



MIKAI' STO FOUNDATION (Mi'Kai'Sto)



Using Elders in the Educational Institution


Coastal CURA
People and Places Conference
Halifax, Nova Scotia, June 28, 2011

First Nation Forestry Program



Mikai'sto Foundation

Red Crow Community College

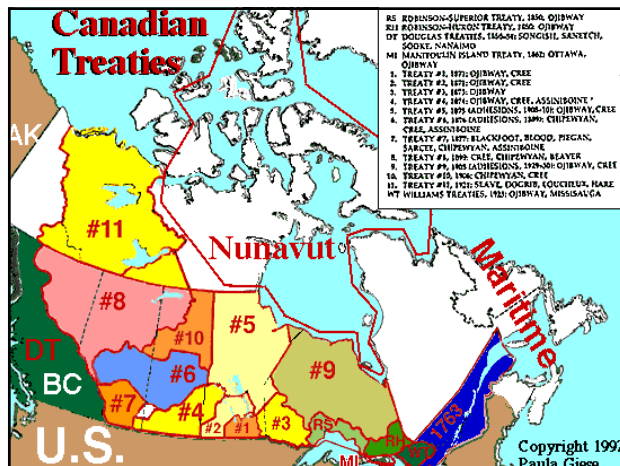


Blood Tribe Employment and Skills Training

Elder's Transfer of Blackfoot Traditional Environmental and Forestry Knowledge to the Youth


Prepared by: Red Crow Community College
Francis First Charger &
Deonne White Quills

Date: June 28, 2011



Location of Red Crow Community College


Red Crow Community College (RCCC) is on the Blood Indian Reserve, which is located approximately 200 kilometers south of Calgary in the southwestern area in the province of Alberta



(Figure 1).
KAINAI First Nation/ Blood Reserve,
Alberta

Blackfoot Territory

- Blackfoot historical territory was as far North as the North Saskatchewan River
- South boundary near the Yellow Stone National Park. New evidence provides that it goes far south as into Wyoming
- East almost close to the Manitoba border
- West boundary was the Rocky Mountains



BLACKFOOT TERRITORY
PRIOR TO 1880

Historical

- Red Crow Community College is a wholly First Nations' community owned and operated educational institution
- It is dedicated to providing adult and post-secondary opportunities for First Nations' students
- Located on the Blood Reserve
- Operates out of an old residential school built in 1925
- Present enrollment is 300 students

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Red Crow Community College

Original site



*Blood Indian School, 1925
(Glenbow Museum)*

current site



*Current Red Crow
Community College*

St. Mary's Residential School became Red Crow
Community College (RCCC)

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**Southeast View looking towards
Ceremonial Room**
Red Crow College Learner's Resource Centre



Aerial View
Red Crow College Learner's Resource Center



Traditional Forestry, Environment, & Cultural Component Design for BTEST

Blood Tribe Employment and Skills Training (BTEST) have asked Red Crow Community College (RCCC) to coordinate, and facilitate a cultural environmental and Forestry component as part of their Youth Work Experience Program. The Course Commenced September 13, 2010 and concluded on September 24, 2010. Red Crow Community College provided the facilitator along with other academic and eminent scholars and/or resource people to be called in to provide support and to pass on their Cultural, Traditional and Educational knowledge on the forestry and environment to the participants. Environment makes reference to: the surroundings, setting, situation, atmosphere, milieu, location background, upbringing, natural world, nature, ecosystem, natural environment. The course will take the participants to sites that are part of our oral history. The class presentations and lectures will provide knowledge of the origin of song and dance, from the animals and environment. How our cultural and spiritual ways are part of parenting in raising our children to respect all creation including plants, animals, people and the land we live on. Forestry use and access has been a historical part of the Blackfoot cultural way of life, using the herbal and wood gathering for our use. It is not new to our people this is where they get their supplies for shelter, food and medicine. This course will provide the special knowledge to our youth, it will also provide general knowledge of the spiritual material gathered at the mountain forestry. This course will also provide other historic forestry management practice of our ancestor.

Red Crow Community College

General Belief

At RCCC, our Academic VP Roy Weasel Fat strongly believes that our students or youth should have a good understanding and knowledge about our Blackfoot cultural ways and oral history before they go to another culture which is off the reserve. The support is there of the same thinking by others at Red Crow Community College.

We do not try to idealize or romanticize our ways but to provide and appreciation of our ways. One is expected to respect and understand the stories as how they connect with the sites in our oral history handed down from generation to generation. We are finally once again going back to our own people for those stories which are part of our lives. One cannot help but feel for the story tellers as they tell these stories and provide the knowledge about plants, animals, sites and in general about the environment.

The RCCC elder's advisory group are very supportive of RCCC to encourage these cultural sessions. The spirits of our ancestors who roam the vast Blackfoot territory are once again being provided through the visits to the various sites by the eminent scholar sessions. The ones who are present for these stories and listen to our scholars soon realize our home land is not just within the boundaries of the reserve.



Prayer And Encouragement

As is our way, we started this portion of the Youth work experience program with an offer of prayer from the participants and words of encouragement from our elder Pete Standing Alone.



Herbal Identification & Gathering



Alvin Many Chief providing a herbal class session, using a reference book



Beattie explains how and where he got his knowledge



Alvin Explain how to identify a shrub and its use



Alvin Many Chiefs talks about plant that can be use an ointment



Alvin tells a many stories about the Reserve timber limits



A student identifies plant

Herbal Identification & Gathering



Alvin showing students how to start a fire without matches



Student trying to start a fire with out matches



Students put together a temporary shelter



Alvin Many Chiefs talks about keeping the camp clean



A Group picture of the participants with Alvin Many Chief after of instructing survival and plant & herb identification with Chief Mountain in the background



Our Traditional Sites & Connection to the Land – Napi's Rock



Frank tells the students the story of Napi and the Rock



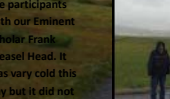
Students are eager to explore the great Rock



Students viewing pictographs drawn with asaan



Participants took a moment walk around Napi's Rock to see every aspect of this ancient being.



A Group picture of the participants with our Eminent Scholar Frank Weasel Head. It was very cold this day but it did not dampen there enthusiasm to explore.



Our Traditional Sites & Connection to the Land – Akii Piskaan



Frank shares the story of Akii Piskaan and life lessons



Front view of the Buffalo Jump



A carving of the butterfly into a cavern. This demonstrates the importance of this land to our ancestors.



Participants thank Frank for sharing his stories

The Students Braved the elements and made the most out of there visit to the women's buffalo jump. They were still all smiles at the end of the day



Kipaitapiiysinnoon & Niitsi'powahsin



Students are captivated by Duane's Lecture on our Blackfoot ways and origins of language.

Students thank Duane Mistaken Chief for an informative and entertaining lecture.



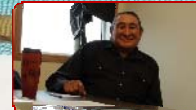
Days not long ago, stories of traditional practices in present society



Wilton also shared traditional practices of the Blood Tribe Police, the original role of intervention.



Wilton shared stories of History of our people & our relationships to the crown.



Wilton Good Sunn encouraged participants to visit him if they have questions or seek knowledge of our traditional ways.

Oral History, Our stories, Our People



Peter Wensel Moccasin, sharing stories of Katoya, A Blackfoot Role Model and super hero.

Peter also shared stories of his personal life, as inspiration that youth of today are our elders of the future.



Spiritual practices – Vision quest & pipe making hill, Old Sundance camp



Francis First Charger reinforces the importance of the site and its historical use.

Bruce Wolf Child shows the participants an old Sundance camp



Traditional Family Life



Agnes First Charger Shares her family pictures with the class



Students thank Agnes for sharing her personal life and experience with us

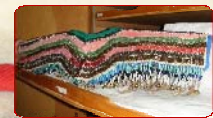


Agnes also shared the dynamics of traditional roles of the family.

Origins of Song and Dance



Breast plates – Glenbow archives. Possibly used for dance



Above: Traditional cape used by women's traditional dancers
Below: traditional Blackfoot Moccasins
Source Glenbow Archives

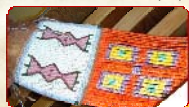
Joe Spotted bull shared his Gift of Song and Knowledge of Dance.



The preservation of our History



Frank talks about the cooperation of the Glenbow museum with the Blood people.



A pipe bag with quill work, housed in the Glenbow Archives



A group of students and Frank looking at a display of the Glenbow. The students know the representation to Gerald Conaty



Students take a moment from the Blackfoot display to ask questions of Frank

Thank you to all who made this project possible and a success.

First Nation Forestry Program
Mikai'sto Foundation
Blood Tribe Employment and Skills Training
Red Crow Community College
Blood Tribe Recreation

Blood Tribe Eminent
Scholars and Resource
People who shared their
knowledge and gifts with
the participants.



Francis First Charger,
Mikai'sto Foundation
Lecturing on Blackfoot
ways of life, including does
and don'ts. Wrap up
session.



Levi Little Mustache, PTF & Eugene
Patterson, PTF
Join us for the final wrap up day.



Deonne White Quills displays info booth for Mikai'sto &
PTF @ LCC aboriginal awareness & Blood Tribe
Community Conference.

Resource People	First Nation People	Non - FN	Total No.
Total Hours	3,074	40	3,114
Total Person Wks	82	1	83

Resource People Used on the Project:

- The bulk of the program coordination to the various sites was provided by Francis First Charger, Levi Little Mustache and Deonne White Quills;
- RCCC utilizing nine elders
- Two professional resource people; From the Glenbow Museum, Gerald Conaty and
- People from Lethbridge College who let us use their facility for the last day's lecture and overall support.
- A total of 27 resource people were used from various organizations.

Presenter:

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Mikai'sto Foundation

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Thank you