



Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
7500 Odawa Circle, Harbor Springs, MI 49740

TRIBAL COUNCIL TRAVEL NARRATIVE

Submitted by: Treasurer Reyes

Training/Event: Seed Keepers
Location: Prior Lake, MN
Date of Event: May 11 – 16, 2014

Thank you fellow Council members and the Citizens of LTBB for allowing me the opportunity to attend the Seed Keepers Workshop. The following is a brief travel report/summary:

Sunday– May 11, 2014

Departed from my home in Harbor Springs, MI traveling to Prior Lake, MN. I arrived in Minnesota without incident.

Introductory Program with presentation by Jim Rock

Monday – May 12, 2014

Day One Topics:

Biodiversity and Traditional farming systems; the mandala of healthy community seed systems; tomato family; germination testing

Introduction to seed Biology, Anatomy & Chemistry; Cultural memory banking

Tuesday – May 13, 2014

Day Two Topics:

Lettuce family; Legal protections for Indigenous seed; Basic flower botany and taxonomy; mating systems, life cycles; bean family

Getting to know plant families; introduction to genetics (genes, traits, inheritance, inbreeding, hybrids); squash family; selection and domestication processes, hybrids, landraces

Wednesday – May 14, 2014

Visit to Seed Savers Exchange seed farm in Decorah, Iowa

Thursday – May 15, 2014

Day Four Topics:

Overview of harvesting, cleaning and storage; Seed production basics; corn

Basic plant breeding; Community seed banking; student interest groups

Friday – May 16, 2014

Day Five Topics:

Biotechnology and GMOs; Biennials; Seed Cooperatives; Seed Education

World Café (seed system problem solving and next steps); Course feedback & Graduation

Over 30 participants from many tribal communities all over the country attended the Indigenous Seed

Keeper Summit. Mentors helped by engaging in dialogue focusing on practical hands on training and in the importance of developing tribal policy focusing on health and healing and improving Indigenous economies. Tribes must be able to feed and nourish themselves with culturally appropriate, healthy, home grown foods.

With increases of diabetes, obesity and heart disease among Native, many tribes are grasping for all educational Indigenous Seed Keeper workshops, with an emphasis on traditional methods of seed care, increased knowledge of Indigenous food, and finding ways of bringing these Indigenous foods back into our daily diets.

As native people we respect all living and growing things and honoring our bodies and the food we consume is our best medicine.

I had the blessed opportunity to make many new friends and collect various traditional seeds and wonder what we will or how will we support our seed savers and seed keepers.

Attendees were taught sound and sustainable methods of planting and caring for seeds so that continued crops will grow produce for our native communities.

It is my hope that our farm will produce traditional, pesticide free produce.

Indigenous Seed Sovereignty:

"Our foods are a part of our culture and our way of life... Our seeds contain histories of our people and contain the security of future generations. In this generation we will ensure that our fish, root crops, buffalo, forests and other foods are retained for the generations yet to come. Food is a human right not to be purchased, or simply delivered in sacks and commodities, but to be grown and harvested in our communities and traditional territories."

"Food Sovereignty – Food is a gift from the Creator; in this respect the right to food is sacred and cannot be constrained or recalled by Colonial laws, policies and institutions. Indigenous food sovereignty is fundamentally achieved by upholding our sacred responsibility to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, plants and animals that provide us with our food." – Indigenous Food Sovereignty Network

"Control oil and you control nations. Control food and you control people." ~ Henry Kissinger

Thank you once again for allowing me to attend this amazing workshop. I would also like to thank First Nations Development Institute for the scholarship that paid for my attendance, airfare and hotel.

Respectfully,
Marcella Reyes, Treasurer

