



P.O. Box 10  
PEGUIS RESERVE, MANITOBA ROC 3J0  
Telephone: (204) 645-2359 Toll Free: 1-866-645-2359 Fax:(204) 645-2360

Mike Sutherland Oral Presentation - Scheduled for 24 May 2017

Peguis First Nation  
Clean Environment Commission Hearing  
Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project

Re: Peguis First Nation Traditional Activities

This presentation is based on my personal knowledge, teachings and what I have learned from other Peguis First Nation community members. ***This presentation does not represent the total traditional knowledge base of Peguis First Nation or its members.***

1. Personal Experience

- Traditional activities
  - We are part of the environment along with the plants, animals, fish, and all life.
  - Personal activities follow the seasons.
  - Summer – Examples - berry picking, farming, harvesting plants like Seneca roots and medicinal medicines. Angling.
  - Fall – Examples - prepare for the hunt, Elk, then Moose and Deer. Hunt Rough Grouse, rabbit. Pick Weekei root and other plants. Trapping for muskrat and beaver. We also harvest our gardens. Cutting wood.
  - Early Winter – Examples - prepare for trapping, baiting Marten boxes, December. Start trapping season. Ice fishing under the ice.
  - Later Winter – Examples - Trapping – fisher, marten, coyote, weasel, mink, otter etc. Otter fur is used for traditional purposes.
  - Spring – Examples - Fishing and gill netting. Trapping Muskrat and Beaver.
  - I follow this pattern year after year. This started when I was 8 years old, and continues to this day. I started trapping when I was 12.
- Teacher of land based skills – May show videos of land based teaching.
  - Started teaching when my son was 5 years old. Take him and his cousins, fishing, hunting, scouting, showing them tracks, areas where the animals migrate to, calving, rutting, wintering range. Teach them what is good to eat in different seasons. Basic skills such as fire making, and plant harvesting.
  - Also taught safety, hunting, travel over ice and snow etc.
  - In 2007 I developed a land-based education program.
  - Worked with the Peguis School on land-based teaching. We teach activities pertaining to each season. We use an area called Tommy's Point and along Lake Winnipeg shoreline.

- Knowledge Keeper – May show videos of activities on the land.
  - Gaining the knowledge I have is not something you can learn in 4 years in school.
  - This is a lifetime of learning, hands on learning, trying things, visualization, watching the animals and fish, observing the earth and changes to the environment.
  - Also listening to the teachings and knowledge from our Elders.
  - Lifetime of listening, learning and doing.
  - It is one thing to learn it is another to pass it on and teach the next generation.
  - It takes specific people to pass the knowledge.
  - It has to be someone who is willing to teach.
  - It is something that I had to be. Direction from the Creator.
  
- Respect
  - Over the years the teaching became more complex: hunting, respect, ceremony, only take what you need. Prepare the animals for storage.
  - Respect comes from the teachings from our Elders.
  - When you are given the knowledge, teachings and understandings you must respect them and pass them down to the next generation.
  - You must provide the knowledge and teachings to the community.
  - Passing the knowledge along is part of the respect for the teachings and the people of our community.
  - To respect is be humble and thankful as to what you have been taught and what you have to teach.

## 2. Traditional Activities

- Some Traditional Practices by Peguis members
  - Vary from person to person and season to season.
  - Many people practice, some practices at different times of the years.
  - Hunters, gathering, harvesters, trapping, medicine pickers and fishers.
  - Different families practice different things. Example - Medicine picking at different times of the years.
  - Ceremonies are practiced at different times of the year.
  - People harvest medicines for family and friends for healing.
  - Ceremony examples.
    - Coming of age, fasting, supervised by Elders.
    - Vision ceremonies fasting for healing.
    - Ceremonies on the land for different purposes at specific places.
    - Harvesting animals and birds for ceremony purposes.
  - Different families hunt at different times of the year in different places.
  - Harvesting Seneca root for selling and medicine.

- People go North, South, West, East fishing on lakes and rivers.
- Many families still garden, raise animals and harvest from the land.
- We are a people that depend on wood for shelter: cabins, sweat lodges, fire wood, spears, bows & arrows, medicine, fencing, tools, trapping, travel.
- Our people have worked in the bush for hundreds of years, cutting wood for fire, logs for building, using willows to make sweat lodges, posts & rails for fencing, logs for dead falls.
- We know when to harvest wood products at various times of the year, depending what it would be used for.
- We know our trees, willows, and shrubs.
- We also use certain trees willows and shrubs for medicine.
  
- Peguis history of traditional practices
  - We run a land based program called “The Ways of Our People”. Developed around the history of our people, how we used to harvest and live on the land. This has included activities in Northern Manitoba.
  - Example – hunting, stopping at the end of the line, making a shelter. Today people may have a cabin.
  - Example – Medicine picking has increased again in our community. More prevalent in the last 20 years.
  - Fewer families today who subsist on traditional foods from the land.
  - But there is a greater concern today about the use of our traditional territory by others. How it affects our traditional activities.
  - Our people practice traditional activities across Manitoba.
  - Traditional practices ebb and flow over time.
  - Example – Our Anglican Church has incorporated some traditional activists like Pipe Smoke.
  
- Multiple concurrent uses of the land
  - Example – Trapping is a multi-use of land. I trap East of Peguis along Washow Peninsula. Want to setup a cabin. Can then use the area for trapping, fishing, gathering, and firewood collection.
  - Our Elders taught us that we use the land for multiple purposes. We cycle what we harvest on the land.
  - My Grandfather taught us about sustainability. Only use what you need.
  - Certain parts of the land and forest have a lot to offer. Harvesting, fishing, trapping in the same area.
  - I have seen the harvesting of small trees and plants from the forest and take them home.
  - Nice to see our people practicing horticulture.
  - The connection to the land is important.

- We were taught when we were young to watch the world, environment, animals, and birds, weather.
3. Peguis First Nation Traditional Activities
- Use of the land and occupancy of the land.
    - Where our people stay, live, practices our culture and ceremonies.
    - Reserve lands, cabins, going out onto the land. There has been a resurgence of our people going out back on the land. Usually in family clusters.
    - Examples – Near our reserve lands, parks, provincial forests, open Crown land.
    - Our people are looking for natural places to get some quiet. People camp; use RVs, or stay in a hotel.
    - Our people are travelling to get back on the land. They are learning about the land. Maybe just camping. They are going out more and more.
    - Families have their own favorite places.
  - Cultural practices
    - Cultural activities have increased. Our people go out for fasting, sweats, Sundance. Our cultural practices are increasing again.
    - Our people go to certain Elders for direction.
    - Picking medicines is a prime activity.
  - Fishing
    - Our people are very diverse. They want to practice different activities. Fishing is very family focused.
    - Many families fish together. Lots of angling in the spring, spear fishing and gill netting.
    - Fishing is not confined to just winter fishing.
    - Our people fish all the way to Buffalo Point, on smaller lakes, rivers and streams.
    - Our people go out for recreation angling and for food.
    - This reflects our history.
  - Gathering
    - Lot of our people gathers food, medicines, and berries.
    - Our people have lots of stories about harvesting and when the best time to harvest.
    - Our people will travel long distances to harvest such as berry picking.
    - Forested areas that are protected are very important for this.
    - There are specific areas to pick medicines, cannot be near agriculture areas or development.
  - Game Hunting
    - As people of the land, we hunt: Deer, Elk and Moose.
    - There are a few people who still eat bear meat.
    - One of the things I have noticed, is more people understand the harvest has to be sustainable.

- Taking only what you need.
- A lot of the people hunting are doing it in a more respectful manner.
  - Example – preparing the harvested meats for Elders.
- Rabbit hunting is coming back.
- The Elders that are still around are being provided with wild meat. It is a taste of history, a matter of respect.
- It is critical to respecting our Elders.
  
- Bird Hunting
  - We are big into bird hunting. Examples - Rough Grouse in the fall.
  - Travel extensively to bird hunt.
  - A lot of people come to our area to hunt geese.
  - Significant number of geese and ducks in our area.
  - The Rough Grouse cycles.
  - The Spruce Hen is abundant.
  - The Sharp Tailed Grouse population is abundant.
  - We have fall hunts.
  - We supply to our Elders.
  - Our people will hunt birds when out hunting big game and trapping.
  - Late fall and early spring bird hunting is the usual.
  
- Recreation
  - Recreation has changed over the years.
  - Fishing, angling for recreation.
  - We were one of the early-urbanized Nations.
  - Examples - Stickball, Lacrosse, Snow Snake.
  - Many of our activities now are hockey and baseball.
  - Our people participate in competition fishing.
  - We have master anglers.
  - Wilderness hiking, cross-country biking, cross-country skiing.
  - The activities change but it is still focused on family recreation activities.
  - We are like any other people who like to go out and camping all over Manitoba.
    - Tenting and RVs.
  - Many of our people go out on the Powwow trail every summer.
  - Very active, traditional and current. Out enjoying the environment.
    - Example - Summer triathlon in Peguis for Treaty Day celebration.

- Trapping
  - People are starting to trap again. Our people go all over the land.
  - Trapping was huge activity in my grandparent's time.
  - There has been decline since early 2000s.
  - Now there is an increase because people are retrained.
  - People are now weekend trappers.
  - It is about the connection to the land.
  - Once our people are connected to the land, they will not let go.
  - When you learn to trap you learn about sustainability.
  - When we are out on the land we are monitoring the land. We notice changes.
  - During the three seasons of trapping, fall, winter and spring we notice many changes.
  - Trapping provides you the greatest access to the land.
  - Our people have trapped for a very long time.
  
- Travel Routes
  - Travel to Southeast MB, Buffalo Point, Whiteshell Park, Sandilands.
  - Easier access by Peguis members living in the city.
    - Spend a day or a weekend. South East MB is crucial to our people living in Winnipeg, Selkirk, Brandon and Portage.
    - There is no other option close by to Winnipeg.
  - Summer - A lot of the travel in the summer is to green spaces for harvesting, recreation. Ceremony
  - Fall - Time is for hunting, recreation, camping.
  - Winter – Recreation, trapping, hunting. Everyone has his or her favorite place for trapping. Hunting until January.
  - Spring – Travel for fishing, spearing, dip netting, angling. Horticulture, transplanting in their yards. Pick medicines, tree bark etc.
  
- 4. Concerns about impacts on our traditional activities
  - Cultural and natural impacts from development
  - Loss of land for traditional activities to development
  - Impacts on the land and water from development
  - Changes to the habitat, animal-land interaction after development
  - Ability to access the land after development
  - Ability to continue traditional activities after development
  - Monitoring of construction and operations.

5. Recommendations if the transmission line is approved and built.

- Some mitigation recommendations:
  - The development of environmental protection plans should involve a series of community engagement meetings.
  - Contractors and Manitoba Hydro employees should be trained about sensitive sites that could be impacted during planning or construction (e.g., archaeological items or aboriginal artifacts), and what steps are to be followed.
  - Environmentally sensitive sites, such as locations of berry picking, medicinal plant harvesting, or sites where rare plants are found should be set-aside as non-herbicide zones, and monitored regularly.
  - Shrubs and herbaceous vegetation should be maintained as much as possible. This includes the ROW, and any areas impacted during construction or operation of MMTP.
  - Minimize the width of the corridor to the minimum safe width.
  
- Some monitoring recommendations:
  - Peguis should be involved in the investigation of sensitive or archeological sites.
  - Monitors from Peguis First Nation should be present at construction sites, especially if near identified cultural, traditional use, special or archeological sites.
  - A website should be maintained for the life of MMTP, should be easy to find, kept up-to-date, include a feedback function for all project information.
  - Annual investigations of environmentally sensitive sites should be conducted.
  - Peguis First Nation and other communities should be involved in the monitoring for the planned transmission line.

Documents Mike Sutherland may rely on:

- Treaty 1
- Peguis TLE Agreement
- Manitoba Hydro EIS for MMTP, Public Registry Files
- Manitoba Hydro MMTP CEC Hearing Information Requests
- Past Peguis First Nation land use and occupancy surveys, interviews, maps

Videos that may be shown:

- Peguis Language & Culture Youth Camp 2016
- <https://vimeo.com/154362730>
- Land Based Education: Fishing with Peguis Central School
- <https://vimeo.com/165309658>
- Brain Tanning: Application of Indigenous Thought - MFNERC
- <https://vimeo.com/88701091>