

2010 SHSS Hunter Education and Cultural Program: Final Report



William Koe teaches participants firearm safety.

Samuel Hearne Secondary School
Tuesday, April 6th to Friday, April 9th, 2010.

Completed by:
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Overview of Project

From Tuesday, April 6th to Friday, April 9th students from Samuel Hearne Secondary School (SHSS) participated in a very successful SHSS Hunter Education and Cultural Program at Rock River Territorial Campground. The purpose of the program, which is part of the school's outdoor education curriculum, allows the students to have an opportunity to travel "on the land" and enjoy our great northern outdoors while learning traditional skills taught to them by a Gwich'in hunting instructor and elder.

By the conclusion of the trip students had participated in activities such as snowmobile safety and maintenance, setting up and taking down camp, tracking moose and caribou, firearm safety and a 'sight in your rifle' program, learning traditional hunting methods, sharing cultural and traditional stories with a Gwich'in elders, and on the land survival skills.



Ms. Julie-Ann Andre taught the participants the traditional way to set up a traditional tent.

The Rock River Territorial Campground is both easily accessible from the Dempster Highway and well equipped for taking groups of students, chaperones and elders out onto the land. The location of our camp was excellent with good shelter from the wind and lots of dry wood to keep us warm. The accessibility of the campground made it a favorable location for future SHSS on the land programs. Throughout the four day trip the main focus can be broken down into four main focal points: traditional and cultural knowledge, outdoor education, harvesting caribou and firearm safety training. In all of these main aspects language and culture were an integral component of their implementations.



The main entrance to the Rock River Territorial Campground, Yukon Territory.



Two of the five camps set up at the park's entrance.

Outdoor Education:

Students performed activities such as setting up a traditional camp, traveling by snowmobile, tracking caribou, enjoying traditional cooking, hiking into the mountains and discussions and illustrations on the importance of being prepared for out on the land trips: They also prepared a list of objectives such as ensuring you have a good winter sleeping bag and wears warm clothing (hats, face masks, gloves, ski pants, and a warm winter jacket) and how to properly tie down equipment and supplies so not to lose anything on long excursions.



The students were responsible for not only the safety and transportation of their own gear, but the communal items such as fuel, food, hunting equipment, and cooking equipment. They were also responsible for collecting sufficient water to drink and cook with, and firewood to keep the fire burning all night at the camp.

The students took initiatives for all of these basic tasks with little direction given by the adults. There was a very cohesive and effective team mentality that provided a positive and successful environment for all. The group was able to stay on task because of the positive attitudes of all parties involved.



Caribou/Wolf Hunting

Students were involved in the daily preparation for tracking and hunting caribou and a few wolves. We completed a firearm safety program and a 'Sight in Your Rifle' program prior to going hunting. The students learned how to look for fresh signs of animals as well as various techniques to ensure that you quickly kill your pray as humanly and safely as possible. It was very important that we did not harvest cow caribou (females) and we ensure that the participants realize this prior to the actual harvest. Even though we did not have a successful hunt this was a major component of the program.



The students were given an opportunity to observe the caribou in their natural habitat.



We had to ensure the caribou were not cows (females) if we were to harvest them in the Yukon.

Culture and Language Component:

Through the day snowmobile excursions the students cultivated and practiced a variety of traditional skills. The hunting instructor, William Koe, and Gwich'in elder, Joseph Kay, shared many stories from their past about when their parents taught them traditional skills and the harsh winters spent out on the land. Their reflections were always captivating for all participants. We were very fortunate Luke Eberl capture many of these moments on his camera.



William Koe interviewed by Luke Eberl about the Rock River area.

Community Benefits:

The community benefits are numerous when it comes to implementing a cultural program such as this. Most the program participants are all aboriginal and to spend time with a Gwich'in elder and an experienced hunting instructor provided the participants an opportunity to learn about the traditional and cultural skills the aboriginal people used for thousands of years to survive in this harsh northern environment.

For thousands of years many young people were taught the traditional skills to live off the land prior to residential schools. The aboriginal people from this region eventually moved into the new settlements such as Ft. McPherson to be closer to their children. Obviously this changed the traditional cycle the aboriginal people endured from season to season.

We were very fortunate to have the participation of Mr. and Mrs. William and Dorothy Koe and Gwich'in elder Joseph Kay. They spent a considerable amount of time speaking with the participants about their experiences 'living off the land' and learning from their elders. The only place a cultural program such as this could be taught is on the land and in the environment their people lived for millennia.

Mr. Joseph Kay told many interesting stories about travelling by dog team prior to the Dempster Highway being built and the many stories he heard from his elders about living and hunting caribou in the Rock River area. When we looked hard enough there was a considerable amount of evidence of people living in this area, such as old trees being cut down maybe a hundred years ago with stone axes prior to the introduction of metal axes.

Daryl English, Julie-Ann Andre, Sam Lennie and Glen Alexie who are all aboriginal employees from the Department of ENR shared many of their experiences of growing up in the Inuvik Region as well. William Koe and the ENR staff members are considered role models in the eyes of the students who benefit from having such successful and capable mentors around them. Community involvement gives the students an opportunity to learn about future careers in wildlife management while observing sound mentorship and in turn enabling future community development.

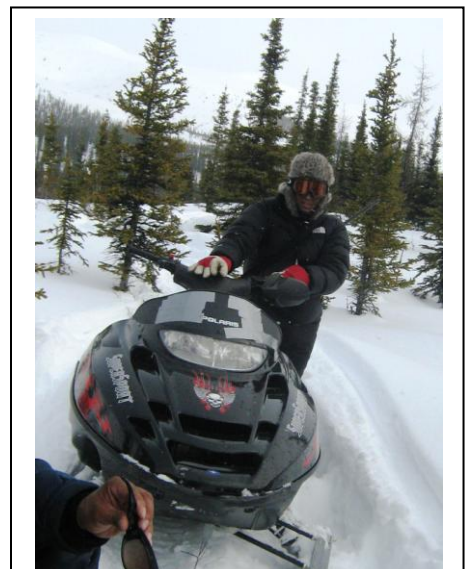
We were also very fortunate to have Mr. Luke Eberl involved with the program as he recorded a majority of the program with a video recorder and produced a DVD that is available upon request. The positive connections made between the school and community is integral for the continued success of programs such as this in the future.



Joseph Kay – Gwich'in Elder



Sam Lennie – Tsiigehtchic Patrol Person



Glen Alexie – Ft. McPherson RRO II

Reflections of the Overall Program:

To achieve the above results we received financial support from the Dept. of ITI/MACA and the Dept. of ENR provided us the use of their personnel and equipment. We selected the youths and made arrangements for the provisions and the honoraria for a hunting instructor, elder, cook and camp attendant. Even though we did not harvest any caribou, the students were given the great opportunity to observe the caribou in their natural environment.

All participants considered the program very successful and this program may become an annual event for the school during the spring time. Similar program were completed over the last several years in the Gwich'in Settlement Area with other schools and renewable resource councils. The Yukon's Environment Office in Dawson City has assisted several times with the implementation of similar programs in the past and we will be approaching them for their assistance with this program in the future as well.

Student's Reflections:

"It was a great adventure. We all got a chance to camp out and enjoy lots of outdoor activities." John Gruben

"We got to learn how to safely use a firearm and got to drive a skidoo up through the amazing Rock River valley." Haji Farland

"We learnt how to chop wood, properly prepare our skidoos and sleds for the adventure along Rock River." Bobby Amos

"It was a great trip and I had a wonderful time with my friends while learning about the Rock River area and the Gwich'in culture." Cole English

"We ate lots of traditional foods like bannock and caribou soup and got to see wolves and caribou along the hills of the Richardson Mountains." Don Gruben

It is worth noting that the students did not miss any school as a result of this program because it was during their Easter Break. It also goes to show their commitment to learning by being involved with an educational program while not in school.



Bobby Amos and Haji Farland



John Gruben and Cole English



Rick Bourgeois and Julie-Ann's daughter



Don Gruben and Cole English

Teacher's Reflections:

"Thank you for an amazing adventure and the opportunity to meet and learn some of the ways and values of the Gwich'in Culture." Rick Bourgeois

The above student's reflections are what measure the success for this type of cultural program. Without speaking too explicitly about the students themselves, reading reflections such as the above is immensely eye opening. This trip was a chance for these youths to show and demonstrate talents that do not necessarily have the opportunity to show themselves in the classroom.

One of the greatest measurements of these trips is taking students away from texts books, homework assignments and smart boards. Allowing them room to develop and grow as people, and not just as names in an online marks tracking system. I can honestly say that each and every one of the students impressed me with a skill set I never knew they possessed. Not only that, but they developed other aspects of themselves through the course of the week. Many of them might not be able to articulate it in a journal reflection, but when you put heavily impressionable teenagers in situations that challenge them physically and emotionally it brings out parts of their character that might not normally be tapped into.

Each one of the students came away from this trip with the ability to grow as young adults by:

- Developing interpersonal skills through teamwork; and
- Learn lessons of tolerance for one another while living in such close quarters; and
- Opening their minds to new experiences and relationships with people they might not have attempted previously; and
- Gaining a greater respect for diversity; and
- A better understanding of themselves through self reflection; and
- The opportunity to learn deeper aspects of their culture in an alternative environment.

Every evening the entire group came together to recap the events of the day, reflect on the experiences, and plan for the next day's activities. During these sharing circles teachers, students, elders, and all persons with a stake in the program had the opportunity to voice concerns and also articulate how the day's activities affected them. They were extremely cathartic experiences for all parties involved. They allowed the experiences taking place to really begin to take shape into meaningful changes in their lives.



Rick Bourgeois



Luke Eberl – Program Recorder



Julie-Ann Andre

Future Projects:

We look forward to continuing this program next year. It was successful in both planning and execution. Not every trip can come off without a hitch, and the most successful ones never do. The success of this trip will have positive influences on the working relationships between the school, the community, and the government in the future. Hopefully many more programs of this nature will continue as the Beaufort Delta Education Council's mandate for "instilling a greater pride in heritage" continues.



Hiking into the mountains.

Thank you to the Inuvik District Education Authority, the GNWT's Departments of Industry, Tourism, and Investment and Municipal and Community Affairs and especially Daryl English, Julie-Ann Andre, Sam Lennie, Owen Allen and Glen Alexie from the Department of ENR for their continued support of our SHSS On-The-Lands Programs.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. and Mrs. William and Dorothy Koe for their outstanding commitment to working with youths and sharing their knowledge with us. Mr. Joseph Kay for all his personal stories and experiences he shared with us. Mr. Luke Eberl for participating in the program and the production of the DVD, and lastly the students that continues to inspire us to implement conservation education programs because of their enthusiasm and passion to learn.

Mahsi Cho.



The program participants went hiking into the mountains in search of caribou.

Participants List:

Hunting Instructor: William Koe

Gwich'in Elders: Joseph Kay

Camp Cook: Dorothy Koe

Camp Attendant: Roland Koe

ENR Program Coordinator: Daryl English

SHSS Coordinator: Rick Bourgeois

Media Training: Luke Eberl

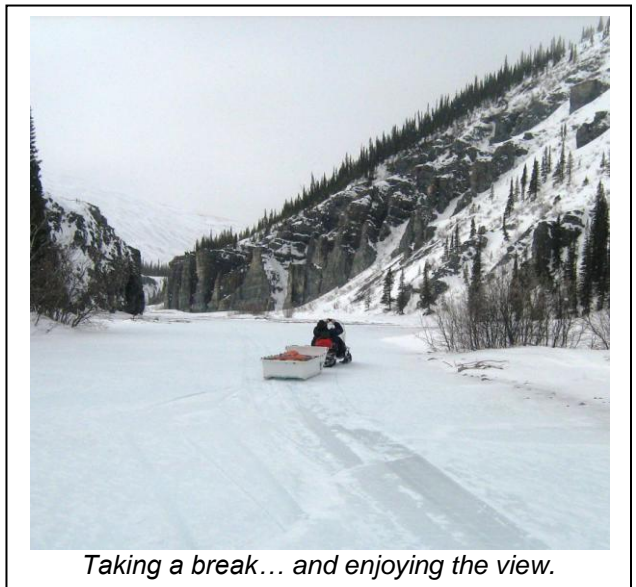
SHSS Students:

1. John Amos
2. Don Gruben
3. Haji Furland
4. John Gruben
5. Cole English

Environment and Natural Resources Staff that assisted with the program:

1. Sam Lennie, Tsiigehtchic Patrol Person
2. Julie-Ann Andre, Forest Fire Technician
3. Owen Allen, Warehouse Personnel
4. Glen Alexie, Ft. McPherson Renewable Resource Officer II

Ms. Julie-Ann Andre brought her two wonderful daughters with her on this program for a total of eighteen (18) participants that took part in this very exciting and educational program.



Budget for Conservation Educational Program at Rock River April 6-9, 2010

Revenues and Expenses:

Items:	Amounts:	Cost:
One Hunting Instructor	6 days @ 200/day	\$1,200
One Gwich'in Elder	6 days @ 200/day	\$1,200
One Cook	6 days @ 200/day	\$1,200
One Camp Assistant	6 days @ 200/day	\$1,200
Two Lunches at Eagle Plains	15 lunches @ \$20 each	\$ 300
Gas & Oil (vehicles & snowmobiles)		\$ 500
Shells		\$ 300
Groceries		\$1,200
Total Cost		\$7,100

The four resource people identified above will have two days of preparation and four days implementing the program.

TOTAL Funding Received from ITI: **\$7,100**

CEO Daryl English contributed additional funds to the program as per 'Appendix A'.



Appendix A



Statement Period From: April 1, 2010

To: April 31, 2010

CORPORATE PURCHASE CREDIT CARD ACTIVITY LOG

Item	Order Date	Ref SOA	Brief Description of Item Purchased	Supplier Name	T.F.I.M.P.	Usage	Receipt	Dispute	Coding	Activity	TOTAL AMOUNT (\$Cdn)
1	04/01/10		Bag lunch	Cloud 9 Restaurant	1/5-8	04/01/10	Y	N	53019	01 31 405 5562	241.45
2	04/01/10		Printing supplies	Stanley Group Ltd	"	04/01/10	Y	N	53019	01 31 405 5562	260.05
3	04/01/10		"	Stanley Group Ltd	"	04/01/10	Y	N	53019	01 31 405 5562	11.62
4	07/06/10		Dinner	Arctic Circle Restaurant	"	07/06/10	Y	N	53019	01 31 405 5562	42.15
5	10/06/10		Bag lunch	Northern Store	"	09/06/10	Y	N	53019	01 31 405 5562	155.51
6	10/06/10		Fuel	"	"	09/06/10	Y	N	53019	01 31 405 5562	271.07
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For items that do not appear on the statement, please checkmark to bring forward (BF) to the next statement.

Comments: Items purchased for the Conservation Education program: SHSS Hunter Education and Cultural Program - April 04 to 09, 2010.

Cardholder's Name (Please Print):	Daryl C. English	Cardholder's Signature:	
Cardholder Account # (Last 4 Digits):	7309	Manager's (Sponsoring) Signature:	

**NOTE: For items purchased in excess of \$5,000, please complete and attach a Tender Record Form (unless purchased under a Standing Offer Agreement)

GNWT SAM-18/2

Appendix B

Rock River Conservation Education Report

Tuesday, April 6 to Friday April 9, 2010.

Tuesday, April 6:

Day one consisted of packing supplies, traveling to Rock River and unpacking trailers and personal gear. Conservation Education Officer (CEO) Daryl English had to go back to Ft. McPherson to borrow two tents and most of the students and staff had to sleep in the ENR trailer and trucks for the first night. However when CEO English came back a tent and stove was set up at about 3:00 AM and some of the students slept in there.

Wednesday, April 7:

The next day the group went down the Rock River. A few of us stayed at camp and prepared to set up the tents once they arrived later in the day from Ft. McPherson. We also burned out the new stoves and tidied the camp area. The students all came back from their afternoon snowmobile trip with fulfilled energy and we all headed to Eagle Plains Hotel for supper. We arrived back at camp sometime after 11:00 PM.

Thursday, April 8:

Today another trip with snow machines went up the Rock River and had another awesome time, while myself and three other students went out on the highway to watch the wolves work a caribou that they had taken down earlier, it was amazing to watch. Later that evening we went back out on the highway to look for caribou, we saw some but we didn't get any. We arrived back at camp at about 12:30 AM.

Friday, April 9:

The last day consisted of packing gear and traveling back to Inuvik. We stopped in Ft. McPherson to fuel up our trucks and we provided a late lunch for the participants. We arrived back in Inuvik at about 9:00 PM, unpacked and headed home.

Mahsi Cho,
Julie-Ann Andre
Forest Technician
Forest Management Division
Environment and Natural Resources
Phone (867) 678-6696