

Fort McPherson: A Volunteer Model

**A Case Study – Aboriginal Participation
in the Voluntary Sector**

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Native Women’s Association of the Northwest Territories
Northwest Territories Literacy Council
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The logo for Canada, featuring the word "Canada" in a serif font with a small maple leaf above the final 'a'.

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1. The Study of Aboriginal Participation in the Voluntary Sector in the Northwest Territories (NWT)

The Northwest Territories Literacy Council, the Native Women's Association of the NWT, and the YWCA of Yellowknife conducted research to:

1. Gain an understanding of volunteers and volunteerism among persons of Aboriginal ancestry.
2. Increase the participation of Aboriginal volunteers in the voluntary sector in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

A main focus of the research was to increase the participation of Aboriginal people in leadership and governance positions within the sector.

The research involved:

- developing a profile of the voluntary sector in the NWT, including Aboriginal participation in it, from a survey of volunteers and voluntary groups;
- personal interviews to discuss Aboriginal volunteerism and good practices that support Aboriginal volunteer participation and encourage greater accountability to Aboriginal communities;
- interviews with eight Aboriginal role models for a storybook celebrating their volunteerism; and,

- two case studies to examine volunteer experiences and activities that provide lessons about improving Aboriginal volunteer participation.

This case study examines volunteering and the voluntary sector in the small, predominately Aboriginal community of Fort McPherson in the NWT. It profiles volunteer groups in the community and discusses the factors and issues that influence volunteerism. It also presents some good ideas for other communities, organizations, and individuals interested in encouraging and supporting Aboriginal volunteer participation.

The information presented in this study was collected from face-to-face interviews; focus group discussions conducted during a four-day visit to the community; and through subsequent telephone interviews. A total of 27 community members participated in the case study. Published information was used to prepare the case study setting. Findings from this case study may be instructive to volunteers, and voluntary groups in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

2. Case Study Setting

The Gwich'in name for Fort McPherson is Teetl'it Zheh, 'at the head of the waters.' Fort McPherson is located on the east bank of the Peel River, 121 km south of Inuvik and 1,107 km northwest of Yellowknife. The community is accessible by air and all-weather road, with seasonal restrictions.

Fort McPherson is home to the Tetlit Gwich'in and lies within the larger territory of the Gwich'in Dene, which includes northern sections of the NWT and Yukon and the interior of Alaska.

History

In 1840, the Hudson's Bay Company established a post four miles upriver from the current site of Fort McPherson. Flooding at the site forced its subsequent relocation. The post was named after Murdoch McPherson, chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1852, a Tetlit Gwich'in settlement on the banks of the Peel River relocated to the site.

In the early 1900s, many Tetlit Gwich'in perished in the influenza epidemics that swept through the region. During this time the Royal Canadian Mounted Police established a detachment in Fort McPherson for officers who patrol the area between Fort McPherson and Dawson City, Yukon. Missionaries established a school in the community in 1900. The federal school system was started in 1946.

The Tetlit Gwich'in maintained their traditional hunting lifestyle well into the 1960s. Today, virtually all residents live in the community year-round.

Political Organization

The community has a history of producing strong leaders. The first Aboriginal members in the federal House of Commons, and the NWT Territorial Council, were from Fort McPherson.

In 1921, the Tetlit Gwich'in signed Treaty 11 with the Government of Canada in Fort McPherson. Seventy-one years later, in 1992, the Gwich'in were the first Dene group in the NWT to sign a comprehensive land claims agreement with the governments of Canada and the NWT. The Gwich'in Tribal Council administers lands and resources granted through the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement for the benefit of all Gwich'in beneficiaries.

Two local governments function within the community: the Tetlit Gwich'in Council and the Fort McPherson Hamlet Council.

In 2001, Gwich'in and Inuvialuit negotiators in the Beaufort-Delta Region signed a self-government agreement-in-principle with the territorial and federal governments. The agreement defines the roles, responsibilities, and powers of proposed self-government structures and the nature of relationships with the territorial and federal governments. A final agreement has not yet been negotiated.

Economy

The public sector is the primary employer in Fort McPherson. It provides a range of services, including community government, wellness, health, adult and primary education, policing, and recreation. Fort McPherson has a basic business and service infrastructure. This includes two general stores, a tent and canvas factory, a retail outlet, a new hotel, a new restaurant complex, and a gas station. Community

businesses also provide highway transportation, construction, and maintenance services on the Dempster Highway.

Some residents commute to oil and gas exploration sites in the Mackenzie Delta and Beaufort Sea. Should it be approved, the proposed Mackenzie Valley natural gas pipeline, currently in the environmental impact assessment phase is expected to have significant economic impact on the community.

Social Issues

In the NWT, the healthy development of individuals, families, and communities continues to be negatively affected by the residual effects of the residential school experience.¹ Separation and dislocation from family and culture, racism, colonialism, and traumatic experiences within and at the hands of institutions, have affected more than five generations of northerners. This is expressed through addictions and the abuse and neglect of self and dependents. In many communities and families, these behaviours have become normalized or condoned. Compared to Canadians as a whole, NWT residents experience substantially higher rates of alcohol and drug use and abuse; tobacco use; family violence; sexually transmitted infections; teen births; child abuse and neglect; and criminal activity, including violent crimes. Fort McPherson is no different. Over the past 20 to 30 years, Fort McPherson has experienced many

tragedies. Alcohol or family violence is usually a contributing factor in local and personal tragedies.

Selected Statistics

In 2001, the population of Fort McPherson was 761. Ninety-three per cent of the population has Aboriginal ancestry and are either Tetlit Gwich'in or Métis. Approximately 60% of the population are 15 years of age and older. In 2001, 41% of Fort McPherson residents aged 15 and older had achieved a high school diploma or completed at least some post-secondary education, compared to 65% in the NWT. In 2004, Fort McPherson had one of the lowest employment rates in the NWT — 34% compared to the NWT rate of 68%.^{2, 3} Between 1999 and 2004, employment rates in the community fell by almost 14%.

In 2002, the average family income in Fort McPherson was \$57,248 which is substantially lower than the average of \$87,143 for the NWT and \$106,953 for Yellowknife.⁴ The cost of living in Fort McPherson is high — estimated to be 52.5% higher than Edmonton and 22.5% higher than Yellowknife. The cost of food in Fort McPherson is approximately 50% greater than in Yellowknife.⁵

¹ For almost two thirds of the 20th century, churches, through an arrangement with the federal government, operated residential schools in several locations in the NWT. Run by priests, nuns or missionaries, these schools followed a strict Christian code of conduct and forbade Aboriginal children access to their language, culture, and often to relationships with siblings attending the same school. Aboriginal children often spent years in these institutions with no access to family, and no exposure to any aspect of Aboriginal life. While in these institutions, many suffered verbal, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse at the hands of religious teachers and administrators.

² Percentage of adults (15 years of age and older) working.

³ http://www.stats.gov.nt.ca/Stainfo/Labour/Labour_Force.html

⁴ www.stats.gov.nt.ca/Stainfo/PricesIncome/Income/1994-2002/_tax.html

⁵ NWT Bureau of Statistics. 2004. "Statistics Quarterly" Volume 26 No. 1, March 2004 Yellowknife: Government of the NWT.

All Web site addresses last retrieved June 1, 2005.

In 2004, 33% of households in Fort McPherson were classified as being in core need compared to 16% of households in the NWT as a whole.⁶

3. Profile of Volunteer Groups in the Community

Fort McPherson has a history of supporting volunteer groups. Many of these groups have been active in the community for 20 years or more. Virtually all volunteers, and volunteer leaders involved in these groups, are of Aboriginal descent. A brief profile of volunteer groups in the community follows.

The **Aboriginal Head Start – Tetlit Zheh Child Centre** is an early-childhood program run by the Tl'oondih Healing Society, the social arm of the Tetlit Gwich'in Council. Twenty children attend. The program has operated in the community for eight years. Approximately 12 parents or grandparents volunteer approximately 480 hours per year cleaning, coordinating special events, cooking, attending meetings, and participating in outdoor and indoor activities. While data are not collected, individuals involved with the group say that volunteer hours are increasing as a result of a heightened parental awareness of the need to contribute time, skills, and energy to support the success of the Program and the children involved in it.

Each year since 1985, the **Fireworks Committee** has staged a New Year's Eve celebration in the community. The celebration takes place after church and involves fireworks, a bonfire, food, and fluorescent tubes for the kids. Virtually everyone in the community attends. Volunteer activities include staging radio bingos to raise money; purchasing fireworks and insurance; setting up snow and tape barricades and fireworks; collecting wood and Christmas trees for the bonfire; and managing the crowd to ensure the safety of all. Members of the

⁶ If a household has any one of several specific housing problems (e.g. suitability, adequacy, or affordability) or a combination of problems and a household is below the designated Core Need Income Threshold (CNIT) it is considered to be in core need. <http://nwthc.gov.nt.ca/pdf/04survey.pdf>. Last retrieved June 1, 2005.

volunteer fire department are trained to set off the fireworks.

The **Fort McPherson Elders' Council** was formed in 1992, shortly after the Land Claim Agreement was signed. Members attend Gwich'in Tribal Council assemblies and regional meetings on land, water, environment, language, or education issues. The loss of Gwich'in language, traditional knowledge, and traditional lifestyles are issues of concern to Council members.

The Council raises funds and donates money to cover costs associated with funeral expenses and community events that involve elders (for example, the annual Christmas dinner for elders and trips on the land). The organization is planning to purchase a 15-person van and is raising funds for this purpose.

The volunteer board of the **Fort McPherson Radio Society** has operated CBQM, the community radio station, since 1981. The station is staffed entirely by volunteers. Each morning, community organizations such as the Tetlit Gwich'in Council, Health Centre, Royal Mounted Canadian Police, Chief Julius School, Language Centre, Tl'oondih Healing Society, and the Peel River Alcohol Society host on-air information programs. In the afternoon and evenings, community volunteers host music and information and request shows. On one weekend every November, the station celebrates its birthday with extended programming that runs until two a.m. The volunteer-led celebration includes trivia contests, live music, phone-ins from within and outside the community, give-aways and free refreshments at the station.

The **Fort McPherson Volunteer Fire Department** has been active in the community since the mid-

1960s. Each member of the six-person brigade has approximately 15 years of service. The brigade fights fires, delivers public education, assists in fire inspections, purchases new equipment, and participates in training. The group also raises funds and distributes money to other community volunteer groups, including the Fireworks Committee and youth group. Fundraising activities help the volunteer firefighters to stay connected with each other and the community and to 'give back' to the community.

"We try to donate to groups and activities that benefit the whole community."

"Over the years, the attitudes of youth have started to change because of travel, workshops and other opportunities. They are more respectful and understanding and have higher self-esteem."

Members collectively volunteer approximately 200 hours per year. In recent years, volunteer hours have increased as a result of the need to update skills, and learn how to operate new equipment.

A **Junior Canadian Rangers** program was established in the community in 2001. The program develops life skills, traditional skills, and Canadian Ranger skills among youth 12 to 18 years of age. The organization is supported and guided by a volunteer committee.

Since 1986, the **Midway Lake Music Festival** has been staged at Midway Lake, just south of the community. The Festival attracts Gwich'in and other performers from the NWT, Yukon, Alaska and other parts of Canada. It features Gwich'in singing, country music, fiddling and dances, traditional dress, canoe

races, story telling, and jigging contests. Up to 2,000 people from the NWT and outside the territory attend the Festival. A volunteer committee works throughout the year to organize and stage the event. The committee is well supported locally, mainly because the Festival offers a good opportunity for Gwich'in of all ages to come together to celebrate and share cultural traditions.

The **Tetlit Gwich'in Tourism Society** was established in 1991 to promote awareness of the tourism industry, raise awareness of Gwich'in culture, and enhance and support services used by tourists. From May until September, the Society manages the visitor centre, which also sells local traditional foods and handicrafts. Approximately 15 people volunteer with the Society, serving as board members, picking up garbage, preparing signage, and staffing the information centre.

The **Women's Wellness Group** raises funds, and stages events that encourage healthy family relationships. The Group also hosts, or contributes to costs associated with, participation in workshops on personal growth and positive lifestyle changes. The Women's Wellness Group has been active for six years and includes a core group of seven female volunteers ranging in age from early 20s to 70s. The group raises funds through bingos, bake sales, and other activities. Volunteers contribute between 200 to 500 hours per year.

The six-member volunteer **Suicide Prevention Team** counsels individuals who are at risk of committing suicide and their families, and families of individuals who have committed suicide. The team is also involved in prevention and awareness activities. The team responds to calls throughout the region.

All members of the team have participated in suicide prevention training and have access to guidance and support from local elders. Responsibilities tend to be divided according to the strengths of individual team members. Team members volunteer approximately 250 hours per year.

The **Women's Auxiliary** is a group of women who gather to socialize, sew, and have rummage sales to raise money for church-related activities.

The **Youth Committee** was formed approximately six years ago by a group of seven individuals. It provides opportunities for youth to benefit from travel and other personal development experiences. The committee raises funds so that youth can attend events, conferences, and tournaments within and outside the NWT. It also hosts a Christmas dinner and distributes gifts to underprivileged older youth. The four active members on the committee collectively volunteer approximately 120 hours per year. Groups that receive funding from the committee are asked to help with fundraising activities.

The community also stages a variety of **sporting, recreational, and cultural events** with the help of many local volunteers. Sporting activities include soccer, softball, hockey, curling, and Dene games. Volunteers are involved in coaching, organizing tournaments, and fundraising for travel. Each year the community hosts a number of feasts to welcome new teachers, nurses and RCMP personnel; at Christmas and New Year's Eve; and to celebrate significant events in the community. Volunteers cook and contribute food, and help serve and clean up. Volunteers also help out during the spring carnival, dog races, canoe races, and at old-time fiddle dances.

4. Factors and Issues Influencing Volunteerism in the Community

Key informants identified a number of factors that influence volunteering in the community.

Tradition of Helping Others

Tetlit Gwich'in traditional cultural values of sharing, caring, helping, and respecting others remain strong in the community. Children and youth are taught these values at an early age. All ages and both genders continue to help out in mostly informal ways, and to value and support the work of others.

"You just grow up that way [helping others]. It has always been like that."

Community members support causes they believe in and feel will improve the quality of life in the community. People acknowledge and take pride in the way the community supports and helps youth, elders' groups, and each other, especially during times of sorrow and celebration.

"Some kids would never get out of Fort McPherson if not for these trips."

"On Mother's Day, we focused on women affected by diabetes and cancer. We wanted these women to get out into the community, not stay at home."

"This is one community where people do so much for each other."

"When everyone comes together, there is closure. People are able to move on from tragedy."

"After one tragedy people got together, shared, told stories, and prayed. Everyone showed so much love and caring. This has a positive impact on everyone."

"This community has had its share of tragedies and some have lost loved ones, but we came together and supported one another. And that is a gift that this community has and you should be proud that the Tetlit Gwich'in [have] ties with one another in the community and out of our community [that] are very strong."⁷

Paid and Unpaid Volunteering

There is a collective understanding of what constitutes paid and unpaid 'volunteering' in the community, and people respect the difference. Volunteers involved with community groups may expect an honorarium if volunteer effort is structured or has responsibilities similar to those of paid employment. For example, people who volunteer for positions on the band, hamlet, education council or other boards, attend planning meetings and assemblies, or serve as master of ceremonies, expect some payment. The payment generally does not fully compensate the individual for the time invested therefore payment for volunteer work is seen as different from employment income. But, people in the community are clear that no payment is expected, or should be received, for

⁷ Chief Abe Wilson, *Tetlit Gwich'in Council Annual Report*, 2003/2004.

helping out or helping each other in ways that are similar to, or reflect Gwich'in traditions.

Community members acknowledge that for many individuals, it is an economic necessity to expect or accept payment for some types of volunteering.

Others say that traditional values of helping and caring for others are not being taught in some families, and that youth are driven by a material culture. Both of these factors create tension around paid and unpaid volunteering.

Community Members Are 'In the Loop'

The volunteer-run community radio station, CBQM, connects people in the community and on the land. Virtually everyone, regardless of age, listens to CBQM.

- Each week, community groups and organizations broadcast information on current and future activities including feasts, fundraising events, and other events and activities. Requests for help are made on air, and individuals call the station to fill volunteer positions and to supply food and other services.
- Phone-in shows raise money for families in the community or the region (e.g. to cover funeral expenses and travel costs to visit sick loved ones).
- Phone-in shows raise awareness and mobilize community support for various issues (e.g. youth drinking or violence; loss of language).

- Announcements are made to inform community members of illnesses or accidents. People are asked to pray for the individual and his or her family.

Volunteer Leaders are Role Models

Historically, Fort McPherson was known for its strong leadership. The late Chief Johnny Charlie is often cited as an example. Today, Fort McPherson has a core group of volunteer leaders who continue to be role models. These individuals are committed to causes, are action and results-oriented, and are compassionate and responsive to community and individual needs. These volunteer leaders have good leadership skills and can motivate people. People are drawn to them and the causes they advocate. It is understood that as others become ready, they too will take on volunteer leadership roles with the support and guidance of current leaders and elders.

Strong Role of Women in Leadership Positions

In the 1970s, women in the community began to assume leadership positions, in part to address community health and well-being concerns. At first, men were threatened and unsupportive of the changing role of women. Today, there is acceptance and admiration for the leadership skills of women in the community. It is estimated that 75% of the volunteer leaders in the community today are women. Women are most often involved in groups that support the health and well-being of individuals, families, and the community.

Many of the women in leadership positions now, and in the past, have experienced personal challenges, including family violence, addictions, and loss of loved ones. They have taken control of their lives, moved forward, and become strong positive role models for others.

“Before men used to serve at feasts. Now it’s women.”

“In 1973, a group of mostly women established the Peel River Alcohol Society. For approximately five years, we operated the centre and provided alcohol and drug addictions awareness, support and counselling. We worked as employees with no pay.”

Volunteer Recognition

Groups in the community recognize volunteers and formally and informally thank them for their contributions. Volunteer organizations also try to make volunteer experiences fun and enjoyable.

“Try to treat volunteers well.”

“We had a supper recently just for volunteers to say thank you.”

“On the wall at CBQM is a list of people in the community who have volunteered at the station.”

“We give out certificates, have recognition lunches and cookouts for our volunteers.”

Independence from Government

Groups that are self-governing, and operate independent from the band and hamlet government structures, tend to be known as community groups rather than volunteer groups. Compared to the band or hamlet government, most community groups believe that they are more in touch with the needs of the people and have more expertise and commitment to respond to local needs. Community groups also see the value of being independent from government. In this regard, community groups feel that they can provide supports that are not overly bureaucratic.

Volunteers involved with community groups may expect an honorarium if volunteer effort is structured, has responsibilities similar to paid employment, and the group itself has adequate resources to recognize volunteer contributions. Volunteers are unlikely to expect any financial compensation if their contributions are in keeping with traditional ways of helping and serving.

“We do what people feel needs to be done. We aren’t told what to do.”

Self-Determination

Fort McPherson residents have a strong will and collective responsibility for shaping their own future. To this end, community members are able to put aside differences and work together to find community-based solutions to local issues. The community is proud of its ability to operate as a collective, and to independently find workable solutions. Leaders stay connected to community members through meetings and radio phone-in shows. For example, 50 people recently participated in a radio call-in show and 25 people attended a meeting to discuss the issue of underage drinking. Because community

people get involved in identifying issues and potential solutions, they are more likely to get involved and support initiatives that address local issues. In many cases, the community is able to support and sustain community activities and initiatives without government funding.

Many community members react strongly to outside organizations that dictate, or impose, solutions on the community. For example, the Government of the NWT recently transferred responsibility for the Peel River Alcohol Society to NWT Health and Social Services after approximately 30 years of independent operation. This change angered many residents, particularly those who have been committed volunteers with the Society.

“Whatever is happening in our community is our problem. We need to fix it ourselves.”

“To encourage the community to come together around an issue, people talk to each other, we do radio shows and send out letters.”

“The community can disagree on certain things, but the bottom line is we are still working for a bigger cause. We work as a collective.”

“You get the sense that the community can turn it around.”

“People in the community do not have a lot of money, but they donate money to worthy causes.”

Tradition of Being a Role Model Community

Community members are proud of Fort McPherson’s status as a role model in volunteer and leadership effort for other communities. As examples, they cite the community’s ability to raise money for causes in other communities; send volunteers to help out in other communities; and take leadership on a variety of issues. For example, Fort McPherson:

- was the first community in the NWT to establish a Justice Committee, a Child and Family Services Committee under the Child and Family Services Act, and a Suicide Prevention Team;
- was the first community to elect Aboriginal members of the Canadian Parliament and the NWT Legislative Assembly; and,
- is a member of the first Dene group in the NWT to sign a comprehensive land claim agreement.

5. Good Ideas for Other Communities

Fort McPherson's experiences provide some good ideas for other communities that are interested in encouraging and supporting Aboriginal volunteers and volunteer leaders.

Practice Traditional Values

Traditional values of sharing, helping, caring, and respecting others are weakening among Aboriginal people in the NWT, mainly through lack of practice and not teaching these values to children and youth. In Fort McPherson, elders, parents, and others teach and role model cultural values to others. Leaders, elders, and others demonstrate the importance of these values through discussion at community meetings and gatherings and through their actions. Traditional values are reflected in the work of community groups, while other groups, such as the Aboriginal Head Start, integrate traditional values into their programming. The community also highlights and celebrates ways in which people help and care for one another.

Talk about Paid and Unpaid Volunteer Work

In Fort McPherson, the practice of receiving payment for some types of volunteering has evolved due to the government's practice of paying honoraria for work that was once done on a volunteer basis. Economic necessity and changing values are other reasons why some volunteer work is now associated with payment or honoraria. Fort McPherson residents acknowledge the existence of both paid and unpaid volunteer work. They also recognize the importance of regularly talking about the issue of volunteering and payment. Talking about both kinds of volunteering helps people have realistic expectations, understand the rewards of volunteering, and appreciate the importance of

keeping alive the strong Gwich'in traditions of helping and serving for the collective good.

Keep Everyone Informed

In Fort McPherson, the community radio station keeps individuals informed of local and regional events, activities, and issues. People who are informed are more likely to get involved, feel part of a cause, and be committed to it. The radio station is also an effective tool for recruiting volunteers, calling for donations of food and other items, and celebrating volunteering.

Mentor and Support Volunteer Leaders

Volunteer leadership is about positively influencing the behaviour of others. Fort McPherson has a history of strong leadership where volunteer leaders have led by example and have the skills to encourage and motivate others. Elders and leaders in the community mentor new leaders and help them gain the skills and confidence to assume leadership positions. Mentoring is a good way to encourage volunteer leaders.

In recent decades, the role of women in the community has evolved and changed. Today many of the volunteer leaders in Fort McPherson are women. Through personal commitment, peer support, and public acknowledgement, Gwich'in women have been able to develop strong leadership skills, and apply them to strengthening and building volunteerism in the community.

Recognize the Contribution of Volunteers

In Fort McPherson, volunteers are recognized, and thanked informally and formally, in a wide variety of conventional and unconventional ways. These actions raise awareness in the community of the contributions of volunteers and let volunteers know that their efforts

are appreciated. Volunteer recognition encourages and supports participation in future community events and activities.

Be Aware that One Structure May Not Meet All Needs

Many volunteer groups in Fort McPherson have been formed in response to specific community needs. These community/volunteer groups complement, rather than duplicate, the work of community governments. Respected, committed leaders who work with community members to determine objectives and activities, lead these groups. The self-governing nature of community groups means that government bureaucracy does not bog down volunteers.

Community residents support volunteer groups and recognize the positive impact they have. People in Fort McPherson believe that it is important to have non-government responses to community needs.

6. Conclusions

Fort McPherson supports an active and diverse voluntary sector. There is a strong culture of volunteerism in the community that is connected to traditional Gwich'in cultural values of serving and helping others. There is also a strong history of committed leaders who are also volunteer leaders and positive role models. The contributions of both male and female volunteer leaders and volunteers are acknowledged, valued, and celebrated. Community members are kept informed of community issues and volunteer needs and activities primarily through the community radio station. Community members are proud of their status as a role model community and their ability to work as a collective to address needs and issues and determine their future. These factors have helped shape volunteering in the community and make Fort McPherson a volunteer model.

Volunteers in Fort McPherson offer good advice for engaging others in voluntary efforts. They tell us that volunteer engagement is strengthened when groups or activities respond to local needs and local people have ownership and control of the activity and the outcomes. They also tell us that volunteer activities that contribute to the wellness of the community and to other well-supported community goals are attractive to volunteers. Fort McPherson volunteers point to the importance of culturally-based and fun activities as a way to attract and retain volunteers. Finally, volunteers in the community stress the importance of recognizing in big or small, private or public ways the valuable role that volunteers play in keeping Gwich'in traditions alive and making their communities better places to live in.

7. Participants

Focus Groups, Youth

Shannon
Vanessa
Kyla
Bobbie
Delores
Charlie
Brent
Bobby

Focus Groups, Adult Education Students

Judy
Bella
Alestine
Michelle
Rhoda

Volunteer Leaders

Dorothy Alexie
Elizabeth Colin
Victor Stewart
Shannon Blake
Beatrice Blake
Mary Ross
Hazel Nerysoo
James Ross
Taig Connel
Kathy Nerysoo
Brian Alexie
Arnold Kimiksana
Wayne Greenland
Betty Vittrekwa-Firth

Notes

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