



Keeyask Generation Project Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Monitoring Plan

Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Monitoring Report

ATK-2018-WLFN



KEEYASK GENERATION PROJECT

WAR LAKE FIRST NATION

REPORT #ATK-2018-WLFN

ABORIGINAL TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE MONITORING 2017/2018 ANNUAL REPORT

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1.0 KEEYASK YEAR IN REVIEW

War Lake First Nation developed a program to monitor the potential environmental effects resulting from the construction and operation of Keeyask based on our Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge (ATK). Our ATK Monitoring Program ensures opportunities are provided for all Members, including Elders, resource users, knowledge holders, and youth, to participate in activities designed to capture their knowledge of traditional War Lake lands and waters and to observe, discuss, and report on potential effects to these areas resulting from Keeyask.

The following provides an overview of key activities undertaken to date and provides summary information regarding upcoming activities.

1.1 ATK MONITORING TRIP #1

War Lake's program includes an "on-the-land" monitoring component which brings together resource users, knowledge holders, Elders, and youth, to spend time at traditional locations and to observe and discuss changes to the lands and waters.

War Lake held a Site Selection Workshop to identify locations of greatest importance to the community. War Lake Members selected 4 sites (and 4 alternate locations) to visit – War (Princess) Lake, Atkinson (Fox) Lake, Landing River, and Fox River.

The inaugural Monitoring Trip was held at War (Princess) Lake and was attended by 8 Members, including the Keeyask Coordinator, the Trapline holder for the area (who acted as a guide and Fieldwork Leader), Elders, youth, and resource users. The group spend a total of 4 days in the War Lake area. A map was created showing the locations observed and is included in War Lake's Draft Monitoring Trip Report. On this trip, War Lake Members remarked that they had recently experienced a high-water event (spring 2017) which flooded War Lake Road, which the Group used to access various locations on this trip. The water rose to unprecedented heights and fully submerged the access road. The Group also observed the extensive damage from a recent forest fire throughout the visited areas. The most notable damage was observed at Mile 4, where many of the trees were so badly damaged that they were best turned into firewood for the Group.



Photo 1: The First War Lake Monitoring Group



Photo 2: War Lake Youth Tishuan Chornoby, Jamie Chornoby, and Ethan Laliberty



Photo 3: War Lake Members at War Lake Creek Boat Launch



Photo 4: Base Camp

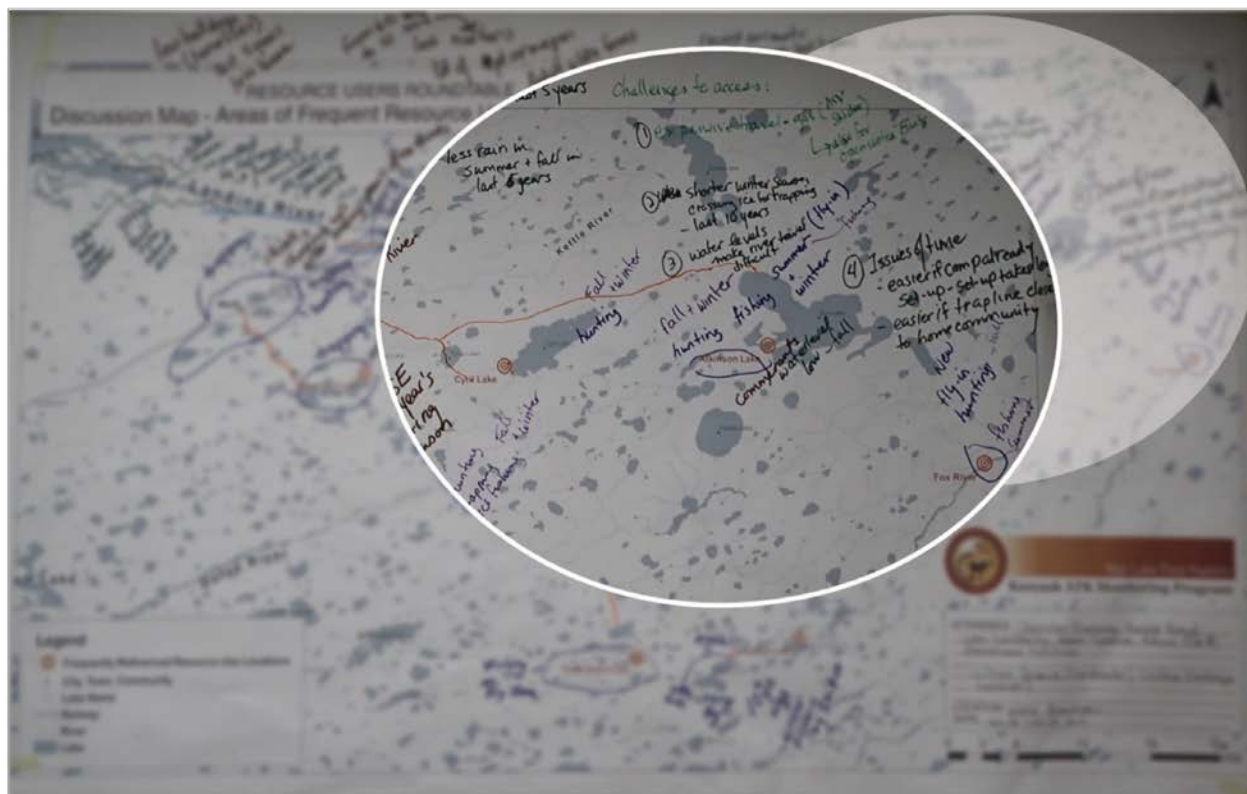
2.0 RESOURCE USERS ROUNDTABLES

An important feature of War Lake's ATK Monitoring Program are quarterly roundtable sessions, which bring together experienced resource users who are very familiar with the land, lakes and rivers where they trap, hunt and fish year after year. The Resource User Roundtables are an opportunity for Members, who regularly access the land, to discuss individual observations of impacts caused by the Keeyask Generation Project, and to reflect on how changes to the land and waterways might impact future generations.

2.1 NOVEMBER 28-29, 2017 – RESOURCE USERS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

This first Resource Users Roundtable focused on identifying locations participants were most familiar with when pursuing resource use activities to help inform the ATK Monitoring Program. The map used for marking observations captured the locations most frequently accessed by War Lake Members for resource use as identified during the Site Selection Roundtable of September 7, 2017. At that time, the 6 participating resource users narrowed down the locations of interest for the “on the land” ATK Monitoring Trips to the following sites: Fox River, Dafoe River, Atkinson (Fox) Lake and Landing River. Chief and Council also thought it important to add Princess (War) Lake to the list of sites to visit for these very important monitoring trips. A series of questions dealing with familiarity with the land, lakes and rivers led to participants sharing observations and experiences related to trapping, hunting, fishing and accessing the land. These activities were marked on the map, as were changes observed over time and challenges experienced. A second series of questions probed the group's concerns with changes to the physical environment. All observations were noted on a flip board and the group worked together to organize findings by the following areas of resource use: Munk to Cyril Lake, War (Princess) Lake to Three Sisters Lake, Cyril Lake to Atkinson (Fox) Lake to Fox River, Landing River, and Mooseocoot (Moose Nose) Lake.

A final series of questions guided the participants to discuss resource use challenges in general and concerns about the future. Observations and experiences shared included challenges related to: seasonal changes influencing access to the land, the high costs of fuel and equipment, and making time to get on the land more frequently and/or for longer durations. Concerns were also expressed regarding safety, especially related to the shortened winter season, and the ability to maintain the traditions and knowledge of their Elders. Most agreed that they were losing opportunities to teach the next generation.



2.2 FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 1, 2018 – RESOURCE USERS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

Another series of questions led to detailed discussions about overland and waterway travel and associated challenges. Factors influencing safe travel as noted by participants include quality of trails/portages, impact of weather conditions (e.g. snow cover, water levels, flooding) and construction and maintenance of winter roads. The final series of questions dealt with the water

quality and flow of lakes and rivers in the two areas. Participants described the water in both areas as having lots of movement and being very clear, with no evidence of negative impacts to animals and fish. They noted more pronounced changes to the water levels in spring due to the unprecedented heavy snowfalls in recent years. This has resulted in overland flooding in the War (Princess) Lake area and changes to sand bar elevations in Atkinson (Fox) Lake, leading to destroyed plants and uprooted trees.

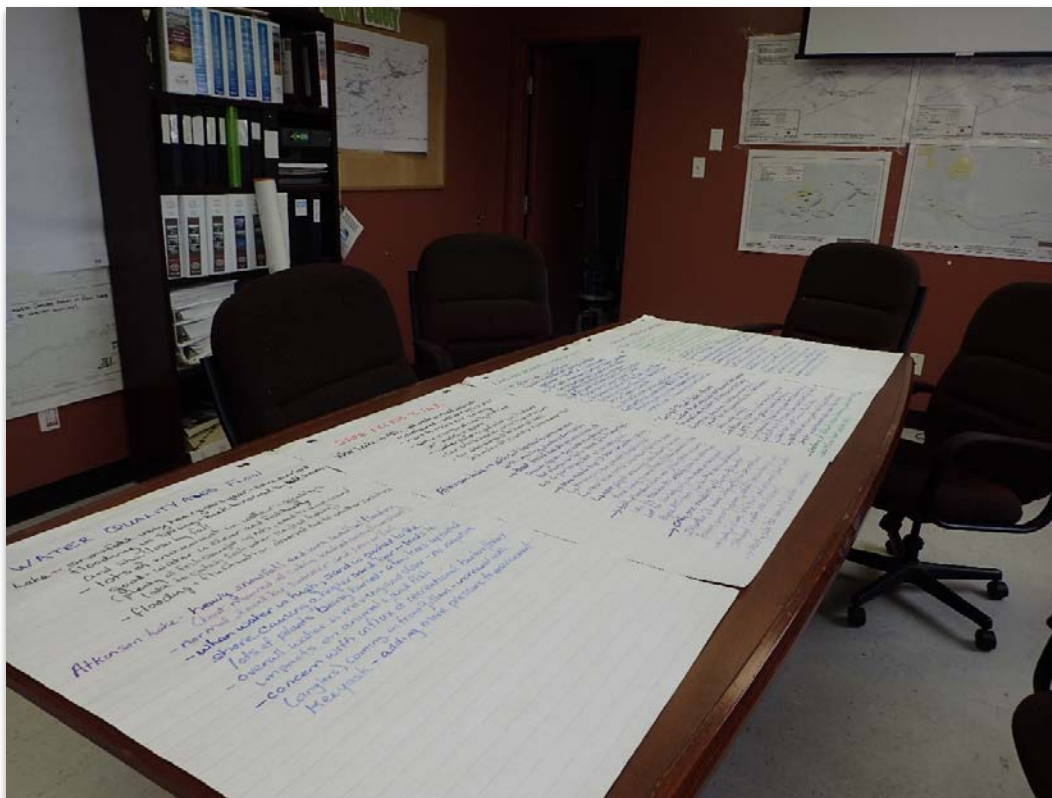


Photo 6: Resource User Roundtables Working Notes

3.0 UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

War Lake has a number of activities planned for the upcoming year. These include:

- ATK Monitoring Trips to Landing River and Fox River;
- Resource User Roundtables; and
- Keeyask Site Visits to observe and monitor construction progress.

War Lake will also produce an annual report which documents and summarizes the activities which have occurred to date, including observations about resource harvesting (wildlife availability and patterns), weather patterns, changes to the lands and waters, and other related topics. If warranted, War Lake will include recommendations for future monitoring based on the findings.