

2022 ILC Culture Camp Moose Hunt



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Activities

This year's Culture Camp/Moose Hunt was a complete success. The weather this time around was not the defining factor of the trip and we could do more than just stay warm and dry! ILC students practiced moose calls, used paddles to imitate bull moose, and picked huge cranberries for breakfast pancakes. We set and retrieved a fish net for whitefish in Pickhandle Lake. Ruth Johnny demonstrated the cutting of the fish and showed students all parts of the fish that could be eaten. Students were then able to cut their own fish and set them out to dry. Ruth made a big pan of fish guts that students were able to try for themselves. David Johnny brought out a sheep horn bow that he had made over 6 months and showed students the steps in creating this beautiful hunting tool. He then demonstrated how to cover a birch bark canoe he had begun over the summer. He was going to use birch bark, but was able to show students how to use canvas given the time constraints of the camp. Regional Chief Kluane Adamek visited the camp and students discussed various issues around the fire with her. Beaver Creek RCMP were invited to the camp and after many conversations with our students, gave us an escort to our firewood area and helped students haul the firewood to the truck and back to the camp. The wind dropped enough one



afternoon that we could get the canoes out on to the lake. We took our students and David and Ruth's son Eddie to the far end of the lake for some paddling and moose calling. Along the way Eddie picked a duck out of the water and put it in the canoe. "Tostito" the duck stayed with us until we came back to camp, and he decided to rejoin his duck friends. It was touch and go whether Tostito would be staying for dinner, but the students decided duck would not be on the menu that night. Each morning and evening our group would walk twenty minutes into a beautiful meadow and call for moose and listen for any answer back. We did hear antlers in the bush, but usually only swans and ducks would answer us back. I think they were laughing. Every day was full, with keeping the fire going, gathering firewood, and keeping camp clean.



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Goals

The ILC's goals for this trip have not changed:

- To integrate Yukon First Nation perspectives and ways of knowing and doing into the curriculum.
- To utilize the experience of a moose harvest to support relevant cross-curricular connections and integration (P.E., English, Social Studies, Science)
- To build capacity and relationship with the First Nation communities and elders
- To experience a moose hunt with traditional practices and guidance from an Elder.
- To affirm ILC students in their Indigenous heritage
- To supplement the ILC food program with wild meat. The ILC staff and students cook a meal every week of the year for our students.
- To connect students together and to connect students to the ILC

Aside from being mooseless again this year, we have realized our goals. When we set out to the Johnny's camp, we have a loose idea of what might happen and what might activities we may participate in. We have learned that when we are invited to a traditional camp that the best strategy is to be flexible and open to participating in what the Johnnys and the environment allow us to try. We know that there will be visitors to the camp, from the elementary students to White River First Nation Elders, and the students are going to gain from all the relationships they will create. From previous years we know that the students are going to have an incredible experience and by simply bringing students to this beautiful place will help them grow within themselves, connect the group, and enhance their relationship to the ILC. I truly believe that bringing students to the land contributes to the same goals of the YFWET. We can see the students' relationship to the land change over the week. Every year the students' responses are the same. They don't want to go home. They know that the land is worth protecting and they reflect back on their time at Pickhandle lake for the rest of the school year.



(Tostito catching a ride in the canoe)

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Communication

Upon our return to the ILC students created a poster to display our camp to the school body and it stays on the wall in our main room for the rest of the school year. Students and visitors alike end up asking a lot of questions about the camp and this helps spread the word for our next camp. The ILC created a Thank You post on our Facebook page for the YFWET on November 3 to show the public our appreciation for support, and we will place an advertisement in local newspapers including YFWET at the end of the school year. The Culture Camp Moose Hunt is becoming more well known. Both the CBC and the First Nation Education Directorate were present for parts of the camp this year. This has a positive and negative effect on our students, as it's great that more people learn about the camp, but our students become more anxious around more people. This will be something we will have to manage as we move into future years.

Financial Report

We had most of our costs dialed in after the last few years of uncertainty. We asked for less money as we have funding for food from the First Nation Education Directorate, but our main surprise was the cost of the rental vehicle. Our first year we were able to rent a vehicle for about \$800 from Norcan. We rented through the Yukon government and found that the costs had risen substantially. Unfortunately, the final numbers on that rental and gas will not be available from Finance until sometime after December, but the approximate number was closer to \$1700 for the truck and \$500 for the gas. We will need to find a better way to do the rental next year. Other costs and included receipts are for our camp kitchen for which I did not request funds. We are finding ways to become more self-sufficient when we arrive in camp.

Reflection

Thank you for your continued support of our program! This camp sets the tone for the rest of our year at the ILC. Students experience time on the land and engage with members of the White River First Nation, and they are motivated to commit further with their schooling. We see this year after year with the students who have participated in the camp and look forward to see the impact for future students!

