

Adapting to Changing Traditional

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation determine ways to adapt to changing traditional food sources

CONTEXT

The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation people of Northern Yukon traditionally enjoyed fairly predictable food sources around Old Crow and Old Crow Flats. Recently however, residents have been experiencing the impacts of a changing climate, especially on food sources. The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation government invited the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research to work with them to address changes to their traditional harvesting and hunting areas, including changes in the distribution and abundance of several traditional food sources.

Photo Credit: Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research



OBJECTIVE

To establish what the Vuntut Gwitchin people can do about the changes and unpredictability of local food sources due to a changing climate.

APPROACH

The first phase of this project involved collaboration between youth, elders, community members and International Polar Year researchers at workshops to learn about environmental changes in the Old Crow area.

The next phase of research focused on learning what food security adaptation strategies the community was already doing, and on what community members could do in the future to address the impacts of climate change. Youth were provided training on interview skills and film editing to communicate these recommendations.

The final phase involved assisting the community in determining how the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation could implement their recommendations to address food security issues.

RESULTS

The project wrapped up in 2010 with the following outcomes:

- Recommendations from the community helped Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation take actions towards increased food security in times of rapid changes to their homelands;
- Old Crow youth were trained in research methods including interviewing and filming skills;
- Youth produced videos of community interviews for public viewing.

Significance

Climate change continues to impact the traditional food sources that Yukoners rely on. This project helped the people of Old Crow and Old Crow Flats adapt to their changing food sources.

Partners

- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation
- Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research
- Health Canada

FOR MORE INFO

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