



NRCan-CFS Compendium of Activities for Indigenous Engagement (2019–2020)





Natural Resources
Canada

Ressources naturelles
Canada

NRCan-CFS Compendium of Activities for Indigenous Engagement (2019–2020)

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, as represented by the Minister of Natural Resources Canada, 2021

Cat.no. Fo4-159/2021E-PDF
ISBN 978-0-660-39188-5

A pdf version of this publication is available through the Canadian Forest Service Publications website
<http://cfs.nrcan.gc.ca/publications>.

Cet ouvrage est publié en français sous le titre: *Recueil des activités pour la mobilisation des Autochtones (2019-2020) du SCF-RNCan*.

Information contained in this publication may be reproduced, in part or in whole, and by any means, for personal or public non-commercial purposes, without charge or further permission, unless otherwise specified.

You are asked to:

- exercise due diligence in ensuring the accuracy of the materials reproduced
- indicate the complete title of the materials reproduced and the author organization
- indicate that the reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by Natural Resources Canada and that the reproduction has not been produced in affiliation with, or with the endorsement of Natural Resources Canada

Commercial reproduction and distribution are prohibited, except with written permission from Natural Resources Canada. For more information, please contact Natural Resources Canada at nrcan.copyrightdroitdauteur.nrcan@canada.ca.



Zagasso, 2021 Mural at Great Lakes Forestry Centre (GLFC) Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Photo: S. Phippen

NRCan-CFS Compendium of Activities for Indigenous Engagement (2019–2020)

From September 2019 to June 2020 the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) Community of Practice on Indigenous Engagement heard from the six Forestry Centres and two National Capital Region (NCR) branches on their Indigenous engagement experiences and efforts on building staff cultural competencies ([presentations available in GCDocs](#)). The key messages from these presentations have led to this Compendium of Activities, an evergreen document to help guide staff in advancing Indigenous engagement and reconciliation.

Best practices have been outlined in three categories: *Building and Maintaining Relationships*; *Research Collaboration and Recommendations Based on Lessons-learned*. For each category, notable examples from regions and branches are outlined as “Principles in Practice” to demonstrate how they have been successfully implemented. It is proposed that CFS report on its performance against these best practices annually, with perspectives and feedback provided by Indigenous partners, which could be included under “Principles in Practice”.

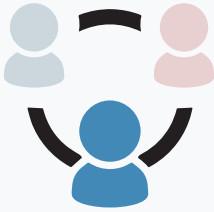


Building and maintaining relationships

- **Educate yourself.** Make continued efforts to better understand the realities of Indigenous people in Canada and the region you work within.
- **Identify the community(ies) that may have rights and interests** in your work based on the project location or subject matter and potential impacts.
- **Learn about the community(ies)** and their culture(s) and priorities.
- **Find out whom to contact** based on the subject matter and community governance structure/operations.
- **Make initial contact and continue to reach out**, responding to their lead.
- **Be open and transparent, flexible and make space for conversations** in your project timelines.



Indigenous Engagement event in Garden River First Nation, Ontario.
Photo: C.Trudeau



Principles in Practice

Pacific Forestry Centre collaborated with local Indigenous leaders on a project that showed settler and local First Nations histories using a Douglas-fir disk. This not only helped staff learn about local cultures and histories, it also strengthened those partnerships.

Northern Forestry Centre's Elder-in-Residence program provided staff with learning and cultural activities so they could better understand Indigenous cultures and histories both broadly and specific to the local area.

Great Lakes Forestry Centre prioritized the Call to Action #57 with hands-on interactive learning opportunities such as the Kairos Blanket exercise, bringing in several Indigenous Knowledge speakers and going to the local First Nation for the cultural experience.

Laurentian Forestry Centre taught researchers the importance of understanding traditional territories by overlaying maps of research areas with Indigenous territory boundaries.

Canadian Wood Fibre Centre worked with regional experts in Indigenous engagement to learn more about successful relationship building. Staff participated in several learning activities to increase their awareness of Indigenous culture across the country.

Atlantic Forestry Centre hosted a regional engagement session with local communities to facilitate knowledge sharing and build relationships for increased research collaboration.

Science Policy Integration Branch's A Tale of Two Centres projects provided staff with opportunities to hear from Elders and Knowledge Keepers in Natural Resource Canada spaces and in situ (e.g. sweat lodge ceremony).

Trade, Economics and Industry Branch's Indigenous economic programs staff visited a number of Indigenous communities to build relationships and learn more about how funded projects are progressing.



Research collaboration

- **Support staff awareness of the knowledge co-creation approaches** and importance of research partnerships with Indigenous communities and knowledge holders.
- Provide staff with **tools and solutions that can be used to facilitate research partnerships**, including best practices that have worked for different regions and research topics.
- Meet with Indigenous partners to discuss ideas for the project and **explore areas of common interest**.
- Based on the **First Nations principles of OCAP** (ownership, control, access and possession), ensure all parties understand how research will be conducted and how data will be shared during the project. This is critical in ensuring contributions by Indigenous partners are respected, protected and not shared beyond the scope of the agreement. It should also define how Indigenous partners access new data resulting from the project, creating a more circular research relationship.
- Develop a working arrangement with **clear roles and responsibilities for all parties**, clarifying and creating common expectations.
- **Validate data with partners** against agreed-upon outcomes that respond to CFS and community interests.



Principles in Practice

Atlantic Forestry Centre hosted a two-day engagement workshop in Membertou First Nation focussed on ways to “twin” two-eyed seeing, or Etuamptmunk, with CFS research. They have also collaborated with a First Nations group for the collection of leaf and wood samples for use in the traceability of wood from native species.

Laurentian Forestry Centre worked with the Indigenous Chair at Université Laval on a guide, “Initiative for Knowledge Co-creation in Collaboration with Indigenous Communities” describing the ethical foundations of relationships between researchers and Indigenous communities.

Great Lakes Forestry Centre’s relationship with the two local First Nations has a positive history as members of the Garden River First Nation work/worked at the centre. GLFC scientists have been working closely with the First Nations at the Chapleau researchers’ area since 2010.

Northern Forestry Centre has a MOU with the Cold Lake First Nation, based on collaborative research planning. This includes research on seedling growth for land reclamation, social and cultural aspects of landscape reclamation and advising social science research.

Pacific Forestry Centre researchers met with the forest manager for the Pacheedaht First Nation and shared information about their areas of work, which led to the First Nation expressing interest in carbon credits for their lands and submitting an IFI proposal. Through that project, the relationship grew and expanded to more staff.

Canadian Wood Fibre Centre is collaborating with the Indigenous enterprise Wahkohtowin Development GP Inc. and Indigenous communities on the Herbicide Alternative Program 2.0 to develop and implement a strategy to regenerate forests on RYAM tenures in Northeastern Ontario using alternatives to the application of chemical herbicides.

Science Policy Integration Branch research hubs have been taking active steps to encourage inclusion, including at the Cumulative Effects Workshop, Wildland Fires Working Group and 2019 Wildland Fire Conference (which includes an agreement to support the Atlantic Forestry Centre’s contributions to that file). Staff have also explored the cultural literacy of researchers, ethics and braiding of Indigenous knowledge, with support from the Office of the Chief Scientist for a whole-of-department perspective.

Trade, Economics and Industry Branch has taken an inclusive approach to program and application evaluation, with Indigenous representation at the table. This will help ensure the program is responsive to Indigenous priorities in the bio-heat and forest sector, but also allows applications to be considered with an Indigenous lens.

Recommendations based on lessons learned

- Don't assume relationships impact only your work. Create a **Research Liaison Officer** position between Indigenous communities and researchers that can support staff efforts and identify opportunities.
- Don't think that you have to use outdated or ineffective tools and processes. Develop **tools to facilitate exchanges** with Indigenous communities and researchers.
- Establish **measures to facilitate relationship building** with Indigenous communities.
- Don't always rely on the same pools of candidates for hiring. Create **opportunities for Indigenous recruitment** and employment locally.



Sweat Lodge Ceremony Indigenous awareness event in the National Capital region.
Photo: C. Rupp-Eke



Principles in Practice

Northern Forestry Centre created a guide for engagement and provides mentoring for ongoing learning and advancing reconciliation through their Elder in Residence program.

Pacific Forestry Centre provided advice and support to an Indigenous partner in areas of emerging interest, beyond existing research collaborations. In providing broader support outside of specific research areas, the relationship was strengthened further.

Laurentian Forestry Centre created a Research Liaison Officer position to help facilitate engagement and build bridges between Indigenous communities and researchers. This has led to greater opportunities for research partnerships.

Atlantic Forestry Centre has learned the value of a “doors are always open” policy to continue ongoing discussions and collaborations to strengthen relationships.

Canadian Wood Fibre Centre has built relationships with local Indigenous communities near the Petawawa Research Forest, including discussions on potential employment opportunities.

Great Lakes Forestry Centre has expanded their hiring since 2018 by hiring 4 Indigenous staff indeterminately, along with providing the opportunities of internships, secondments, and terms to 10 Indigenous people.

Science Policy Integration Branch learned the importance of co-developing research rather than planning without including Indigenous partner voices during the joint research on Indigenous Urban Forestry with Tree Canada. “Cold call” style of outreach led to few returns and low levels of feedback from previous funding recipients.

Trade, Economics and Industry Branch has established an evaluation board with Indigenous representation for incoming applications for the Indigenous Forestry Initiative.