



“It’s about our survival”

Keeping the Food and Water Safe in the Sahtú Region

Research Results Workshop
Tulít’a, November 27-28, 2013

Hosted by:

ʔehdzo Got’iṇę Gots’ę Nákedı (Sahtú Renewable Resources Board)
Northern Contaminants Program (NCP - Aboriginal Affairs and Northern
Development Canada)
Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program (CIMP - Aboriginal Affairs and
Northern Development Canada)

Report prepared by:

Shauna Morgan, Pembina Institute

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Summary

People in the Sahtú Region are concerned that the health and safety of their food and water sources on the land could be threatened by contaminants, climate change, and cumulative impacts of industrial development. Sahtú communities have asked researchers to investigate and monitor the caribou, moose, fish, and water. Many of those research and monitoring projects have been ongoing for several years. Sahtú community members requested an update on the results of those projects so far, and an opportunity to give input on where the research should go next.

The good news is that researchers have found so far that, generally, the fish and wild game in the Sahtú Region are safe to eat and the water is safe to drink. Community members can feel confident that eating and drinking off the land is one of their best ways to stay healthy. It is up to community members, researchers, health officials, government agencies and co-management boards to work together to make sure things stay that way.

It is important that community members are involved at every step of the way in research. The workshop report describes two examples of Sahtú communities being involved: monitoring of mercury levels in fish, and monitoring of caribou and moose health.

At the end of the report are 1- to 2-page summaries of research projects that have been going on in the Sahtú Region, with pictures and diagrams to help explain:

- Diversity of Sahba (Trout) in Great Bear Lake (Louise Chavarie)
- Long term monitoring of Great Bear Lake fisheries and the aquatic ecosystem (Kim Howland/ Deanna Leonard)
- Loche (burbot) contaminant research with Fort Good Hope (Gary Stern / Jesse Carrie)
- Watershed framework for assessing cumulative impacts of development (Krista Chin/ Julian Kanigan)
- Water quality monitoring on Mackenzie River (GNWT-ENR)
- Caribou genetics study (Jean Polfus)
- Sahtú wildlife health project (Susan Kutz / Anja Carlsson)
- Dene mapping project and wildlife study (ʔehdzo Got’ı̄n̄ę Gots’ę Nákedı)



The workshop group