

healthy supply and quality of certain country foods could share surplus with the other communities for their surplus in other country foods. In the long term a store and warehouse could be built in JMR as a central point for distributing food amongst the communities, which may eventually lead to a commercial enterprise if there is enough food grown and/or harvested locally to have a surplus for other communities and temporary work camps in the area to purchase. Such an enterprise also has the potential to create job sharing opportunities with the communities involved.

Another adaptation strategy to address food security is to change harvesting locations where species are less abundant and/or unhealthy, including areas where scientists have identified increased levels of contaminants, such as at Ekali Lake and McGill Lake. People are already reducing their consumption of fish from these lakes, based on the recommendations of scientists. There is also the potential to harvest new species that are being seen in the area, but most of the animals and birds seen so far are not considered food by community members, with the possible exception of whitetail deer.

6.2. Access to Safe Drinking Water

In regard to adaptation strategies to address the challenges of accessing safe drinking water, there are a number of factors that are contributing to the deterioration of the water quality in the area. Pollutants and contaminants are prime contributors to this; however, the warming of lakes and rivers can also affect the quality of the water and cause contaminants trapped in the ground to leach into the water table. Without more information it is difficult to elucidate the connections between a warming climate and its effects on the water quality in the Dehcho region.

At this stage our community needs a contaminants study conducted for the area, and we also need improved methods for monitoring the quality of drinking water and for treating it. People have already started adapting to the lack of quality drinking water in the community by buying bottled water for the grocery store. This is an expensive adaptation strategy, but a necessary one, as many people consider drinking water in the community and out on the land not to be safe.

6.3. Cultural Continuity & Community Sustainability

The climate change impacts affecting the health of our culture and community are intertwined and developing adaptation strategies that promote cultural continuity includes promoting a sustainable community and vice versa. The adaptation strategies initially explored regarding the climate change impacts that are affecting these aspects of our health are principally initiatives that can be planned, developed, and implemented by the community with little or no outside assistance. However, there are other potential adaptation strategies specific to addressing climate change impacts at the community and regional levels that would require collaborative approaches with other communities and researchers; as well as regional, territorial, and federal governments.

At the community level a number of adaptation strategies can be developed in the form of education and communication initiatives to inform community members about the health risks associated with climate change, and what actions people can take to prevent or minimize these risks. For example, education strategies about how to prevent heatstroke and sunburn (e.g. drink plenty of fluids, sunscreen, limit time in direct sunlight, etc.), or a community fire education strategy in case of a forest fire could be developed by the community and implemented in the form of community workshops or information sessions, as well as in the school. Community initiatives that address climate change related issues when out on the land could be developed as part of youth learning survival skills and learning about their spiritual connection with the land, such as at culture camps and ecology camps, and through the passing on of TK from older family members and Elders.