



What's HAPpening?

A regularly published newsletter from the MERC-Tembec Herbicide Alternatives Program (HAP) Steering Team

The HAP Goal:

Develop and implement a strategy to regenerate forests on Tembec tenures in northeastern Ontario using alternatives to the application of chemical herbicides.

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Contact us at: editor.hap@gmail.com

Update on HAP Sites Selected for 'No-Spray'

The HAP has identified the first four test sites where the use of herbicides has now been eliminated. The Steering Team has recently proposed that Tembec expand the program to other sites having most promise for elimination of herbicide. These are sites with low nutrient and/or moisture availability as represented by the soil groupings within Ontario's Ecological Land Classification system as 'very dry', 'dry', and the dry end of the fresh soil moisture regimes. In other words, areas where competing vegetation has less chance overtaking the growth of desired species.

More challenging are sites with fresh, moist, high nutrient soil. New research, improved planting stock, additional knowledge and experience gained from the no-herbicide techniques applied on drier sites will help us to reach the HAP goal.

Additional Steering Team Members Sought From First Nation Communities in and Near Tembec Forest Tenures

The HAP Steering Team is looking for additional qualified representatives from other First Nations to join the HAP. At the time this edition was being prepared, two other First Nations have been approached with an invite to join us. For more information, contact any member of the Steering Team identified at the bottom page four of this edition.

Two First Nation Youth Introduced to Forestry under Tembec's Herbicide Alternatives Regime

A Tembec initiative, spawned by discussions in the HAP, has recruited two Aboriginal youth considering careers in forestry.



Sheldon Corston, left and Jessica Raposo, Aboriginal Silviculture Assistants working out of Kapuskasing and Chapleau operations.

Employed from May through to the end of August, the two will supervise and monitor renewal work on the Martel, Romeo Malette and Gordon Cosens Forests.

Jessica Raposo works in the field at Tembec's Chapleau operations, and Sheldon Corston works out of the Kapuskasing office

Besides a competitive wage, Tembec is providing an extensive orientation to the forest management process.

Having youth participate in the HAP process ensures that a multitude and diversity of perspectives are included in HAP decision making and planning processes.

Jeff Leach, a Tembec Silvicultural Specialist says, "Jessica and Sheldon will learn more about the program and HAP work. These young people will have opportunities to connect with MNR and industry representatives, the HAP Steering Team and Elders and other members of participating First Nations. They'll have an interesting and productive summer!"

First Nations Call for Measures to Show Progress

At the HAP Steering Team update to the Chapleau Cree First Nation Council, community residents heard about the purpose and progress of the Herbicides Alternative Program in place within Tembec tenures.

Chief Keith 'Keeter' Corston, who is also Chair of the Northeastern Superior Regional Chiefs' Forum, speaking on behalf of his First Nation welcomed the news, and challenged the Steering Team and Tembec to move quickly, gather more data through monitoring and include meaningful measures in future reports. "We don't want this to be a retirement program. We want this to happen quickly. I want to see the volume of



herbicides applied to the forests reduced year after year. I want to see the area of HAP-managed sites increase over time”.

Chief Corston's message aligns well with the 2013-2014 goals of the Steering Team, whose members include First Nation representatives from Michipicoten First Nation, Missanabie Cree First Nation, Chapleau Cree First Nation, and Taykwa Tagamou Nation. (See previous item re additional First Nation representation) A HAP Site Monitoring Program is in the design stage, and includes a requirement for First Nation input.

Pro-Traditional Value Paper submitted to the journal 'Forestry Chronicle'

Acting as scribes for the First Nation contingent of the HAP Steering Team, Gordon Kayahara, HAP Science Advisor from the OMNR, and Carly Armstrong, from MERC, have compiled the thoughts of the group as a paper titled “*Understanding First Nations rights and perspectives on the use of herbicides in forestry*”.

The paper has been submitted to the Canadian Institute of Forestry’s journal *The Forestry Chronicle*, a well respected scientific journal among forest practitioners.

Included are First Nation views on treaty rights sharing the land; observations from those on the land; risk and mistrust of the government and science, and the traditional worldview of First Nations in northeastern Ontario. Upon an acceptable review we expect to see the article in print later this year.

First Nation Traditions a Part of the HAP Steering Team Proceedings

2012 and 2013 have been fruitful in terms of respect for Aboriginal and First Nation traditions and activities. The opening of each HAP Steering Team session begins with a smudging ceremony and a prayer by a First Nation Elder. Much of the working sessions centers on a Talking Circle format, with opinions and suggestions invited and sought from each person in attendance. The session closes with a prayer giving the Creator thanks for our progress.

Incorporating traditional ceremony into the HAP serves several purposes, some of which are to: 1) continually reaffirm the interdependence between Mother Earth and each of her creations; 2) honour multiple ways of knowing within the HAP process; 3) provide opportunities to explain to others the meanings underlying First Nation traditions and ceremonies; 4) remind us of the importance of the goal we all want to realize; and 5) to demonstrate the Team unity.

HAP Steering Team Selects New Logo James Nolan, MCFN, Receives \$250.00 Award

The *What’s HAPpening* spring edition’s request for a design of an official HAP logo brought Missanabie Cree First

Nation’s James Nolan, a \$250.00 award from Tembec. The design, seen in the page one header, was selected by the Steering Team for use as the official graphic for the HAP.

According to James; “The bear is considered to be the protector of the forest... and of medicines in the forest. The tree represents the bear’s connection to the forest... [the tree] growing through the bear shows how the HAP is protecting the healthy growth of the trees while keeping the animals of the forest safe. Tembec logo is at the front to represent Tembec's leading the way in helping to protect the forests. The bear is in forward motion showing the progress of the HAP. Great job James!

Profile: HAP Steering Team – Archie Nolan

Arthur Nolan (better known as 'Archie') represents the Missanabie Cree First Nation (MCFN) on the HAP Steering Team since its start-up in 2011.

Archie's spiritual perspective and commitment to managing forests without herbicides fits well with the HAP vision.

A Traditional Elder on Missanabie Cree's Council of Elders, he's a vocal ecological and traditional native values spokesman for MCFN and First Nations in general.



Archie Nolan, right, HAP Steering Team's Missanabie Cree Representative and Wayne Bell of OMNR's Applied Research and Development Branch share thoughts with the HAP group on June's field tour at Chapleau Crown Game Preserve

Presently employed by Mushkegowuk Land & Resources Department and MCFN as a Land Use Planner-Coordinator, Archie is also actively involved as a key player in the re-establishment of Missanabie Cree First Nation.

He’s held positions as Health, Social Services and Cultural Coordinator for MCFN and with other non-native agencies. Archie also has working experience in the mining and forestry sectors. He practices and promotes his Nishnawbe Traditions, and draws from a wide set of skills and life experiences.



The June HAP Chapleau Crown Game Preserve Sites Tour



HAP Steering Team and Chapleau Cree F.N. members on lunch break at CCFN's Campground on Racine Lake.

Back row, from the left, OMNR Advisor Gordon Kayahara, OMNR Research Scientist Wayne Bell, HAP Advisor Jason Gauthier, Tembec's Don Bazeley, Tembec Aboriginal Silviculture Assistant Kevin Corston, HAP Co-Chair Chris McDonell, HAP Co-Chair and CCFN HAP Rep Lark Ritchie.

Middle row, seated from left, Elders and CCFN Councilors Norma Caldwell, and Marjorie Lee, CCFN Chief 'Keeter' Corston, Missanabie Cree's Archie Nolan, Tembec's Aboriginal Silviculture Assistant Jessica Raposo, and HAP Coordinator Carly Armstrong.

Front, left, Tembec's Jeff Leach, HAP Advisor Isabell Souliere, and Michipicoten Cree's HAP Rep John Tangie.

HAP-MERC Aboriginal Entrepreneur Project Delivers Guidance Document to First Nation Communities

Last year, through the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs' New Relationship Fund, the Mushkegowuk Environmental Research Centre (MERC) received funding to hire a project officer to help facilitate communication among four First Nation communities, MNR and Tembec.

A spin-off arising from suggestions by the Steering Team, the project engaged the leadership and members of the First Nations to describe the opportunities flowing from the program, and to identify needs and gather feedback about the program from each of the communities.

The outcome was a resource document entitled, "*Laying Roots, Growing Prosperous: An Aboriginal Entrepreneur's Guide to the Herbicide Alternatives Program*". The guide presents information on HAP entrepreneurial opportunities and resource information for those who want to explore it. The publication is being distributed to the participating First Nations and other neighbouring Aboriginal agencies.

(See next item for more information.)

The HAP Planning and Monitoring Strategy

As the number of HAP test sites increases there's a need to regularly assess and determine the best strategies to achieve the 'no herbicide' goal. This past January a small task group of the HAP steering team developed a draft monitoring strategy for the HAP project. It adopts existing field data collection methodologies that could be used to evaluate the effectiveness of non-herbicide alternative treatments.

Monitoring data will be used to substantiate the decisions and methods needed to implement the HAP vision. Learn more about the Monitoring process in our upcoming Fall issue.

Opportunities for First Nations

First Nations have opportunities to become involved in the monitoring process and to see for themselves what a fully implemented HAP may look like out on the land.

The field work may also provide an opportunity to identify medicines and non-timber forest products (e.g. mushrooms) that are of interest to First Nations. The 2013 summer field season (See 'Page 1 'Two First Nation Youth...') will provide an opportunity to test some of the monitoring procedures and identify areas for improvement.



From the Land – Ostrich Fern (Fiddleheads)

In the North, we look forward to many harbingers of spring; ice leaving the lakes, geese returning from over-wintering grounds; ambitious robins struggling in a late season snow; fall and plants emerging through last year’s leavings, ready to capture sunlight and soil nutrients to grow and reproduce

One such plant, known by many to be a springtime delicacy with high medicinal value is the ostrich fern, whose young tightly-curled edible shoots are nicknamed ‘fiddleheads’.



Fiddleheads (Matteuccia struthiopteris)

Harvested during the relatively brief season before the frond unfurls to full height, they’re a nutritional powerhouse high in iron, fibre, omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids with twice the disease-fighting antioxidants of blueberries.

Picked fairly close to the ground, you’ll find them in the North along rivers and lakes in the presence of Black Ash in areas subject to spring flooding.

Harvesting responsibly is critical to the continued sustainability and propagation of such food species.

Each plant produces seven shoots that turn into fronds. Harvest no more than three tops per plant. Over-picking kills the plant.



Fiddlehead unfurling to become a full frond

Fiddleheads may harbour microbes; to reduce risk of contaminants, always wash and cook before eating. Search out Health Canada for tips on food safety for fiddleheads. Prepared properly, they’re a nice addition to a spring diet!

Need more information? Contact any of these HAP Steering Team members.

Lark Ritchie, Chapleau Cree First Nation. (HAP Co-Chair)

Archie Nolan, Missanabie Cree First Nation

John Tangie, Michipicoten First Nation

Tom Kioke, Taykwa Tagamou Nation

Chris McDonell, Tembec (HAP Co-Chair - Tembec)

Carly Armstrong, HAP Coordinator

Jeff Leach, Tembec – Kapuskasing Office

Don Bazeley, Tembec, Timmins Office

Gordon Kayahara, OMNR, NE Regional Office