



Keeyask Generation Project
Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Monitoring Plan

Askiy Nanakacihetakewin Stewardship Program Report

ATK-2019-YFFN



KEYYASK GENERATION PROJECT

YORK FACTORY FIRST NATION

REPORT #ATK-2019-YFFN

***ASKIY NANAKACIHTAKEWIN* STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM
2018/2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

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June 2019

This report should be cited as follows:

York Factory First Nation. 2019. Keeyask Generation Project, *Askiy Nanakacihetakewin* Stewardship Program, 2018/2019 Annual Report #ATK-2019-YFFN, June 2019.

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1.0 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Askiy Nanakacihtakewin means, “to watch out for and take care of the lands, waters, wildlife, plants, and people of the land”. YFFN has chosen the term “stewardship” for its “monitoring” program, as this word is better aligned with Ininiw perspectives on caring for Askiy. The program is designed to incorporate traditional science and Ininiw kiskenihtamowin (ATK), with cultural, educational, and traditional elements in understanding the effects of the Keeyask Project on YFFN’s members and their traditional lands.

The 2018/2019 year was marked by the sudden passing on of the program’s Stewardship Coordinator, late Roy Redhead, in September 2018. Roy was a driving force behind the vision and work of the Askiy Nanakacihtakewin program, and is dearly missed.

On December 4th, 2018, Darcy Wastesicoot started as the new Coordinator of York’s Askiy Nanakacihtakewin monitoring program. He is working with the Stewardship Assistant, Monitoring Support Worker and program Steering Committee to carry this important work forward in Roy’s absence.

2.0 STEERING COMMITTEE

The Askiy Nanakacihtakewin Steering Committee, is a group of elders, resource users, RMB members, Band and Implementation staff who offer guidance to the program and ensure linkages with other First Nation programs and activities.

2.1 KEYYASK COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

Program staff represent YFFN on a number of Keeyask committees and working groups. Each of these groups acts as a forum to share community perspectives and work for better inclusion of Ininiw knowledge and values in the Keeyask project.

- Keeyask Monitoring Advisory Committee (MAC)
- Keeyask Caribou Coordinating Committee (KCCC)
- Construction Advisory Committee (CAC)
- YFFN Steering Group for the Keeyask Socio-Economic Monitoring Program (SEMP)

The new Stewardship Coordinator also sits on the Wapusk Management Board and Kischi Sipi Namao Committee. Connections to these tables will help to tie the program's work to broader management efforts on YFFN's traditional lands.

3.0 KEY ACTIVITIES

Several of the program's key events of 2018/2019 are as follows:

3.1 WORK PLANNING

The spring of 2018 involved considerable work by program staff and the Steering Committee to develop a work plan and negotiate ongoing funding with Manitoba Hydro. A contribution agreement has been signed, providing continued funding for Askiy Nanakacihtakewin activities from June 2018 to May 2020.

3.2 CARIBOU MAPPING

For several years, YFFN's A.N. program has been mapping caribou observations with YFFN resource users to create a record of what they are seeing on the land over the course of the winter. This mapping work continued in the spring of 2018 to understand caribou movements in the winter of 2017/2018. A similar mapping exercise was carried out in War Lake First Nation this year and results are being shared within the Partnership.

3.3 WATERWAYS TOUR

In August 2018, program staff worked with Manitoba Hydro's Community Waterways program to arrange a boat tour from York Landing to the Kelsey Generating Station. The tour involved the Askiy Nanakacihtakewin Stewardship Coordinator, an Elder, a resource user, two youth, and staff from Manitoba Hydro. The group travelled across Split Lake, toured a local resource user's cabin and harvesting area, and toured the Kelsey Generating Station. A discussion at the Kelsey Generating Station addressed management of the hydro system, flooding in 2017, the Augmented Flow Program, Kelsey Re-running Project and CR-North programming.



Photo 1: Inside the Kelsey Generating Station on the YFFN Waterways Tour

3.4 WORKER-FAMILY SURVEYS

As part of the Keeyask Socio Economic Monitoring Program, YFFN held 35 interviews and a community workshop focused on documenting the experiences of Keeyask workers and their families. Community researcher, Robben Constant led the interviews, discussing work experience, income, family life, career development, drugs & alcohol, racism and harassment, and other topics. Interview results were compiled and analyzed by Manitoba Hydro and InterGroup Consultants. YFFN thanks the members who gave their time and shared rich and candid experiences with the research team: Kinanaskomitinawaw.

YFFN has developed a report summarizing the key themes coming out of the YFFN interviews, which is available to YFFN members and leadership. Results from all four communities will be analyzed and reported on through the SEMP program.

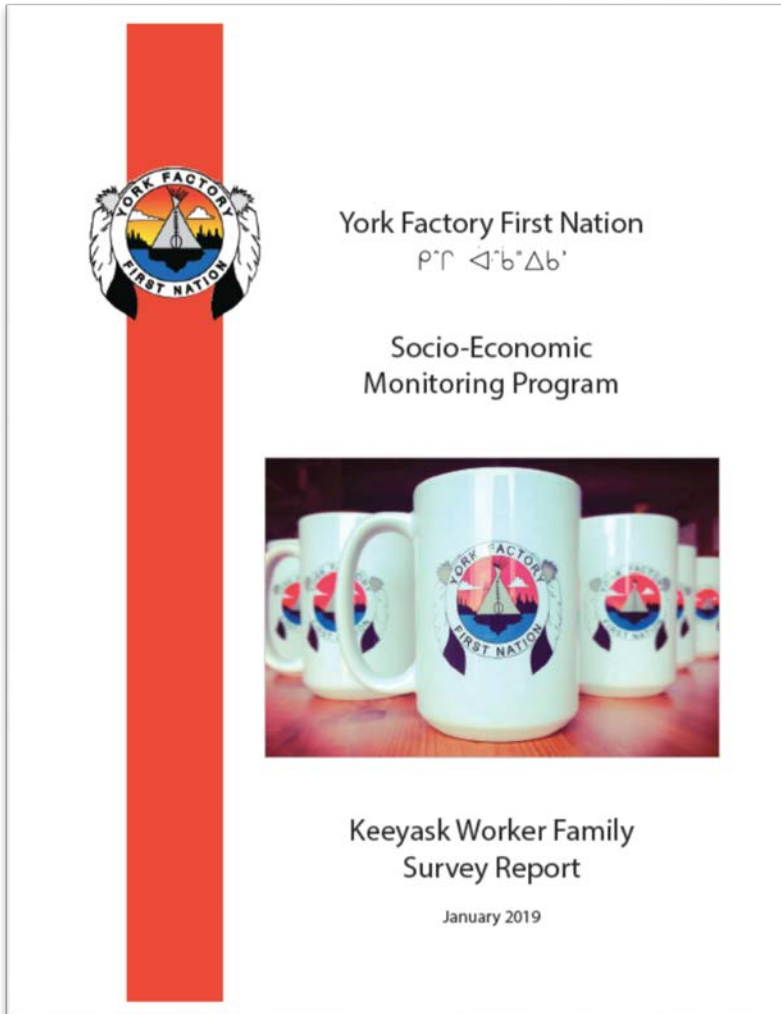


Photo 2: YFFN Worker Family Survey Report

3.5 TEAM MEETING

One of the first activities that the new Coordinator took on was a YFFN Team Meeting. The YFKI team, Chief and Council, and advisors met to update each other on our programs. It was held in Winnipeg on December 12th and 13th.

3.6 STEERING COMMITTEE

We held a Steering Committee meeting January 22, 2019 to update them about Askiy Nanakacitakewin activity and to seek direction and feedback on future events and plans. One of the ideas that came out of the meeting, is to emphasize the Cree language and to incorporate it into the monitoring program wherever possible. The Committee also encouraged staff to focus on hands-on and on-the-land activities in their work.

3.7 COORDINATION WITH STURGEON ACTIVITIES

As a result of the Coordinator's role as Co-Chair of the Kischi Sipi Namao Committee (a sturgeon stewardship group for the lower Nelson River), the Askiy Nanakacihtakewin program was connected to several sturgeon-related activities:

- Presentation at a sturgeon symposium at the University of Manitoba in December, 2018
- Participation in a joint meeting of three Manitoba and Saskatchewan sturgeon boards in January 2019

3.8 MAC OPEN HOUSE

YFFN hosted a Keeyask MAC openhouse in February. The event focused on youth, with hands-on activities related to animals, the land, and environmental monitoring. To add a language element to the event, the Askiy Nanakacihtakewin program developed buttons with Ininimowin (Cree Language) animal names that were handed out to youth who attended. The buttons were very well received. Following the open house, additional animal names were added and a series of magnets was developed to share with youth at YFFN's Pison Kapesiwin (see below) and other events.



Photo 3: 4 of 24 animal name magnets prepared for YFFN youth

3.9 PIPON KAPESIWIN (WINTER CAMP)

Program staff organized and hosted their second annual Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge Winter Camp in March 2019.



Photo 4: Pipon Kapesíwin - group photo

Elders prepared wild food like geese, fish, caribou and rabbits that were donated by community members. Children watched the Elders prepare the wild food and staff and learned how to say the names of animals and birds in Ininimowin (Cree). Staff gave out magnets and buttons with animal names for each of the children to take home to their families. The people who were at the camp helped the children and other people who didn't know the Cree language.



Photo 5: Pipon Kapesiwin - cleaning fish

The camp included a traditional feast with bannock and meat prepared by the elders, a community campfire breakfast, and a Western style feast that was open to the whole community.

“What I observed...was people enjoying themselves and visiting amongst themselves. I haven’t seen this kind of people interacting since before technology and Facebook came into our lives. It felt so good to see this and be part of it.” Jimmy Beardy, Stewardship Assistant

3.10 COLLABORATION FOR ATIKOK

2017, 2018, and 2019 have seen large numbers of caribou come near the Keeyask partner communities. The herds have drawn many harvesters from outside the area and raised concern among YFFN and other partner communities: about the number of animals being harvested; hunters failing to follow traditional protocols for accessing traditional lands; carcasses being left with only small amounts of meat taken; and safety hazards associated with gut piles being left on access routes. These concerns have been discussed at Keeyask MAC and KCCC meetings.

Steering Committee members urged Askiy Nanakacihtakewin staff to find funds to support further collaboration among the communities with respect to monitoring and protecting caribou. They emphasized the importance of communicating with other First Nations in the region beyond those in the Keeyask Partnership and working together to address their common concerns.

YFFN has secured funds through the Canada Nature Fund for a project titled Collaboration for Atikok. The project involves three multi-party workshops including 6 First Nations from northeastern Manitoba. This work will allow the Keeyask partner communities to build their collaboration on caribou monitoring in the area, and expand discussions to include other First Nations that observe and access caribou in the region. The workshops will take place in 2019 and 2020.



Photo 6: Darcy Wastesicoot, Stewardship Coordinator, discussing use of atik (caribou) leg bone