

The Dehcho Community Based Water Quality Monitoring Program

The Dehcho “Aboriginal Aquatic Resources and Ocean Mgmt.” (AAROM) program has an agreement with GNWT, Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) under the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy to be involved in their Community Based Water Monitoring program. Dehcho AAROM works with our member First Nations in eight communities to deploy, maintain and retrieve water quality and contaminant monitoring equipment. First Nations involved in the project presently are Pehdzeh Ki, Liidlii Kue, Jean Marie River, Nahanni Butte, Deh Gah Gotie, Katlodeeche, Sambaa K’e and Ka’a’gee Tu. Study locations and sampling are based on addressing community concerns. Monitoring stations are located on the Mackenzie River near Fort Providence, Fort Simpson and Wrigley as well as in Trout Lake, Kakisa Lake and the Liard, South Nahanni and Hay rivers. Sondes continually measure Temperature, pH, Dissolved Oxygen, Conductivity, Turbidity, Ox/redox potential and Chlorophyll during the open water season. PMD’s measure dissolved hydrocarbons and DGT’s measure dissolved metals. In addition water grab samples, analyzed by Taiga Labs in Yellowknife, measure 70 substances.

Dehcho AAROM is a natural partner for this long-term baseline study since we already contract our First Nations to hire boat patrol monitors who observe activities on their waters and recording fishing activity, wildlife sightings, as well as being involved in other Dehcho AAROM studies. This agreement has greatly strengthened our Aquatic Monitoring Program; it provides state of the art equipment as well as providing scientific analysis and recording of the collected data. Training is provided by ENR as well as on the job training by our Technical Advisor, Mike Low.

Results for the previous year are reported back to the communities each year.

George Low

Dehcho AAROM Coordinator

