

"Dachan Tat Tr'igwich'in K'iikhe' Natr'idzih" / Living Out On The Land By That We Heal

- Bertha Francis, Teet'it Gwich'in Elder

Land-Based Learning in Teet'it Zheh

A TEETL'IT GWICH'IN - UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA PARTNERSHIP

From 2017-2020, we will establish a youth-focused community bush camp as a site for Gwich'in land-based practice. This bush camp school will provide a critical land-based education for Gwich'in youth. Immersing them in a transformative experience, guided by elders in a camp whose decision-making process, curriculum, and activities will be structured by traditional Gwich'in governance processes.

Youth will be given the opportunity to learn summer-based bush skills like fishing and moose hide tanning, along with the running of a camp—set-up, cooking, eating, cleaning, camp management, etc.—in ways that differ from life in town. While a significant part of the bush camp experience is elder-centered practical education, youth will also be exposed to critical Indigenous studies scholarship, Gwich'in history and governance, and decolonial pedagogy.

Through this immersive process, students will be able to renew Gwich'in governance practices, build land-based knowledge and skills, and situate this within a larger narrative of colonization and resistance.

VISION

"By connecting the knowledge of community leaders, knowledge holders, & University researchers, this project will explore Gwich'in land-based knowledge skills related to bush camp life, Gwich'in governance processes, & intergenerational knowledge transmission"



University of Alberta Research Team members recently met with Chief Wanda Pascal of Fort McPherson, N.W.T in Edmonton, Alberta on April 24th & 25th, 2017 to begin planning the community project.

L-R: Liza Piper (History & Classics); Molly Swain (MA Student Native Studies), Lianne Charlie (Yukon College); Isabel Altamirano-Jimenez, (Political Science); Shalene Jobin (Native Studies); Elaine Alexie (UAlberta North/Native Studies); and Adam Gaudry (Native Studies/Political Science)

Our Teetl'it Zheh community members possess immense land-based knowledge and have worked with young people on the land for many years. This project represents a coming together of experience that will allow us to increase the scale and reach of on-the-land learning in the North and across Canada. The Faculty of Native Studies is an emerging national leader in community engaged Indigenous research and is in the process of developing several on-the-land learning projects.

5 Goals of the Project

1. *Develop resources for future Gwich'in land based learning camps based on the knowledge shared at the camp & by the elders who attend;*
2. *Develop a "How-To" guide for Indigenous communities looking to establish their own community bush camps available as a free download;*
3. *Publish on the themes, experiences, and challenges that emerged from the camp*
4. *Host a "land-based learning" conference at the U of A;*
5. *Develop a fifth outcome with Gwich'in youth participants that will emerge from the project. For this goal to be met, we will support the leadership of youth to envision & carry out this project outcome.*

Next Steps

July 2017 Community Visit to Teetl'it Zheh - Fort McPherson, N.W.T

Members of the research team from the University of Alberta will be making a community visit in July to introduce the project and to meet with members of the community.

We will be setting up community meetings over multiple days & making home visits, if necessary. Our visit to the community will provide the opportunity for community members to learn about the project in more detail and for the team members to hear from everyone in the community.

We look forward to meeting everyone!



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF NATIVE STUDIES



ualbertanorth

FOR MORE INFORMATION
teetlitlandcamp@gmail.com
Facebook Page @teetlitlandproject