

Connecting with Cultural Heritage Land-Based Learning and Healing through Archaeology in Northern Manitoba Research Project



Project Design

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Developed based on foundational activities April-Sept 2023

Why We Need the Project



Significant Archaeological Cultural Heritage Sites Exist in the North

In the Churchill area, there are significant sites that have not been documented well, are not protected, are not managed by Indigenous people, and the elder stories have not thoroughly been captured. The sites provide an opportunity for regaining cultural heritage for the community and the youth.

There are Many Community Strengths to Build on to Include Cultural Heritage

The Indigenous Communities have a great deal of knowledge, interest and have had little opportunity to engage in a comprehensive way with the cultural heritage of the area. The communities have been creating land-based healing programs and there are a lot of opportunities to involve culture heritage.



Can We use this Opportunity to Grow Awareness, Regain Culture, Build Wellness and Lead Stewardship?

There is the need to reconnect the community with the cultural heritage, use the opportunity of the cultural heritage sites to grow youth and community wellness, regain culture, and build a model of Indigenous-led stewardship of the cultural heritage

Project Goals

Three Goals

This research will explore the:

- a) best approaches to engage community and diverse stakeholders in working together on a major initiative such as cultural heritage and wellness.
- b) best approaches to create Indigenous-led stewardship of archaeological cultural heritage in the north.
- c) role that archaeological sites (cultural heritage ancient and historic) on the coast of Hudson Bay at Churchill can have in Land-based learning and wellness for Inuit, Dene, and Cree youth.



Methods

We will use culturally appropriate Indigenous methods (as defined the Inuit, Dene and Cree and grounded theory), including community engagement, building on strengths, honouring ceremony, cultural heritage research and youth-oriented programming to enhance well-being/health and meaningfully engage community.

Expected Outcomes

1. We will facilitate the creation of an Indigenous-Led cultural heritage stewardship strategy for the cultural heritage sites in northern Manitoba and potentially create an archaeological preserve.
2. We will create and test an archaeological, cultural heritage, land-based program for youth which will facilitate wellness and opportunities for the future.
3. We will work with Inuit, Dene and Cree communities in a meaningful way throughout all aspects of the project such that they have ownership of the project in a sustained way going forward.
4. The narratives, knowledge, evidence and experiences that cultural heritage retains, can have a role in a strength-based approach for youths and the community's repossession of the Land.

Objective 1: Engage the Community and Build a Program Based on Community Strengths



Activity 1: Work with the Communities Meaningfully throughout the Project via an Engagement Strategy

- Create the engagement strategy using a community engagement framework, and determine who to engage including the local community, external stakeholders, and partners. Determine the process for engagement (i.e., advisory panels for the 3 components of the project?), how often they will engage, etc. Community engagement advisory panels will help guide the project design, and evaluation, help with finding stakeholders, etc.



Activity 2: Develop a systematic Review of Current Related Programs in the North and determine the best fit for the Proposed Program

Conduct a systematic review of current related programs in the North and beyond by engaging with the community and stakeholders. Determine the current state and if there are ways to connect the proposed program.



Activity 3: Design and Implement a Communication Strategy

Develop a comprehensive communication strategy that will continue through the life of the project.

Objective 2: Create Indigenous Stewardship of Cultural Heritage Sites



Activity 1: Systematic Review and knowledge sharing of the Archaeology of the Area

- Conducting inventory, review of actual sites, current holdings, current documentation and learn about gaps, needs, and develop recommendations. Literature review of land-based healing/wellness programs
- Ancestors and burial sites.
- Drone imaging and virtual reality

Activity 2: Literature Review, Environmental Scan of Models and Community Engagement on Best Approaches For Stewardship

- Review of best practices, trends, and engagement with community to determine best approaches and what is needed to move forward.
- Reach out to communities in the Province and the north to learn about their programs.
- Attend and learn from other land-based healing/wellness programs.

Activity 3: Engage with the Community to Create an Indigenous-Led Stewardship Approach and Possible Archaeological Preserve

- Working with the Community to create a sustainable model for an Indigenous-led stewardship approach for the cultural heritage sites and what would be needed to create an archaeological preserve.

Objective 3: Create and Test an Archaeology Cultural Heritage Youth Program to Improve Wellness



Activity 1: Conduct a Review of land-based Healing/wellness Programs.

- Literature review and environmental scan, what already exists in the north
- Attend Land-based healing/wellness programs in the north

Activity 2: Create the Program With the Community

Create the program based on engagement with the community, and with youth, build on community programs and strengths, and build on best practices that have been gathered from the environmental scan and literature review. The program may include:

- Understanding the cultural heritage sites in the north through site visits
- Assisting in Gathering cultural heritage stories (mapping)
- Building strength-based wellness through land-based learning and regaining culture
- Developing capacity in skills including archaeology, interpretation, research methods, museology, etc. that may lead to occupational outcomes.



Activity 3: Implement, Test, Improve and Refine the Program

Enroll a cohort of approximately 20 youth to run and evaluate land-based healing/wellness programs. Evaluate developmentally. Refine. Retest refined program. Evaluate and make recommendations for sustainment.



Project Management Approach

- **April 2023- February 2024: Laying the Foundation**
- **October 2023-March 2024: Planning & Preparation**
 - Hire Research Assistants
 - Coordinate an Advisory group consisting of community and key stakeholders
 - Define a Stewardship Team for the entire Project
 - Conduct Literature reviews, environmental scans, and program reviews
 - Understand who should/wants to be engaged with the project and how
 - Develop engagement, communication, program, research & evaluation strategies.
 - Ethics submission for 20 youth to be engaged in the research program
- April 2024-March 2025: Implementing, test, refine the strategies.
- April 2025-March 2026: Implement Refined Strategies, Evaluate, Establish sustainment plan.

General Strategies Throughout

- Principles of **Indigenous** research and leadership throughout
- Research/Evaluation for all Objectives: Design, Plan, Do, Test, Learn, Refine, Sustain

PROJECT TIMELINE

