

REFLECTIONS

Human, plant, animal relations, and the physical environment are all vulnerable to climate change

Building resilience means identifying strategies within both communities and research

These strategies include good communication, common interests, local solutions, the importance of traditional knowledge, and flexibility



The full length Summary Reports for the 2018 and 2019 Research Summits are publicly available on the Kluane First Nation website:

<https://kfn.ca/documents-and-forms/>

Or

can be requested via resource.manager@kfn.ca

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Participants expressed support for Summits to occur on a regular basis in future years. Due to multiple reasons, unfortunately there will not be a Research Summit in 2020. Pending capacity, logistics, and finances, hopefully another Kluane Research Summit can occur sometime in the near future.

Kluane First Nation (KFN) and Dän Keyi Renewable Resources Council (DKRRC) partnered with University of Ottawa, Simon Fraser University, and Yukon College (University) to host the 2nd Kluane Research Summit with financial support from KFN, DKRRC and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

SHORT SUMMARY OF THE

KLUANE RESEARCH SUMMIT 2019 “Change & Resilience”

May 30, 31 & June 1 2019
Burwash Landing, Yukon



Kluane Research Summit 2019: Change and Resilience

Background

Despite the lengthy history of research and shared interests at Kluane, there is room for better communication and stronger relationships between researchers and local communities. The inaugural 2018 Kluane Research Summit addressed this by bringing together researchers, communities and government into a dialogue to work towards bridging knowledge and building relationships for mutually beneficial outcomes. The 2018 Summit focused on water-related issues (the lake, rivers, glaciers of Kluane) due to high interest resulting from the recent A'ay Chu diversion, and a need to narrow the scope of the Summit to accommodate both the research and local communities. Outcomes of the 2018 Summit included recommendations outlined in the 2018 Summary Report, including engaging in cross-cultural learning and working on mutually beneficial research projects.

The 2019 Research Summit offered a renewed opportunity for communities and researchers to reflect and build upon their collective strengths to advance the 2018 goals and recommendations. Based on feedback from 2018, the 2019 Summit theme was more holistic and focused on 'change and resilience', applying to climate, landscapes, wildlife but also socio-cultural changes and response to these changes.

2019 Objectives

1. Reconvene, share progress, and (re)evaluate shared interests, priorities and goals;
2. Continue building the collective knowledge of the people of Kluane and examine solutions/strategies for learning from and adapting to change in the region;
3. Identify opportunities for further involvement of communities in research and researchers in communities.

Summary

The 2019 Summit hosted approximately 75 participants (Kluane First Nations citizens, community members, citizens from adjacent First Nations, Yukon government researchers, university students and academic researchers). Based on feedback and to enable relationship building, the Summit format was adjusted from 2018 to include more dialogue between participants with fewer formal presentations.

Day 1

- Welcome prayer & evening meal followed by Kluane museum tour/ sewing with knowledge keepers
- A sacred fire lighting was planned but adjusted due to high fire hazard.

Day 2

- Welcome from Chief Bob Dickson and DKRRC chair Sandra Johnson with words from elder Mary Easterson
- A few presentations were held in the morning, outlining highlights/updates from KFN and DKRRC (ex: KFN Traditional Knowledge Policy, Bringing Research Home project, etc.)
- Margaret Johnson and Lena Johnson shared words and stories about history, culture, change, and resilience
- Logan Moore (grade 7 KFN student) presented his science project that received an award at the National Indigenous Science Camp
- A panel of knowledge holders discussed resilience in Kluane (Regional Chief Kluane Adamek, Elder Joe Bruneau, Stan Boutin [U of A] and Benoit Turcotte [Yukon Government])
- Group discussions were held relating to change on the land, in the water, animals, communities, as well as in our approach to research/how research is conducted

Day 3

- Field trip to Thechàl Dhâl & A'ay Chu
- Parks Canada/YG provided an overview of park history, ecology, and sheep biology

- Elder Margaret Johnson told stories of growing up in the area (like crossing the A'ay Chu bridge for the first time)
- Dr. James King led a field trip to the dust collectors on the A'ay Chu riverbed and explained his research
- Video "Kluane Climate Change" (Prairie Climate Centre)
- A water and ice panel provided research updates about glaciers, hydrology, groundwater, and lake conditions
- Roundtable reflections on adaptation to climate change and resilience

Outcomes

Over the course of the Summit, participants discussed ongoing changes, past and potential future impacts, and how to rebuild and renew resilience. The participants agreed that climate change and its effects are occurring at an alarming pace. It is not only impacting local residents but also plant, animal and fish communities. In spite of these growing concerns, the community continues to strengthen its resolve and activate resilience.

Participants widely acknowledged this Summit and its theme "Resilience and Change in Kluane" as a very useful platform and important topic of discussion. They further wished such Summits or workshops would be continuously organized in coming years. The Summit created space for participants to exchange stories and ideas and share laughter and frustration. Participants agreed on the value of pursuing research that addresses 'resilience and change' in the Kluane region. They concluded that collaborative research, exploration, learning and sharing shall be further continued to increase resilience.

As the local and First Nations communities in Kluane region become more actively engaged in shaping research, KFN and DKRRC continue to work towards establishing guidelines that may foster research relationships and ensure that communities benefit from research outcomes.