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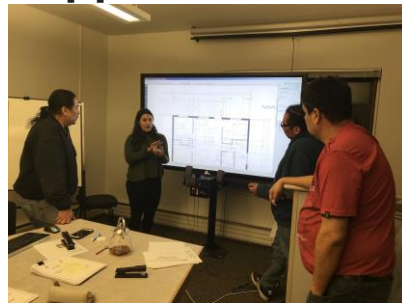
Mino Bimaadiziwin Partnership Winter Ice Road 2019 Newsletter



Students out of the Woods: Graduates of Chainsaw Safety & Forestry Management getting lumber for homebuilding

Garden Hill and Wasagamack First Nation students of the Boreal Homebuilders Program are now cutting their logs for housing

Will funding for sawmills and housing businesses in First Nation communities happen?



Catrina Salinese, architecture student, showing her design drawings for a 3 bedroom environmental and culturally-appropriate home to the directors of Waaka' ligan Inc.



according to their approved forest management plan. After passing the chainsaw certificate course and forestry management course they have all the tools for success. The Boreal homebuilding students had practice logging, repairing chainsaws and safety lessons as part of a week long course in January 2019.



Above the 20 people from Garden Hill who passed the class are shown in their safety and warm weather gear ready to cut down trees to build housing in their community. Below you see the 12 people from Wasagamack who passed the Chainsaw safety class. Bravo to these students. Their gear for safety (helmets, special gloves, chaffs and special boots) and clothing (pants) was provided by the Mino Bimaadiziwin partnership with the Northern Store contributing their reflective jackets.



Cameron Fontaine from Garden Hill, Greg Harper from Wasagamack, and Zeb Taylor from St. Theresa Point, were their excellent teachers. They had received their Chainsaw Instructors Certification through Arboriculture Canada in the fall funded by the SSHRC Mino Bimaadiziwin partnership. Due to knowing the language of Anishinimowin they could speak to students in their own language to make sure

Waaka' ligan Inc. board of directors meeting to finalize business plan.

The federal government has long taken the position of no funding or business loans for sawmills to First Nation. This position is very problematic as sawmills are exactly what First Nation communities need to solve their housing crisis. Somebody is going to make money off First Nation housing and First Nations should be given a chance to do so and not treated as economic dead zones by government and funders. The federal government and funders recognize the lack of healthy housing in First Nations communities is a big crisis but is there any leadership in these organizations to deal with it? That is yet to be seen.

Proposals and business plans have been advanced by Mitik 299 Corp (Mitik means Wood in Anishinimowin) in Wasagamack and Waaka' ligan Inc. (Waaka'ligan means Log House) in Garden Hill. The two companies submitted very strong proposals with business plans having cash flow analysis, income statements, work plans and governance plans to Community Futures and then defended them in a dragon's den situation. These proposals both show a return of investment of less than 1 year and hundreds of thousands in inkind and cash contributions including the Mino Bimaadiziwin partnership.

Funding these not-for-profit sawmill and housing corporations should be a no brainer. There are economic, social and environmental benefits and a great need for the housing and jobs that would be produced. Our

that everything was understood by students.

See the photo below by Felix Beardy showing the Boreal Homebuilders from Garden Hill conducting their logging work amidst the deep snow. These boreal homebuilders in both communities are well on their way to getting all the logs to frame and build two houses this year in each of their communities with stick wall, wood siding, wood panelling and flooring.

hope is that funders will shift from their treatment of reserves as economic dead zones to recognize and reconcile that First Nations need economic resources to build their development, just like other communities.

