

Partners in research

Northern News Services

It's great to hear about research projects like the one that is about to start in Kakisa.

At any given time in the Deh Cho, especially in the summer, there are a number of research projects, some of a scientific nature, underway. All of these projects and the data or findings they are producing are clearly important to someone or they wouldn't be happening, but many of them have little direct bearing on the communities they are closest to.

Sure, the researchers may stop by once a year to give a community presentation or to submit a copy of their most recent report, but community residents, leaders and administrators don't necessarily have a practical use or application for that information.

Projects like the one in Kakisa that look at the impacts of climate change on the community, and an ongoing one in Jean Marie River are different.

From the beginning, these projects are partnerships between the communities and the organizations conducting the research. Issues or concerns that residents want answers to are the primary areas that are examined.

In the case of the Kakisa study the precise areas that are going to be examined haven't been determined yet because a community event still has to be held to gather input. Overall, the project will look at what impacts of climate change residents are noticing and whether these changes are affecting their ability to gather country food. This translates into whether they have food security and can continue healthy lifestyle practices and what adaptations are or can

be made to ensure food security in the future.

The project is expected to result in a plan or adaptation-strategies that will be of practical use to the people of Kakisa. A template or toolbox will also be created for other communities that are interested in conducting this type of work, to follow.

In Jean Marie River a community-directed, multi-year study has been investigating how landscape changes caused by thawing permafrost will impact residents' lifestyles and everyday activities. Again, this is a study that is creating research and information that is of direct interest and use to the community.

Research projects of all types benefit the Deh Cho because they create a body of data about the region and how it is changing. Communities, however, receive the most benefit when they actively partner with researchers to delve into areas, like climate change and thawing permafrost, that are of direct concern and impact to them.

Studies like the one in Kakisa will create answers for that community which can be adapted and applied throughout the region.

THE ISSUE:

RESEARCH
PROJECTS

WE SAY:

EVERYONE
BENEFITS



**ROXANNA
THOMPSON**
