Traditional Indigenous Knowledge &
The Northumberland Strait Coastal Restoration Project

Atlantex Creative Works

Mountain Rose Herbs

The Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq
We work for a clean climate and clean water, and, to help us get there, we foster, educate and support clean leaders in our communities.
About the Project

Goal:
• Restore 15 hectares of tidal wetlands in the Northumberland Strait of mainland Nova Scotia, Canada
• Community engagement in Mi’kmaw and non-Mi’kmaw communities
• Build community capacity
• Build a body of publicly accessible data for future restoration projects
Generously Funded by

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Pêches et Océans Canada
About the Mi’kmaw Nation

• Mi’kmaw people and ancestors have lived in Mi’kmaki for 11,000 + years

• Based on the land and waters of Mi’kma’ki, the following developed interdependently:
  • Language
  • Culture
  • History
  • Spirituality
  • Knowledge

• Sovereign nation with a complete governance structure
  • Territory is unceded to any other government
  • Mi’kmaw Nation is a nation-to-nation Treaty Holder with the Crown
Tribal Council Partnership & Secondment

• The Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq (CMM) is the Tribal Council for seven communities of mainland Mi’kmaki
  • Mission: “To proactively promote and assist Mi’kmaw communities’ initiatives towards self determination and enhancement of community”

• Benefits of secondment:
  • Work from within the Tribal Council
  • Follow processes set up by the communities, for the communities
  • Work directly with the MCG Advisory Committee
  • Advisors from each community appointed by the member community Chiefs
What is traditional knowledge?

Traditional knowledge…

• Is a specific knowledge set developed and sustained by First Nations and indigenous societies worldwide.
• Carries the history, science and other knowledge of successive generations.
• Is transmitted orally between generations through language, traditional practices, and storytelling.

• As traditional Mi’kmaw knowledge, practices and lifestyle are embedded with the rhythm of the Earth, traditional knowledge accumulated over the generations of a nation over 11,000 years old, can tell us much about the ecological landscape we are working to restore.
L’nui’sultinej: Let us speak Mi’kmaw

- Traditional knowledge is embedded within the structure of the Mi’kmaw language
- Learning the Mi’kmaw language can help understand the Mi’kmaw worldview and provide additional guiding principles
  - Msit no’kmaq = All my relations
Our Traditional Knowledge Study

We are interviewing:
• Elders
• Community Knowledge Keepers
• Traditional fishers, hunters, and trappers

Who can share traditional knowledge about:
• Saltmarsh related food, social and ceremonial species and activities
• Saltmarsh sites of cultural significance
• Traditional or personal stories about saltmarshes and the Northumberland Strait
• Historic extent of saltmarshes
• Land use changes since colonization from industry and development

Call for Knowledge Keepers!
The Northumberland Strait Coastal Restoration Project is gathering knowledge and community input about saltmarshes in efforts to restore 15 hectares of saltmarsh in the Northumberland Strait region of mainland Nova Scotia by 2022.

We are seeking:
• Elders
• Community Knowledge Keepers
• Traditional Fishers

Who can share knowledge and stories about saltmarshes along the Northumberland Strait, including:
• Saltmarsh related food, social and ceremonial species and activities
• Saltmarsh sites of cultural significance
• Traditional or personal stories about saltmarshes and the Northumberland Strait
• Historic extent of saltmarshes

Please RSVP to Alanna Sylliboy if you would like to participate!
Email: asylliboy@cmnns.denr.ca
Phone: 1-877-892-2424

Communities who have agreed to participate:
Pictou Landing | Millbrook | Sipeke’katik | Glooscap | Annapolis Valley | Bear River
Mi’kmaw Ethics Watch

- Study methodology and protocols developed under the guidance of The Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq and enshrined in the project’s Mi’kmaw Ethics Watch application
  - Application submitted to the Mi’kmaw Ethics Watch Committee
    - Committee appointed by the Sante’ Mawio’mi (Grand Council of the Mi’kmaw Nation)

- The Mi’kmaw Ethics Watch Committee’s review and approval guarantees:
  - The right of knowledge ownership compiled in the study rests with Mi’kmaw communities
  - The integrity and cultural knowledge of the Mi’kmaw people is protected
Challenges & Advantages

• Spreading the word
• Working with MCG’s Community Liaison and Communications Specialist
• Working with band office communications staff
• Publishing in Mi’kmaq Maliseet Nations News
• Generating word of mouth in the communities
Interview Best Practices

• Interviews arranged by Community Liaison Officer
  • Can be in Mi’kmaw

• Support for Residential School survivors
  • Shubenacadie Residential School closed in 1967

• Interviewees choose the interview style

• Knowledge holders choose how knowledge, videos, audio recordings and photos are used

• Interviewees can review notes and reports for changes, inaccuracies, omission of sensitive information, and finalization

• Knowledge keepers are paid an honorarium and gifted tobacco

• Archived study remains at CMM only
Comparison with Community Knowledge

• Held five community engagement sessions across the project region
  • Mapping session

• Community Knowledge Surveys made publicly available in print and online
  • Consistency in questions for community and traditional knowledge gathering
Future Applications
Wela’lioq! Thank you! Merci! Tapadh Leat!

Sign up for project updates at: saltmarshes.ca

Follow us on social media! @CleanFoundation