

## Organization Profile Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library

Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians is located in rural northeastern Wisconsin. The Tribe is one the largest employers in the area with tribal government allocating funds from the gaming revenues to support a large number of health, education and welfare programs, including the Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library. The Tribe's mission is, *"To provide leadership for the betterment of tribal membership and descendants in the areas of health, education, welfare, economic / job development and the protection of natural resources."*

The Ben Guthrie-Lac du Flambeau Public Library opened its doors in May of 1979. This was made possible by group citizens and the Tribal Council that felt it was important to establish a library facility in the community. The supervision of the library falls under the Tribe's education department thus the Tribe is the employer of library staff, as such, the Tribe provides a modest budget for the support of the library. The library director works with the town of Lac du Flambeau government, because they also provide a small budget to support the library. There is collaboration between both the Tribe and the town of Lac du Flambeau due to the Wisconsin statutes under Public Libraries. The library board consists of five members. The Library's mission statement is as follows: *"The Ben Guthrie-Lac du Flambeau Public Library will provide free information and services to all residents of the Lac du Flambeau community, encompassing the Vilas County areas. This effort is sustained by being part of the northern region of the state public library system that connects us to the world by having free public computers. Our unique status as a Tribal library will be sustained by a continued succession plan."*

Our service area is officially within the boundaries of the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. It is a twelve square mile beautiful area with 126 lakes. The reservation is a checkerboard land base meaning both Native and non-Natives live in the area through the Dawes Act of 1887. The library is part of the northern region of the State of Wisconsin library system and since we are also a public library we fall under the Department of Instruction (DPI) through the State of Wisconsin. Northern Waters and DPI helped connect us to the internet and the world of information. Their staff trained us to understand the computer system we are part of and have continued to be of support for any technical questions we have.

We serve anyone who walks in the door and requests a library card, regardless of their residence. We do have residents from nearby towns who use our library as well as summer residents from other towns, cities and states.

The library is involved and engaged in the community. In June of 2018 we went live to an on-line scanning system and we have not looked back. Currently we have up-to-date computers for public use, we collaborate with Tribal Departments to offer information and training on a number of subjects, but for the last five years have offered Ojibwe language and culture in our facility and continue to collaborate with the Director of the Ojibwe Language program to host an Ojibwe Language immersion camp for families each summer. We look forward, with great excitement, to the future as we move to offer more opportunities for learning and accessing resources for our patrons and will be directly involved in carrying out the work of the **Asigisidoon Assemble and Put It together**; Foods for Our Health project.

Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant  
2024-2026

Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library  
Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

## ***Asigisidoon Assemble and Put It together; Foods for Our Health***

### **Project Justification**

#### **What goals did we select?**

Goal 1: Champion lifelong learning

Objective 1.1 is to advance shared knowledge and learning opportunities for all

Objective 1.2 Support the training and professional development of the library workforce

Goal 3: Enhance the preservation and revitalization of Native American cultures or language

Objective 3.3 Support the sharing of content within and/or beyond native communities

#### **What is the need, problem or challenge?**

The Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library is located on the Lac du Flambeau Reservation in rural Northcentral Wisconsin and occupies land in Iron, Oneida, and Vilas Counties. The reservation is 86,630 acres, or 144 square miles and is 13 miles from the nearest community, off the reservation. According to the 2020 Census data from the Lac du Flambeau CDP, the reservation has a 59.1% employment rate and 20.1% of the population is without health insurance. The number of tribal members on Food Share (aka Food Stamps) is high for our small community. According to the Tribe's Economic Support Department Director, an average of 1,300 people receive Food Share benefits each month, which includes adults and children. The total average monthly value of Food Share benefits is \$286,293.83, which equals approximately \$3,435,526.00 a year. While the yearly Food Share benefit amount seems high, the average person would receive just \$220.00 a month, which makes it challenging to purchase foods that provide a healthy and balanced diet.

The Tribe's diabetes educator reports she is working with 362 Native American patients being treated for diabetes on the reservation. The Director of the Peter Christensen Health Center states the center is currently treating 517 patients with a dual hypertension/diabetes diagnosis, 733 with a diabetes diagnosis and 483 who are considered pre-diabetic. Although the Community Health Center has a weight room, only a core group of community members use it.

The library currently has three staff members, one that has a high school diploma. The Library Director has a Master degree and a Type 2 Librarian certification from the State of Wisconsin. Library staff need training to enhance and improve the services provided to patrons at the library. The library travel and training budget is small, which has limited the amount of training and/or conference attendance for staff.

## **Who is Our Target Group for This Project?**

Our target group for this project are individuals 18-25 as this group is interested in traditional/seasonal foods, but often has little experience with them. With that said, all tribal and community members are welcome to participate and will benefit from this project. Our target group has been involved in the planning of this project through input provided to library staff, both verbally and via survey responses at our yearly expo and other community events.

## **Who are the ultimate beneficiaries for this project?**

Our proposed project will benefit the 3,656 people residing on the Lac du Flambeau Reservation and an additional 2500 tribal members living off the reservation. Digital products produced through the project will be shared more widely with regional libraries and accessible from anywhere in the world via the Library's website and the Library's YouTube Channel.

## **Project Work Plan**

Our project focuses on the following goals and objectives: **Goal 1. Champion Lifelong Learning; Objective 1.1 to advance shared knowledge and learning opportunities for all; Objective 1.2 Support the training and professional development of the library workforce; Goal 3. Enhance the preservation and revitalization of Native American cultures or language; Objective 3.3 Support the sharing of content within and/or beyond native communities. *We have labeled our activities according to the goal and objective they fulfill in our work plan.***

As we tried to articulate why a project that focuses on traditional Ojibwe seasonal harvesting and eating to improve health was important to our community, we came across an article by Mary Kate Dennis and Tabitha Robin (2020)<sup>1</sup> that perfectly described why we wanted to approach our project through the library rather than a health care setting. Dennis and Robin write, "Indigenous people have had their health quantified through their health disparities and their chronic disease statistics." The authors go on to describe the disconnect between Western medicine that separates the mind and the body to an indigenous perspective that sees *wellness as being in connection and balance with all things*. The authors later describe that wellness and "traditional" indigenous foods may not be considered healthy in the western sense, but can provide indigenous people with a sense of connection and wellbeing that is far more valuable to them.

Our approach is to bring indigenous practices of seasonal hunting, gathering, preparing and preserving food and information on health and wellbeing to a neutral location (the library) and bring content experts, whether they are local hunters and gatherers, Ojibwe language teachers, gardeners, tribal staff who have expertise in plants and animals indigenous to the reservation, or health care providers who can share good information with participants in a way that brings participants to a closer connection with their health and wellbeing in a way that incorporates culture, language, traditions, community and connections.

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<sup>1</sup> Healthy on Our Own Terms: Indigenous Wellbeing and the Colonized Food System, Mary Kate Dennis and Tabitha Robin (2020), Journal of Critical Diatetics, Special Edition, Volume 5, Issue 1.

### What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence?

This project will educate community members on menu planning and budgeting around traditional Ojibwe gathering seasons and will include presentations from content experts, hands-on cooking demonstrations and other activities described in the table below. For this project, our menus and cooking demonstrations will start where people in the community are at, i.e. fry bread, biscuits and other higher fat breads and foods, which are typically eaten because of their taste and affordability. We will then introduce ways to make these foods healthier as well as describing how eating less of them, and more harvested foods, will make a difference in participants’ overall health and sense of wellbeing. Meeting participants where they are at, helping them to experiment with cooking, learning new techniques for buying, gathering, growing and preserving food will be done in a supportive, positive environment in the Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library.

### Work plan

What	When	Who will do it?
<b>Training of library staff</b>  Goal 1 Objective 1.2	Monthly, beginning year 1 month 1 and then ongoing	<b>The Library Director</b> will work with library staff to enhance their skills in event planning, disseminating project information and digital literacy. <b>Staff will also attend conferences and state-wide meetings</b> to learn what other libraries are accomplishing and develop connections with other library staff.
<b>Cooking Lessons</b>  Goal 1 Objective 1.1	<b>Monthly, beginning year 1, month 2</b> Mary Sikora-Peterson, Leon Valliere, UW-Madison Extension as resources for food choices (healthier), food traditions and language around food and food preservation	<b>The Library Director and Staff</b> will host monthly cooking lessons starting year 1 month 2 of the grant. Months 10-12, 1-3 and 5-8 will also include content experts who will provide historic cultural and contemporary information on seasonal menu items and how to clean and prepare harvested game and gathered, seasonal foods. The Ojibwe names for all foods will be taught and the lessons will end with a discussion and sharing of memories and recipes from participants and library staff. Cooking lessons will continue in year 2 with content experts presenting during months 9-11, 1-3, 4-7. Cooking lessons will occur monthly.
<b>Participant Roundtable discussion for feedback</b>  Goal 1 Objective 1.2	<b>Quarterly</b>	<b>The Library director and staff</b> will host quarterly participant round table discussions to discuss what participants liked about previous activities, what they would like in the future and how the project can be improved. This activity will be a key learning experience for library staff in terms of receiving feedback and responding to what they learn.
<b>Digital Literacy Training</b>  Goal 1	<b>Monthly, starting year 1 month 5</b>	<b>The Library Director</b> will initially work with the Tribal IT department to teach Staff how to use the technology for the cooking lessons and other activities. Once staff become proficient they will teach participants how to use the technology in the library, including the computers, video camera, scanner and 360 OWL zoom device cameras to record the lessons and other

Objective 1.2		activities, so they can be saved and used as a resource for the entire Tribal community.
Seed Starting  Goal 1 Objective 1.1 Goal 3 Objective 3.3	<b>Year 1, months 3-5, year 2, months 3-5</b> Library staff, master gardeners, UW-Extension specialists and others will provide information and resources for seed starting and garden care and tie the growing of our own food to Indigenous food sovereignty and seasonal harvesting and eating.	<b>The Library Director, Staff, master gardener and content experts</b> will discuss the benefits of working in soil, seed starting seedling transplanting, types of gardens, gardening prep, and seasonal garden care. Activities will be recorded with a video camera and posted on the Library's YouTube channel to share with the community, other libraries in the region and across Indian Country.
Food harvest and preservation  Goal 1 Objective 1.1 Goal 3 Objective 3.3	<b>Year 1 and 2 during months of harvest</b> Community hunter/gathers, Tribal Content Experts, UW-Extension specialists, and Master Gardeners will provide information and resources for these activities.	<b>The Library Director, Staff and content experts</b> will guide participants through several types of food harvesting from garden grown foods to gathering traditional Ojibwe foods in season. Food preservation techniques and hands-on demonstrations will be conducted with participants and the activities will be recorded with a video camera and posted on the Library's YouTube channel to share with the community, other libraries in the region and across Indian Country.
Digital Preservation of project activities  Goal 3 Objective 3.3	<b>Beginning Year 1, month 5 and ongoing for the length of the grant.</b> Videos produced during the project will remain available to the public on YouTube with links to the channel on the Library's website. Activity handouts, including resource lists of books and organizations will remain available to patrons at the library or on the website.	<b>The Library Director, staff and content experts will be responsible for having participants sign consent and release forms for videos and photos taken during the project activities.</b> All photos and videos produced during the project activities will be loaded on the Library's future YouTube channel and linked on the Library website at <a href="https://ldflibrary.org/">https://ldflibrary.org/</a> The videos will feature gathering seasonal foods, processing of game and cooking of foods and game. Ojibwe language and culture will be included in every activity.

**What are the risks to the project? How will you mitigate them?**

Risks related to the project are related to food safety and the ability for participants to identify and safely process seasonal foods on the reservation and ceded territory. We will mitigate any food risk, through the following: each lesson will include a food safety discussion, especially when it comes to harvesting and preserving wild animals and fish. Each lesson will include a safety handout and online resources about each meal and each food item that is introduced. A week after each lesson, videos of the activities/ demonstrations will be uploaded to the Library's future YouTube channel and will be available for review. In addition, each lesson will be available to those who cannot attend in person, by zoom and will feature time for questions throughout the activity. These mitigation strategies will be reviewed quarterly, or more frequently as needed.

**Who will plan, implement and manage your project?**

Jeanne Wolfe, the Library Director will plan and implement the project, in collaboration with her staff, content experts from tribal programs and the community and UW-Madison Extension master gardener. Ms. Wolfe has a master's degree in Tribal Administration and Governance from the University of Minnesota Duluth, as well as having completed the Librarian Certification course through the State of Wisconsin. Ms. Wolfe has managed

grants through IMLS and other entities for six or more years and will be responsible for the management of this grant.

**What time, financial, personnel, and other resources do you need to carry out the activities?**

This project will use existing Library personnel, but will increase one staff member's weekly hours (with that increase paid out of the grant) so that staff can incorporate much of the grant work planning and activities into her position. The project will pay a stipend to have community content experts lead an activity such as cleaning and processing a deer, partridge, rabbit or other small game, gathering and processing maple sugar, harvesting manoomin (wild rice) and processing it for use, just to name a few. The cost for the increased hours for a staff person to take on some of the grant work equal \$61,849.00 over the course of the two-year funding cycle of the grant. Each presenter will share approximately 1 hour of their time, but some will be longer. Content experts who are employed by the tribe will present information as part of their work and no fee will be charged to the grant for their time. Please note that all traditional harvesters will be paid a stipend. The dollar amount requested from IMLS for traditional harvesters for this project is \$250.00 per year and a total of \$500.00 for the two-year grant cycle.

**What existing resources within the tribe, library, community or potential partners will be utilized?** The Library has a large collection of books that focus on harvesting seasonal indigenous foods. These books will be featured in monthly hand-outs to participants and cited in YouTube video descriptions as additional resources. In addition, content experts from our partners in Tribal Departments, such as the Tribal Natural Resources and The Peter Christensen Community Health Center will participate in activities where their expertise will be beneficial i.e. community health, fish hatchery, Tribal farm, and more. Please note, Tribal Department staff will participate in the project at no charge. In addition, the Tribe has a partnership with UW-Madison Extension and as a result we have a full-time Extension/Tribal Community Development Educator in the Planning and Development Department. Our CDE is our connection to a host of extension educators who will be available to consult or give presentations in their area of expertise, which will be a great resource for the project, especially as we respond to feedback from our quarterly round-table discussions about the project and our effectiveness.

**How and with whom will you share your work's general findings and lessons learned?**

This project will be shared with the local community and Indian Country via YouTube links posted on the library website at <https://ldflibrary.org/> one week after every activity. Links and information will be shared quarterly with other tribal libraries in our region. Quarterly reports will be shared with the Tribal Council and the Library Board and weekly notices about the project activities will run in the Tribe's e-Newsletter.

**Project Results**

**What are your projects intended results and how will they address the need, problem or challenge you have identified?**

Our project proposes to improve health and wellness in the community by providing monthly experiential learning activities for people to learn about the Ojibwe seasonal hunting and gathering, and the preparing and processing of traditional foods. Activities will range from hands-on cooking demonstrations, cleaning and processing deer, fish and other small game, sharing of traditional recipes handed down from elders in the community, group discussions about eating, cooking and food traditions in families, presentations from tribal content experts around indigenous foods that can be gathered on the reservation and in the ceded territories, hands-on activities and guidance from UW-Extension specialists and master gardener on how to plant seeds and grow food in our climate and how to make healthier versions of favorite traditional foods found in the community and in Indian Country.

**How will the knowledge, skills and/or appreciation of the target group’s community values grow as a result of your project?**

Our approach of bringing indigenous practices through an experiential learning process of seasonal hunting, gathering, preparing and preserving food and learning about health and wellbeing to a neutral location (the library) is different from anything that has been attempted in the community. We believe that offering these experiences in a non-medical, non-school setting (two places where tribal members have often not felt seen or heard), into a relaxed welcoming environment, will bring participants to a closer connection with their health and wellbeing. Incorporating culture, language, traditions, community and connections in a safe space, while also listening to participant feedback to improve the project, has the potential to increase a sense of community connection and shared values. We believe that our target audience will find value in learning from their own community members and from the experiences planning into this project.

**What products will result from your project?** The project will create YouTube videos of cooking demonstrations, harvesting demonstrations, game cleaning and processing demonstrations, menu preparing demonstrations/activities and health-related presentations. In addition we will develop activity handouts with links to additional resources and link the resources on the Library website. We will also provide individual digital literacy, to those who need it, on library computers, so that everyone has access to the digital products created through this project.

**How will you sustain the benefits of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?**

The Library will be able to sustain the digital products after funding for the project ends, because YouTube is free for use and the library will have other sources of funding to support requests for printed copies of handouts developed for the project. The training that library staff receive both in digital literacy and in using what they learned to assist patrons, will continue after the project ends. We expect that most of the participants, library patrons, other libraries and tribal communities will access the digital products through YouTube and the Library’s website. The website has already been developed and is being maintained by the library and will continue to be maintained after the project ends. Many of the content experts, who will be providing experiential and informational presentations, are employed by the tribe and will be able to come

back for follow-up presentations or experiential learning activities, as part of their jobs, which is supported by their supervisors and Tribal Council.









**Ben Guthrie Lac du Flambeau Public Library**  
*Asigisidoon Assemble and Put It together; Foods for Our Health*  
**Digital Products Plan**

**What digital projects will you create?**

We will use a basic video camera to record demonstrations (i.e. dressing wild game, cooking, processing wild rice or maple syrup). We have offered an option to attend by zoom for our classes since the pandemic (using the zoom record) and have posted the videos on the library website. We will continue to offer zoom for all class room experiences to ensure that all patrons, regardless of whether they have adequate transportation or not, can participate in our programming. Making video recordings of activities that will be conducted outdoors is an option we considered to keep our zoom patrons engaged.

In the past the Lac du Flambeau reservation did not have adequate broadband for all households, but the Tribe has received an NTIA Broadband grant that will bring fiber to 2,600 homes on the reservation. The first homes will be able to connect to the Tribe's broadband network by late fall 2024. We feel confident that our patrons will have adequate broadband to access the videos we create and upload to YouTube.

We are not hiring an individual to create our project's video recordings, we are not selling copies of the recordings. We have decided to upload copies of our video recordings to YouTube, because individuals can access YouTube for free and most people know how to use YouTube, because it is ubiquitous. We will provide a link to our YouTube channel on the Library website at <https://ldflibrary.org/>

**What type of digital products will you create?**

We are video recording and using the zoom record function to capture activities for those patrons who can not join us live. We also recognize that participants may wish to review the discussions and activities at a later date, so that they can try activities at home. So, recording our activities and posting them on a Library YouTube channel, placing the link on our Library website, seemed the most economical way to preserve our work and make it accessible to our participants and patrons. We will also be posting pdf documents of notes, shared recipes and templates for menu planning and budgeting so that participants/patrons can access them online. Participants and patrons may also come in person to the library for hard copies of the documents created for the project. The video recordings will be saved and uploaded using one of the eight supported formats used by YouTube, (i.e. FLV, MOV, AVI, 3GPP, MPEG4, WebM, MPEGS or WMV.) Documents uploaded on the Library website will be saved in PDF format.

### **Availability:**

Video recordings will be uploaded on the future library YouTube about a week after they have been recorded. PDF documents will be uploaded within a week of being handed out during in-person participation and will be posted on the Library website.

The Library is not developing any software, data sets, journal articles, etc. We are only video recording activities and demonstrations so that participants (remote or in-person) can review the information at a later date. YouTube is a free service and does not require a paid membership. Links to the videos will be located on the Library's website and one click on a link should access the Library's (future) YouTube channel. All recordings will be dated and a brief explanation of the topic and links to other resources (if they were handed out in class) will be provided as well, in the video description.

The limitation in our digital products will be that the Library will be recording the presentations as a service to the patrons and participants. There will be a learning curve related to simple editing. The videos will not be professionally processed as we anticipate developing some light editing skills at the library staff level and in the past (with zoom class recordings) that has been adequate for the needs of our participants.

### **Access**

The **Asigisidoon** project is a public project being developed and implemented in collaboration with the Lac du Flambeau Ojibwe language program, the Peter Christensen Health Center Community Health Department, and the Lac du Flambeau Natural Resources Department. All presenters know to limit their comments to cultural information that is publicly accessible. No culturally sensitive information will be recorded or shared on our YouTube channel videos. All or most of our presenters are enrolled members of the Lac du Flambeau Band or individuals who have worked for the tribe for many years. All presenters have an area of expertise and are happy to share their knowledge with participants and patrons of the library. The Library Director and Staff will ensure that all Participants and presenters sign a consent release form for all video and photos taken during each activity. Any persons not wishing to appear on video will be respectfully avoided on camera. The choice to not consent to being recorded or photographed will be respected at all times.

The use of YouTube as a means to store and access videos from this project was made due to the ubiquitous nature of the platform. We believe that YouTube is accessible to all and will be happy to assist any patron who is unable to access our videos on YouTube. We will also provide access to our YouTube videos on the computers at the Library, including providing headphones for viewing. All viewing and access of the videos recorded using IMLS funding will always remain free of cost for our patrons, participants and the public.

**Sustainability:**

All video recordings uploaded on YouTube should remain sustainable until and if YouTube changes its use of the eight supported video formats. Should YouTube change its requirements, we will need to either change the format of the recordings (save as...) or if that is not possible, archive them on the Library website. We doubt that YouTube will change its format in the near term and will be able to reach out to Norther Waters or DPI to request technical assistance to ensure that videos, photos and documents created with IMLS funding remain available to patrons and the public.