

Dene béré belarewílé

Ensuring food security for future generations in Délı̄ne

Dene béré belarewílé is a 5-year program that will work towards the following objectives, as detailed below:

- 1) Food for the Community - Deline Food Map and Calendar
- 2) Safe Places - Great Bear Lake Cabin and Safe Harbour Inventory
- 3) Alternative Harvest Knowledge Transfer
- 4) Growing Food in Deline
- 5) Training Young Harvesters in Deline
- 6) Learning on the land - Supporting transfer of knowledge through on-the-land camps

1) Food for the Community - Deline Food Map and Calendar

To secure food for the community for future generations the knowledge of when and where food sources were traditionally harvested will be important. Interviews and mapping these important locations with Elders, and sharing this map with community members and harvesters will be essential to long-term food security. This work tie in with the Deline Caribou Management Plan and on the land camps (Priority #6) can also be targeted to these locations at different times of year to help foster knowledge transfer and build experience of young harvesters.

2) Safe Places - Great Bear Lake Cabin and Safe Harbour Inventory

Ensuring the safety of community members on the land and knowing where to go or stay if they encounter trouble while travelling on the land was identified as a priority by community members. By creating a map of cabins, noting who owns them and what condition they are in, as well as places on the land where shelter from wind and waves will be vital information to community members. This map will be shared with community members and made available in emergency kits to be distributed by the DRRC. By noting if repairs are necessary will also be important if funding becomes available for improvement in the future.

3) Alternative Harvest Knowledge Transfer

For the Caribou plan to be successful, and for the future of food security in the community, ensuring that community members have the knowledge to properly harvest and respect a variety of animals is critical. Furthermore, community members mentioned muskox, moose and wolves as animals that are becoming more plentiful on the land, and these species will become important part of the food system, and also the traditional economy, of Deline in the future.

Opportunities to bring in harvesters that have experience and knowledge about harvesting these other species and showing these skills to the harvesters of Deline will be the basis of this program. The majority of this program can take place on the land, but there is the opportunity to utilize the Food Processing trailer, obtained in previous years but not yet used, as a classroom on how to properly butcher the meat. This trailer can then play a role in preserving food for storage, and serve as a way to facilitate food being available to trade with the Grey Goose Lodge and other outlets.

4) Growing Food in Deline

Through interviews, growing food was identified as a key way forward for Deline to become more self-sufficient and food secure in the future and decrease their dependence on the expensive store food. Potatoes were a key food source that people wanted to see grown in the community. This initiative would build on success of the existing community garden, but work to grow more capacity, knowledge, and interest in the community around growing food.

5) Training Young Harvesters in Deline

To ensure food security for the future of Deline, young harvesters must be provided with the opportunity to learn skills on the land, and under the guidance of community elders and knowledge holders. Deline Young Harvesters (DYH) Program, has been designed in collaboration with youth in the community to harness not only their skills with technology and social media, but empower and encourage them to become harvesters, trappers, food providers and positive role models in the community.

DYH relies on 5 major components, which are detailed below:

1) Communication

Create a Facebook page dedicated to the DYH Program. As most of the youth communicate through this medium, it is an ideal way to mobilize this demographic. This page will be maintained by the DRRC assistant and will only post relevant information to the DYH members.

2) Mentorship

When individual harvesters come to the DRRC office for gas or other supplies, the individual will be asked if they would be willing to take one member of the DYH along with them. The DYH Program would then pay for the extra supplies and gas needed to allow the Young Harvester (YH) to participate in the trip on the land.

3) Equipment Rental

For this program to be successful, they YH will need access to equipment. This is one of the major barriers to having young people on the land. A pool of community members that have equipment that they will be able to use (boats, skidoos, etc.) will be established. When a mentorship

opportunity arises, the list will be consulted and people will be asked if their equipment can be rented. A standard daily rental fee (TBD) will apply.

4) Certification

Once equipment, supplies and mentor have been established, the YH will be required to photodocument their trip. A camera will be supplied through the DYH Program. Photos of their experiences, as well as evidence of harvest, will be shared with the DYH through the Facebook page. The DYH will also have to fill out a simple form detailing what skills they learned on the trip, what they were able to harvest, and who they share the food with. This will have to be signed by the mentor. Tallies of harvest and all trips will be recorder by the DRRRC Assistant. Once the YH have become proficient in certain skills (confirmed by the mentor) a certificate of achievement will be issues by the DYH Program lead. Other skills, such as basic mechanical skills, firearm safety and others, can be added through volunteer mentors in the community and participants will be eligible for certificates upon completion or competency in agreement with the mentor.

5) Recognition

Recognition will take place on a continual basis through the Facebook page. It is hoped by posting pictured of achievements and details of harvest totals will encourage participation of DYH members to maintain activity in the program. Recognition by community members is also key, ensuring that YH are thanked by Elders for sharing food and supported in their efforts to learn more skills. Finally, a yearly feast will be held (all food provided by YH members), likely in the summer, to celebrate the YH achievements. Awards will be given out for best harvester, trapper etc., and the most successful YH will be given some prize through the program (skidoo, or equipment etc.)

6) Learning on the land - Supporting transfer of knowledge through on-the-land camps

Providing community members experience on the land as families or large groups, was seen as the ideal way to learn skills and reestablish bonds with each other and the land. Funding to support on the land trips will be priorities as part of any project proposals moving forward. It is hoped that funding can pay for fuel, supplies, equipment rental, and if possible honouraria for participants. On the land camps can also tie into other objectives mentioned above (Alternative harvesting, Training youth and others)