SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Indigenous-Led, Land-Based Programming

Facilitating Connection to the Land and within the Community

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Misipawistik Cree Nation provides an example of one Indigenous community in northern Manitoba that has been significantly and adversely affected by settler-colonialism, resource development and the climate crisis. In Cree culture, like many Indigenous cultures, connection to the land is part of a lifestyle, and helps to maintain social, physical, mental, and spiritual wellness. The land is tied to the Cree identity and caring for the land builds social and community connectedness. This connection is also reflected in the local economy comprised of hunting, trapping, fishing, monitoring, and conservation professions.

After being deeply socially, culturally and spiritually affected by settler-colonialism and the construction of Manitoba Hydro's Grand Rapids Generating Station in 1968, the community of Misipawistik is now also dealing with the early effects of the climate crisis. These factors all impact the ability of the Cree people to live off of the land and to maintain a connection to it, especially for younger generations.

In recent years, Misipawistik has implemented Indigenous-led, land-based programming such as the Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw land-based learning program, and the MCN kanawenihcikew Guardians program. These programs are helping to address the above-mentioned disruptions to connection to the land while additionally facilitating community connectedness. While this programming has various benefits that are unique to rural, Indigenous communities such as Misipawistik, land-based education can also be implemented in an adapted form in urban school divisions to improve the mental health of students and high school drop-out rates, while creating future stewards of the land and advancing reconciliation.

In order for this approach to be successful, there must be increased, permanent, and no-barrier funding and support for, as well as recognition of, this type of programming in rural, Indigenous communities as well as in urban school divisions. Additional resources must be commissioned by the Manitoba Provincial Government through the Minister of Education and Training, and created by Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers and educators to be made accessible to all educators to scale these types of programs.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This report explores the many ways in which Indigenous-led, land-based programming in Misipawistik Cree Nation addresses disruptions to the land such as settler-colonialism, hydro-electric development and the climate crisis. Each of these disruptions contribute to the manifestation of social isolation in the community, meaning that community members are alienated from the land, their collective identity, and the practices that bring them together and foster belonging. By contrast, "Achieving social connectedness means working towards a society where everyone is valued, seen and heard… where solidarity, trust and cooperation pave the way for inter and intra community bonds."[1] Misipawistik's programming helps to foster this social connectedness between Elders and youth, builds connection to the land, and revitalizes Cree culture, among other benefits. This report also summarizes testimonies from other land-based educators in urban school divisions throughout Manitoba regarding benefits and barriers to implementing land-based programming.

This report sets out to address the following key questions: **(1)** What is the importance of connection to the land to the people living in Misipawistik? **(2)** What disruptions to this connection have occurred historically or are still happening today? **(3)** How have these disruptions affected the community and the land? **(4)** How does land-based learning and other programming help to address the negative effects of these disruptions? **(5)** What can we learn from the example of Misipawistik? **(6)** What barriers do land-based educators in urban environments face, and what are the benefits of their programs?

[1] "About Us," Social Connectedness, https://www.socialconnectedness.org/about-us/.

This report recommends that the Provincial and Federal governments should recognize the right of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis groups to design their own systems of education. These governments should formally recognize the benefits of land-based education, and provide increased, no-barrier, permanent funding for land-based programming in both rural, Indigenous communities, and urban school divisions. The report also addresses the relationship between resource development entities and impacted Indigenous communities by recommending furthers partnerships in the area of climate action.

1.1 Research and outreach methodology: In order to learn about land-based learning programs offered in urban school divisions throughout Manitoba, land-based educators were contacted through email and over the phone by the researcher. Some outdoor learning sites were also visited in-person. In order to learn about the community of Misipawistik, I visited the community during the last week of the Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw land-based learning program. The greatest learning tools used were observation and participation. Becky Cook, the program coordinator provided an informal guided tour of Misipawistik while explaining the history of the land and community. Through facilitating a leadership workshop for the youth participants in the program, I was able to connect with the youth, and later informally asked them about their experiences in the program. I also engaged with the Elders and other community members and visitors present, and formally interviewed two of the Elders, Alice Cook, former Chief of Misipawistik, and Melinda Robinson. Everyone whom I engaged with provided valuable historical information and personal perspectives regarding connection to the land and Misipawistik's programming.

SECTION 2: MISIPAWISTIK CREE NATION: HISTORY & DISRUPTIONS TO THE LAND

2.1 Misipawistik Cree Nation: Misipawistik Cree Nation is a community located about 411 kilometres north of Winnipeg, Manitoba. The on-reserve area is located on the east and south banks of the Saskatchewan River at Lake Winnipeg, and the Town of Grand Rapids is located across the river, accessible by bridge. Misipawistik Cree Nation is signatory to Treaty 5.

Over thousands of years of living on the land, the Cree people developed a lifestyle centred on the land, which sustained them physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Even the Cree language reflects their connection to the land.[2] Today, the local economy continues to depend on the land through professions such as fishing, trapping and environmental monitoring.

2.2 Settler-colonialism as a disruption to the connection to the land: The area of Grand Rapids was mapped out by the youngest La Verendrye son in 1740, and by 1741, the first location of Fort Bourbon was established. While the fort was eventually moved upstream about nine years later, the Hudson's Bay Company would continue to travel through the area along the Saskatchewan River in York boats, as this was considered the fastest trade route between the Rocky Mountains and Lake Winnipeg.[3] Elders from Misipawistik, Alice Cook and Melinda Robinson told me that while their ancestors were kind to the traders who came through the area, the traders later kidnapped women and young children who lived along the Saskatchewan River and took them to the nearby settlement.[4]

[2] "Honouring Earth," Assembly of First Nations, http://www.afn.ca/honoring-earth/.
[3] Martha McCarthy, "Manitoba History: Thundering Waters Stilled: The Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan," *Manitoba History*, no. 15 (Spring 1988), Manitoba Historical Society.
[4] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), In-person, informal interviews in a group setting, at the Mino Aski Culture Camp in Misipawistik, Manitoba. Written consent obtained from local residents and Elders, Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.

In the 1770s, the Cree people became more involved in trading furs and fish for other goods, and were offered more paid work by fur traders, which altered their subsistence lifestyles, and subsequently, their connection to the land and to one another. They were subjected to the spread of diseases, brought to the area by the traders, as well as the violence which occurred between rival trading companies, the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. Both companies offered alcohol to the Cree people as a way of competing with one another, which also played a role in negatively affecting their lifestyles.[5]

In 1877, the Hudson's Bay Company developed the first rail line in western Canada. The Cree people in the area were neither informed nor consulted with. This rail line carried freight including, "… supplies for HBC posts, farm implements for Saskatchewan settlers, and Indian Department supplies. Throughout the 1880s the tramway played a vital role in the development of the Saskatchewan River as a northern transport route."[6] This laid the groundwork for further encroachment on the Cree people's lands and waters.

Throughout this time, missionaries with colonial mindsets saw the Cree people as needing to be "saved."[7] According to online records, there was a Residential School which operated in the area between 1885 and 1961, and then a Day School which operated between 1961 and 1967.[8] Both were run by the local Anglican Church, and were funded by the Federal

[5] McCarthy, "Manitoba History: Thundering Waters Stilled: The Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan," (Spring 1988), Manitoba Historical Society.
[6] Gordon Gordsborough and Heather Docking, "Historic Sites of Manitoba: Grand Rapids Tramway," (April 2017), Manitoba Historical Society.
[7] McCarthy, "Manitoba History: Thundering Waters Stilled: The Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan," (Spring 1988), Manitoba Historical Society.
[8] "SCHEDULE K - INDIAN DAY SCHOOLS LIST," Indian Day Schools, https://indiandayschools.com/en/wp-content/uploads/Schedule-K-List-of-Day- Schools-002.pdf.

and Provincial Governments, respectively.[9] The schools separated Cree children from their families and cultures, and used tactics such as physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse to enforce rules. There was also exploitation of students' labour used to keep the poorly funded school system afloat, and to force a settler-Canadian lifestyle on the Cree children.[10]

Despite these disruptions to the land as a result of early settler-colonialism, the people of Misipawistik were able to maintain lifestyles largely focussed on living off of the land until the construction of the Grand Rapids Generating Station by Manitoba Hydro, which began in 1960. Prior to this time, there was no road access to Misipawistik.[11] The construction caused extensive disruptions to the land, which made it difficult for the people to rely on the land.

2.3 The Grand Rapids Generating Station construction and damage to the land: The construction of the Generating Station had various parts: "The actual hydroelectric project involved construction of a dam, a dyke, transmission lines and a spillway dam. The dyke, basically a huge pile of gravel that runs 25.7 kilometers, was built out of material dug out of the earth in the vicinity."[12] The Manitoba Hydro website acknowledges that, "… proposals and plans were drawn up with little community consultation."[13] While the name of the community, 'Misipawistik,' means "rushing rapids," the rapids it was named after disappeared as a result of the construction.[14] In a report from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the testimonies

[9] "SCHEDULE K - INDIAN DAY SCHOOLS LIST," Indian Day Schools.
[10] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
[11] Peter Kulchyski, Ramona Neckoway, Gerald McKay, and Robert Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name: The Impact of Hydroelectric Development on Grand Rapids," *Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*, (August 2006),https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/Manitoba_Pubs/2006/Grand_Rapids.pdf, p. 6-7.
[12] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 5.
[13] "A History of Electric Power in Manitoba," Manitoba Hydro, https://www.hydro.mb.ca/corporate/history/history_of_electric_power_book.pdf., p. 63.
[14] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 1-2.

of local residents reveal that there were loud explosions in the area before the rapids were "shut off" and could no longer be seen or heard.[15] The construction of the dyke relied on excavating a huge area of land and digging up the rock to be used. Many community members were evicted from their homes along the Saskatchewan River to make way for the construction. According to the testimony of Robbie Buck (a local resident), Hydro tried to purchase his parents' land, but when his father refused, they continued construction of a fence anyway. Hydro even bulldozed people's homes while they were away, causing significant displacement within the community.[16] There was no system of accountability at that time.

The excavation also desecrated sacred burial grounds. In the early years of construction, bones were discovered by Hydro workers during excavation, but this information was kept secret by workers at the time, who did not want to delay construction.[17] When I visited Misipawistik, Becky showed me the area which was excavated, as well as the secluded area and gravestones marking where the remains were relocated to, decades later by community members. She showed another area which had also been excavated, save for a small island of trees in the middle of the field of blasted rock. The contrast between the lush trees and the rocky field is stark, showing how the land might have looked had it not been bulldozed.[18] According to local residents, this small area of trees was saved from being bulldozed because one of the Hydro workers was a local man who knew that graves were located there.[19]

[15] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 8.
[16] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 8-9.
[17] "Informal discussions," Interview(s) by author, Various dates, In person discussions with Becky Cook.
[18] "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
[19] "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019); Justin Brake and Ashley Brandson, "Hydro Had "bigger Impact" than Residential School in Misipawistik: Councillor," APTN News, (September 19, 2018), https://aptnnews.ca/2018/09/18/hydro-had-bigger-impact-than-residential-school-in-misipawistik-councillor/.

The reservoir also flooded a huge area, including some of the best trapping areas and traplines of local residents. According to Robbie Buck, "… a lot of Hydro employees that were there became hobby trappers and started competing… started taking over the trapping."[20] This disrupted the lifestyles of people in the community who relied on trapping in those areas for food. The flooding of the land also released methyl mercury into the water system, which significantly impacted local fishers and resulted in the closure of the commercial fishery in the early 1970s.[21] In an interview with APTN News, local resident Gerald McKay said, "In 1969, I think there was mercury in the fish and hydro denied that it was them and then they shut fishing down and there was no compensation for anybody. We all depended on my dad's income to eat, and we couldn't eat the fish anymore."[22] According to another resident, Steve Pranteau, "(Hydro) had these huge tanks… they would break down and they would… just bury them… I'm pretty sure that place is saturated with oil… a lotta people who live there now are getting sick because of that."[23] This demonstrates that the construction had direct impacts on the physical health of local residents.

The dam also destroyed the spawning grounds for fish species, most notably the lake sturgeon, pickerel (walleye) and jackfish (northern pike).[24] The lake sturgeon population was significantly impacted to the point of endangerment. While Manitoba Hydro now operates the Grand Rapids Fish Hatchery which is used for spawning, local residents say that these fish are

[20] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 9.
[21] "Informal discussions," Interview(s) by author, Various dates, In person discussions with Becky Cook.
[22] Brake and Brandson, "Hydro Had "bigger Impact" than Residential School in Misipawistik," APTN News, (September 19, 2018).
[23] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 10.
[24] "Informal discussions," Interview(s) by author, Various dates, In person discussions with Becky Cook; "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.

being used to re-populate other bodies of water affected by Hydro, but not enough is being done to replenish populations in their own waters. [25, 26] The construction of the dam and other projects also cut off travel routes used for fishing. According to Becky, "Many areas in the Saskatchewan River and Cedar lake are dangerous to travel on due to high flows in the summer and thin and unpredictable ice in the winter."[27] Cutting off access to safe travel routes put fishers at risk or forced them to look for other means of survival.

In addition to facing physical challenges to fishing, hunting and trapping, Hydro also enforced Provincial and Federal laws in regard to Treaty rights, which significantly impacted those members of the community who were not Treaty, including those who were of Métis descent. Non-Treaty people were not allowed to fish, hunt or trap during certain seasons, and were subjected to other regulations.[28] This prevented them from maintaining lifestyles which relied on the land. Local residents were forced to make the shift away from a subsistence lifestyle, and this happened very rapidly, almost overnight, for some families.

Becky explained that the Cree people were more connected to one another and to their spirituality when they worked together as a community. Families would go fishing or hunting together, and the land would teach young people life skills.[29] When settler-Canadians and Hydro workers settled in the area, they introduced western individualism, which disrupted the way that the Cree people related to one another. Becky described how her father used to help

[25] *Lake Sturgeon in Manitoba: A Summary of Current Knowledge,* Publication. Manitoba Hydro, (2016), https://www.hydro.mb.ca/environment/pdf/lake_sturgeon_summary.pdf.
[26] "Informal discussions," Interview(s) by author, Various dates, In person discussions with Becky Cook; "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
[27] "Informal discussions," Interview(s) by author, Various dates, In person discussions with Becky Cook.
[28] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 10.
[29] "Informal discussions," Interview(s) by author. Various dates. In person discussions with Becky Cook.

other community members with various tasks, including building houses, without expecting pay. “It was just what we did,” she said.[30] The settler-Canadians created a system of dependency on government assistance by destroying the land that they relied on, and introducing more paid work.[31] According to the 2019 MCN Climate Change and Health report, “An estimated 80% of the on-reserve population rely on social assistance for their basic needs.”[32] This number can be explained by the abrupt disruption to the livelihoods of the Cree people, which has had intergenerational effects.

2.4 The settlement of Hydro workers and significant social problems: Since the Cree people had become the minority on their own land, they were subjected to racism and violence.[33] Women in particular were subjected to sexual abuse by Hydro workers. In the following passage, obtained from an APTN News article, Gerald McKay recalls events that occurred during the early days of the dam construction:

> School buses would pick up white kids but leave Cree and Metis kids standing on the side of the road… He recalls a story of a Cree family whose baby boy was sick and needed medical care. “They took him to the hospital, then they looked at him and sent him home, and they went back and they sent him home again,” he says. “So they took him the third time and he died… in the hospital.” He describes “perverts” and “peeping toms” roaming the community at night. McKay says at one point his mother… caught someone trying to steal McKay’s baby sister right out of a bedroom in their home...[34]

Additionally, “the presence of the first liquor outlet in the community… had significant consequences on the communities.”[35] According to local residents, the bar was built to service

[30] “Informal discussions,” Interview(s) by author. Various dates. In person discussions with Becky Cook.
[31] “Informal discussions,” Interview(s) by author. Various dates. In person discussions with Becky Cook.
[32] Becky Cook, *Misipawistik Cree Nation Climate Change and Health Report 2019*, (June 30, 2019), p.2.
[33] "Gerald McKay’s Life in Grand Rapids," Wa Ni Ska Tan An Alliance of Hydro Impacted Communities, http://hydroimpacted.ca/community-stories/.
[34] Brake and Brandson, "Hydro Had "bigger Impact" than Residential School in Misipawistik,” APTN News, (September 19, 2018).
[35] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name,” (August 2006), p. 5.

the Hydro workers, but alcohol was also more readily available to community members. The Cree people were experiencing a traumatic shift in their ways of life, and additionally dealt with racism and abuses. This, combined with tensions between the Hydro workers and community members, led to substance abuse over time on both sides, as well as physical fighting.[36] These are just some of the social issues brought to the community by the Hydro settlement.

When the construction project was completed, the utility promised to generate revenue for local residents, but this never occurred.[37] Local residents were never provided with subsidized hydro-electric costs, and instead were faced with extremely high bills.[38] Local residents continued to speak out about the injustices that occurred. In 1991, Misipawistik signed a compensation agreement with Manitoba Hydro, which was worth about $5 million.[39] However, this agreement did not adequately address all issues, and in 2012, a new settlement agreement was signed.[40] In reference to Gerald McKay, an APTN article states, "(He claims) community members received a one-time $500 payment after the band signed the agreement and get about $120 every three years."[41] While the people of Misipawistik were somewhat compensated, money can never compensate for the way of life they were forced to give up.

[36] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
[37] Kulchyski, Neckoway, McKay, and Buck, "The Town That Lost Its Name," (August 2006), p. 2.
[38] Caroline Barghout, "Manitoba 'Hydro Justice' Rally Gains Support on Heels of Board Resignations." *CBC News*, March 22, 2018. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-hydro-justice-rally-1.4589155.
[39] Manitoba Hydro Crown Corporation, *The Agreement Between Grand Rapids First Nation and Manitoba Hydro- Electric Board,* (December 5, 1991),https://www.hydro.mb.ca/community/indigenous_relations/pdf/grand-rapids-settlement-1991.pdf. *For reference.
[40] Mary Agnes Welch, "Hydro Signs $58-M Deal with First Nation," Winnipeg Free Press, (February 14, 2012), https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/hydro-signs-58-m-deal-with-first-nation-139271098.html.
[41] Brake and Brandson, "Hydro Had "bigger Impact" than Residential School in Misipawistik," APTN News, (September 19, 2018).

2.5 The climate crisis as a disruption to the connection to the land: Another disruption to the connection to the land is the climate crisis. As previously discussed, Indigenous people have a physical, mental, social, and spiritual connection to the land, as well as local economies and lifestyles that rely on the use of the land. While these lifestyles have less of an impact on the land, as the climate crisis continues to disrupt the land, Indigenous communities will experience these effects more severely than other communities. [42] The 2019 MCN Climate Change Report details the effects of climate change which have already been experienced within the community, as well as concerns for the future.

The issues identified by the report include increased temperature, warmer waters in lakes, increased precipitation and run-off, increased extreme weather events, and health impacts. Climate change has significant impacts on fishing and hunting. For example, "The fish, that were at one point plentiful near the shore, have migrated toward the cooler waters in the centre of the lake. In order to have a successful catch, fishermen are traveling further out in the water, which has required a change to the style and size of boat used."[43] Increased algae blooms change the patterns of fish location, and clings to nets, weighing them down. Warmer winter temperatures affect the length of the ice fishing season. For hunters and trappers, extreme temperatures affect hibernation and migration patterns, making it difficult to rely on traditional knowledge. Changes in temperature also affect food availability for animals, which contributes to them coming closer to communities in search of food.[44]

[42] Cook, *Misipawistik Cree Nation Climate Change and Health Report 2019*, (June 30, 2019), p.2.
[43] Ibid., p.12.
[44] Ibid., p.18.

Besides affecting livelihoods, climate change also impacts social connectedness and health. According to the report, "… their way of life used to involve going into the forest to hunt together, fishing together and being at one with nature. Their spirituality and being closer to creator is directly tied into these activities in nature."[45] Less access to natural foods can lead to greater reliance on processed foods, which contributes to declining health. Additionally, when livelihoods and lifestyles are affected, people can also experience increased levels of stress, anxiety and depression, which can lead to substance abuse and suicide attempts.[46]

2.6 Testimonies from two local Elders, Alice Cook and Melinda Robinson: In order to gain a richer understanding of Misipawistik's history, I asked two of the Elders, Alice and Melinda, if they could speak about connection to the land in greater depth. The following is a summary of their responses. Alice began by saying, "The connection to the land is everywhere, not just here in Misipawistik."[47] Connection to the land is a peacefulness that one can feel, but that is not easily described. The rapids in Misipawistik, which disappeared with the Generating Station construction, were described as a means of communication, which provided "mail" and food. The rapids were once so loud and joyful that they could be heard from anywhere in the community. They are part of the Cree peoples' identity in Misipawistik, and are what once connected them to their ancestors.[48] Heidi Cook, a councillor for Misipawistik Cree Nation, said in an interview with APTN News, "I felt it personally, that as somebody from Grand Rapids I was

[45] Cook, *Misipawistik Cree Nation Climate Change and Health Report 2019*, (June 30, 2019), p.13.
[46] Ibid., p. 23.
[47] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
[48] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.

robbed of my birthright to know these rapids and to have this beautiful part of my home sing me to sleep at night, and greet me in the morning when I wake up."[49]

Life changed drastically when the Hydro workers settled in the area. Even the way that women gave birth was disrupted. Previously, Cree women relied on midwives and gave birth in their homes where they felt comfortable. After the Hydro workers settled in the area, Cree women who were pregnant were forced to go to The Pas to have their babies in the hospital. This often meant that the women were away from their families for up to two months, which also disrupted their connection to the land.[50]

The Cree people once relied on purely natural diets and ate the livers of fresh fish to prevent disease. Disruptions to the land altered their lifestyles to rely more on foods that could be bought in the store. This led to more diseases such as diabetes, and overall declining health and wellness.[51]

There were also profound disruptions to spirituality. When Hydro workers settled in the area, more churches were quickly built. The missionaries put a stop to traditional ceremonies, which they said were 'pagan', and this disruption was further exacerbated by Residential and Day Schools. Just prior to the 1980s, the regular school system at least offered the opportunity for young people to join their families to go fishing throughout the month of June. In order to accomplish this, classes would run for an extra 15 minutes every day of the year, so that the

[49] Brake and Brandson, "Hydro Had "bigger Impact" than Residential School in Misipawistik," APTN News, (September 19, 2018).
[50] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
[51] Ibid.

school year could end one month earlier, in May.[52] Today, youth lack that opportunity because their classes continue until the end of June.[53]

The community of Misipawistik has experienced various disruptions to the land. The following section explores some of the ways in which community members are facilitating connection to the land and building community resilience.

SECTION 3: RECONNECTING TO THE LAND USING LAND-BASED PROGRAMMING

3.1: ***Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw land-based learning program:*** The Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw land-based learning program is coordinated by Becky Cook with guidance from an Elders council. The camp takes place at the Mino Aski Culture Camp, on the shore of Lake Winnipeg. It is overseen by the Misipawistik Cree Nation Health Authority and is "equipped with a number of semi-permanent trappers tents with frames, a kitchen, several outhouses and a sweat lodge."[54] According to the program outline, the vision is "a program that offers culturally relevant teachings to help students in Misipawistik reconnect with their culture, rebuild connections to their ancestral land, promote healthy living and provide an education."[55] The program seeks to address three areas:

> (It) will create employment within the community by having local people leading the development, teaching and governing of the program. The teachings offered will inform youth about their history as well as giving them the skills needed to spend time out on the land exercising and living a healthier life. By offering high school credits the program will also open up more educational opportunities for students who wish to continue their education.[56]

[52] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
[53] "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
[54] Becky Cook, "Misipawistik Land-Based Learning Program: A Program to Revive the Nehinaw Way," (January 14, 2017), p.3.
[55] Cook, "Misipawistik Land-Based Learning Program: A Program to Revive the Nehinaw Way," (January 14, 2017), p. 1.
[56] Ibid.

The program involves four seasonal teachings: History, Plants and Medicines, Fishing, and Moose and Hunting. It aims to increase knowledge about Misipawistik's history in regard to colonization, language, sustainability, and uses of plants and animals, and to teach about community building, healing, the Seven Sacred Teachings, traditional crafts, and stewardship.[57]

3.1 (a) Providing culturally relevant education and improving retention of students: The program first and foremost addresses the need for culturally relevant education for the Cree youth in Misipawistik. While it is currently offered as a cultural credit, Becky says that ideally, Indigenous knowledge and land-based learning should be incorporated into other provincially-required and elective courses, such as science, math, history, and art.[58] Indigenous knowledge is deeply connected to all of these areas, and can enhance our understanding of them.[59] Indigenous youth may feel disengaged from western-oriented education, which relies on an entirely different worldview that is historically situated in colonialism.[60] Therefore, while outdoor learning can simply improve interest in learning because of the associated mental health benefits, and the increased stimulation for students who are active learners, benefits may be more profound for Indigenous youth.

The program provides education in a format which is interactive, supportive, and engages youth personally and spiritually, often in conversations with Elders and in activity with the land. By bringing Elders and youth together in a safe and peaceful setting, youth have the

[57] Becky Cook, "2019 Teaching Schedule, Land- Based Learning Program," (April 2019).
[58] "Informal discussions," Interview(s) by author. Various dates. In person discussions with Becky Cook.
[59] "Honouring Earth," Assembly of First Nations, http://www.afn.ca/honoring-earth/.
[60] Cook, "Misipawistik Land-Based Learning Program: A Program to Revive the Nehinaw Way," (January 14, 2017), p. 2.

opportunity to build relationships and mentorships with other Cree people of all ages, which is something that they may not find within their typical school environment, for various reasons.[61]

The program also offers discussions of history from the Cree perspective, and activities and ceremonies which focus on celebrating their own identities. This empowers the youth by providing them with a sense of pride in who they are and where they come from. In this environment, youth are less likely to be discriminated against because educators may have a greater understanding of unique barriers to learning that youth might face. The youth said they felt more comfortable participating in the program and asking questions than they do in their regular classrooms.[62] Research shows that outdoor learning in general can increase confidence, and significantly reduce drop-out rates of "at-risk" students.[63] Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw also has the potential to increase student retention in Grand Rapids school. Through positive messaging from adult mentors, youth are encouraged to continue their education.[64]

3.1 (b) Revitalizing Cree culture, discovering identity, and reconnecting to the land: The program also seeks to revitalize the Cree language and culture, by creating a space to engage with Cree traditions, ceremonies and practices. There is a designated individual who regularly teaches the youth Cree words and phrases. There is a sweat lodge located at the culture camp area, with regular opportunities for the youth to participate in sweats. Each morning, the camp

61 "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
62 "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
63 Alonso Verde, Arturo Valdés, and José-Reyes Ruiz-Gallardo, "Garden-Based Learning: An Experience With "At Risk," Secondary Education Students," *The Journal of Environmental Education* 44, no. 4 (August 5, 2013), 252-270.
64 "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).

begins with smudging and a sharing circle. This experience particularly helps to build connectedness and openness between all of those in attendance.[65]

There are also opportunities to participate in seasonal activities which are related to the land. For example, in the Fall, there was a moose camp, and in the Summer, the youth participated in a canoeing trip, camping trip and medicine camp. There are also abundant opportunities to learn from the stories of Elders, and from their knowledge on beading, songs, drumming, dances, making bannock and other foods, and hunting and fishing, among others. These are all ways of revitalizing the Cree culture, and the program truly facilitates the transfer of knowledge from Elders to the youth. In turn, this promotes spiritual, physical, and mental wellness.[66] This is a vital part of land-based programming, as Indigenous youth are particularly at risk for poor mental health, including anxiety, depression, self- harm, and suicide attempts.[67] Thus, reconnecting to culture and spirituality can have sustainable healing effects for Indigenous peoples experiencing unwellness.[68]

3.1 (c) Addressing the climate crisis and creating stewards of the land: The program also acts indirectly as a unique form of alternative climate action. It is primarily successful because it nurtures the spiritual relationship between young people and the land in a way which creates environmental awareness, and lifelong stewards of the land who are committed to protecting

[65] "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
[66] Helen L. Berry et. al., "Mind, Body, Spirit: Co-benefits for Mental Health from Climate Change Adaptation and Caring for Country in Remote Aboriginal Australian Communities," *New South Wales Public Health Bulletin* 21, no. 6 (2010), 139- 142.
[67] Statistics Canada, "First Nations People, Métis and Inuit in Canada: Diverse and Growing Populations," Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. March 27, 2018, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-659-x/89-659-x2018001-eng.htm.
[68] Berry et. al., "Mind, Body, Spirit: Co-benefits for Mental Health from Climate Change Adaptation," (2010), 139- 141.

it. When youth have a personal connection to the land, and particularly one that is spiritual in nature, they are more likely to recognize themselves as stakeholders in environmental issues. This approach is more sustainable than many other types of climate action because it focuses on creating value systems centred on respect for the land, rather than simply thinking of climate action as a compartmentalized public policy issue.[69] Throughout the program, Elders discussed the way that their ancestors cared for the land and relied on it for survival before settler-colonial activity forced them to rely on alternative ways of life. Through teaching youth about the history of their people, the youth can develop a more personal connection to and understanding of the land, and the knowledge of how their own identity relates to both. Through learning parts of their Cree language, the youth found that their language is deeply connected to the land that their ancestors lived on.[70]

The program also offers youth the chance to partake in activities and ceremonies which require use of the land, and foster connection to it. Through these activities, youth gain a greater appreciation of what the natural environment offers. For example, they participated in a canoe trip where they slept on the beach and used branches for cushioning under their sleeping mats. They also had the opportunity to assist with scraping the fur from a moose hide using a scraping tool made of bone. Becky explained that the moose hide can be used for a variety of things, including for making drums, moccasins and rope. She talked about the uses

69 "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
70 "Discussion about the Land- Based Learning Program," Interview(s) by author, (June 25th- 27th, 2019), Informal discussions with youth participants in the program about their experiences.

for each part of the moose, and how historically, no part of any animal killed would go to waste.[71]

3.1 (d) Building community connectedness: The program truly facilitates intergenerational connectedness within the community. The outdoor space has no capacity limit, and any number of visitors, Elders, and community members are welcome to observe or participate. Through holding informal discussions with the Elders and youth, I gained insight into what the program truly means to them.

Many of the Elders identified that they are retired and spend a lot of their time at home. They talked about how their children and grandchildren come to visit sometimes, but many said their family members live in Winnipeg, and only come to Misipawistik occasionally. The Elders said that they love Monday mornings because of the camps, and that seeing the youth brings them joy and a sense of purpose. The Elders gave the youth lessons, telling them to visit their family members, and especially their Elders, often, before they would no longer be with them. They discussed how the camp makes the youth more interested in the land. They felt that the program makes the youth more aware of where they come from and makes them more interested in staying in the community and making a difference there.[72] The camp also provides a space for the Elders to connect with one another. They seemed to share close friendships and were always laughing and joking together.[73]

71 "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
72 "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
73 "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).

Through speaking with the youth, I learned that they are equally fond of spending time with the Elders. During the camp, I assisted in facilitating a leadership workshop where the youth were asked to work in groups to create an idea for a community initiative that they could execute together. The group I worked with decided that they loved the program so much that they wanted their community project to essentially be an extension of it. They said that they wished they had more time to learn beading, and how to make bannock from the Elders.[74] One of the youths said that through a lesson about family trees and relations within the community, she learned that she had another Kokum (grandmother) whom she did not know about before. The youth also talked about the new friends they had found in one another.

Many of the youth discussed wanting to pursue education and careers in the areas of conservation, monitoring work, or fishing, hunting, and trapping. They raved about how much fun the canoeing trip had been, and also mentioned that it was 'cool' to see how their ancestors might have lived 'right on the land.'[75] During another part of the leadership workshop, I asked the youth to close their eyes and picture themselves 5 years in the future. I asked them questions, and then had them open their eyes and draw their imagined futures. One boy drew a picture of himself and his siblings fishing on Lake Winnipeg. He said that he wants to be a fisherman to provide for his dad, as his dad has always provided for him.[76]

The youth were able to discuss environmental issues at length. They described how their ancestors once protected and cared for the lands and waters, and how hydro-electric development had changed their lifestyles. When asked about what connection to the land

[74] "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
[75] "Discussion about the Land- Based Learning Program," Interview(s) by author, (June 25th- 27th, 2019).
[76] "Discussion about the Land- Based Learning Program," Interview(s) by author, (June 25th- 27th, 2019).

means to them, the majority of the youth said something along the lines of, “It’s something you have to feel and experience for yourself.”[77]

3.2 Misipawistik’s kanawenihcikew Guardians program: Besides Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw, Misipawistik is also implementing other types of programming which address disruptions to the land and facilitate social connection. In November of 2018, the Misipawistik’s Kanawenihcikew Guardians program was developed.[78] According to The Indigenous Leadership Initiative, “Guardians are employed as the ‘eyes on the ground’ in Indigenous territories. They monitor ecological health, maintain cultural sites and protect sensitive areas and species… they (also) promote intergenerational sharing of Indigenous knowledge...”[79] In Misipawistik, the Guardian program brings together community members and even employs youth from the Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw land-based learning program over the summer to work alongside the Elders and other Guardians.

According to the Misipawistik Cree Nation webpage, “MCN members have identified fisheries, moose and forestry as priorities.”[80] During the winter, MCN Kanawenihcikewak were monitoring a fishing closure on the Saskatchewan River. Currently, they are collecting new moose harvest data.[81] The program helps to assert rights over the territory and ensure the natural health of the lands and waters, which addresses the disruptions which occur because of the climate crisis. Guardians in other communities spend time doing local monitoring work and

[77] “Discussion about the Land- Based Learning Program,” Interview(s) by author, (June 25th- 27th, 2019).
[78] Misipawistik Cree Nation, "MCN HOLDS SWEARING-IN CEREMONY AND BLESSING FOR KANAWENIHCIKEWAK," Misipawistik Cree Nation, https://misipawistik.com/news-&-events/f/mcn-holds-swearing-in-ceremony-and-blessing-for-kanawenihcikewak.
[79] "Indigenous Guardians Program," Indigenous Leadership Initiative, https://www.ilinationhood.ca/our-work/guardians/.
[80] Misipawistik Cree Nation, "MCN HOLDS SWEARING-IN CEREMONY AND BLESSING.”
[81] Ibid.

developing new knowledge based on the changing environment, while preventing visitors from mistreating the land by over-fishing, bringing in invasive species or over-hunting.[82]

During the Misipawistik History Teaching, representatives from the organization Nature United visited the camp to talk about Healthy Country Planning. In addition to developing its own land code in 2017, Misipawistik's Healthy Country Planning framework is part of the Guardians program and helps to create a community-wide plan to maximize rights to their land. During the camp, workers assisted in the initial planning process with the Elders, youth, and educators.[83] According to Nature United, Healthy Country Planning is: "A modified version of methodology used… to create land-use plans, wildlife management plans, protected area plans, etc. It… involves a series of meetings and workshops where Indigenous leaders, resource managers, and community members, and potentially non-Indigenous stakeholders, gather to create a plan to look after the land and keep it healthy."[84]

The Elders identified key areas of land that they hope to protect, and described what a healthy, revitalized Misipawistik will look like in the future. They also discussed how they can monitor and evaluate their own tactics for restoring the land. This type of programming will empower intergenerational action that can address the climate crisis and the effects of Hydro development, while bringing the community together for a unified purpose.

[82] "Connection to the Land and Disruptions in Misipawistik," Interview by author, (June 26, 2019), Melinda Robinson and Alice Cook.
[83] "Visit to Misipawistik: Observations," Observations of author, (June 23rd- 27th, 2019).
[84] "Healthy Country Planning," Nature United, https://www.natureunited.ca/what-we-do/our-priorities/investing-in-people/healthy-country-planning/.

SECTION 4: LAND-BASED PROGRAMMING IN URBAN SCHOOL DIVISIONS

While land-based learning programs are most common in Indigenous communities, urban school divisions have also recognized the benefits and are using adapted versions of this programming. In speaking with a variety of land-based educators in urban environments, common challenges and common benefits were identified.

4.1 Barriers and challenges to establishing land-based learning programs:

4.1 (a) Lack of funding: Most educators stated that they lack access to long-term or stable funding. Additionally, most educators identified that they spend extra hours of their own, unpaid time searching for donors, and working on grant applications. The majority of people interviewed identified themselves as being the sole coordinators for their program. This was attributed to a lack of funding, and a lack of interest by other employees in land-based education. Barriers to receiving grant money include that funding must be approved by the administration, and that many grants target non-profit organizations.[85]

4.1 (b) Administrative and bureaucratic barriers: Many educators working on implementing land-based learning programs on their own discussed problems with gaining support from the school divisions they worked within. They found few resources on how to design programs with the provincial curriculum in mind, or how to deal with additional safety concerns, such as risks associated with bringing students near bodies of water, or near wildlife. School administrators were described as being very reluctant to implement Indigenous programming without intensive consultation with Elders and Indigenous organizations. All

[85] "Discussion and consultation with land- based educators and program coordinators working in schools in, and outside of Winnipeg, Manitoba," Various dates. In total, 12 educators were interviewed either in person, or over the phone.

educators identified this as a necessary step to ensure culturally relevant and authentic programming, while also identifying that Elders should be paid an honorarium or a salary. However, three educators also said that their administrators had used this as a reason not to endorse this programming, citing extra expenses, lengthy periods of consultation, and fears of mis-representing Indigenous knowledge. Some educators indicated that it was difficult to convince their superiors of the relevance of their programming to the current provincial curriculum, and some believed that racism or ignorance on the part of their superiors may have played a role in the lack of support they received.[86]

4.1 (c) Lack of access to 'true' nature: Many educators identified that they wanted more opportunities to take students on field trips to areas with more trees or bodies of water that resemble 'true' nature. The majority of outdoor spaces in the urban environments I visited consisted of prairie grasses, while some had ponds or ditches. Some schools did not have onsite areas for programming, and instead used nearby parks or fields. Those educators explained that this process involves obtaining permission from administration and gathering permission forms from parents and/or guardians weeks in advance. As a result, going outdoors to learn cannot be 'spontaneous,' and may end up being planned on a day that has poor weather.[87]

4.2 Benefits and successes of establishing land-based learning programs: Many of the benefits of land-based learning programs identified by educators in urban schools are similar to those of Misipawistik. These include improving student retention, facilitating community connectedness, improving the mental health of students, and assisting with cultural

[86] "Discussion and consultation with land- based educators," Various dates.
[87] "Discussion and consultation with land- based educators," Various dates.

revitalization. It is important to consider that Indigenous students in urban schools may feel further disconnected from their culture and identity than those living in their own communities. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,[88] the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action[89] and the recommendations from the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls report[90] all assert the importance of offering culturally relevant education to Indigenous youth: "Article 14: 3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language."[91]

However, offering programming that separates youth from their peers may not be the complete answer. The following two examples demonstrate additional benefits that apply to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

4.2 (a) Encouraging climate action: Land-based learning programs provide an opportunity for all youth who live in urban environments to develop a connection to the land. Many youths who grow up in urban environments do not have regular access to outdoor spaces and therefore lack any sort of connection to nature.[92] One educator talked about the land as a magic place for imagination and learning, to which many young people lack access. As

[88] "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples For Indigenous Peoples," United Nations,https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html, Articles 11, 13, 14.
[89] Northern Affairs Canada, "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action," Government of Canada; Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, (February 19, 2019), https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525, Calls to Action 8, 12, 13, 62, 63.
[90] Lara Z, "Final Report MMIWG Recommendations," MMIWG, (May 29, 2019), https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/, Recommendations "Calls for Justice for All Governments: Culture" 2.2, 2.3, 2.4.
[91] "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," United Nations, p. 7.
[92] "Discussion and consultation with land- based educators," Various dates.

previously discussed, by nurturing a personal and spiritual connection to the land, these programs produce stewards of the land who are more environmentally conscious.

4.2 (b) Advancing reconciliation and understanding: Bringing Indigenous knowledge into urban schools can improve an understanding and appreciation of Indigenous culture. In the western education system, non-Indigenous youth are often only taught about the atrocities committed against Indigenous peoples by settler-colonialism, which is highly important, but are rarely shown any aspects of Indigenous cultures. Land-based learning programs can help to address racist or misguided perceptions of Indigenous people by bringing in Elders to teach about their cultures and providing the opportunity for non-Indigenous youth to engage and participate in Indigenous ceremonies or activities.[93] This is especially important in younger year classrooms, where youth are more impressionable. Land-based learning programs may also bring together and bridge differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students by creating a safe, shared space for learning and asking questions.

SECTION 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based in part on the concerns and ideas of local residents of Misipawistik, as learned through consultation and interviews, and align with both the environmental and educational goals of Misipawistik Pimatisiméskanaw. Though these recommendations are targeted to government, they can also apply to other Indigenous communities throughout Canada.

[93] "Discussion and consultation with land- based educators," Various dates.

5.1 The Manitoba Provincial Government - The Minister of Finance should: **(1)** Share revenues obtained from resource development entities, such as hydro-electric companies, working in Indigenous communities with the residents of those impacted communities. ***As a joint effort, the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Relations and the Minister of Sustainable Development should:*** **(2)** Commission an independent, credible body to conduct a review of resource development entities' environmental and social impacts within Indigenous communities with the intent of providing policy alternatives to reduce impact in both areas. Reviews should be completed prior to license agreements and should be published in a final report that is accessible to Indigenous communities. ***The Premier of Manitoba and the Minister of Education and Training should:*** **(3)** Formally recognize the right of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis groups to design their own systems of education. **(4)** Recognize the benefits of land-based education and award credits for transcripts. Provide increased, no-barrier, permanent funding for the adoption of Indigenous-led, land-based programming in both rural, Indigenous communities, and urban school divisions. Funding should include material resources, spaces, and salaries for Elders and Indigenous educators. **(5)** Fund and support a province-wide inquiry into recommendations for a new public-school curriculum which recognizes and includes Indigenous teachings and knowledge in required courses and electives. This could involve pooling existing resources and developing new recommendations through commissioned meetings between Elders, Knowledge Keepers, land-based educators, and Indigenous educators. **(6)** Create new stipulations which require educators teaching required courses to include a minimum number of outdoor teaching hours per each season in teaching schedules.

5.2 The Federal Government - ***The Prime Minister of Canada and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change should:*** **(1)** Formally recognize Indigenous peoples as the true stewards of the land, and continue to provide funding for Indigenous-led, land-based programming. **(2)** Recognize the work of Indigenous-led, land-based programs and other Indigenous-led initiatives as climate action strategies and provide funding for these strategies.

5.3 Resource- development entities, such as hydro-electric companies working with Indigenous communities should: **(1)** Continue to provide funding for community-based environmental research and monitoring work, and new Indigenous-led climate action-oriented initiatives. **(2)** Partner with land-based monitoring programs throughout Manitoba to provide long-term, stable funding, including for youth employment, while allowing the programming to maintain independence. **(3)** Partner with land-based learning programs in Indigenous communities to facilitate workshops about climate change and sustainability and to provide funding. **(4)** Require that all northern employees participate in training led by hired local residents regarding history and connection to the land. **(5)** Include Indigenous knowledge and monitoring reports, with full recognition for these contributions, in any official reports regarding the area's environmental integrity.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSION

Misipawistik Cree Nation has been significantly affected by settler-colonialism, the construction of the Grand Rapids Generating Station, and, more recently, the climate crisis. The following are some effects of these disruptions which still exist today: *(1) High costs of living, while forcing new lifestyles leading to greater poverty or reliance on social assistance. (2) Intergenerational trauma as a result of residential schools, abuses and being disconnected from*

the land leading to substance abuse, illness and problems with familial and community structures. (3) Disrupting the Cree lifestyle which focusses on the land and helping one another, leading to focus on individuals above community. (4) The Generating Station's construction and presence leading to environmental degradation affecting the land and contributing to loss of lifestyle. As a result, young people no longer feel connected to the land. (5) Increased effects of the climate crisis making it more difficult to rely on traditional knowledge and land-based professions, leading to health problems and increased reliance on social assistance. (6) Loss of language and culture as a result of settler-colonialism and environmental degradation leading to further disconnect from one another, and a lack of common identity and wellness.

Misipawistik's combination of programming provides an example of what can be done at the community level to address these disruptions. Through this programming, Misipawistik is building intergenerational resilience and connectedness, while revitalizing the Cree culture. It also proves purposeful in advancing reconciliation, addressing health issues and tackling the climate crisis. This model can also be used in other Indigenous communities facing similar disruptions to connection to the land. Further research can evaluate the long-term benefits of land-based education in urban classrooms and Indigenous communities, as most programs are relatively new. It would also be beneficial to create a more detailed community mapping document which outlines the schools in Manitoba already using land-based programming. Through this, research could demonstrate how wide-spread and impactful land-based education really is, which would entice the Provincial Government to provide increased funding and resources for this type of programming.

SECTION 7: IMPACT

One purpose of this report was to document and showcase the benefits of the Misipawistik Pimatisimeskanaw, and to demonstrate the ways in which this programming addresses various disruptions. This programming can also be used as a community development model for other Indigenous communities affected by settler-colonialism, resource development, and the climate crisis. This report, as well as the pamphlet which accompanies it, can be shared with Indigenous communities through the Samuel Centre for Social Connectedness webpage, through Becky Cook and the Elders, and through land-based education conferences. It can also be distributed to land-based educators in urban school divisions, and to school boards interested in implementing this programming. The pamphlet outlines various credible frameworks with which land-based learning aligns, and the report describes a variety of other benefits of the programming. Both documents can be used by educators in urban school divisions to demonstrate to their administration the benefits of providing funding and support for land-based programming in their institution.

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