

Stan Sabourin. Trapping. Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg (Pic Mobert First Nation)

Stan talks about his life as a trapper and the importance of trapping in carrying the teachings of his grandparents and sharing them with his children, grandchildren and others who are interested in learning.

Length: 5:00

Summary: Aaniin, boozhoo, saygo wachiya. Stan Sabourin ndishnikaaz. Netmizaaggamig. Hello, my name is Stan Sabourin, I come from Pic Mobert First Nation.

I've been trapping ever since I can remember. My grandparents took me out on the land all year round until I was about the age of ten.

Trapping is about knowing how to survive out on the land. How to make ashwaaygan. How to make a lean-to. How to trap what you need to trap to survive. How to think the way your animal that you want to catch thinks, and look at all the various options. It's a way of tradition.

My grandparents, I owe a lot to them. To me they were excellent teachers, both in language, in culture, in heritage and also teaching about trapping.

I started trapping on my own trapline when my father passed away back in 1960. I was asked to work the trapline and was on the trapline until I finished high school.

Since 1985 I became a trapping instructor. And once you learn the basic fundamentals of the mammals you're going to trap and the basic fundamentals of the tools you need, it'll all come to you. It's like the more you put into it, the more you get out of it.

In teaching children, if they enjoy what they're doing, they will pick it up. It's like anything. If you enjoy what you're doing you'll pick it up and you'll learn to go further with it in the learning.

So by learning and watching and observing, you in turn pick up the traits, family traits, from your siblings, or from your parents or from your grandparents. I said it's like school. The more you go, the more you learn. And how you use it depends on what you do with it.

Trapping to me as an Aboriginal person, is a birth right. It's a treaty right, it's a constitutional right. To me it's a way of life. It's a way of being whole for me and being one as an individual with my family. Trapping has always been in our family.

My legislation is that my teachings in relation to the land and trapping and hunting and fishing and heritage and culture, is to teach it to my children and grandchildren, and to my brothers and sisters.

Trapping seems to be a dying art with our people. When I first started out doing this I can remember our whole community at one time or another was involved. Now there's only about ten of us that trap from Pic Mobert First Nation.

At one time there used to be four of us boys in our family and there still are, that go in the bush, but I'm the only one that's trapping. My other three brothers, one is a fisherman, the other one is a hunter and I've got on that totally walked away from it, and yet we all grew up with it.

For me, if I can leave after I go to the spirit world, it will give me an opportunity to share what I have. Trapping is in each and every one of us to a certain extent, we don't realize it.

The further we share what we have, whatever skills that we have, the further we get.