

Sandy Creek Ecology Camp 2012



Students



Axell Bouvier
Age:14
Fort Providence



Nathaniel Minoza
Age:15
Fort Providence



William Alger
Age:14
Fort Simpson **Keagan Nadli**
Age:15
Fort Providence



Kody Hardisty
Age:14
Jean Marie River



Nathaniel Tsetso
Age:12
Morgan Elleze **Fort Simpson**
Age:14
Fort Providence



Students



Michelle Lafferty
Age:13
Fort Simpson



Natasha Nadli
Age:15
Fort Providence



Rochelle Yendo
Age:13
Wrigley



Sky Lennie
Age:12
Fort Simpson



Sasha Squirrel
Age:15
Fort Providence

Staff



Sharon Pekok
Supervisor
KFN



Bruce Townsend
Instructor
AAROM



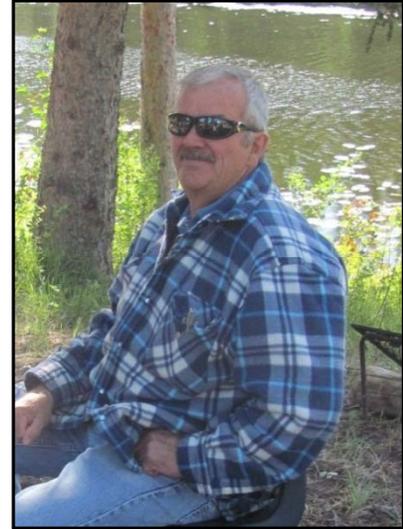
Clara Lafferty
Elder
KFN



Fred Tambour
Elder
KFN



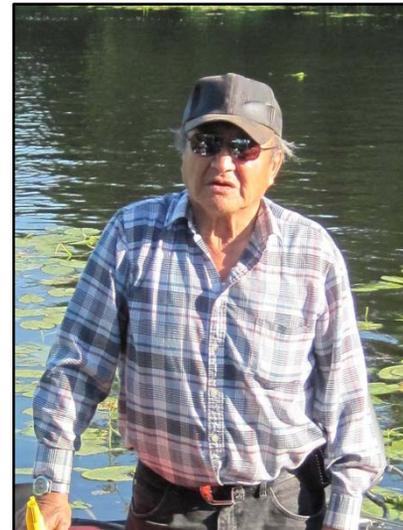
Ron Antoine
Instructor
ENR



George Low
Instructor
AAROM



Alexa Tsetso
Instructor
Recreation



Pat Martel
Elder
KFN

Staff



Cathy McArthur
Assistant Cook
KFN



Violet Fabian
Cook
KFN



James Hatch
Teacher
Fort Providence



Michelle Lafleur
Instructor
KFN



Stephanie Yuill
Instructor
ENR



Georgina Fabian
Instructor
KFN

Mike Low
Instructor
AAROM



Sandy Creek Area and the Camp



After the students unloaded their gear and met everyone, they were given an orientation of the camp, provided with the camp rules, and assigned their accommodations. Students went for a supervised swim afterwards.



Start of Sandy Creek road to camp.

Sandy Creek cooking area and gathering place.



Fire and Water feeding ceremony

Chief Roy Fabian and Councilor Robert Lamalice welcomed the youth to the camp, they explained and showed the youth how to do a Fire Feeding ceremony and a Blessing of Water ceremony. The importance of paying respect to the land was explained to the youth, a practice that is still used to this day by traditional harvesters.

Chief Roy Fabian warming up his drum to sing a prayer song.



Youth gathered in a circle waiting for Roy to start the prayer song.

Hay River Swimming Pool

Staff and students went to Hay River to go to the swimming pool to learn how to snorkel. The weather wasn't ideal for outside activities so it was decided to go to the swimming pool earlier than planned. The kids thorough enjoyed going to the pool.



Students enjoying the Hay River Pool.



Students practicing snorkeling at the Hay River Pool.



Bear Safety

Ron Antoine, a Renewable Resource Officer with Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) taught the students about bear safety. He taught the students how to properly store food while out on the land away from sleeping quarters, and many other helpful bear safety tips were reviewed. Many different types of bear deterrents were shown to the youth and Ron showed photos of camps near Hay River that had bear problems in the past.



Ron explaining to the students how to lessen bear problems out on the land by keeping a clean camp, storing food separately from sleeping area etc.

Ron explaining to the students the different bear deterrents that are available to ENR officers.



Water Ecology

During the course of the camp, Bruce taught modules on water ecology to the students. Freshwater zooplankton, the water cycle, dissecting fish, contaminants, biomagnification and food web dynamics were some of topics taught to the students. Students went out on field trips and used scientific equipment to do experiments. The zooplankton were viewed under a microscope by the students.

Mike taught fish biology and anatomy to the youth while Clara demonstrated how to prepare fish for cooking.



Bruce taught the students how to use the Secchi disk to tell how transparent the water is.



George demonstrating to the youth how to use a Secchi disk.



Students learned how water food-web dynamics worked.



Students used marshmallows to build molecules.

Water Ecology



Bruce getting a specimen ready to look under the microscope.



Students using a Plankton Net in the creek to catch aquatic life.



Students trying to catch small fish using the Seine Net.



Keying out what insects were caught in the Plankton Net.



A student looking at the different microorganisms caught with the Plankton Net.



A student looking at a specimen under a microscope.

Water, Boat and Canoe Safety

Bruce, George, Mike, Michelle and Alexa taught the students water, boat and canoe safety. The students learned the importance of wearing a lifejacket while in a boat and to have supplies onboard like a paddle, fire extinguisher, throwbag and a bailer. All activities were taught and practiced on dry land. The students took turns rescuing each another with canoes. It was quite a popular event for the students who wholeheartedly participated in the exercise.



Students practicing paddling in a canoe.



Mike taking the youth to set a fish net.



Students coming back from checking the fish net.



Students going back to camp.

Water, Boat, Canoe Safety

All staff and students had to wear life jackets during trips on the lake and creek and students had to be supervised while doing water ecology activities on the lake. Each student was fitted with a lifejacket according to their weight and size. The weather was great for the majority of the camp, all water related activities were the highlights for a lot of students.



Students going for a boat ride to False Point with elder Pat Martel.



George supervising the youth driving the boat.



Students returning from their trip on Great Slave Lake.



George setting a Gill net to catch small fish with the youth.

Traditional Knowledge

Traditional knowledge was taught by Clara, Fred, Georgina, Pat, Roy and Robert. Clara and Fred showed the students how to prepare fish for cooking. Fred, Roy, Robert, and Pat told traditional stories and shared some of the history of the area with the students. The instructors taught the students how to feed the fire and water. The students found it quite interesting and participated every step of the way.



Whitefish getting cooked on open fire.



Fred preparing a fish he caught in a net.



Students demonstrating how to play dene hand games.



Clara showing the youth some of her beadwork.

Medicinal Plant Identification

Elder Georgina Fabian taught how to identify medicinal plants of the boreal forest during a hike near Sandy Creek. Georgina showed the students medicinal plants that were used to cure ailments before hospitals were in the north. The students picked spruce gum, rosehips and high bush cranberries that are used in traditional medicines. The students found it quite interesting and eagerly participated in looking for medicinal plants.



Georgina helping a student collect spruce gum.



Georgina showing the students some important medicinal plants.



Students listening to Georgina explain the importance of medicinal plants to the Dene.



Species At Risk

Stephanie Yuill taught the youth Species at Risk and Bat ecology in the NWT. The students enjoyed the practical exercises and participated wholeheartedly.



Stephanie taught the youth about bats in the NWT, got them to put baby powder on their nose to demonstrate White-nose syndrome that is greatly affecting North American bat populations.

Signal Fire

Students gathered firewood with instructors and made a signal fire on the southern shore of Great Slave Lake. The students helped gather firewood and sat around the fire listening to stories from the elders.



Sharon and Clara sitting by the fire.



Fire burning on shoreline.



Students drying off by the fire.



James helping the gather firewood.

Recreational Activities

During their spare time students spent time swimming, listening and socializing. They were supervised during swimming and other water activities. Evening activities included elder story telling, card games, and snacks. There were residents that regularly came during the camp to visit. The students thoroughly enjoyed their free time and got to know each other quite well.



Students sat around the fire during breaks and evenings.



Students getting ready to go swimming.



Students going for a supervised swim in Great Slave Lake.

Sandy Creek Ecology camp

This year there was a community feast to end the camp. The elders, supervisors and facilitators played an key role in the ecology camp's success as did the group of students from throughout the Dehcho. All students wholeheartedly participated in and became involved with all of the different experiences provided to them during the camp. The students thoroughly enjoyed themselves at the 2012 camp and made friendships that will last a lifetime.



Sunset on shoreline of
Great Slave Lake.



Sandy Creek.



Mouth of Sandy Creek.



Sandy Creek cabins.



During the last regional wildlife workshop held in October 2010, there was consensus that the youth ecology camp should continue to be held at different locations throughout the Dehcho Region. The 2003 and 2004 camps had been held at the Trout Lake Fire Base. By holding the camp in different locations this would allow different communities the opportunity of hosting and conducting the youth ecology camp as well as providing the chance for participants to experience different areas of the Dehcho. A joint DFN/ENR committee reviews the proposals and awards the camp. The 2005 camp was held near Jean Marie River and hosted by Land is Life. The 2006 camp was held near Hay River Reserve and was hosted by the Katlodeeche First Nation. The 2007 and 2009 camps was held at Cli Lake west of Fort Simpson and were hosted by North Nahanni Naturalist Lodge Ltd. The 2008 camp was held at Paradise creek near Trout Lake and was hosted by the Sambia K'e Development Corporation. The 2010 camp was held at Ekali Lake and hosted by the Jean Marie River First Nation. The 2011 camp was held at Rabbitkettle Lake and hosted by Nahanni Butte Dene Band/ Parks Canada. This year's camp was held near Hay River Reserve and was hosted by the Katlodeechee First Nation. We would like to thank AAROM and Species at Risk for providing additional funding and expertise for the camp this year, without their help we would have been unable to hold a camp this year.

Previous camps taught a variety of traditional and scientific skills. This year's camp had a great mixture of both. Students learned a lot of new tools which should help them in future endeavours. Once again we appreciate all the work the instructors and elders did this year to ensure a most memorable experience for all those who attended.