

Archaeology of Sustaining Best Practices to Achieve Indigenous Food Sovereignty and Healthy Living in O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation

Asfia Gulrukh Kamal (University of Manitoba), Rene Linklater (Tommy Thomas Memorial Health Complex), Shirley Thompson (University of Manitoba), Shirley Ducharme, Hilda Dysart, & Roger Moose

Abstract

O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation is one of the many communities in northern Manitoba that was affected by the establishment of the Churchill River Diversion Dam. In fact the community has lost the majority of its traditional livelihood and food resources due to this flooding. In 2009 a University of Manitoba study found high food insecurity in the community (Thompson et al, 2011). Since the flooding the community food champions have been organizing training on hunting, fishing and other traditional skills for the youth to learn Aboriginal ways of living of the land. After more than twenty years of the flooding the community has been struggling even more with very limited support from the provincial government. The impacts are strongly visible in the health sector. Our presentation will discuss the significance of Aboriginal knowledge for gaining access to traditional food and healthy living and the socioeconomic dynamics that lie at the base of this local educational system.