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## MEDICINAL PLANTS PANEL

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Date: February 25, 2000  
Location: Museum of Anthropology  
Speakers: Mary Thomas  
                  Secwepemc Nation  
                  Kelly Bannister  
                  University of British Columbia  
                  Peter McCoy  
                  Ktunaxa Kinbasket Treaty Council  
                  Michael Keefer  
                  Ktunaxa Kinbasket Treaty Council  
Moderator: Ghillar (Michael Eckford)

### MARY THOMAS

My concern today is the welfare of my people. I was fortunate enough to have very strong teachers, spiritual leaders in our nation, I will talk about my grand-mother and my experience with my father and my aunt . \* (unknown word) I mentioned yesterday, about my residential school era. I learned from \* (unknown word) , My concern is for my people, as to how we farm, I've dedicated the last few years in trying to think positive to the government peoples that we have lost so much. Well I think it's time to start addressing the records on this.

I have a dear friend Nancy Turner, \* (unknown word) for a number of years. But my concern is how far can I go because I'm afraid. The knowledge that I will share, may be taken the wrong way , we know there's a struggle out there. It seems like every time we share something, it's time to\*. And that's not part of our culture.

When we as Native people, our connection with Mother Nature that's our spirituality. I don't go in the woods to gather plant medicine without offering a mother gift. I walk in and I pray, before I touch anything, I'm not scared to the plants, to the animals, the birds, the fish and \* (unknown word) . I know what I do if I destroy Mother Natures gifts. I am destroying myself, my children, my grandchildren's future, which is very precious to me.

I think that I stand \* (unknown word) concerns of my elders. They are afraid to share, especially the medicines, because we know we there is a money making business out there. That" not what we want to teach because the spirituality has changed a lot. And another thing \* (unknown word) we share the medicines especially the ones you make in front of you. Because I know the things that work for our people before would not work today because of the way we eat.

Our blood is not like what it used to be. That's why I hesitate to share the medicines that we take \* (unknown word) . I brought some slides that I'm going to share with you. It has to do with our \* (unknown word) what they stand with me as long as I admire them. We don't have that much time, I've got eighty-two and I'm going to cram it into my fifteen minutes.

This one here, is not the women that's holding the baskets. The story behind this one is the birch bark baskets that were sent them down to us from way back the containers. When you create something with your hands, it's valuable. Today, what will we do? We don't make baskets. Our young people go around crying, "Where's my plastic bucket, where's my ice-cream bucket". We tend to go for mass-produced things that are

bad for the environment. If I make a basket, if I hold that basket for year after year, well I clean it wash it and hang it, next year I have my basket.

What we're doing is teaching our children of that lesson, we teach them that the values of our people. Not that we learned from the basket. And the tree that we take the basket from, it's a very valuable tree, the birch tree has a lot to teach us. I use the birch tree, when I go into the forest, for workshops. Not only is the bark taken by our people.

To prove a point, one year I thought okay I'm going to do something, that I can carry on and show the value of that tree is. We went in and cut the tree, and cut a little v-shaped\* and stuck in there to start it dripping. I was getting a gallon in the morning, and a gallon at night of sap, which is a tree about this big. And the sap kept coming for a whole week, can you imagine two gallons a day, fourteen gallons in one week of sap was coming out of that tree. Not to mention what was coming out and going down that tree.

I took the syrup home, I took the sap home, and I made syrup out of it even \* (unknown word) syrup. An not only that, in our culture, there's a fungi that grows on the tree, that our people use to take our fire from one place to another. If you take that fungi it's dry, if you put it against a fire it will start to burn. It will burn slow.

A freshwater clam was another very special thing from our people. They would take that freshwater clam, put that fungi in the freshwater clam pouch, put it their canoe and go half a day up the river, down the lake. You get there, you open it, it is still burning. You put a few dry tinders and blow and you got your fire burning. You didn't matches. Now the part that I'd really like to share with you, is that I can with the sap that goes up, it creates leaves, it's collecting solar energy all summer, the rain, the wind, the sun.

In the fall, it goes back into the soil, the leaves drop, it creates compost. Other plants, feed from it. And when we cut all those trees out the leafy trees, we are depriving the food value in the soil. I promised to tell you and share with you a funny little thing that happened one year. I had some students, that I was working with, and I was trying to teach them, that we should learn to cooperate with others established farms. In this case\* the guys from the forestry to come with us and we'll show them what we know.

But the year before, I encountered a beautiful spot where we could get the birch bark for making our baskets, nice and pliable. All of the people that went there again, and somebody had put ringers around very one of my birch trees, and they were dead. I didn't understand what was happening. So we took the guy from the forestry office in Salmon Arm to come with us up the mountain. I took him to this particular area and I wanted to share with him, my concern, I wanted to know why this was happening. So that as were driving up I was telling him I was so hurt I wanted to strangle him. I was really angry. My beautiful birch bark now I don't know where to go to find it. And I was driving home I pulled off the road, and I go let's stop here, I want to show you.

We all got up \* (unknown word) I should say we all got out and I said" Look at this area here, this is what I'm talking about". Someone had put ringers around the birch trees. Boy, I could strangle that person who did it. The poor guy's face turned beet red and backed away from me, he said " Mary I'm sorry I did it. You know I darned near fell there, I just went numb and I said," What on earth why did you do that? It made me most angry?" He said well I can explain it you. He said when they tree plant seedlings here, the leafy trees are choking, they are overshadowing them.

You'd be surprised how I told him. I told him BS! I even surprised my son. I turned around, I almost started crying. I went back to the vehicle, I stood there for awhile and I thought about it and right away I started praying in \* (unknown word) We got to deal with this. \* (unknown word) I'm not going to strangle him.

So he comes over and I said Bob, I'm going to explain to you, about the birch tree. And I told him everything I knew about this that was taught from my elders. You know he apologized, and he apologized, I said it's over and dealt with. Let's forget it. When we cut all the trees and leafy trees out there is nothing being put back in the soil.

You can't believe the things that they cultivating. There is nothing put back in that soil that Mother Nature offers. So, maybe two or three years after, with all the chemicals and poison chemicals \* (unknown word) we can't grow anything anymore. We're working with dead soil, producing a lot of chemicals we throw into that ground. That's the difference between the two cultures. I remember that I've got only fifteen minutes\* .

The mushroom family, is a it's not, it hasn't got as much food value, But there are different kinds of mushrooms that our people ate. The\* mushroom and the I don't know what kind in English, I know the Indian names, but the English names are \* (unknown word) you'll have to excuse me. Which reminds me, we call it I haven't forgotten my language even though I \* (unknown word) but today I'm can't swear in my own language.

These are the two kinds of mushrooms, that were all plentiful and there are others, I only brought a few samples today but there are the \* (unknown word) , the \* (unknown word) , and there's the \* (unknown word) , those I can remember . After a big burn on the mountain, the Morales come up in the spring, and we have what we call our mushroom mania. People go in there, by the hundreds collecting Morales and this concerns me.

Because people today, have no values if a stream is coming down, they'll ride their cars through it and do a lot of damage. We have the Indian celery, we call this one \* (unknown word) This is one of the first plants that was eaten raw in Spring. Today, when I look for this type of \* (unknown word) mushroom \* (unknown word) we find it smaller and smaller, they're not like they used to be. One time \* (unknown word) we're lucky to find one half of that size. When we teach our students, about plants, we make it a point that they study the leaves. A lot of plants look identical.

One might be poisonous, one is edible. So we make it a point to teach our students, the plant leaves, because they differ close up. The seeds on the celery, you can fry, use for your soups, it's a green\*

This one here, is the one we call\*. That's the Indian rhubarb. That's another plant that is eaten early in the spring. Again the leaves, We peel and eat it just like that fresh. This one here is like our \* (unknown word) we call it. The reason why I think that some of the evergreens \* (unknown word) in these slides, is to explain something that we learned the evergreens hold a lot of sugar. It's a lot of sugar content in trees and I'll explain more as we go along.

There's the \* (unknown word) cones. You roast them and you could eat them the nuts and there's a lot of protein in the nuts. This one here is a balsam or spring sunflower. We call it \* (unknown word) . This one here, is edible as well as medicinal for open sores, open, poison ivy, any kind of skin irritation. That and plantaine go together. And I can make ointment out of the plantaine, after baking it in the sunflower solution. We boil it and use the wash on open sores, like an ulcer sore. And use the plantaine to cover it. It is also edible, the big roots that you see they're deep-rooted. It's got a very tough stem you have to use a hatchet to crack it.

And it's inside you boil and use it for washing open sores and it's edible. Like the next picture, there are some of the smaller ones, we could cook them, they're very sleek and in breaking it down, we find there is a lot of antibiotic in this plant. And we ate this as our daily food a long time ago. My grandparents would dry a lot of it ,and when you pick \* (unknown word) you peel the fruit value in your root edibles. And when this is your daily diet, your system stays intact. Today, the reason why I mentioned that I'm afraid to proscribe any kind of

medication that we used to drink, as you know lethal, because of the change of our diet. We're eating junk food too much, fried foods especially coffee, this is one of the worst things that you're taking. Coffee, caffeinated-tea, soda pop, anything with acid in it is the ruination of our body. And we got to go back to at least halfway to eating properly. At eighty-two I can walk for what seems like two miles. Before it was really hard, but now I'm keeping up with a lot of the young people.

I like to eat properly, I haven't drank coffee for ages, and the secret behind my staying young at eight-two I do my bicycling early in the morning \* (unknown word) . This one here is the one \* (unknown word) . It was gathered and \* (unknown word) . It's like the table onions, only they last longer what they use , I'll come to that the reason why we're getting smaller and smaller.

That's how our grandparents used to store their food. They'd braid and hang them over branches and they'd completely dry and you could put them away. So \* (unknown word) family has other plants that look identical. That's why they are always so particular about sunny plant \* (unknown word) .

This one here is what they call \* (unknown word) We call it the Indian . That's the Indian for the \* (unknown word) They're poisonous, so you have to really know what you're gathering in order to play it safe. This one here, is what they call the Indian \* (unknown word) . I call it \* (unknown word) . This is a medicine that I would, I don't even know how to administer this. It's very good for very sore throat, but I'd have to be a professional to administer this in very small doses.

This is the \* (unknown word) I can't remember the Indian name for that. The roots on this is way, way smaller than what I used to see when Floyd helping grandmother and when my dad worked \* (unknown word) This one is water parsnip we call it \* (unknown word)

This is a plant that we dug early in spring, right after the snow dad would say let's time to produce the agricults. This one her the\* where the plants that made, we ate early in spring, I can remember going with granny one day \* (unknown word) And then there is another plant that looks often identical but the leaves are different. You have to be very careful when you go to gather the plant because the roots of the \* (unknown word) They are small size. Now this one here the top looks exactly like the edible one. But this one again very poisonous, this one they call the water hemlock. We call it \* (unknown word) If you cut the root a yellow substance comes out. And that's the poison. It was called \* (unknown word) by my elders and a long time ago my people warred against each other they would cut one of these roots, and a yellow substance would come out , and they dipped their arrowheads in the brine, and if you got the arrowhead in you, the poison would spread and kill you.

That's the one we call the Silver mead. Look at the roots, it's just like swimming in roots and I'll be heading to the reservoir in this way. This one here is another plant that is starting to really I will miss a point when I will go out and get with my students. They look like big sized potatoes. Today, I doubt if you could find one size of the tip of your thumb, I feel guilty of trying to eat the smaller size. \* (unknown word) And that's the biggest I've got today, but they used to be way bigger than that. If we could get Kelly to take the next ones, Kelly must know quite a number of \* (unknown word) in Harrison. She was a \* (unknown word) I like to work with the young people that study the contents of the plant and Kelly did her thesis on this one here, I'll let her share that one.

#### **KELLY BANNISTER**

Native language spoken. Sorry, at this \* (unknown word) . It's something that humans can't adjust for they don't have the right enzymes. But through the pit picking process and through the drawing process, the process

and methods that Mary can share with you, that reverts the carbohydrate that's indigestible it \* (unknown word) into the \* (unknown word) which you can digest the things that are sort of indigestible to digestible \* (unknown word) sweet and tasty, so the cultural knowledge not only of the plant but the processing, are very, very important to understand how you can take something and make it so important in that \* (unknown word) as well, that after I get in my trip to Mary's \* (unknown word) as well it amazes me that it's a privilege to guarantee that the things that Mary is going to share not only with me personally but I think also I can take that back to where I go the laboratory and can share that perspective with \* (unknown word) and have less \* (unknown word) coming at in the midst up to Mary.

Thank You Kelly (Mary Thomas). I guess the reason why that I like to do it is in sharing I do have a problem. I think we worked it out with Nancy Turner, we whatever I teach, whatever I share, with Nancy Turner, at \* (unknown word) .

It is protected under the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council, and I'm very grateful to my leaders for always standing behind me, in spite of my concerns. That's why I'm actually pale because at the least I'd be sharing with you. The avalanche \* (unknown word) our people when they dump it out.. They make sure that there's a little tiny arm at the end of the root. That they slit up to plant in soil, and that they took a basket full to their camp where they'd thoroughly go through them to make sure they're not taking away any of those roots that are on the bottom of the plant.

They carry it and put it back in the soil the next day. This one here is kind of \* (unknown word) . It's edible. It's like eating like my onions, it's like a bigger taste like raw onions. It's cooked and eaten, but you have to acquire a taste. We call it \* (unknown word) . The \* (unknown word) are chocolate lily . It's another edible root. The roots we kept a lot of these were pit-cooked. And I won't have the time to explain how the pit-cooking was done. It was very good \* (unknown word) . Some of the roots and again this one here was is far smaller than what it used to be. There is a variation of all of the plants that I've been talking about. Except for the \* (unknown word) They call it our \* (unknown word) . It is a tree lichen. It's a moss that hangs on trees there are two kinds of the light-colored, the light colored one and the dark one.

The light colored roots are very bare. The dark colored is what we gather and wash it and there we pick all the dark ones out of it. Pick it really good and then wash it . They have to be washed \* (unknown word) This stage feels like wet dough , for you women that are home and bread making, you know how slippery and nice it is to play in that dough. Here we have a cooked one. I was doing a three day symposium, here in Vancouver, I don't have a vehicle, living near the ocean, and we're having a three day symposium on silviculture, it was sponsored by this university, and there was a group of students came along and I had to orientate everything pertaining to our culture and forests.

And when they see this black \* (unknown word) they said what's that black thing? I grabbed it right away and sliced it in to long pieces, and gave each one of them, it's not bannock. It's pit-cooked and when it comes out done it looks like a big slab of licorice. And they're smelling that, I said you're not supposed to smell that, eat it!

Isn't it good? They said Ooh! A taste all it's own. I said you know . I said you know you guys in forestry, you're going to be up there, you're going to be lost, you've run out of food, you're going to run out of drink, you're going to be thirsty, you're going to lay down under a tree to die of hunger\* . You take your time with snow it's really deep, the animals cannot dig the forest for dry grass, they have to reach up, this is what they live on. The moose, elk, here to survive all winter on this food, it can keep me alive there is a lot of food value in it.

We're so quite familiar with the \* (unknown word) the \* (unknown word) \* (unknown word) where you go to find the \* (unknown word) . There are two kinds of them. This one here is the black, there is a lighter colored one \* (unknown word) . There's a lot seeds in it, we don't really for the seeds, but we like this here, this one here, \* (unknown word) . The \* (unknown word) we, this is the \* (unknown word) go back to the \* (unknown word) It's come from land , but we have some roots that we found Okanagan \* (unknown word) that they traded in our Shuswap Nation, we no \* (unknown word) in our Shuswap Nation where we dig our \* (unknown word) so we have to trade for dried fish \* (unknown word) .

In respects to the \* (unknown word) and it has the taste of breadfruit Oh! It's yummy. The \* (unknown word) is got a lot of vitamins, get the juice, we drink the juice, it's full of vitamins and a lot of our juices have a lot of vitamins. I think with could I have time , the most important thing in this, I was mentioning that our roots, all edibles are getting smaller and smaller. What we found is when they bulldoze an area, where there's the areas where we used to take our root edibles, they have planted, in a species of grass, with fine, fine roots, they intertwine and it's created a thick carpet all over.

Therefore, you cannot get the sun, rain to penetrate and that's why the plants are getting smaller and smaller, and this is my argument with the so-called environmental people that's supposed to get command of Mother Nature. Thank You. (Applause).

#### MODERATOR

It's really difficult to chair a segment of the Elder's if you're late. Just an announcement. There's someone that's left their lights on, in the Sunshine Coast \* (unknown word) . Next we have Peter McCoy and Michael Keefer. Peter McCoy is of the Ktunaxa Kinbasket in the Dawson Creek Council. Peter McCoy is \* (unknown word) and trained received his full orientation from his grand-parents and their friends.

Pete is one of the youngest fluent \* (unknown word) speakers along with these \* (unknown word) . While working with Michael, in Ethnologies, \* (unknown word) project \* (unknown word) he could provide \* (unknown word) in a cultural context some of Pete's accomplishments have went on document \* (unknown word) "Plant Use of \* (unknown word) , I'll leave that one for you. I'll do the \* (unknown word) organizing it , \* (unknown word) as well as contributing towards the outcome of the Indigenous plant use.

Of course, Michael Keefer, the other half, is \* (unknown word) . Michael has been working with the \* (unknown word) projects, since 1997. Although Michael worked for two years and much of his work in the forest of what is now Pacific Spirit Park before \* (unknown word) , enjoying \* (unknown word) about plants. Michael received his undergraduate degree in Geography and Environmental Studies, at the University of \* (unknown word) , and has been busy, to busy to return to all formal education as of yet. So Michael's accomplishments while working with \* (unknown word) of the project are publishing the \* (unknown word) titled, "All Living Things", and numerous \* (unknown word) education workshops and the opening of Indigenous Plant Nursery on the St. Mary Reserve, in Cranbrook. I give you the two speakers.

My name is \* (unknown word) (Native lang. Used) I am \* (unknown word) (Native Lang. Used) and I'm most honoured to be here. I am honoured to be given the opportunity to present to you people far more qualified in this \* (unknown word) plant life. Michael and I have been working for several years on some medicinal and edible plants as found in our territory. Go Ahead.

Currently our project is administered by Ktunaxa Kinbasket Treaty Council and our job first began with oral history interviews and going everywhere in the territory we could collecting plant specimens for a Herbarium. We found this an incredible first year to get to know each other when also the land, I am very new to the Ktunaxa Territory and now I feel like I'm grounded thanks to Pete and the Elders.

Our information we try to keep it stored orally with the people by directly going out and passing out information but, because of the fact we're in the 90's, we also store in a computer database which is a useful tool, but it's nothing like keeping the information oral, so we hope to do both.

**PETER McCOY**

We are available almost any time to pass on our knowledge, information as gotten from the elders. We can at almost any time just get up and if there's a request to go on walks and identify plants or anything like that, we will go with the people to use them. And some of the medicinal plants that people request and may know about, they come to us and ask us if they could use it. I tell them what is your ailment? I've got to find out what exactly what it is and if I do have the medicine for them I will give it to them. They come back again to ask me about it again, I will show you where to get it. So we're educating them in the uses and making sure they using the right pack for the right ailment.

**MICHAEL KEEFER**

So as we've been learning about in the last day there's been a decline in knowledge and use of plants in the last century. Some of the reasons are changing land-use, thanks to the residential school system, and the reserve system in BC. Modern medicine, and also the loss of plants, there's plants that were important that are no longer found in the Ktunaxa territory. Such as the tobacco, which was once cultivated.

There's logging all around us, and we're trying to work with this traditional knowledge and also go out into the forest companies, and the Ministry of Forests and effect how things are done. There's a plant of special significance which Pete can introduce.

**PETER McCOY**

We have a plant growing in our area, that probably grows in other areas that is used by many other First Nations peoples. We have the \* (unknown word) name for it, is the \* (unknown word) , it is the \* (unknown word) for us, it is a really important plant found only in certain areas. One of our trials, I guess and hardships is being able to go to the same areas as used by our peoples, we found the last year or so, that if they're planning on logging certain areas that we have so we have worked with the forestry service, forestry companies, to identify this plant with permission from the elders, we went and told the company that, there is a plant in this area that we're concerned about, and asked us what. We can't tell you yet, we'll go back to our elders and we talked to them, and after long, hard discussions we said, yes, anything \* (unknown word) we'll give you permission to tell them. So we're able to tell them, that we found a little bit of \* (unknown word) , we were able to \* (unknown word) off of precious areas that we did use.

**MICHAEL KEEFER**

The Ayou, it prefers the moist sites, the wet draws coming down from the mountain sides. This clear-cut it's in an area which was burned in the 1930's and 40's, and since then it re-generated a thick new forest of pine and western larch. But the areas we're most concerned about is wet draws. So we went out with the foresters, we started flagging the areas where this, that are important from this plant. So we have a series of corridors going up through this proposed clear-cut, which will have a number of different treatments.

We have one area which will not be touched, for they cannot run any machines, they cannot cut trees. There's other areas where machines will unfortunately pass through in some areas, that some of the trees which will be considered unstable in the wind are going to be taken out. And there's another area of control where they do what they usually do. We plan this summer, to go in to these areas and measure the plants, and then come back and the following years after they've completed the logging to see the effects because, we don't really know what how these plants can be managed with what they're doing, so they don't disappear.

We found typically, that Ayou after clear-cutting and soil compaction, is only two inches tall where normally it's three feet tall in the summer. Some of the other threats in our area to the plants are urbanization, the Rocky Mountain Trench, is rapidly becoming an international destination for tourists, so if the most important sites which were traditionally used and managed everybody likes because there's an open forest with grasslands. These are now becoming suburbs. In much of the territory, there is mining, open pit coal mining, after that the land does not have much. And also fire-suppression and that's one of our favourite topics, we're keen on re-introducing fire.

**PETER McCOY**

We have not \* (unknown word) \* (unknown word) with our mining, roads and everything else that's come in. And in our area, we have back country packing and hiking and things like that. We're finding that even over the tops of a lot of these mountains, that it matters to introduce the noxious weeds.

**MICHAEL KEEFER**

So that's one of our jobs, with ethnobotany instead of the only the traditional approach of documenting, we're trying to go out and apply this knowledge. Because there's a grave danger of simply documenting and that's it that's been very common throughout the world. One of our new projects, is been an Indigenous Plant Nursery, it came through development projects, one that's going from the Castlegar area down to the Ponderay.

They're putting in a large power line and we came to them and said, This is not good, and we have to at least lower the risks and protect the plants. So we've walked the entire length of the line, and highlighted areas of importance, where they cannot disturb soils, other areas where they have to go back and plant.

Out of this came an opportunity for our nursery. We have sought funding, and succeeded with, so hopefully in the next month, we'll begin construction of the nursery to put these plants back in the land, where they're lost and only native plants that is.

**PETER McCOY**

In the course of our work over the last few years, we have traveled pretty extensively throughout our claim territory which is pretty extensive. We have, I've built a herbarium which is a case that holds plants, specimens and we have about over two hundred-sixty plant specimens, that we have collected, identified in Latin, and English and most of them in our language too. And we're compiling and collecting stories, messages, of their names where they might be found and what are the proper procedures to get them.

In an effort to educate, we may need to start with our children, we have written a small handbook that some of you have seen and I will open up right now. We have several copies of a book called, "(Native language used) All Living Things. Mike and I have produced this in conjunction with a book written by Nancy Turner which is called, "Plants of the Southern Interior of British Columbia". It follows the same format, and in it we have the \* (unknown word) first, because it is designed for our children, the English words so other people

know about it, the Latin names so you don't get them mixed up with anything else, and make sure you get the right species so you don't poison yourself accidentally or on purpose.

And the uses, where to find them, and some of the uses of how to prepare the actual plants themselves, all these plants we have in here the uses of them, Michael and I, Michael or I, have tried on these plants. I had a big scar on my arm, I would like to show you some of how good the medicine is, this scar is gone, this is how good the medicine is.

**MICHAEL KEEFER**

The filming that I flipped while we were talking about the Ayou earlier, is the concern about revealing plants to the companies and they all want to say specifics, when we talk traditional uses. They want this spot, this spot, that spot. We say it's the area, it's a whole valley that is important. In this one case we decided just to try telling them a few spots, where this plant grew and we found them comfortable with that.

But they are very abhorrent of the idea of considering a whole area as important. That's one of our most major struggles, right now, and The Wig-Wam Valley, it's in the southeast corner of the province but nation does not like to see the area clear cut. It's the last unroaded valley and we did a major study, came back to the government, told them this is all one big traditional use area and they don't like that, they've instead told us they're going to move their road to avoid this one spot. The trail has been there for millennia going to the prairies, well that's okay we'll log around it and we'll clean up the mess when we're finished. Thank You.

It's a major challenge to try to release some information in an appropriate manner, keep other things away and yet teach respect. Out of our work we've had another call by the Elders in the last number of years, the huckleberries, very important food plant they've been becoming commercialized,. In Montana, and Idaho there's a long established business of collecting berries and marketing them. They've found through their forestry practices that huckleberries are less common than they were once were. And there's competing values, so the Elders asked to put together a workshop so that we could use to educate people.

Not only the huckleberries but all the other plants. We keep on finding them. The more we learn the bigger this gets, the commercialization of the plants. So on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> this year in Yaaka and Nooky, in Creston, BC, we'll be holding a workshop on this very subject. And I hope to see many faces out there at our workshop, we hope to bring people together on this issue instead of the divisiveness that we see so much of, and come out with some concrete solutions as to how deal with this.

**PETER McCOY**

This conference that we're putting on is put on by in part with the non-timber forest products people. They have been putting conferences \* (unknown word) some of you remember the Alert Bay conference and the Damglish conference. So I'm with Michael so we're working good with them to put this on. We belong to that. We have brochures that we can pass out, you guys, if anybody wants one, we have them up here. And we can tell you about our power to heal if you need to know.

**MICHAEL KEEFER**

So thank everyone for listening, and the Musqueam' for allowing us to be here and allowing me to grow up in their land .(Applause).

**MODERATOR**

PROTECTING KNOWLEDGE: TRADITIONAL RESOURCE RIGHTS IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM  
FEBRUARY 24<sup>TH</sup> – 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2000.  
CONFERENCE TRANSCRIPTS

So before we go to people who might ask questions, there are a few of these given out, for those who plug the net for the conference kits. There are some left, the sum is pay us \$20.00 until they're sold out. Yes, are there any questions?