

SAMS Gwich'in Language Classes – Grade 4 to 6

On the Land Program

Final Report



Wednesday, June 22 to Friday, June 24, 2011.

Final Report Prepared By
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Introduction:

This brief report will describe the day trips that took place at the Gwich'in Territorial Park from June 22, 23, and 24, 2011 with the Grades 4, 5, and 6 students from SAMS Gwich'in Language classes. The resource people included Freddy and Sarah Jerome, Mabel English (Gwich'in Elder), Alice Vittrekwa (cook), Ernest Dillon (bear monitor), and Renewable Resource Officer Lloyd Gruben (bear safety) and Ernie Francis and Marty Kunnizzii (forest fire safety). Moses Gordon's, MGM Bus Service, was used to transport the students back and forth between the school and the park.

Freddy Jerome carried out nature walks with the students and talked about the plants and the food that bears eat. He dug out bear roots and talked about the plant, what it is used for and when is the best time to pick it. He also set a fishnet on the lake and later when we went to check the net we caught a lot of Coney, whitefish and jackfish. Mabel English, our Gwich'in Elder, and I cut up the fish to show the students how to prepare the fish to cook on the fire. We washed the Coney heads, the pipes and the stockings (fish intestines). While I cooked the fish guts on the fire Mabel roasted the Coney heads over the coals. When they were done, we all had a piece and enjoyed the delicious cooking.

Both Mabel English and Sarah Jerome told stories. For Sarah stories we went inside the tent where she talked about the spruce branches that were set on the tent floor. We were sitting on caribou hides and Sarah talked about the caribou hides, how they were dried and used long ago before foamies came around. Mabel talked about the birds, the fish, the traditional plants, and she told stories about the bear. We lunched on caribou soap, bannock, cooked cranberries, and the children had juice box while the adults had coffee or tea. The meal was enjoyed by everyone. The students and adults alike learned something new. The teachings were interesting. The students enjoyed the boat ride on the lake, including Miss Kay.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources Renewable Resource Officer Lloyd Gruben provided a presentation on bear safety and Forest Management Firefighters Ernie Francis and Marty Kunnizzii provided a presentation on forest fire safety to the students and resource people. They did a wonderful job speaking about what they do. Everyone learnt something new.

It was so peaceful at the Gwich'in Territorial Park that the children behaved and listened well. The only time we put the radio on was at noon to listen to the messages and the local news at 12:30 and the radio was then turned off at 1:00 o'clock. I also invited the newspaper woman from the Drum. She went out on the last day however she couldn't find us because the tent setting was well hidden in the willows. The story of the children going out on the day trips will not be in the newspaper until in the fall time.

Mahsi' to Daryl English's support and funding from GNWT Department of ITI/ENR/MACA for making the day trips to the Gwich'in Territorial Park possible.



Gwich'in Vocabulary

1. Van – Lake
2. tr'ih – boat
3. srii – knife
4. han – river
5. daa'aai – axe
6. gwandak – story
7. troo – wood
8. ts'ee – beaver
9. shih – grizzly bear
10. shoh – bear
11. chuu – water
12. kw'an' – fire/matches
13. kheh – geese
14. dats'an – ducks
15. dzhii – birds
16. mahsi' hai – thank you
17. jak – berries
18. luk – fish
19. at'an – leaves

Hai ! Mahsi' Cho! Thank you very much!

Daryl English
Lloyd Gruben
Ernie Francis
Marty Kunnizzie
Ernest Dillon
Freddy/Sarah Jerome
Alice Vittrekwa
Mabel English
Moses Gordon
Davey Wood – Beaver Helper

The above people have done a great job. The Gwich'in students and Miss. Kay learned many new interesting things on these day trips.

Keep up the good job and keep smiling!



Conservation Education Officer's Report

A lot of planning and preparation goes into a program such as this. Mr. Fred and Sarah Jerome always does an outstanding job of making all the preparation for setting up the traditional camp, buying all the groceries, hiring their additional resource staff and finally implementing the program so that it is not only successful but very enjoyable for all the participants. Their planning of presentations to the youths about their culture, heritage and traditional knowledge is exceptional and they really believe in getting the youths out on the land, which is a great experience for all.

Miss Bella Kay is great to work with as she really cares about her students and she does a considerable amount of work to plan and implement a program. She must fill out all the applications for funding and consult with the aboriginal organizations to ensure that everything is in place prior to the beginning of the program. I have worked with Miss Kay over the last several years and I always enjoy assisting her classes in implementing on the land programs that are invaluable to the Gwich'in Language students.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources have many staff members that from time to time contribute to our conservation education programs. Renewable Resource Officer Lloyd Gruben always finds the time to provide very educational presentations to the youths that they enjoy very much. This year we were very fortunate to have a presentation provided by the Forest Management Staff, Forest Fire Fighters Ernie Francis and Marty Kunnizzii. The students and staff learned a lot about forestry ecology and why we fight forest fires and in other cases, why we do not fight forest fires. Forest Management Warehouse Manager, Owen Allen, is a great asset to our Department and our conservation education programs. He ensures that all the camping gear and everything else that we need to have a successful program is available and we really appreciate this.

We would like to thank Forest Management Manager, Martin Callaghan, and Regional Superintendent, Stephen Charlie, for all their support and encouragement in making these programs successful and lastly the GNWT Parks Staff and the Beaufort Delta Education Council Staff, John Whelan and Kurt Scheiwiller, for all their assistance as well.

Mahsi Cho,

Daryl C. English

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Additional Images:





Forest Management Presentation:



The Great Staff!



Mahsi Cho!