

COLLEGE OF MENOMINEE NATION SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Tribes have been interacting and adapting to the changing environment of North America for thousands of years. Our resilience is inherent in our cultural understanding of our place and time. Climate change is another opportunity to apply our indigenous knowledge to adapt and sustain our people. The Sustainable Development Institute is combining western research methods with indigenous knowledge to address climate change through a variety of research projects.

MENOMINEE PERCEPTIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

College of Menominee Nation (CMN) was one of the tribal colleges to participate in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium sponsored video documentary project titled *Where Words Touch the Earth: A Video Documentary of the Changing American Indian Habitat*. The project supported the research conducted through the CMN Sustainable Development Institute by four student interns. The interns identified Menominee community members and implemented community based journalism and mutual mentorship focused on Menominee perceptions of climate change.



MENOMINEE ETHNOBOTANY PROJECT

In the early spring of 2011 the College of Menominee Nation Sustainable Development Institute created an internship to do a study of Sustainable Development, Environmental Preservation, and Climate Change on the Menominee Reservation. There are many trees and plants located on the reservation which can be used for many purposes including, food and medicine. The trees and plants that grow on the Menominee Reservation are abundant, but are subject to Climate Change. These plants may die off or move to another habitat site. Some of the methods for the project are:

- Conducting interviews which consist of different age groups of Menominee tribal members that gather plants for food consumption, medicinal purposes.
- Collect information on gathered trees and plants from the different tribal communities on the reservation to determine their uses.
- Identify and label all the plants and tree species that are in the surrounding areas by scientific, common and Menominee names.
- Take and collect images and data of trees and plants in their natural environment and in different stages of the development and season example: Seed, Seedling, and Adult Stages, Unique Botanical Features, Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter Changes
- Use the information and images gathered on the trees and plants of the Menominee Reservation to create an updated Menominee Ethnobotany book for use of the people and school system.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The trees and plants of the Menominee Reservation can help us in many different ways; from food to decoration, or as medicine for something minor such as a common headache to the possibility of curing cancer. These trees and plants can be indicators for climate change, health of the forest and its inhabitants, and the state of the ecosystem.



PROCESS AND METHODS

- Identify the trees and plants by common, scientific, and Menominee names
- Identify the various habitat types in which the trees and plants grow within the boundaries of the Menominee Reservation; an area 357.9 square miles
- Collect images of the trees and plants of the Menominee Reservation to create a working database
- Conduct interviews with Menominee tribal members to obtain information on the various uses of trees and plants
- Use all the information gathered to create an updated Menominee Ethnobotany book for use of the people and school system



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