



WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT HERITAGE RESOURCES: PHASE ONE ENGAGEMENT

Community & Protective Services
November 8, 2021 – March 31, 2022

M. Dougherty Consulting
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***“Heritage needs to be respectful of each
different, authentic group.”***

Engagement Response



With gratitude, we acknowledge that we are working within Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dene, and the unceded territory of the Métis.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Heritage resources management is a community-driven initiative in the creation of a plan and in the management of identified resources and sites. The Heritage Resources Management Plan (HRMP) is a strategic priority of the Wood Buffalo Culture Plan, which was adopted by Council in 2019.

The purpose of a HRMP is to provide a useful and proactive framework to encourage and facilitate heritage conservation activities in Wood Buffalo. It also serves as a guide for future initiatives for the identification, stewardship, and management of heritage resources.

Developing a successful HRMP requires the involvement of the community. As such, online surveys, virtual group discussions and individual discussions created a foundation for meaningful engagement.

This report is a synopsis of what the Heritage Resources Management Plan Project Team has heard and learned so far through Indigenous engagement, public engagement, and historical research. It does not complete the team's work in these areas, but rather is a snapshot in time of our current journey. We are listening!

M. Dougherty Consulting has completed this report with assistance and advice from the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public, stakeholder and Indigenous engagement opportunities for the initial phase of engagement were held from November 7, 2021 – March 31, 2022. Due to COVID-19 protocols, most engagement to date has been completed virtually.

WHAT WE DID

INDIGENOUS PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

4

First Nations

3

Métis Locals

2

Organizations

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



- Virtual group discussions
- Digital engagement (Participate Wood Buffalo, social media, email)
- Online & print survey



- Return postage-paid surveys (Fort Chipewyan residents, rural Elders and seniors, and urban seniors)
- Virtual group discussions
- Individual discussions
- In-person Community Coffee Chats

“Indigenous residents deserve recognition at minimum that these lands have traditionally been theirs, including places that were significant to them.”
Engagement Response

ENGAGEMENT CHANNELS

The project was promoted through the project’s Participate Wood Buffalo page, radio ads, social media campaign, news release, internal RMWB communications, and in-person during Community Coffee Chats.

629

Online Visits to Participate Wood Buffalo Project Page

49,192

Social Media Impressions

352

Social Media Comments, Clicks, Likes and Shares

30

Virtual & In-Person Discussions

138

Online Survey

WHAT WE HEARD


TOP 10 HERITAGE VALUES BASED ON PARTICIPATION

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Nature | 6. Heritage stories |
| 2. Indigenous heritage | 7. Exploration & adventure |
| 3. The rivers | 8. Resilience |
| 4. Natural resources | 9. Community |
| 5. Education & learning | 10. Collaboration/Partnership |

TOP 10 HERITAGE THEMES BASED ON PARTICIPATION

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Indigenous cultural heritage | 6. Settler colonialism |
| 2. Fur trade | 7. Modes of transportation |
| 3. Natural resources | 8. In/out migration |
| 4. Global economic trade network | 9. Displacement |
| 5. Treaty 8 | 10. Natural disaster |

THESE PLACES MATTER!



The most referenced and recognized historic resources and cultural landscapes found in the RMWB, as identified by engagement participants follows. A more detailed list can be found further into the report.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Fort McMurray Heritage Village | • The Snye |
| • Fort McMurray Heritage Shipyard | • Rivers/waterways/waterfront |
| • Abasand Oils Historic Site | • MacDonald Island |
| • Bitumount Historic Site | • Various trail systems |
| • Mitchell's Café (formerly RCMP) | • Moccasin Flats |
| • Fort McMurray Fire Hall #1 | • Fort Chipewyan |
| • Fort Chipewyan Bicentennial Museum | • Downtown Fort McMurray |
| • Fort McMurray Royal Canadian Legion | • Fort McMurray Tarsands Lions Park |
| • Churches in Fort Chipewyan | • Draper |
| • Keyano College | |

NEXT STEPS

We thank you for your input and ideas throughout the first stage of engagement on the Heritage Resources Management Plan. Next steps include continued conversations with Indigenous communities, regional open houses, resource assessments and evaluation, and other group and individual meetings. Our goals include project validations, inventory creation, heritage programming, and management planning. To stay informed about the project, or to receive project updates visit participate.rmwb.ca/hrmp.

INTRODUCTION

In June 2021, The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) launched the Heritage Resources Management Plan (HRMP) project. The What We Heard Report summarizes what we have learned through historical research and what we have heard through community engagement. This document is not an endpoint, rather it is step in a larger process. The Project Team will continue to learn, listen and adjust throughout the HRMP project.

ENGAGEMENT¹

Heritage Resources Management (HRM) is a community-driven initiative, and Heritage Management Plans must be developed via community input and engagement. RMWB is a diverse region built of many communities, and the Project Team understands that it alone cannot interpret community wants and needs. Planning should be guided by a broad and deep cross-section of the greater RMWB communities.

HRM is developed in three key phases, with engagement woven through all stages of development. The Phases are presented below in a linear timeline; however, it should be recognized many items are concurrent, and there is much overlap between the Phases.

Phase 1 - Discovery & Identification

This Phase examines which heritage pieces remain and begins to collect the stories, ideas and values associated with specific resources.

Phase 2 - Resources Evaluation

This portion of the project takes the learnings from Phase 1 and refines them through an evaluation process. This Phase will also focus on creating the Vision Statement and looks to the community to understand and explore options for Heritage Programming, which could inform, support and enliven Heritage Management in RMWB.

Phase 3 - Heritage Management Planning

The Management Plan is developed in Phase 3. While much of the plan will focus on technical and operational management, this portion of the project brings together the findings, evaluation results and learnings through Engagement.

Heritage Stewardship

The goal of HRM is empowerment through community Stewardship of Heritage. It is intended that the RMWB Heritage Resources Management Plan will give the community the Ability to Act, providing stewardship for historic places and cultural landscapes.



The primary objective for the RMWB HRMP is to manage the tangible, immovable heritage assets within the Municipality.

1- Engagement started in the summer of 2021. It was put on hold during a 5-week blackout period for municipal elections and relaunched in late October. Since the beginning of the project, the majority of engagement has been virtual meetings and online activities, as the Project Team has endeavoured to keep the project Covid-Safe.

Strategies & Tactics

We have used (and will continue to use) multiple strategies and tactics to help reach a wide demographic and cross-section of the RMWB.

- Indigenous engagement (direct outreach)²
- Group sessions (virtual)
- Digital engagement
 - Participate Wood Buffalo
 - Social media
 - Email
- Survey (online and paper)
- Return postage paper surveys
- One-on-one interviews
- Impromptu conversations
- Community Coffee Chat (events/open houses)

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN ASKING

Engagement has been focused on the identification of potential resources and heritage programming. This engagement has been multifaceted. Some technical questioning has been done internally at the municipality. Resource evaluation has been a primary consideration in Indigenous engagement.

The key questions we are asking relate to all three phases of heritage management: identification, evaluation and management. These questions are used in both survey and direct engagements:

1. Identification:

Thinking of historic places in Wood Buffalo, please share your favourite place, space, or heritage resource in the region.

2. Evaluation:

What about this place is important to you?

3. Management/Programming:

Along with stewardship of Heritage Resources, Heritage Management may include Heritage Programming. Programming can consist of events, commemoration, tours, interpretation, etc. How do you like to engage or participate in heritage in RMWB?

2- The health and safety of Indigenous communities is a priority to the RMWB. The RMWB recognizes that Indigenous communities are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. As such, the RMWB suspended in-person engagement with Indigenous communities from December 2021 to March 2022, which is the period during which the RMWB intended to undertake more extensive Indigenous engagement concerning the HRMP. Since Indigenous communities have expressed a strong preference for in-person engagement for the HRMP, the depth of engagement achieved at this juncture is out of step with non-Indigenous engagement, which has occurred primarily through online venues.

“Access to Natural Landscape is a one of the key elements of this region.”

Engagement Response



THEMES AND VALUES

Themes – Development themes are uncovered via research and engagement. The Project Team looks for specific occurrences, reoccurrences, foundational elements, and seminal pieces. The community may or may not appreciate these themes; however, each has impacted and/or driven community development over time.

Values – Heritage values are partly evidenced through research, but more so through engagement – question #2 above (qualitative analysis). These are the key elements that people cherish and reference as essential building blocks for Heritage Management.

Development Themes	Heritage Values
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous cultural heritage (foundational)• Fur trade• Natural resources• Global economic trade network• Treaty 8• Settler colonialism• Modes of transportation• In/out migration• Displacement• Natural disaster• The boreal forest• Boom/bust cycles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nature (natural environment)• Indigenous heritage• The Rivers & the waterways• Natural resources• Education & learning• The stories• Exploration & adventure• Resilience• Community (reliance upon and duty to)• Collaboration/partnership• Stewardship

VISION STATEMENTS

The Project Team has reviewed several applicable and Council-approved planning documents to understand the community vision and aspirations for heritage management. Vision statements were collected, and keywords and phrases were extracted for further consideration. These documents include (but are not limited to): RMWB Strategic Plan, Culture Plan, Public Art Plan, Draft Municipal Development Plan, and various Area Structure Plans.

VISION KEYWORDS & PHRASES

- Foundations
- Cultural heritage
- Natural beauty
- Sustainable
- Indigenous cultural heritage
- Natural landscape
- Traditional areas
- Sacred places
- Enjoying
- Protecting
- Traditional culture & language
- Preserved and celebrated
- Land has been secured
- Wonderful Environment
- Ever-changing clearwater river
- Preserve the natural landscape
- Relationships with neighbours
- Value the rich natural setting
- Natural environment is integral
- Cultural heritage
- Highly respected
- Celebrated
- Cultural activities
- Celebrations
- Natural environment
- Enhanced stewardship
- Partnership
- Support cultural identity
- Strong sense of identity
- History and optimism
- Environmental
- Well-being
- Heritage
- Vital
- Proud
- Sustainable



WHAT PLACES MATTERS MOST?

The following sections were developed from the 138 surveys (quantitative analysis). The image (below) illustrates the places that matter most to the respondent - a mix of Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes. The listings that follow put each in its component category.

Survey respondents overwhelmingly supported the existing heritage preservation and curatorial work at Heritage Village, the Shipyard, and the Fort Chipewyan Museum (noted in the images as: “museum”).

It should also be noted that there is a strong community identification with and preference for: rivers, waterfronts & waterways; Indigenous cultural heritage; and early oil/gas developments.



POTENTIAL HISTORIC RESOURCES

- Fort McMurray Heritage Village
- Fort McMurray Heritage Shipyard
- Abasand Oils Historic Site
- Bitumount Historic Site
- Mitchell's Café (formerly RCMP)
- Fort McMurray Fire Hall #1
- Fort Chipewyan Bicentennial Museum
- The Legion
- Churches (Fort Chipewyan)
- Keyano College

POTENTIAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPES and/or HISTORIC AREAS

- The Snye
- Rivers/waterways/waterfront
- MacDonald Island
- 'Trails'
- Moccasin Flats
- Fort Chipewyan
- Downtown Fort McMurray
- Lion's Park
- Draper

TOP 5 HERITAGE PROGRAMMING

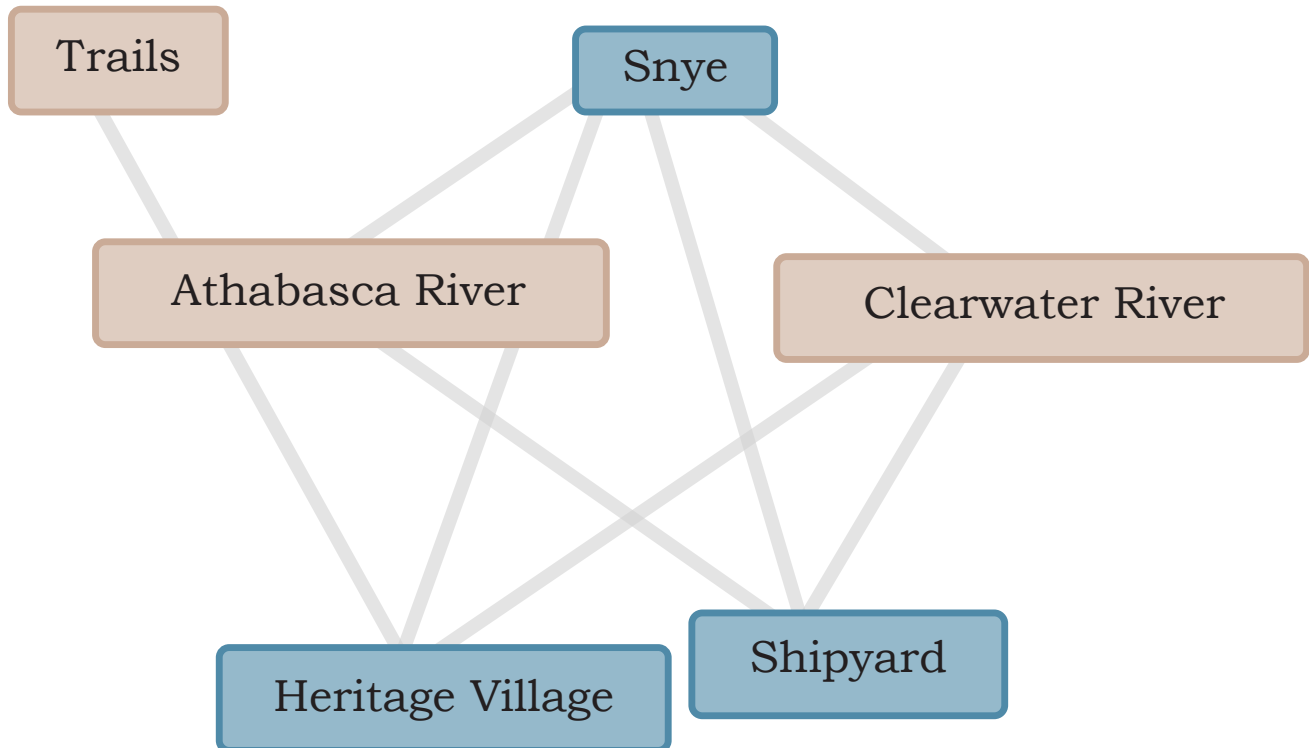
1. Events
2. Interpretive signage
3. Museums
4. Public art
5. Online engagement

Note: There is a reoccurring theme of “with” for heritage programming. That is to say, participants wish to experience programming with family, with children, and with friends. It should also be noted there is a theme of hospitality and inclusion: everyone, all ages, regular people, and people from all over the world.

POSSIBLE LINKAGE

Connecting linkages between Historic Resources, Cultural Landscapes and Heritage Programming is an integral part of the planning process. Using data from respondents, certain links can be made. For example, interpretive signage could be developed on a walk through the Prairie in Fort McMurray – connecting historic trails to the waterfronts and historic resources.

The signage could be general heritage or based on a Development Theme, such as Modes of Transportation.



EVALUATION

During engagement, there has been much discussion on why places are significant. There has also been a consideration on Why a municipality may or may not wish to protect or commemorate a heritage site. This section looks to give further insight into what criteria are used.

There is an existing framework used in Canada that suggests using five specific criteria:

- A- Theme/activity
- B- Institution/person
- C- Design/style/construction
- D- Information potential
- E- Landmark/symbolic value

For RMWB evaluations, the Project Team will include additional principles to allow for deeper considerations:

1. Historical legacies & ongoing harm
2. Opportunity for education & awareness
3. Amplifying histories (under-told and lesser-known)
4. Physical location
5. Levels of interest & engagement

In an attempt to decolonize our process, the Project Team is exploring adding an Indigenous Lens to evaluations. Suggestions from Indigenous Elders, community members and representatives include the use of:

Seven Sacred Teachings

- *Courage*
- *Respect*
- *Truth*
- *Love*
- *Humility*
- *Honesty*
- *Wisdom*

Medicine Wheel

- *Spiritual*
- *Physical*
- *Mental*
- *Emotional*

Storytelling

Elder's Sharing Circle

The Project Team is working with Indigenous communities to understand better these suggestions and how they could be applied to evaluating historic resources.

OTHER EXPRESSED CONCERNS

1. How/who of stewardship – who looks after the historic sites?
2. Protecting resources from trespass, plunder or amateur archeology.
3. Protecting information related to historic sites (private property, government, Indigenous groups).
4. The constraints of heritage conservation and the need for a better understanding of how policy/procedures work.
5. Impacts of heritage conservation on environmental stewardship.

***“It’s important to show life in
this region before the oilsands.”***

Engagement Response



PLACES OF INTEREST LIST

Places of Interest List (POIL) is an ongoing list of ‘potentially’ significant sites warranting further review. RMWB-POIL combines current fieldwork & survey information, engagement (specific suggestions from residents and communities), research of the historical record, and previous heritage work.

Name	Address/Location	Locale or Near	Site Type
Trails	Throughout	Various	Landscape
Cache 23 (Train-Wreck Site)	Rural	Anzac	Landscape
Airport House	Singer Drive	Anzac	Structure
Log Building	Stony Mountain Road	Anzac	Structure
Christina Lake Lodge & Cabins	Father Mercredi's Trail	Conklin	Structures
Saint Vincent Church	Christina Lake Drive	Conklin	Structure
Clearwater - Oil Extraction Plan	Draper Road	Draper	Landscape
Draper (Historic Area -railbed)	Draper Road	Draper	Historic Area
Draper Mine Site	Draper Road	Draper	Landscape
Fort Chipewyan III	Lake Front	Fort Chipewyan	Landscape
Athabasca Cafe	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Mah's Theatre	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Parks Canada Building	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
HBC re-build (Museum)	Evans Crescent	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Sundial	Lake Front	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Fraser Store & Buildings	Lake Front	Fort Chipewyan	Structures
NWMP Warehouse	Evans Crescent	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
HBC Building	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Bungalow	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Big Point	Rural	Fort Chipewyan	Landscape
Poplar Point	Rural	Fort Chipewyan	Landscape
Embarras Portage	Rural	Fort Chipewyan	Landscape & Structure
Treaty 8 Signing	Lake Front	Fort Chipewyan	Landscape
Fort Chipewyan (Historic Area)	Fort Chipewyan	Fort Chipewyan	Historic Area
1874 Day School	Lucas Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Anglican Church	Lucas Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Log House	Lucas Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Quonset	Lucas Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
HBC House	Lucas Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structures
Lodge	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure

***“Diversity is our strength,
and that should be
recognized.”***

Engagement Response

Nursing Station	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
RC Mission Church	Lake Front	Fort Chipewyan	Structure
Mission Point Outbuildings	Lake Front	Fort Chipewyan	Structures
Roadside Grotto	Mackenzie Ave	Fort Chipewyan	Landscape & Structure
Big Dock	Lake Front	Fort Chipewyan	Structures
Bitumont	Rural	Fort McKay	Landscape & Structures
Target Road	Rural	Fort McKay	Landscape
Cree Burn Lake	Rural	Fort McKay	Landscape
Quarry of the Ancestors	Rural	Fort McKay	Landscape
Beaver River Quarry	Rural	Fort McKay	Landscape
Moccasin Flats	Snye Park	Fort McMurray	Landscape
The Snye	Snye Park	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Bob Lamb Bandstand	Borealis Park	Fort McMurray	Landscape & Structure
Abasand	Rural	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Fort of the Forks	Rural	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Confluence of the Rivers	McDonald Island	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Waterways Railway	Saline Creek Parkway	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Mitchells (RCMP McMurray)	Manning Ave	Fort McMurray	Structure
New Town House	Hill Drive	Fort McMurray	Structure
Cottage	Fraser Ave	Fort McMurray	Structure
Square-Bungalow	Manning Ave	Fort McMurray	Structure

Warehouse	Manning Ave	Fort McMurray	Structure
Golosky Shed	Marshall Street	Fort McMurray	Structure
Fire Hall #1	King Street	Fort McMurray	Structure
King Street Bridge	King Street	Fort McMurray	Structure
Heritage Village	King Street	Fort McMurray	Structure
St. John Catholic Church	Hospital Street	Fort McMurray	Structure
Shipyard	Clearwater Drive	Fort McMurray	Landscape & Structures
Salt Plant	Tomlinson Street	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Waterways House	Bulyea	Fort McMurray	Structure
Pond Cairn	Snye Park	Fort McMurray	Structure
HBC Fort McMurray	McDonald Drive	Fort McMurray	Landscape
HBC Crain Base (Waterways)	Saline Creek Parkway	Fort McMurray	Structure
Treaty 8 Signing	Snye Park	Fort McMurray	Landscape
The Legion	Huggard Street	Fort McMurray	Structure
Keyano College	King Street	Fort McMurray	Structure
MacDonald Island	McDonald Drive	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Downtown (Historic Area)	Fort McMurray	Fort McMurray	Historic Area
Art Deco/Nautical (1980)	Franklin	Fort McMurray	Structure
Lion's Park	King Street	Fort McMurray	Landscape
Chard Siding - Bridge	Rural	Janvier/Chard	Structure
Meadow Creek - Bridge	Rural	Rural	Landscape & Structure
Cache 24	Rural	Rural	Landscape
Steamboat Landing (Clear-water)	Rural	Rural	Landscape
Winter Road	Rural	Rural	Landscape

“I think it’s really interesting how Wood Buffalo has long been a destination for immigrants to have a better life.”

Engagement Response



NEXT STEPS

The Project will continue engagement throughout the next Phases of development. It is currently moving from Phase 1 (Identification) into Phases 2 & 3 (Evaluation and Management Planning). Engagement will continue to inform and influence the overall processes.

The Next Steps include:

1. Continued Indigenous engagements
2. Continued public engagements
3. Resource assessment & evaluations

The Goals for upcoming Engagements include:

1. Project validations
2. Inventory creation
3. Heritage programming
4. Management planning

Continued Indigenous Engagement

The continued prevalence of COVID-19 has limited the depth of Indigenous engagement to date. The RMWB takes the health and well-being of local Indigenous communities seriously. The RMWB also acknowledges that Indigenous populations are vulnerable communities at a higher risk of severe outcomes concerning COVID-19. As such, in-person engagement with Indigenous communities was suspended from December 2021 to March 2022.

Since Indigenous communities have expressed a strong preference for in-person engagement, the depth of Indigenous engagement achieved to date is not consistent with what was envisioned in the project's Indigenous engagement plan.

Although Indigenous engagement has not advanced to an optimal place for this juncture of HRMP development, Indigenous engagement was never envisioned to have an 'end date.' It has always been the intention to develop the HRMP that provides a robust framework for continued Indigenous participation in managing the region's heritage resources.

“The natural surroundings will always be here, the building may perish, but the memories and connections will never disappear.”


Engagement Response



Going forward, the project team will focus on (1) strategic and value-added engagement and (2) ensuring that the Indigenous participation framework developed for the HRMP closes the engagement gap created by COVID-19.

Strategic and Value-added Engagement: since the window for Indigenous engagement regarding the initial HRMP, including an initial Places of Interest List, is closing, the engagement team will focus their efforts on engagement activities that create the most opportunity for Indigenous participation. The engagement team will reach out to Indigenous representatives to assess engagement options on a community-by-community basis. The engagement team will also carefully re-examine engagement topics to ensure that input is solicited that will have the most impact on the foundational elements of the HRMP.

Closing the Engagement Gap: the Project Team will collaborate closely with the Indigenous engagement team to understand the nature of the engagement gap created by the COVID-19 pandemic and design an Indigenous participation framework that addresses these engagement gaps. The Indigenous engagement team will reach out to Indigenous communities to review and confirm engagement gaps and discuss how the HRMP will work to address these gaps.



***“Every aspect of heritage
is important. The sooner it
is documented the better.
The more people know,
the prouder they will be of
where they live.”***

Engagement Response

WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT HERITAGE RESOURCES: PHASE ONE ENGAGEMENT

Community & Protective Services
November 8, 2021 – March 31, 2022