

Askîy

Youth Monitor Contest Guide



The Otipemisiwak Métis Government Environment and Climate Change (ECC) department is holding an essay-writing contest to find **four Askîy Youth Guardians aged 18-29** to participate in a week of fish monitoring activities led by harvesters and staff from February 19-24, 2024.

To enter, youth must submit a 500-word essay explaining, **“What would being part of the Askîy Youth Guardians Team and participating in Fish Health Monitoring mean to you? (i.e., connection to culture, learning a new skill, learning to feed yourself/family)”**. Interested youth should review the schedule on page 4 to ensure their availability before entering.

CONTEST BACKGROUND

The Environment and Climate Change department conducts community-based monitoring programs through an initiative called Askîy (Cree for “Earth” or “land”) to investigate and address Citizen environmental concerns. We have developed programs to monitor plants, fish, wildlife, and biodiversity using methods which braid western science with Traditional Knowledge. Monitoring programs are designed to engage with Citizens, facilitate knowledge sharing within the community, provide opportunities for community involvement in monitoring, and keep Citizens updated on project activities and outcomes.

In March 2021, we launched our Fish Health Monitoring Project, working with experienced Métis harvesters to sample fish from select lakes across Alberta. Using both traditional gillnets and rod and reel techniques, harvested fish were measured and examined for fish health. All lethally-sampled fish were sent home with harvesters to later fillet, eat, and report back on internal fish health and palatability (e.g., taste, texture, smell). In 2022, we returned to many of the same lakes to sample again and collect fish for toxicology testing.

In February 2023, four Metis youth were invited to participate and learn both traditional ice-fishing methods and fish health identification techniques from our harvesters, as well as scientific monitoring techniques from ECC staff. This year, four new youth will form the 2024 Askîy Youth Guardians Team and learn and work together throughout the week to complete fish monitoring activities.

View last year’s team in action here:

<https://albertametis.com/AskiyYouthVideo>

CONTEST CRITERIA

Essays must:

- Be typed and submitted in PDF format.
- Be one page and 500 words maximum.
- Answer the question: **What would being part of the Askîy Youth Guardians Team and participating in Fish Health Monitoring mean to you? (i.e., connection to culture, learning a new skill, learning to feed yourself/family).**

**All contest rules are provided on page 5 of this guide*

EVALUATION

Each submission will be judged according to the following criteria:

- Content
- Organization
- Creativity

**More detailed evaluation criteria are provided on page 5 of this guide*

HOW TO SUBMIT A CONTEST ENTRY

All contest submissions must include:

- An original essay submitted in PDF format and emailed to Environment@metis.org
- A completed Contest Entry Form
- A completed Participant Consent Form

Entries must be submitted by **11:59 p.m. MDT on January 7, 2024**. Late entries will not be accepted.





MONITORING PLAN

ECC staff, harvesters, and the Askîy Youth Guardians Team will travel together for the week to complete monitoring activities on three lakes across Alberta. OMG harvesters will teach youth two ice-fishing methods and traditional ways to assess fish. ECC staff will provide instruction on western science-based fish monitoring methodologies.

We will depart from Edmonton on **Monday, February 19, 2024** and arrive back in Edmonton on **Saturday, February 24, 2024**.

Youth residing outside of Edmonton will be reimbursed any costs for travel and accommodations required to participate in the monitoring activities.

Youth will have the opportunity to:

- Set and pull gillnets
- Rod-and-reel fish

- Measure fish
- Examine fish for health indicators
- Evaluate ice thickness for safety
- Hear stories and learn from the harvesters

We will provide accommodations and a per diem for meals. All equipment necessary for monitoring will be supplied, but youth participants must bring their own outdoor clothing and footwear.

Youth will be expected to:

- Dress appropriately for the weather
- Be on time
- Help the harvesters and ECC staff
- Conduct themselves safely and respectfully

The Askîy Youth Guardians Team will also share a camera to document their experiences throughout the week. The photos and videos will be made into a video and shared on our social media. Participants will also be welcome to post on their channels during the monitoring week, tagging us on Facebook [@ABmetis](#) or Instagram [@albertametis](#) using [#AskîyGuardian](#).



MONITORING SCHEDULE

Exact meeting and departure times will be provided in a schedule to be shared with successful participants.

FEBRUARY 19

Morning: Meet in Edmonton
Drive to Moose Lake and set nets
Stay overnight in Bonnyville

FEBRUARY 20

Morning: Pull nets from Moose Lake, assess fish, re-set nets in Moose Lake
Stay overnight in Bonnyville

FEBRUARY 21

Morning: Pull nets from Moose Lake, assess fish
Drive to Calling Lake and set nets
Stay overnight in Athabasca

FEBRUARY 22

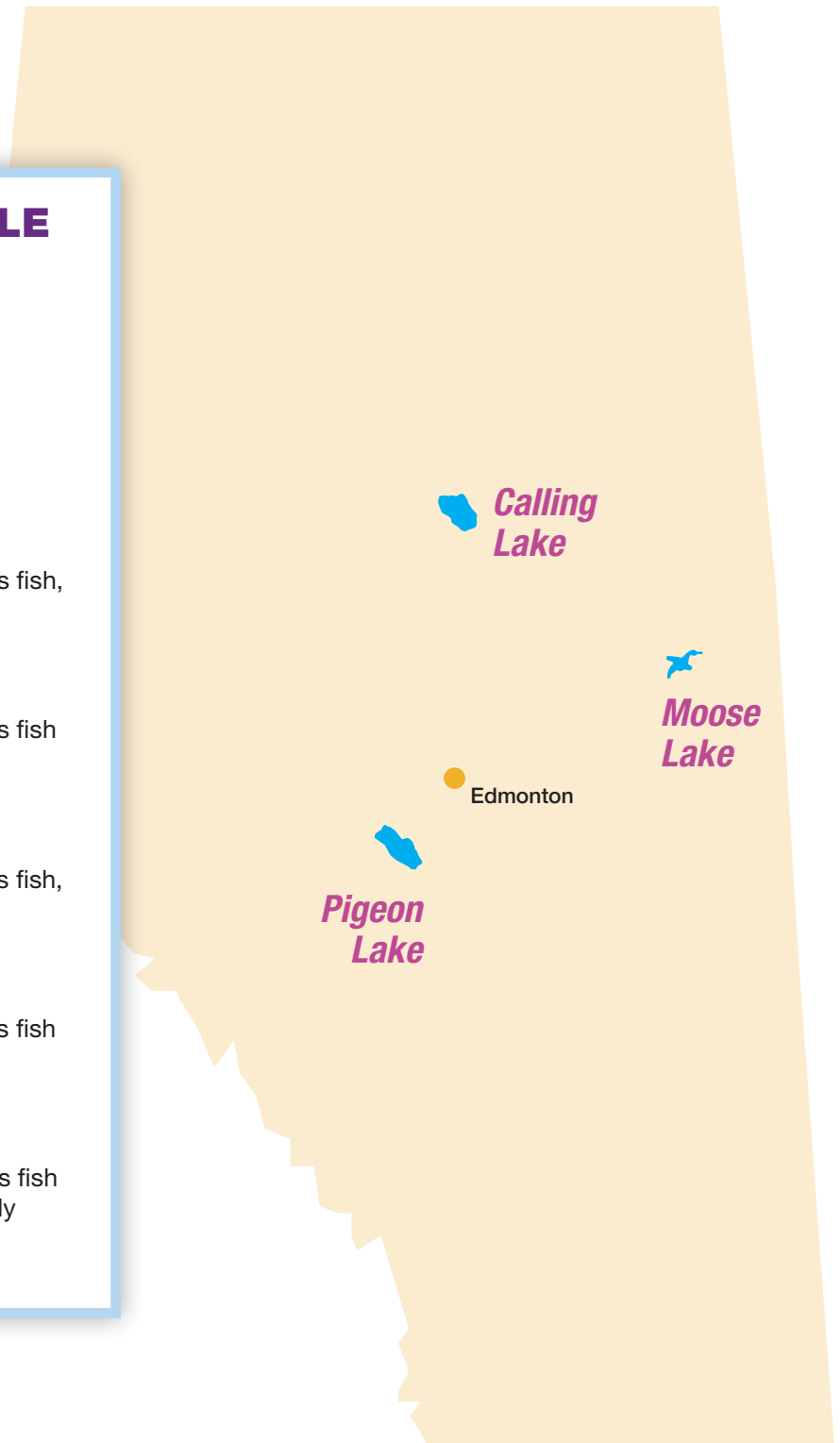
Morning: Pull nets from Calling Lake, assess fish, re-set nets in Calling Lake
Stay overnight in Athabasca

FEBRUARY 23

Morning: Pull nets from Calling Lake, assess fish
Drive to Pigeon Lake and set nets
Stay overnight in Pigeon Lake area

FEBRUARY 24

Morning: Pull nets from Pigeon Lake, assess fish
Participate in the OMG's Children and Family Services Frosty Reels family camp
Return to Edmonton



CONTEST RULES

ELIGIBILITY

- The Askîy Youth Monitor Contest (the “Contest”) is open to all individual OMG Citizens aged 18-29.
- Essays must be unpublished and an original entry. No copyright materials may be used for this Contest.
- Essays must be created by the participant.

ENTRY INFORMATION

- Essays must be a maximum 500-word essay and answer the question: **What would being part of the Askîy Youth Guardians Team and participating in Fish Health Monitoring mean to you? (i.e., connection to culture, learning a new skill, learning to feed yourself/family).**
- Only one essay submission per participant. Multiple entries per Citizen or group entries will not be accepted.
- Entries must be emailed to Environment@metis.org by 11:59 p.m. (MDT) on January 7, 2024.
- All essay submissions must include a completed Contest Entry Form and Participant Consent Form to be considered a valid entry.
- Any false information provided within the context of the Contest by any participant concerning information provided in the Contest Entry Form, ownership or right or non-compliance with the rules or the like may result in immediate elimination of the individual from the Contest.
- The Rules may be changed without notice or reason including, if necessary, to comply with any applicable law. By entering the Contest, participants abide by these rules.
- This Contest shall be governed by and construed in accordance with these Rules, the laws of the Province of Alberta, and any applicable federal laws. These Rules govern all aspects of the Contest and are binding on all participants and other parties including a participant’s parents or legal guardians, if applicable.
- Please contact Kimberly Mosicki at kmosicki@metis.org or more information.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Contest entries will be evaluated in a single category, with no preference given for age or gender.
- Four contest winners will be selected to participate in the OMG’s Askîy fish health monitoring work in February 2024 as a part of the Askîy Youth Guardians Team.
- Essays or parts of essays may be used by the OMG for any advertisement, publication, promotion, or any other purposes.
- The OMG reserves the right to cancel, terminate, modify, or suspend the Contest for any reason, without any prior notice to any participant.
- Essay submissions become the sole property of the OMG.
- Upon submission, all copyright in and to the essay submission is transferred and assigned to the OMG.
- Participants grant the OMG the right to use, reproduce, reprint, distribute, perform, and/or display the participant’s essay without further compensation or notification of the participant.

SELECTION OF AWARDS

- All entries will be reviewed and judged by the team of OMG harvesters who participate in the Askîy Fish Health Monitoring program.
- Judges will evaluate each entry according to the following criteria:
 - » **Content** – how relevant the essay is to the theme question and the originality of the response.
 - » **Organization** – how well the essay is organized and laid out. The main point is clear and highlighted and the essay uses clear and easy-to-understand language.
 - » **Creativity** – how well the essay demonstrates personal expression and importance related to the contest question.
- Each participant with a winning entry will be notified by telephone or email that they have been selected for the Youth Guardians Team. Arrangements will then be made for their participation and to organize travel details. If the participant declines the prize, the prize may be forfeited and awarded to another.
- If the ECC department does not receive entries of sufficient quantity or quality, we reserve the right not to select any participants for the monitoring work.



CONTEST ENTRY FORM

The personal information collected on this form will be used to determine the individual's eligibility for the Askîy Youth Monitor Contest (the "Contest") and to fulfill the operating activities of the Contest. The individual's name may be disclosed to the general public for the purposes of publicizing the Contest. Questions or inquiries regarding the collection and use of personal information may be directed to the Environment and Climate Change Department at Environment@metis.org.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Name (First and Last)

Age

OMG Citizen Number

Phone

Email

Region

Jacket/Shirt Size

ESSAY

In 500 words answer the question: **What being part of the Askîy Youth Guardians Team and participating in Fish Health Monitoring would mean to you?** (i.e., connection to culture, learning a new skill, learning to feed yourself/family)



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

1. I warrant and agree:
 - a. I am the individual identified on this form and confirm I have read the Contest Rules;
 - b. The information in the Contest Entry Form and the Participant Consent Form is true and correct on the date it was submitted;
 - c. The essay submitted for the purposes of the Contest (the “Essay”) is an original and unpublished work by me;
 - d. To be legally bound by the Contest Rules.
2. I understand that if selected as a participant, my name, likeness, and quotes from my essay may be disclosed to the general public for the purposes of publicising the Contest.
3. I acknowledge and agree that the Essay, or part of the Essay, may be used by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government for any advertisement, publication, promotion, or any other purposes.
4. Photographs and/or videos taken over the course of the ice fishing trip, if selected as a participant, I hereby grant the Otipemisiwak Métis Government and its employees, without my inspection or approval, to use, alter, and composite any digital images (if any) including images of me, or in which I may be included, taken in the course of the monitoring work for promotional and/or educational materials made available through:
 - a. Printed materials or publications
 - b. Electronic publications or presentations
 - c. Video
 - d. The albertametis.com website
 - e. Social media pages/accounts managed by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government.

Name of Participant (Print)

Date

Signature of Participant

