



Indigenous Fire Management Talking Points for Discussion

Information taken from article Indigenous Fire (Shkode) Keeping and Land Management:
<https://www.stateofthebay.ca/indigenous-fire-shkode-keeping-and-land-management/>

Points for Teachers to Highlight in the Discussion:

- Using fire as land management has been a practice for many Indigenous groups across the world. The Anishinaabe use fire (shkode) as a way of influencing the land and restoring ecosystems.
- There has been a disconnection with using fire for land management due to the loss of knowledge through colonization.
- Since the Industrial Revolution, a societal shift marked by the colonization of both lands, and Indigenous and racialized peoples, increased carbon emissions. This has increased the average global temperature, causing climate change (Williams, 2018).
- In the face of climate change, the proliferation of invasive species, and biodiversity loss, Indigenous fire keeping, and land management can help us to address many of the challenges we face. This is understood by the Anishnaabe through Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK).
- There are pockets of knowledge all over Turtle Island and beyond about fire and land management. A lot of the knowledge across Indigenous groups about fire has similar understandings of land management through fire.
- Indigenous fire keepers are responsible for monitoring the age and health of forested areas and ecosystems. This is through observing abundance of harvested plants, animals, biodiversity and organizing times to burn.
- Policymakers such as the First Nation Chief and council, elders, townships and municipalities, foresters, and scientists should be working to develop new management policies to restore forest health and plant biodiversity. However, there must be collaboration among these groups and their ways of governing. This can be hard to coordinate.



QUILLS

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- This collaboration is in action in Alderville, Ontario. Alderville Black Oak Savanna is using ecological restoration work which combines using fire, planting native species, and controlling invasive species.
- In Anishinaabe culture just as women are considered to be water keepers, men are considered to be fire keepers.
- Two-spirited people traditionally were believed to have many roles in society and ceremony as they can fulfill the roles of both men and women. Many of these teachings and sense of roles has been eroded by colonization and must now be relearnt and reclaimed.