
SUMMARY REPORT

FIRE WITH FIRE

MULTI-PARTNER KNOWLEDGE CONVENING

SEPTEMBER 25-27, 2019, EDMONTON



FIRE WITH FIRE

Multi-Partner Knowledge Convening

SEPTEMBER 25-27TH, 2019

DESCRIPTION

This multi-day knowledge sharing gathering brought together Fire with Fire project partners and subject experts to share lessons learned and plan upcoming activities.

Day 1 focused on building a shared understanding of context through community presentations and facilitated discussion of capacity needs to mobilize Indigenous knowledge of fire. Day 2 involved working sessions to connect community capacity needs to Fire with Fire project activities. Day 3 focused on Fire with Fire project implementation (e.g., next steps, timelines).

This gathering was an opportunity for project partners to build a shared understanding of:

- alignment between Fire with Fire project objectives and participating Indigenous communities' interests, capacity needs, and desired outcomes; and,
- capacity building priorities (participatory video training, biocultural monitoring) for mobilizing Indigenous knowledge of fire.

The three days were designed to contribute to the development of an approach to build community capacity and expertise for mobilizing Indigenous knowledge of fire through the Fire with Fire project.



Fire with Fire Project Convening

SEPTEMBER 25-27TH, 2019

ALFRED H. SAVAGE CENTRE, 13909 FOX DRIVE, EDMONTON

WEDNESDAY September 25, 2019		
8:00 AM Doors Open - Light breakfast available		
8:30 AM – 9:15 AM	Opening Ceremony and Protocol	Ira Provost
9:15 AM – 9:30 AM	Welcome, Opening Remarks and Overview	Elliot Fox, The Rockies Institute Krista Tremblett, Co-Facilitator
9:30 AM – 10:30 AM	Introductions	Vanessa de Koninck, Co-facilitator
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	BREAK	
10:45 AM – 11:00 AM	ICCON and Fire with Fire Overview <i>Purpose, timeline and desired outcomes</i>	Gleb Raygorodetsky, Alberta Environment & Parks
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	2018-2019 Pilot project <i>Pilot Video Screening and knowledge sharing</i>	Diandra (DJ) Bruised Head & Alvin First Rider, Kainai First Nation Michelle Louis, Samson Cree Nation
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	LUNCH & Video: Burning Off	
1:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Community Context <i>How are communities documenting Indigenous knowledge of environmental change on their traditional territories? Impacts of those changes on people's lives?</i> <i>How is documented Indigenous knowledge being stored? For what purposes is it being recorded and used?</i> <i>What skills, capacity, and resources do communities have now, and what do they still need to develop, to enable this work?</i> <i>How might video support documenting and sharing Indigenous knowledge of environmental change across traditional territories?</i>	Dene Tha' First Nation Samson Cree Nation Kainai First Nation Piikani First Nation
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Day 1 Wrap Up & Day 2 Plans	Krista Tremblett & Vanessa de Koninck, Co-facilitators
5:00 PM DINNER		

THURSDAY September 26, 2019

8:00 AM Doors Open - Light breakfast available

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Opening and Welcome	
9:00 AM – 9:15 AM	Day 1 Summary & Overview Day 2	Krista Tremblett & Vanessa de Koninck, Co-Facilitators Sam Hester, Graphic Recorder
9:15 AM – 9:30 AM	Video: Shackan Indian Band – Cultural Burn (2019)	Krista Tremblett, Co-Facilitator
9:30 AM – 10:00 AM	Focused Conversation – Capacity Building	Krista Tremblett, Co-Facilitator
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM	Cultural Burning in the Australian Context	Dr. Aaron Petty
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM	BREAK	
10:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Facilitated Dialogue – Fire & Climate Change	Vanessa de Koninck, Co-Facilitator
12:00 PM – 12:30 PM	LUNCH & Video: Fires of Spring	
12:30 PM – 2:00 PM	Facilitated Discussion - Tools to support Indigenous Knowledge Mobilization	Christopher White, Promethean Heritage & Cultural Services
2:00 PM – 2:15 PM	BREAK	
2:15 PM – 4:30 PM	Facilitated Dialogue <i>Theme 1: Project Delivery</i> <i>Theme 2: Networking & Leveraging</i> <i>Theme 3: “In a good way”</i>	Krista Tremblett & Vanessa de Koninck, Co-Facilitators
4:30 PM – 5:00 PM	Day 2 Wrap Up & Day 3 Plans	Krista Tremblett & Vanessa de Koninck, Co-Facilitators Sam Hester, Graphic Recorder
5:30 PM DINNER and Guest Presenter (David Andison, fRI Research)		

FRIDAY September 27, 2019

8:00 AM Doors Open - Light breakfast available

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Opening and Welcome	
9:00 AM – 9:15 AM	Day 2 Summary	Krista Tremblett & Vanessa de Koninck, Co-Facilitators
9:15 AM – 10:15 AM	Project Implementation and Next Steps	Krista Tremblett & Vanessa de Koninck, Co-Facilitators
10:15 AM – 11:00 AM	Day 3 Wrap up and Reflections	Krista Tremblett & Vanessa de Koninck, Co-Facilitators
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Closing Prayer and Pipe Ceremony	Elder Josephine Buffalo
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	LUNCH & Depart	
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM	Project team - Next Steps and Action Items	TRI, AEP, PCC, Promethean Heritage & Cultural Services

WELCOME, OPENING REMARKS AND OVERVIEW

FOCUS OF FIRE WITH FIRE PROJECT CONVENING

This multi-day knowledge sharing convening brought together Fire with Fire project partners and subject experts to share lessons learned and plan upcoming project activities. It was designed to contribute to the development of an approach to build community capacity and expertise for mobilizing Indigenous knowledge of fire through the Fire with Fire project.

OBJECTIVES OF FIRE WITH FIRE PROJECT CONVENING

Build a shared understanding of alignment between Fire with Fire project and partner interests, needs, and desired outcomes:

- Identify capacity building priorities (e.g., participatory video training, biocultural monitoring) for mobilizing Indigenous knowledge of fire.
- Inform the process to design and deliver project activities.
- Document the dialogue, learnings and next steps for use by partners in advancing the work.

By the end of the 2.5 days the goal was to have enough clarity on the what, why and how of the project. The aim was to build a collective understanding, identify capacity building priorities, and to inform into a co-created design process.



WHAT QUESTION DO YOU NEED ANSWERED IN THE NEXT 3 DAYS?

At the beginning of Day 1, participants were invited to express the questions they need answered over the course of the workshop. This occurred through a facilitated discussion in the morning, and participants added questions throughout the first day.

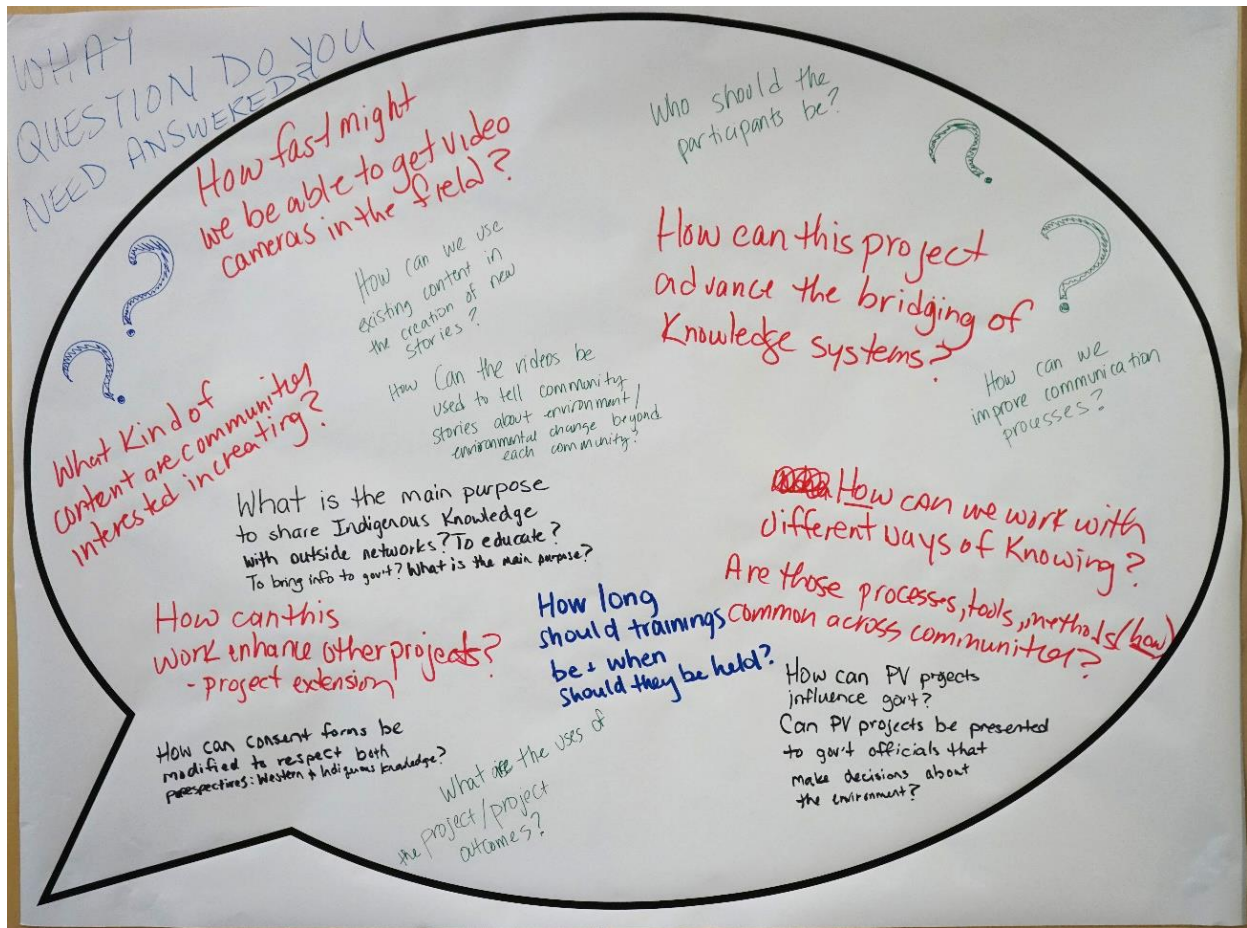


Figure 2. Workshop participants were asked: what question do you need answered over the next 3 days?

ICCON AND FIRE WITH FIRE OVERVIEW

To provide context for the upcoming discussion, Gleb Raygorodetsky, Alberta Environment and Parks, Indigenous Knowledge, Community Monitoring & Citizen Science Branch provided an overview of the Indigenous Climate Change Observation Network (ICCON) and Fire with Fire project and the goals of the project.

The Indigenous Climate Change Observation Network (ICCON) began in 2016 when the idea of an Indigenous Wisdom-Led Network of Climate Variability was presented to the Government of Alberta's Indigenous Wisdom Advisory Panel. Throughout 2018-2019 a Participatory Video Pilot Project was delivered with Kainai First Nation and Samson Cree Nation. The Fire with Fire project is one delivery mechanism to advance ICCON over the next 2 years. Implementation of the Fire with Fire project will occur through both training and knowledge gathering activities.

The long-term goal of ICCON is to support shared stewardship of Alberta's resources by enabling Alberta's Indigenous knowledge holders and scientists to coproduce the best available knowledge of climate change. The short-term objective is to develop and implement culturally appropriate practices and tools that help Indigenous peoples mobilize, interpret, and apply Indigenous knowledge to enhance their communities' climate change resilience. This knowledge gathering was the first time all project partners were brought together to develop a shared understanding and move towards getting boots on the ground and delivering training.

The project is working towards a true partnership between different experts and knowledge systems, working together collaboratively, to enhance climate change resilience. Fire with Fire will create the space for dialogue and enable knowledge coproduction. The project is not about validating Indigenous knowledge with western science, but instead placing it on the same level as western science in a dialogue between complimentary knowledge systems. Throughout this process the project is working to find ways to align the Fire with Fire project with what Indigenous communities are aspiring to do in their own community-led work.

Indigenous worldviews provide a narrative of stewardship and caring. Indigenous peoples have an intimate relationship with the environment, a holistic understanding of the world. This project will work with the people on the landscape.



BUILDING Capacity
IN COMMUNITIES
ADAPTING TO
CLIMATE CHANGE



USING VIDEO
TO DOCUMENT
& MOBILIZE
INDIGENOUS
KNOWLEDGE

2018-2019 PILOT PROJECT

Participants from the 2018-2019 Participatory Video Pilot Project shared their perspectives and suggestions for improving future training. Participatory videos created by both Kainai First Nation and Samson Cree Nation as part of the pilot project were also shared. The participants shared their perspectives on four questions, which are summarized below:



Why were you interested in being involved in last year's project?

Overall, participants were interested in the potential of video as a monitoring tool to document the changes they have seen over the years. Participants were additionally excited to learn the skills for making a video and in telling their story from their perspective.

What was one thing about the project that surprised you?

Participants were surprised by how effective participatory video is as a tool to capture what is really going on in a community and how accessible the equipment was to make the videos. It was identified that more time was needed to bring everyone together to complete the project, including the editing phase. Participants also expressed they wished that the coding and editing components had been taught to all members of the group, instead of a select few.

What are you doing with the skills you learned?

Overall, the majority of participants are using their new skills to conduct interviews and create videos. There was widespread interest in continuing to use these tools for monitoring and education.

What would you like to see happen with the next training?

Participants identified the need for a more narrow focus moving forward as climate change was a broad topic to tackle, and that training should be more in depth but more spread out as the current format was too compressed. The need for better communication with the project trainers and facilitators was highlighted, and it was advised that consent needs to be further discussed at the beginning of the project.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

To build a shared understanding of community interests and needs, each of the four participating communities offered remarks on their community's context.

Participants from Dene Tha' First Nation, Samson Cree Nation, Piikani First Nation and Kainai First Nation highlighted:

- *How their community is documenting Indigenous knowledge of environmental change on their community's traditional territories and the impacts of those changes on people's lives.*
- *How documented Indigenous knowledge is being stored and for what purposes is it being recorded and used.*
- *The skills, capacity, and resources their community has now, and what their community still needs to develop, to enable this work.*
- *How might video support documenting and sharing Indigenous knowledge of environmental change across traditional territories.*

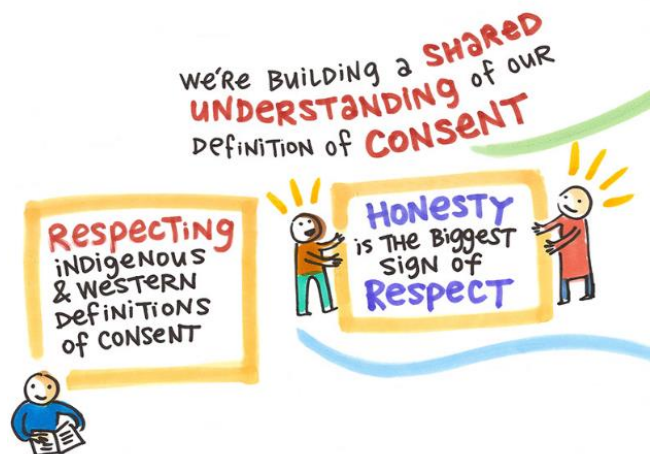


The four participating First Nations are involved in a multitude of projects both community-led and through partnerships. Many of these communities are documenting Indigenous knowledge, and some communities have developed advanced data management systems. The First Nations were all interested in the use of video to document and share Indigenous knowledge and there was great interest in developing tools and building the capacity necessary to participate in this project.

DAY 1 WRAP UP

Day 1 concluded with a conversation around ethics and consent, followed by a discussion around storytelling and purpose.

It was acknowledged that there are a variety of issues from a data sharing perspective, both within and outside a community and finding solutions will likely require an ongoing consenting process. Participants highlighted that participatory video can be used for community engagement or monitoring, depending on the priority of the community. As well, it is important to maintain the integrity of the stories being captured through the interviews, including maintaining language and asking culturally important questions.



OVERVIEW DAY 2

The objective of Day 1 was to build common understanding of the context of the Fire with Fire project and community needs, desired outcomes and current activities. Day 2 focused on design and delivery: project delivery, networking and leveraging, and doing things “in a good way”. At the end of the workshop, the goal was to have enough clarity to move forward with project design and deliver the training.

Three questions guided Day 2:

- *WHY we are undertaking this work (purpose and whether it is different across communities)? What stories are worth telling? What is the purpose of sharing Indigenous knowledge with outside networks?*
- *WHAT is being pursued and where are the sticking points (i.e. ethics, coding and editing)?*
- *HOW will activities be implemented? How long will training be? Can we use existing content to tell new stories?*



The morning of Day 2 was spent providing context for the Fire with Fire project through a series of videos and presentations.



VIDEO – SHACKAN INDIAN BAND – CULTURAL BURN (2019)

This video is one of two produced as part of the [Indigenous cultural burning storytelling and practices project](#), a companion initiative to the "[Revitalizing traditional burning: Integrating Indigenous cultural values into wildfire management and climate change adaptation planning](#)" project. The project



facilitated an opportunity for the First Nations' Emergency Services Society (FNESS) Forest Fuel Management Department to conduct spring cultural burns alongside the Shackan Indian Band in collaboration with BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) in March 2019. The video features interviews with representatives from FNESS and Shackan Indian Band about the importance of cultural burning revitalization. The video and project information is available online: <https://fness.bc.ca/core-programs/forest-fuel-management/first-nations-adapt-program>.

CULTURAL BURNING IN THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT – DR. AARON PETTY

Dr. Aaron Petty is an ecologist with an interest in land use and land cover change. Aaron's presentation focused on the effects of changing fire regimes in Kakadu National Park, Australia, and he began by explaining the fundamental importance of Indigenous burning to fire regimes in the region.

In the contemporary setting, western fire management regimes in the park are informed by a social perspective of fire as a threat that needs to be managed and controlled, but there is still an attempt to achieve this through a replication of the effects of Aboriginal burning (understood to mean exclusively early Dry season fires). These efforts to reproduce Aboriginal burning as a technique rather than a culturally and socially embedded system have led to 'debatable' ecological success, with Kakadu showing evidence of vegetation and mammalian decline, and dissatisfaction with levels of fire in the park on the part of Aboriginal Traditional Owners as well as other park stakeholders.

A key lesson brought out during the discussion was to consider how this helps to demonstrate the importance of forming partnerships, so that land management can be put back in the hands of the people on the land rather than trying to learn practices done by Indigenous people and mechanizing it for implementation by others.



VIDEO – FIRES OF SPRING (1978)

This documentary was made in 1978 by Henry T. Lewis, who conducted research on Indigenous fire ecology in North America, Asia, and Australia over the course of his life. Filmed in northern Alberta, the film brings together interviews with Indigenous people and footage of the landscape and traditional burning practices to present some of the ways that controlled burning has been used in the region as a tool for land and resource management. The video shown was an edited

version of the documentary with an emphasis on the voices and wisdom of the Elders interviewed. This edited version is available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XX0rhYqkC4Q>.



FIRE AND CLIMATE CHANGE – FACILITATED DIALOGUE

Following the videos and presentation in the morning, the conversation shifted to fire and climate change. Participants reflected on three questions related to these topics:

- How should the theme of fire be framed in the project?
- How can this project support larger work within your community related to fire and/or climate change?
- How can project activities provide learning opportunities related to fire and climate change?

The discussion focused on the human component of fire, that fire is a tool to be used on the landscape. It was mentioned that each community will have a different relationship with fire.

When discussing the project, the themes of renewal, cleansing and survival all emerged as important, as did the participants' relationship to climate change and adaptation. There was also a focus on relearning fire activities and practices that were done in the past.



TOOLS TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION – FACILITATED DISCUSSION

Christopher White, Promethean Heritage & Cultural Services led a discussion around tools to support Indigenous knowledge mobilization.

Participants were asked to envision some possible outcomes of the Fire with Fire Participatory Video project (examples provided by Christopher included creating more data for community databases, fostering understanding about cultural practices, and connecting youth and Elders).

Ideas shared during the group discussion included: starting conversations again around cultural fire practices, sharing knowledge between Elders and the younger generation, and creating visual tools to guide the story around fire and cultural burning. The option of creating digital stories was also highlighted.

The group spent some time discussing recording equipment options, including the previous experience of participants with iPads, standard cameras and audio recorders during the Participatory Video Pilot. While a standard camera generally produced the highest quality film, it was mentioned that the big camera invoked feelings of having their stories taken from them. The previous participants preferred the use of iPads when filming as they were easy to use and did not come across as intrusive to those being interviewed. Audio recorders were additionally mentioned as a good option if the interviewee did not want to be filmed.

Finally, there was a discussion about tools and software to support video editing and production. While no specific software was decided on, it was agreed that it would be important during the editing stage for each community to have access to a translator.

CHOOSING TOOLS
THAT COMMUNITY
MEMBERS FEEL
COMFORTABLE
WITH



PROJECT DELIVERY – FACILITATED DIALOGUE

This session began with a review of the Fire with Fire timeline and some of the overall details and goals of the project. This led to a big picture discussion about the role of the participatory video training in connection with larger efforts, and some of the larger outcomes the Fire with Fire project is contributing towards. Highlights from this discussion include:

- Workshop attendees stated that an overarching goal of the project would be for cultural burning to be brought back into practice legally in Alberta. However, it was identified that multiple steps need to be taken to reach this point. A funded and sustainable participatory project in each community could be a first step.
- With the recent Canadian wildfire activity, more of the western scientific world is coming to the same conclusions Indigenous peoples have been saying – that prescribed burning is needed and leads to higher biodiversity. Western science is catching up to Indigenous knowledge on fire management but work still needs to be done to change the perspective that fire is a disturbance instead of a regenerative tool for renewal.

The discussion then turned more specifically to the participatory video training, the videos, and the focus on fire:

- Language and culture is being lost around the world faster than we are losing biodiversity. There was emphasis on re-learning practices from the past and regaining that culture. This needs to be prioritized before moving towards more knowledge braiding.
- Participants identified the need to document the process of making the videos and noted that different videos may need to be made for different audiences (from community members to decision makers).



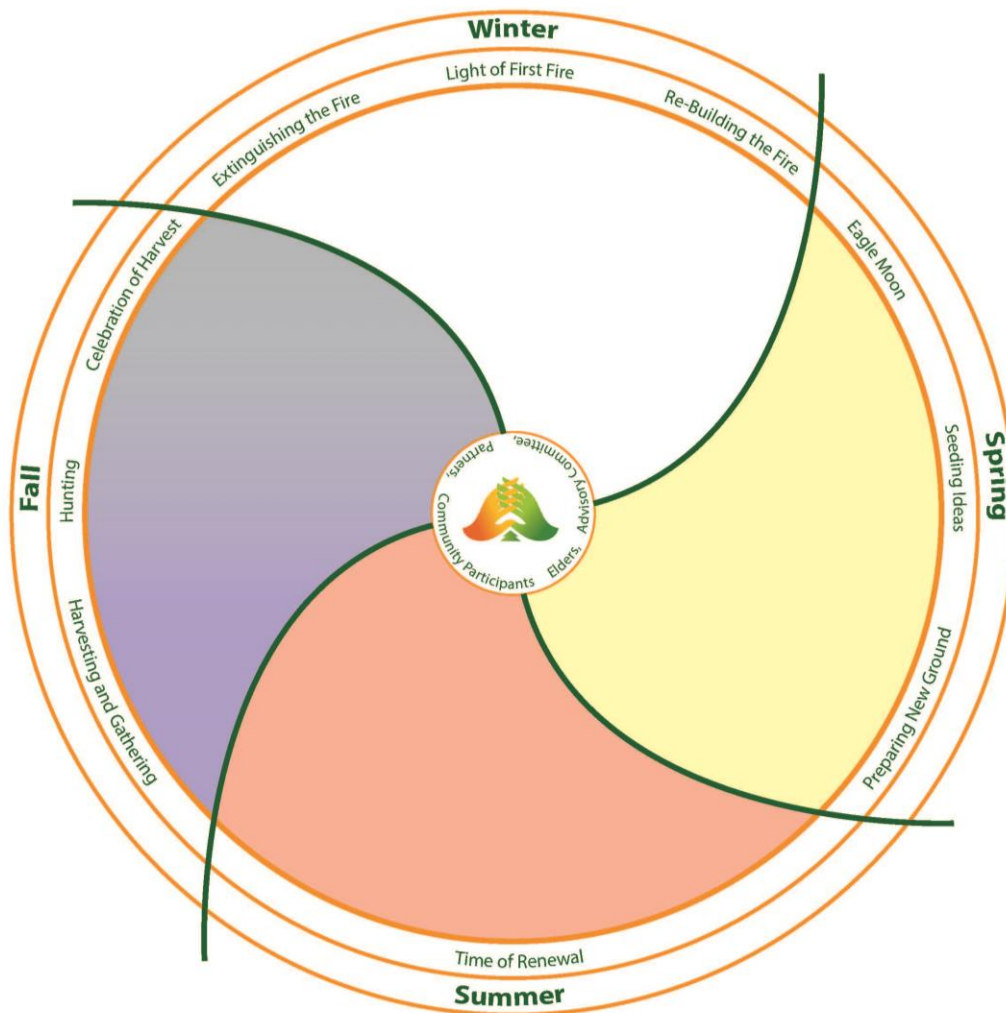
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS – SEASONAL ROUNDS

The end of Day 2, and the morning of Day 3 focused on timing. Each participant identified key events in their community and when they occurred. The goal of this activity was to map out how training and the participatory process could fit into each community.

The seasonal activities from each of the four communities was recorded on a Community Seasonal Calendar or through dedicated note-takers sitting with each of the communities. An example of a Community Seasonal Calendar is included below.

The information gathered over the 3 days will be used to create the Fire with Fire participatory video training delivery model. The 4 participating First Nations will continue to be involved in the co-design of the training, with the aim for training to occur with each First Nation in early 2020.

Community Seasonal Calendar - Watching the Land



How will seasonal changes influence the delivery of activities?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We offer deep gratitude to the knowledge holders and Elders who guided the workshop and gifted knowledge and wisdom during the gathering. We acknowledge and thank the presenters, and all participants for meaningful and active participation that resulted in the contents of this package.

As well, we thank Sam Hester from *The 23rd Story*, for her commitment and dedication to capturing the event through a series of graphic recordings. Highlights from these graphic recordings are presented throughout this summary report.

