



**Recommendations
For The
East Side Planning Initiative Round Table
From
Land of the Spirits/Spirits of the Land
Gatherings III: May, 2004
Raven's Creek, Hollow Water First Nation
Sponsored by
The Anishinaabe Turtle Island Protectors**

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Final Recommendations to the ESPI

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These people and their families have lived in this region of Manitoba for thousands of years and still depend on a healthy, fully functional and diverse ecosystem for their cultural and economic survival.

Gathering Background:

During the years 2001, 2003 and 2004, elders, traditional land users and youth from First Nation communities on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg gathered for the **LAND OF THE SPIRITS/SPIRITS OF THE LAND TRADITIONAL GATHERINGS**. They came to smoke their pipes, pray to the Creator for guidance and to discuss in sharing circles, what would be identified as issues and recommendations for the East Side Planning Initiative (ESPI) regarding of the proposed development plans on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg. Specifically, they explored the impacts on their cultural fabric, traditional territories and to Mother Earth. These people and their families depend on a healthy, fully functional and diverse ecosystem for their cultural and economic survival.

At issue for these community members, was the proposed construction of hydroelectric dams and erecting of associated High Voltage Transmission Lines, that would travel for hundreds of kilometres down the East side of Lake Winnipeg. Coupled with Manitoba Hydro's development intentions, is a proposed expansion, to increase the geographic area and the amount of forest clear-cut annually, to feed Tembec's paper mill operations in Pine Falls. The impacts on traplines, from these development intentions, plus the proposed construction of hundreds of kilometres of all weather roads and connecting logging roads, pressing further northwards into inaccessible forest areas currently undistributed by large-scale industrial development, were also clearly on the minds of those who participated in the Gatherings.

Participants also focused on the Manitoba governments' current large area planning exercise (ESPI) for the forest region on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg. The consensus reached expressed concern that it was a process to justify approval of large-scale development projects proposed for the region.

Elders noted that if government truly intended to do real land use planning, a planning process would have been initiated, engaged and worked with grassroots members of Aboriginal communities in assisting those communities in preparing traditional use study for their territories that would lead to community driven plans that reflect the values flowing from the traditional use studies.

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Popular River First Nation had successfully obtained interim protection from large-scale development activities for their traditional territory – approximately 800,000 hectares. This First Nation community used a 1998 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which creates a process for First Nations to nominate protected areas.

Trappers who attended the Gatherings developed a regional aboriginal trappers association to advocate and defend their rights to trap and protect the ecological integrity of their trap lines, to insure their traditional livelihood activities sustain future generations.

Participants at the gathering concluded; while there may be some minimal advantage, the social and environmental impacts of large-scale development projects would far out weigh the benefits. They expressed fears that the land they depend on as a culture would be irreparably harmed. Elders and youth alike felt an urgent need to send a clear message to governments that these types of development projects should not precede.

Elders also noted it was the Creator who gave the Anishinaabe responsibility to protect Mother Earth, a responsibility that they must take seriously. In keeping with this important responsibility, First Nation grassroots people attending the gatherings were looking for solutions to allow their communities – not outside developers - to manage, plan, and protect the natural resources in their traditional territories. This in turn would allow them to build an economy based on their inherent rights, which is so necessary to achieve self-determination and self-government. Further, they demanded to be consulted in a meaningful way before any new development projects preceded on their traditional territories.

The outcomes from Gatherings 2 and 3 were built on the work of the first Gathering, focusing on the development of recommendations to the ESPI and how aboriginal peoples can organize to effect holistic development, achieve meaningful community consultation, informed consent and government-to-government consultation.

Attached to this document is the survey that was developed for participants and the grassroots community members. The survey was designed to assist in the development of the ESPI recommendations and to focus on the concerns expressed regarding proposed development activities on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg.

The Gatherings also provided a venue to explore what community members saw as holistic development, meaningful community consultation, informed consent and government-to-government

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consultation and decision-making. Below are the Gathering III participant responses, which serves as the foundation for the final recommendations by the Anishinaabe Turtle Island Protectors to the ESPI.

Recommendations to the ESPI Round Table:

The following recommendations were finalized and approved by the Gathering participants at the May, 2004 Gathering held at Hollow Water First Nation. These 27 recommendations encompass the primary issues brought forward at Gatherings I, II and III.

- 1. Existing obligations under the Treaties must be met before any planning process is engaged. The Manitoba Government should make a good faith effort to finalize outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement and meet existing Treaty obligations with First nations communities on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg.**
- 2. The Manitoba Government and industry should make a clear written statement that no Treaty or Aboriginal Rights can be abrogated.**
- 3. Government and Industry should have a written set of consultation guidelines, policies or protocols regarding development proposals that may infringe on Treaty and or Aboriginal Rights before consulting with Aboriginal communities. These consultation guidelines, policies or protocols must be incorporated into the planning process for the East Side of Lake Winnipeg.**
- 4. That a *Protocol Agreement* be developed between the government of Manitoba and all First Nation communities on the East Side of Lake Winnipeg and that this agreement will become an integral part of the planning process.**



5. Governments, industry and crown corporations must recognize, respect, and honour local agreements between First Nations respecting First Nations traditional, cultural, and resource territories, as this is imperative to creating greater control and participation for local communities.
6. Governments should support the creation of an ESPI Youth Council that will participate in any land use/development planning process.
7. Government should support the creation of a ESPI Elders Council that will participate in any land use/development planning process.
8. Government should support the creation of a East Side Lake Winnipeg Trappers Council that will participate in any land use/development planning process.
9. Government should support the creation of a Women's Council that will participate in any land use/development planning process.
10. An ecosystem-based process that protects the boreal environment and directly involves First Nations, Métis, Non-Aboriginal communities, industries and non-government organizations should guide land use planning and decisions.
11. It must be recognized that Aboriginal Peoples and each of the First Nation communities on the Eastside of Lake Winnipeg have the right to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources within their traditional territories.
12. Government, industry and Aboriginal communities should work together to protect First Nations culturally significant areas, sacred sites, ceremonial, historical sites and burial sites without disclosing the exact location. The goal is to protect these important sites from the damage and other impacts caused by development.



13. **Community-based land use planning initiatives by First Nation communities on the Eastside of Lake Winnipeg should be completed prior to any large-scale development activities commencing within the ESPI planning area.**
14. **Governance systems within Aboriginal communities must support and respect traditional activities and uses in any land use process.**
15. **The Manitoba and Federal Governments must support and promote the First Nations Accord World Heritage Site nomination.**
16. **First Nation communities are solely responsible for identifying their traditional resource territories.**
17. **Additional lands within Aboriginal Traditional Territories must be set aside or protected to exercise First Nations Constitutional Rights for traditional uses, hunting, fishing and trapping.**
18. **Government and Industry should assist in providing resources and funding to enable Aboriginal communities on the Eastside of Lake Winnipeg to undertake or complete Traditional Land Use and Occupancy Studies within their traditional territories before any large-scale development occurs.**
19. **All First Nations communities in the ESPI Planning Area must be provided with resources & money (from Federal, Provincial and other sources) to develop land use plans for their traditional use areas.**
20. **All First Nations communities in the ESPI Planning Area must be provided with resources & money (from Federal, Provincial and other sources) to develop and complete traditional land use studies, and occupancy studies.**



21. Governments must provide funding for or develop more human capacity building initiatives and programs to realize and participate in the full potential of activities in regions and territories.
22. Governments must enhance and support more effective skills training programs for First Nation in the region as part of overall employment strategy. This funding should not be tied to any future large-scale development proposals.
23. Government must enhance and support capacity development for communities to acquire information and the resources necessary for effective land use planning in their traditional territories, and create an educational/training program targeted specifically to Aboriginal youth to enable them to deal with environmental and resource issues in their home communities.
24. Aboriginal Elders, Youth and Women, in consultation with grassroots community members, must be engage in any planning processes for their communities.
25. Government must share a percentage of the royalties generated from existing large-scale industrial development in the region with the First Nation communities.
26. Government must support and continue implementing decisions and activities with respect to the First Nations/Manitoba Government MOU on Protect Areas.
27. Governments need to support the means for communities to gain benefits from initiatives and activities within communities and territories.



GATHERING REPORT APPENDICES

- 1. Gathering Workshop Questions and Summary**
- 2. Gathering Summary Responses:**
- 3. Hollow Water Survey**
- 4. Elders Declaration**

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1. Gathering Workshop Questions and Summary:

The questions below were developed by a Consultant to explore what participants saw as holistic development, meaningful community consultation, informed consent and government-to-government consultation and decision-making.

The Nine Workshop Questions are:

- 1. *What is Mother Earth?***
- 2. *What is the meaning of 'caretaking' and 'stewardship'?***
- 3. *What are the 'gifts' and 'natural' laws?***
- 4. *Do the concepts of Mother Earth, caretaking and stewardship mean there should be no development?***
- 5. *What is the meaning of holistic development?***
- 6. *How should grassroots community consultation, informed consent and government-to-government consultations be conducted to make them 'meaningful'?***
- 7. *How should aboriginal peoples organize to effect holistic development? Identify the steps and needs.***
- 8. *How should these steps and needs be applied to the East Side of Lake Winnipeg?***
- 9. *Who should be included in deciding the future East Side of Lake Winnipeg? What are the roles?***



What is Mother Earth?

Mother Earth is nature, a living breathing entity, the one who created us, our home, no different that our Mother's womb.

It is people and the circle of life. We are all Mother earth, part of her. She takes care of us, feeds and clothes us. When we hurt Mother Earth, we hurt ourselves.

2. Gathering ii Summary Responses:

The following is a summary, taken from the workshop notes at the second Gathering, of the participant's responses to each question.

What is Mother Earth?

Mother Earth is nature, a living breathing entity, the one who created us, our home, no different that our Mother's womb. It is our home under threat because of greed and lack of vision. It is the planet, the country where nobody goes. Areas should be free of human interventions. It is people and the circle of life. We are all Mother earth, part of her. She takes care of us, feeds and clothes us. When we hurt Mother Earth, we hurt ourselves. All things are sustained and nurtured by her and the Great Spirit.

There is a need to understand the different relationships between Grandmother Moon, Grandfather Sun, Father Sky and Mother Earth. We need to respect the relationships we have with each other, and recognize that everything changes, it is always in motion, nothing is constant. We also need to understand that diversity in all things is essential to the well being of all life.

Mother Earth is a place of growth and adaptation. All this we need to understand.

What is the meaning of caretaking and stewardship?

We can neither be caretakers or stewards until we understand the interconnectedness of life. All of us who live on Mother Earth are held within a symbiotic relationship, what affects one affects all. When we use words like caretaker or steward, we are accepting the responsibility of working for the well being of all and the living planet. This means if you take something, replace it with something. Make an offering, recycle, reuse and donate.

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Industry sees Mother Earth as separate and compartmentalized and develops projects from that basis. Mother Earth is connected and inter-connected; we ignore that at our peril. Intrinsic value has meaning in of it self and includes cultural and spiritual values that reflect healthier practices and alternatives.

Remember if you take care of Mother Earth you have a right to protect and defend her. Given the perilous condition of Mother Earth, we also must be caregivers not only caretakers.

Caretaking and stewardship can also imply that we are higher than nature rather than interdependent. It also can imply that we know what we are doing but are often blind to Mother Earth and the Creator being caretakers and caregivers. Mother Earth can take care of herself.

Education is also a responsibility of caretakers. We need to teach the young ones the meaning of caretaking, compassion, respect and responsibility using the Seven Teachings. A lot of us are still babies and learning about life. Caretaking and stewardship is about walking lightly, leaving no footprints on her. Keeping things in balance and healing the harm. It is about exploring and creating alternatives, working together for a better future.

What are the gifts and natural laws?

The Seven Teachings, Love, Respect, Wisdom, Courage, Trust, Honesty and Humility. The natural elements are gifts, Earth, Wind, Fire and Water. The awareness that everything is interconnected, there is no "other" we are all one.

Everything Mother Earth provides is a gift and reflected in healing, life and life giving. Intuition, spirituality, learning, to know yourself, your purpose, and your limits these are gifts. Life is a gift and within that framework we are all given tools as gifts to fulfill our purpose.

Natural Laws are as simple as do not shit where you get your water from and as complex as the interconnectedness of all life. Our place is to find the way to be a peace with Mother Earth and all her creatures.

How we can act on our awareness of natural laws is by taking care of the land, treating people the way you want to be treated, learning right from wrong and being disciplined enough to take only what you need. Learning from your mistakes and experiences and not taking yourself too seriously. Share, live by example and teach respect and compassion for Mother Earth.

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Do the concepts of Mother Earth, caretaking and stewardship mean there should be no development?

Large-scale industrial development versus small-scale value added labour intensive development with local ownership and control that is connected to the land. This small-scale value added development must be tied to consumer education and awareness that will help overcome the consumption addiction experienced in North America. Current development practices create greater dependences on higher consumption. Until this changes there should be no industrial development in our backyards.

Industry sees Mother Earth as separate and compartmentalized and develops projects from that basis. Mother Earth is connected and inter-connected; we ignore that at our peril. Intrinsic value has meaning in of it self and includes cultural and spiritual values that reflect healthier practices and alternatives.

We attach value to material possessions, and the problem is with ownership of resources when sharing should occur. For instance, work with local communities and build capacity, engage in community development projects and create better practices.

Look for alternatives that are less harmful to Mother Earth, it is time we put an interconnected and interdependent concept of ecology into development proposals, especially when the technology exists to do so.

What is the meaning of holistic development?

Development should be in balance and in harmony with earth and that pays people to do positive development options. It is ecological recovery, thinking about the future and learning from the past. Alternatives that are respectful to Mother Earth must take precedence.

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The people who live in the surrounding environment should have deciding power, creating economic development that works for communities not corporations. All development should take into account the long-term impacts, not only the short term. It should also reflect the interconnectedness of Mother Earth. We also have to heal the urban/rural disconnect.

For communities, they should reclaim democracy, people need to take responsibility and become more involved in non-destructive activities. This means that we become accountable. First Nations should have Self Government and more control over what happens on their Traditional Lands.

We are the imaginers: we should dream better dreams and remember the Dream of the Turtle.

How should grassroots community consultation, informed consent and government-to-government consultations be conducted to make them meaningful?

We are the grassroots community, and developers must come to our communities and all information must be given prior to consulting with the communities. Existing obligations under the Treaties must be met before any process is engaged.

Protocol agreements are seen as a process of consultation, but we also must have the legal meanings of informed consent and consultation. This is what will lead to the creation of legal binding agreements.

At this time, the Government, Band Leadership and the ESPI Committee are not informing the community of the proposals and the environmental impacts of those proposals. For the communities to be heard we need to be united and take responsibility to be heard as one people. Right now there are some communities who have a 3rd party community consultation policy that they are not following. The ESPI process is not answerable to communities nor has it provided any answers to our questions and we do not believe that it will ever do so. This is because there is currently no benefit to the communities in the Eastside

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We can work with people who want to help, and we can organize a Land Use Planning conference of Objibways and Cree to develop one voice so developers can no longer divide us to conquer us and take our resources. If we are to have a future for ourselves and for future generations, with fresh water and clean air, there must be action soon.

development proposals. We will lose our traditional way of life and our traditional economies.

Some things can be done. We can work with people who want to help, and we can organize a Land Use Planning conference of Objibways and Cree to develop one voice so developers can no longer divide us or conquer us and take our resources. If we are to have a future for ourselves and for future generations, with fresh water and clean air, there must be action soon.

- 1. *FNLP will not benefit with the current arrangement with Tembec.***
- 2. *Create a Youth Council, Elders Council and Women's Council that will participate in the planning process: This will ensure that these voices will be heard in any planning process that is undertaken.***
- 3. *Educate the young ones about the connection to the land.***
- 4. *Work with elders and gather our leaders in community.***
- 5. *Develop a process to create leaders.***
- 6. *Develop our own land use and community development plan.***
- 7. *Demand a moratorium on development on the East side of Lake Winnipeg.***
- 8. *Seek information, it does not just come to you and learn and understand western values and systems, talk to them in their own language.***
- 9. *Bridge the gap between elders and youth.***

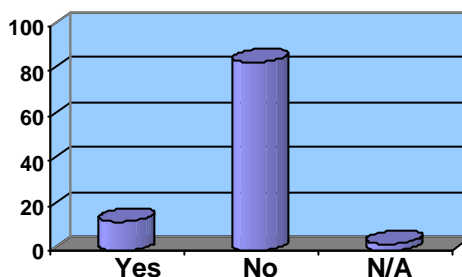
There is a total on reserve population in Hollow Water of 620 with 360 people being 15 years or older. The survey sample size was 100 persons 15 years or older.

3. Hollow Water Survey:

There is a total on reserve population in Hollow Water of 620 with 360 people being 15 years or older. The survey sample size was 100 persons 15 years or older. The following are the survey questions and responses.

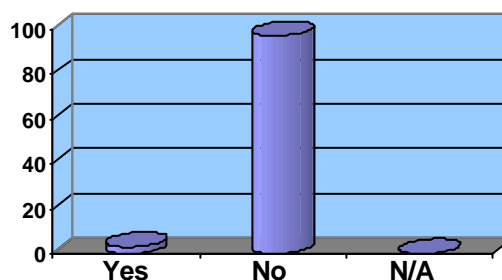
Hollow Water Survey Results:

Question 1: Do you think the current educational opportunities for Aboriginal students after they graduate from high school are adequate?

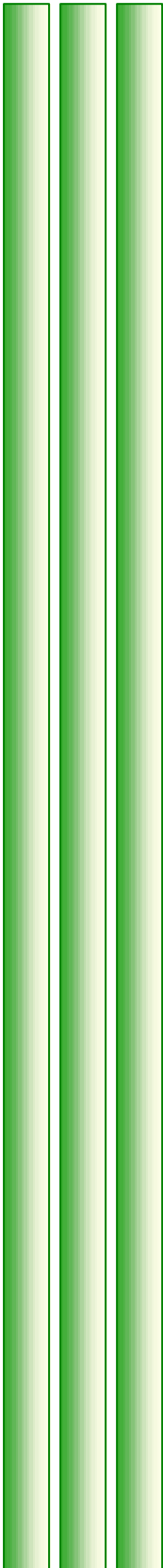


Response to Question 1

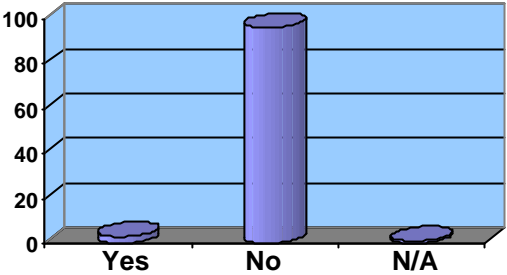
Question 2: Do you think schools include enough content from an Aboriginal perspective?



Response to Question 2

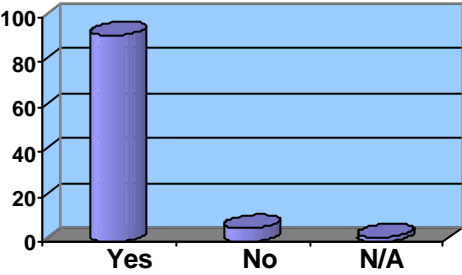


Question 3: Do you think schools include enough information about Aboriginal and environmental and resource management issues?

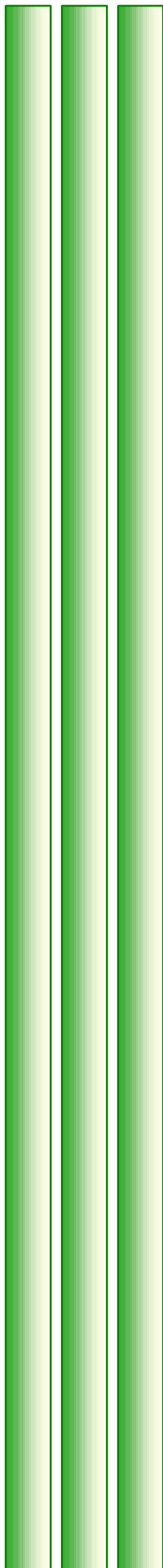


Response to Question 3

Question 4: Do you think Manitoba needs a special program for Aboriginal students to train to deal with resource management and environmental issues in their home communities?



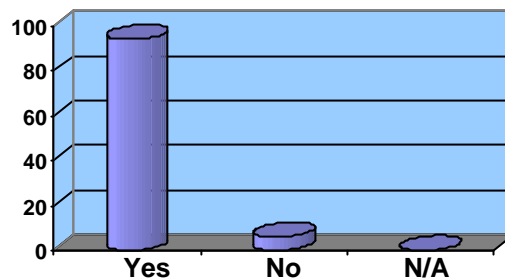
Response to Question 4



Question 5:

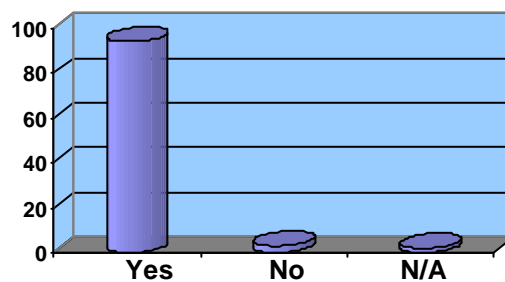
Do you think it is important for Aboriginal communities to do Traditional Land Use Studies on their Traditional Territories before outside development?

Response to Question 5

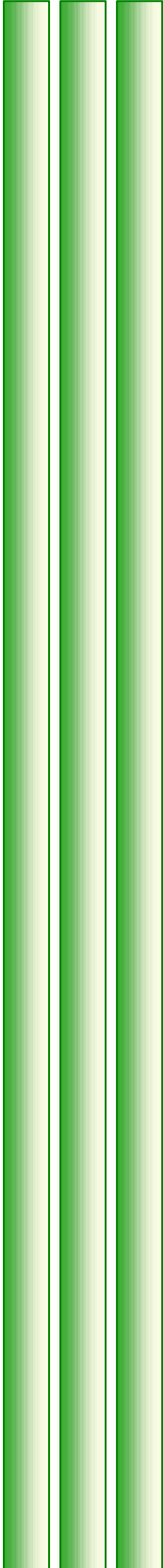


Question 6:

Do you think governments and/or industry should have a written consultation policy that is meaningful and is legally binding before consulting with Aboriginal communities about resource development that may infringe on Aboriginal treaty rights?

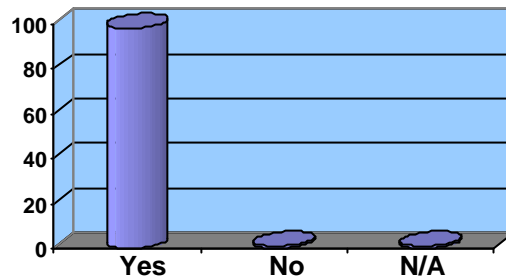


Response to Question 6



Question 7:

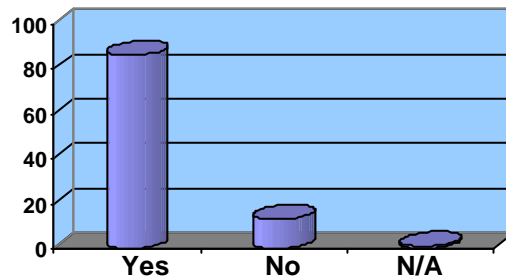
Do you think Aboriginal communities should be able to manage, plan, control and protect the natural resources in their Traditional Territories?



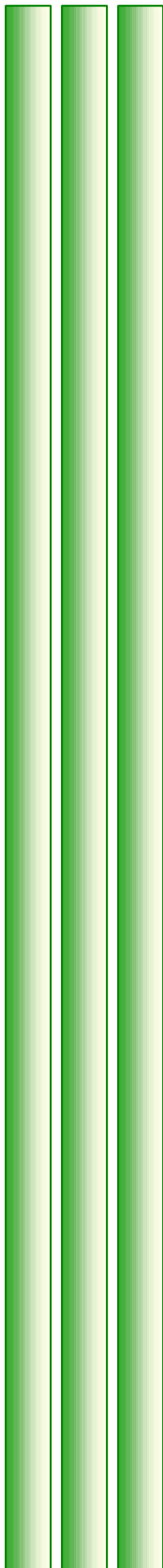
Response to Question 7

Question 8:

Do you think that Traditional Knowledge should be included into any land use planning exercise?

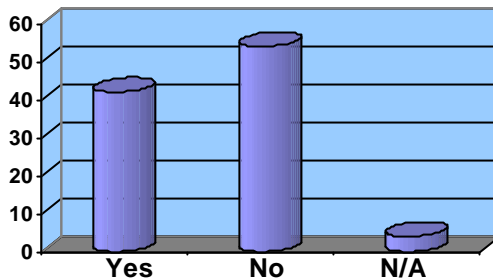


Response to Question 8



Question 9:

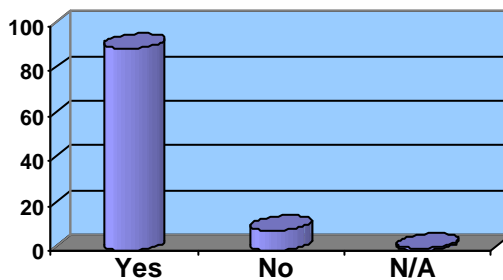
Do you think Aboriginal communities should share revenues from government and/or industry for resources that are extracted from Aboriginal communities' Traditional Territories?



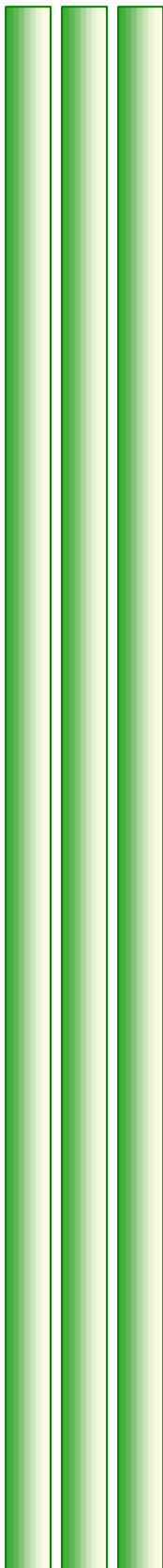
Response to Question 9

Question 10:

Do you think it is important that additional land in Aboriginal communities' Traditional Territories be protected from large-scale industrial development in order to continue practicing traditional activities such as hunting, fishing and trapping?

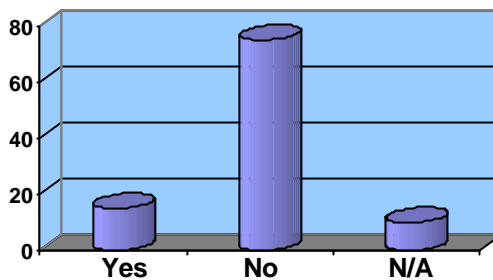


Response to Question 10



Question 11:

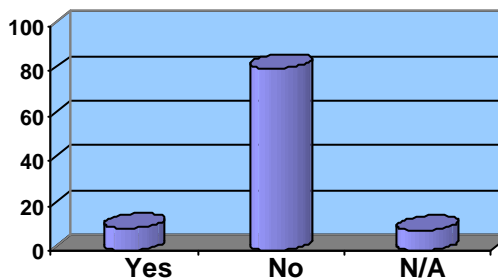
Does your community have its own plan for creating its own jobs and a good local economy?



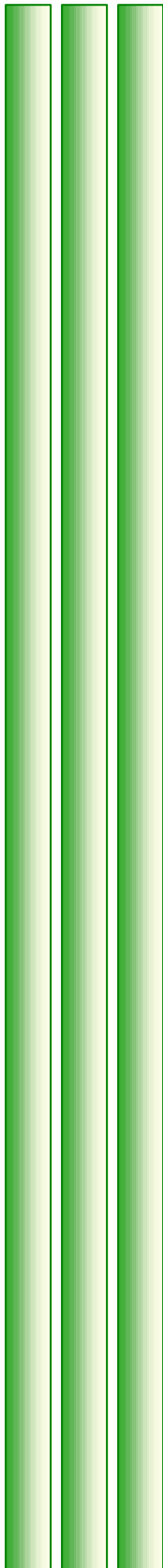
Response to Question 11

Question 12:

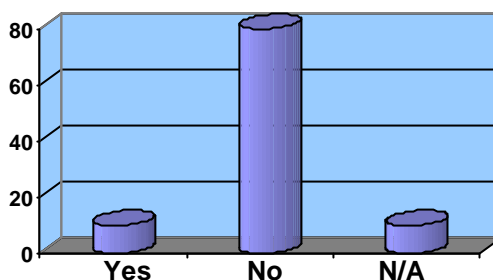
Do the Elders and political leadership work together when developing a plan for the future of the community?



Response to Question 12

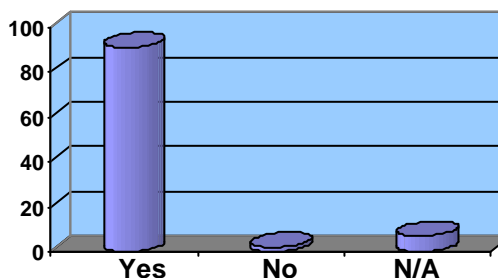


Question 13: Does the present governance system in your community attempt to support traditional values in its planning process?



Response to Question 13

Question 14: Would it help your community to have the support of other communities on the east side of Lake Winnipeg and work together as a regional group to negotiate with government?



Response to Question 14



4. Elders Declaration:

Preamble:

We, Elders and Traditional People, from Turtle Island, are truly concerned for the health of Mother Earth.

“We must realize that this Mother Earth does not belong to us, but that we have to care for and maintain the delicate balance of Nature for the sake of the well-being of our children and of all future generations. It is our duty as Humans to preserve Mother Earth and to honour the intentions of our Creator.”

We see many signs of damage within the forests, lakes, rivers and sky. Our way of life is threatened, as are the winged ones, the four legged, the crawlers and those that swim.

Therefore, we declare:

That the gifts and Natural Laws of the Creator are our greatest concern. However, all First Nations Constitutional, Treaty and Inherent Rights must be fulfilled in any decisions regarding our Traditional Lands.

That grassroots community (voters and young people) consultation and consent precede Government-to-Government consultations, which themselves pass the test of meaningfulness, in any development decisions, regulations, legislation and agreements regarding our Traditional Lands and Natural Resources.



This declaration applies, but is not limited to, any of the following development or resource planning activities that affect our Traditional Lands and Resources:

- Land Use Planning,
- Mining & Exploration,
- Highways & Roads,
- Hydro, Energy, or Oil and Gas Development activities,
- Large Scale Forestry Development,
- Tourism and
- Sharing of Knowledge.

We are committed to follow through on this Declaration and we invite you to work with us.

In conclusion, the Old Ones say we are to respect these gifts given to us by the Creator and that if we respect these gifts they will last forever. And if we disrespect these gifts and if we destroy them they will end and we will end.