



Nak'azdli Whut'en

We Challenge the Future.



Planning Report

A Companion Document to the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan

Prepared with the assistance of Land Forest People Consulting Ltd.

Version 1.0, April 2021

Resolution carried at the 2019 Annual General Assembly:

That based on the current health of the two watersheds in Nak'azdli Territory, we ask Nak'azdli Whut'en to declare an environmental state of emergency in order to push the government to take action to restore the watersheds to be healthy and sustainable.





**Land
Forest
People.**

Land Forest People Consulting Ltd. offers our gratitude for the opportunity to assist Nak'azdli Whut'en in this important initiative. We are thankful for the help and guidance of all the wonderful Nak'azdli Whut'enne we have had the pleasure to meet and work with. Colleen, Tina, Seraphine, Rosemarie, Clara, Robin, Evan, and Pete, we are in your debt.



Nak'azdli Declaration

We are Nak'azdli Whut'enne – the people who travel by water.

We are people of the land.

We have lived on our lands since time immemorial. We have been here since the Creator made us responsible for this land.

We have always been here and we will always be here.

Our people are here to care for our land and water. It is our obligation and birthright to be the caretakers and protectors of our resources.

Our people descended from powerful hereditary leaders. We know where we come from and we know who we are. We respect our heritage and nothing can change our history and our truth.

Our people travelled far and wide throughout the keyoh – our territory. They paddled our waters and climbed our mountains. They understood the richness that the keyoh held, and in understanding this, they knew our land. Our ancestors were responsible for the rivers, streams, and forests of the keyoh; they knew our land well because it was for the benefit of everyone.

Nak'azdli Nation is moving into our future. Our children and our land are our future. Our future will bring enough for our children's children to thrive. We are looking forward; we are ready to meet the next millennium.

Therefore, be it known far and wide that Nak'azdli Whut'en, the People of the earth, are responsible for and belong to the keyoh. Let it be known that Nak'azdli is a Nation unto itself, holding territory for its people.



Table of Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	PURPOSE.....	1
1.2	GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE.....	2
1.3	KEYOH.....	3
1.4	METHODOLOGY.....	3
1.5	THE PLANNING TEAM.....	4
1.6	TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE (TEK).....	4
1.7	DELIVERABLES.....	9
2.0	GOVERNANCE AND JURISDICTION.....	12
2.1	OUR PEOPLE.....	12
2.2	SETTLER POLICY - CANADA.....	13
	SETTLER POLICY - BRITISH COLUMBIA.....	18
2.4	RESERVE LANDS.....	22
2.5	ACCOMMODATION OF INFRINGEMENT OF RIGHTS.....	22
3.0	THE STATE OF THE WATER AND THE LAND.....	28
3.1	WATERSHEDS.....	28
3.2	WATER SUSTAINABILITY.....	31
3.3	HEALTH OF THE LAND.....	38
3.4	RISKS TO THE LAND.....	41
4.0	COMMUNITY VISION.....	47
4.1	LAND AND WATER STEWARDSHIP.....	47
4.2	WATER.....	48
4.3	FORESTS.....	49
5.0	GUIDANCE.....	51
5.1	WATERSHEDS.....	51
5.2	FOREST MANAGEMENT.....	52
5.3	STEWARDSHIP ZONES.....	55
5.4	TRADITIONAL USE AND OCCUPANCY.....	57
6.0	MEASURING SUCCESS.....	58
6.1	PURPOSE OF THE LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN.....	58
6.2	GOALS OF THE LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN.....	58
6.3	MEASURABLES: GOVERNANCE.....	59
6.4	MEASURABLES: CULTURE AND HERITAGE.....	60
6.5	MEASURABLES: EDUCATION.....	61
6.6	MEASURABLES: WATER AND FISH.....	61
6.7	MEASURABLES: FORESTS AND WILDLIFE.....	63
6.8	MEASURABLES: ECONOMY.....	64
7.0	COLLABORATION AND MONITORING.....	65
7.1	REFERRALS AND CONSULTATION.....	65
7.2	INDIGENOUS GUARDIANS PROGRAMS.....	65
7.3	THE NAK'AZDLI GUARDIAN PROGRAM.....	66
8.0	LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN.....	68



9.0	SOURCES	70
-----	---------------	----

Tables and Figures

FIGURE 1 - LOCATION OF THE TERRITORY OF THE NAK'AZDLI WHU'TENNE	2
FIGURE 2 - TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE	8
FIGURE 3 - REPRESENTATION OF THE INTERACTIVE LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN	10
FIGURE 4 - REPRESENTATION OF THE INTERACTIVE TRADITIONAL USE MAP	11
FIGURE 5 - DAKELH STEWARDSHIP 1919	27
FIGURE 6 - WATERSHEDS AS UNITS OF STEWARDSHIP	30
FIGURE 7 - GRAPH OF LOGGING HISTORY	33
FIGURE 8 - TABLE OF LOGGING HISTORY	34
FIGURE 9 - WATERSHEDS EVALUATED FOR HEALTH	37
FIGURE 10 - WATERSHED STEWARDSHIP GUIDANCE	52
FIGURE 11 - NAK'AZDLI WHUT'EN LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN	69





1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nak'azdli Whut'en with the assistance of Land Forest People Consulting Ltd. has developed a *Land Stewardship Plan* for the territory of the Nak'azdli Whut'enne. This has been done in recognition of the deep and diverse relationships that Nak'azdli has with the land, and according to our vision of the future.

The *Land Stewardship Plan* is a tool of nation re-building. To this end it promotes well-considered use of the land and waters of Nak'azdli Whut'en in order to ensure community sustainability. Sustainability rests on economic, social, and cultural health.

The *Land Stewardship Plan* is a living document. It is flexible to accommodate new information and to meet the changing needs of Nak'azdli Whut'enne.

The *Land Stewardship Plan* shares the view of Nak'azdli Whut'enne and represents our truth.

1.1 PURPOSE

By way of the *Land Stewardship Plan*, Nak'azdli Whut'enne carry out our legal and spiritual obligations and birthright to be the caretakers and protectors of our lands and waters.

The *Land Stewardship Plan* is a statement of intent and a standard for stewardship of our territory and all outside governments, agencies, industries, and persons must comply with it.

Through the *Land Stewardship Plan* Nak'azdli has set out to:

- Empower the community through direct involvement in land use planning;
- Build upon the strength of the people through project leadership and sustainability research;
- Celebrate Nak'azdli tradition and culture as guiding forces in the work;
- Protect and enhance all manner of natural and cultural resources which support the community;
- Implement Nak'azdli Indigenous laws;
- Promote Nak'azdli presence in a culturally and environmentally productive landscape; and
- Benefit from culturally and environmentally appropriate economic opportunities and entrepreneurship.

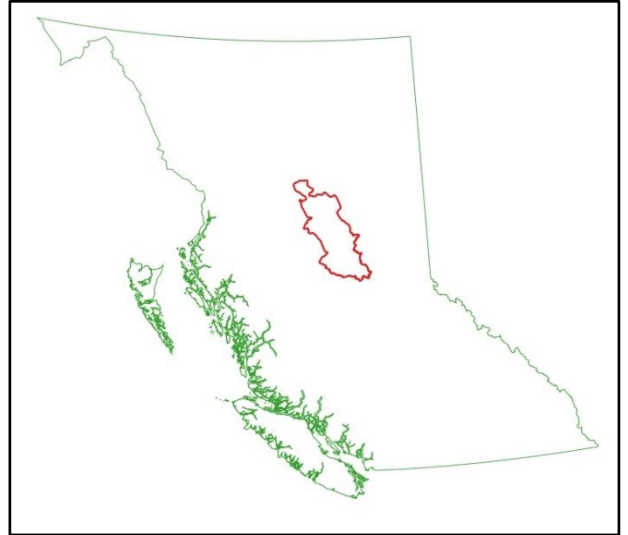
Stewardship of the land and waterways of Nak'azdli will support cultural resurgence, education, economic development, environmental restoration and protection, wellness, and healthy sustainable communities.



1.2 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The geographic scope of this *Land Stewardship Plan* is the entirety of the Nak'azdli territory as defined by the Nak'azdli Natural Resources Office and as currently in use in our referrals process. This territory is approximately 2.5 million hectares in area and was first spatialized during Nak'azdli's engagement in the B.C. Treaty Process.

Figure 1 - Location of the Territory of the Nak'azdli Whu'tenne



Nak'azdli Whut'enne have lived on the shores of Nakal Bun and throughout the home territory of the Dakelh people for countless generations. The land and water have provided for the people and the people have cared for the land and water.

We have neighbours in the municipality of Fort St. James, Yekooche First Nation, Tl'azt'en Nation, and other surrounding municipal and Carrier-Sekani First Nations communities.

1.3 KEYOH

“‘Keyoh’, it means territory...it talks about an area, but everything in that area like the plants, the water, the air, the rocks, the sand, the leaves, the insects, the birds, the animals... ‘Ke’ refers to feet...‘yoh’ means ‘house’ in our language, but it doesn’t mean house: it refers to the walls of a house. So ‘ke’ doesn’t refer to feet, it refers to a boundary, like ‘the boundary walls of where you walk’. Keyoh is a territory.”

– Francois Prince, 21 May 2019

Nak'azdli heredity and stewardship includes family-level protection and utilization of the land and resources in a family-controlled area known as a keyoh, largely defined by biophysical watershed boundaries. These traditional areas are used as units of stewardship and articulating the vision of the community. Many of these areas were codified and/or arbitrarily circumscribed in the early 1900s through the provincial trapline registry, and the commodification of territory and coerced settlement in urban areas now means that traditional intra-territorial boundaries are incompletely known.

The *Nak'azdli Watershed Sustainability Project* (2017) described Nak'azdli territory in terms of watershed-based management units, and these traditional areas have been adopted for use in the land stewardship plan as units of engagement for soliciting and articulating the vision of the community.

1.4 METHODOLOGY

Land stewardship planning is a nation re-building tool to direct land use and development within Nak'azdli territory. The plan describes community vision and articulates local concepts for land use, protection, and development. It describes how, where and when development or other uses are permitted and promoted and provides a framework for land use decisions within Nak'azdli territory. It is a tool for fair, transparent, and consistent decision-making by staff and leadership, as well as for the protection and promotion of Nak'azdli cultural practices, values, and resources. A land stewardship plan, at minimum, provides documentation and direction on:

- Past, present, and desired future cultural and natural resource use areas;
- Land use guidance in various forms including zonation and designation;
- Guidelines to protect environmentally and culturally sensitive areas; and
- A strategic and community-directed framework for future land-use decision-making.

1.5 THE PLANNING TEAM

A planning team was assembled consisting of Nak'azdli land managers, traditional ecological knowledge researchers, and Land Forest People staff. The Nak'azdli land stewardship planning team consists of:

- Colleen Erickson, Nak'azdli Natural Resources Manager: project oversight and design;
- Tina Erickson, Nak'azdli Natural Resources Research Coordinator (retired): project oversight and design;
- Clara Jack, Nak'azdli Natural Resources researcher: TEK interviewing and mapping; archival research;
- Jonathan Taggart, Land Forest People Associate: TEK interviewing and mapping; GIS assembler; and
- David Carson, Land Forest People Principal: lead planner, project oversight, and community engagement and communication.

Further in-office insight and support was provided by Rosemarie Sam, Pete Erickson, Evan Prince, Ken Johnson, Arthur Halleran, Dave Radies, Chief Alec McKinnon, Genevieve (Jenny) Martin and Seraphine Munroe.

1.6 TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE (TEK)

"My Mom would tell me to tell my son, "You tell him to call me atsoocho." All the people who were my grandmother's age...that's who I thought were all medicine women, knew something about medicine. My understanding would be that if you go on this keyoh and there's something that grows really well, or lots of medicine plants, then the language would describe it that way – make reference to it. Atsoocho, they were all the same, had the same knowledge. So all of them have different keyohs and different places. One keyoh might have lots of lush places, other place might be desert, other place might be mountain, other place might be by the river. All of those have different ecosystems, and so no nedo [white person] language can explain that...We pick roots and we gain knowledge by our connection with that plant. It's the same with different plants: you gain knowledge by contacting them in spirit and physically handling them...Our knowledge goes back to when our people first arrived here. What did they find? What did they make of this country? It must have been the creator that did put us here...My atsoochos, they all told me the same thing, they just said, "Look after everything. Respect that." That was the first thing. It was good."

– Sharon Bird, 27 April 2017

This section describes our methodology to use traditional ecological knowledge to bring together the past, the present, and the future and document the relationship that our people have with the land.

"Each group of long-resident people, living within its own geographic space and relying for the most part on local resources, accumulates over time a wealth of specialized and complex knowledge about its particular locality or territory."

(Turner, 2014, p35).

Traditional use studies (TUS), traditional (ecological) knowledge studies (TK or TEK; Deroy & Olson, 2015), or Indigenous use-and-occupancy studies (Tobias, 2000; 2009) – are spatially-explicit assessments



of the local ecological knowledge of a given group: the integrated understandings of local species, the landscape they inhabit, their temporal and spatial variabilities, and the dynamic weather systems in which they exist, as developed through long-term habitation within a given area (Turner, 2014).

Traditional use studies record harvesting activities (e.g. hunting, trapping, fishing, harvesting berries and other plant foods, gathering of medicinal plants), as well as travel related to these activities; they also record related knowledge (including knowledge contained and transmitted in oral histories and stories), place names, and habitation sites under the rubric of 'occupancy' (Tobias, 2000). Such studies are often undertaken as a component of a rights and title strategy to demonstrate occupancy of a given area over generations (Tobias, 2000).

The *Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan* has drawn heavily on the traditional ecological knowledge of Nak'azdli Elders and keyoh holders to identify environmental and cultural values on the land, interpret cause and effect with regard to environmental and cultural change, to articulate policies and protocols for current and future land use, and to define a vision for desired future states of both land and community. The project design and data collection methodology described below is informed by best practices in traditional use and occupancy mapping (DeRoy, 2015; DeRoy & Olson, 2015; Tobias, 2000; 2009). It conforms to the principles of decolonizing and indigenous methodologies (Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008) in that it aims to involve Nak'azdli land managers and membership in every stage of research design, data collection, analysis and communication. The methodology employed in mapping Nak'azdli *keyoh* can be considered a form of counter-mapping (Peluso, 1995; Harris & Hazen, 2006; Willow, 2013; Povinelli, 1995), in that it prioritizes community stories and experiences of the landscape, as well as visions for the future. It is further informed by critique of traditional use and occupancy research as currently practiced, as articulated by Colleen and Tina Erickson of the Nak'azdli Whut'en Natural Resources Office and by Indigenous and allied scholars such as Nola Markey (2001), Brian Thom (2014), and others. To this end, the methodology further emphasizes the stories, experiences, concerns, and future hopes and plans of Nak'azdli community members.

"Being Dakelh": Value Components in Nak'azdli Keyoh

Value components are categories of cultural and natural resources deemed integral to the identity of a community – these are the categories that guide traditional ecological knowledge mapping interviews. Value components may be species of plants, animals, trees, and fish, as well as site-specific cultural activities related to dwelling, travel, birth, death, mythology, and others as defined by the community, and these categories can be useful in 'organizing' traditional ecological knowledge for the purposes of mapping. Previous referrals-specific traditional use and occupancy studies have articulated and mapped a comprehensive list of culturally-significant plants, animals, and activities in portions of Nak'azdli territory, and these valuable yet limited studies have been integrated into the current project in the interest of capturing as much existing data as possible. In particular, studies completed in consultation for the Spectra Energy and Prince Rupert Gas Transmission pipelines have provided valuable data pertaining to the footprints of those projects.

Initial project team meetings identified both the value and shortcomings of these earlier 'value components', and it was decided to adopt and expand these categories to further allow for qualitative interviewing and mapping of place-based stories, observations and attributions of change, and aspirations for the future of Nak'azdli lands and waters to more completely represent a Dakelh worldview and way of life.

“Dad used to say that all of the children learned how to do everything...It has nothing to do with gender. He said they learned how to sew and make birch bark baskets, they learned how to cook, they learned how to nurture the children. So that when you're out on the land, if something happened to the women, you know how to nurture the children and look after them. If the hunter among you dies while you're out on the land, you need to know enough about hunting to survive. So, it was just a matter of learning skills for everyday living and survival. It was not about assigning the hunting to the men.”

– Tina Erickson, 27 April 2017

Participant recruitment

Nak'azdli researchers identified 30 Elders and keyoh holders who were asked to contribute their knowledge of the keyoh and to share guidance on land use principles and priorities. These members were contacted in person and invited to participate in a mapping interview. The majority of mapping interviews were conducted individually, although several proceeded as small focus groups.

Interview Protocol

The project team designed semi-structured interview protocol to guide interviews. Each interview began with a project introduction and a review of consent and privacy protocols; participants were then asked a series of questions about culturally-significant species, places, practices, experiences, environmental and cultural change, and the future of the keyoh.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge Data Collection

Traditional ecological knowledge data collection included open-ended questions about the availability and utility of various fish, animal, plant and tree species associated with hunting, gathering, fishing and trapping in the study area. For each section and species, a follow-up semi-structured questionnaire solicited information on:

- Seasonal availability;
- Harvesting, processing, preparation and preservation methods; and
- Change in the timing, distribution, and community knowledge of the resource.

Spatial Data Collection

Spatial data collection followed the 'direct-to-digital' method outlined in DeRoy (2015).

Google Earth was used to display the project base map with Nak'azdli reserves, forest service roads, lakes, and streams displayed as points of reference. These elements were turned on or off as requested by the interviewee. The base map was projected on a wall or screen where possible.

Participants were asked to identify important areas on the map, using a pointer. Sites were recorded as lines (trails only) or polygons (all other site types) and were traced by project staff in Google Earth, following the area indicated by the interviewee. Polygon and line fidelity was continually verified with the interviewee while tracing. Recorded sites were numbered consecutively, and basic identifying information was recorded in the description field.

Supplementary data on place names, access restrictions, seasonal variability, social and environmental history (including how the site was known and with whom it was accessed) and applicable knowledge protocols was recorded for each site.



Data Processing and Analysis

Data from each interview was entered into a GIS and assigned attribute fields indicating interview number, participant name, type of activity or observation, species-specific information as applicable, and notes as recorded during the interview. Interviews were further transcribed by the project team and transcriptions were used to supplement site descriptions in the GIS as needed. Code queries were then used to collate expressions across all interviews relating to each resource or activity type. These expressions represent interviewees' collective knowledge of resource use within the study area and study period. Interview transcripts were also coded for land use directives or protocols which were further refined into zonation recommendations as described in section 5.3.

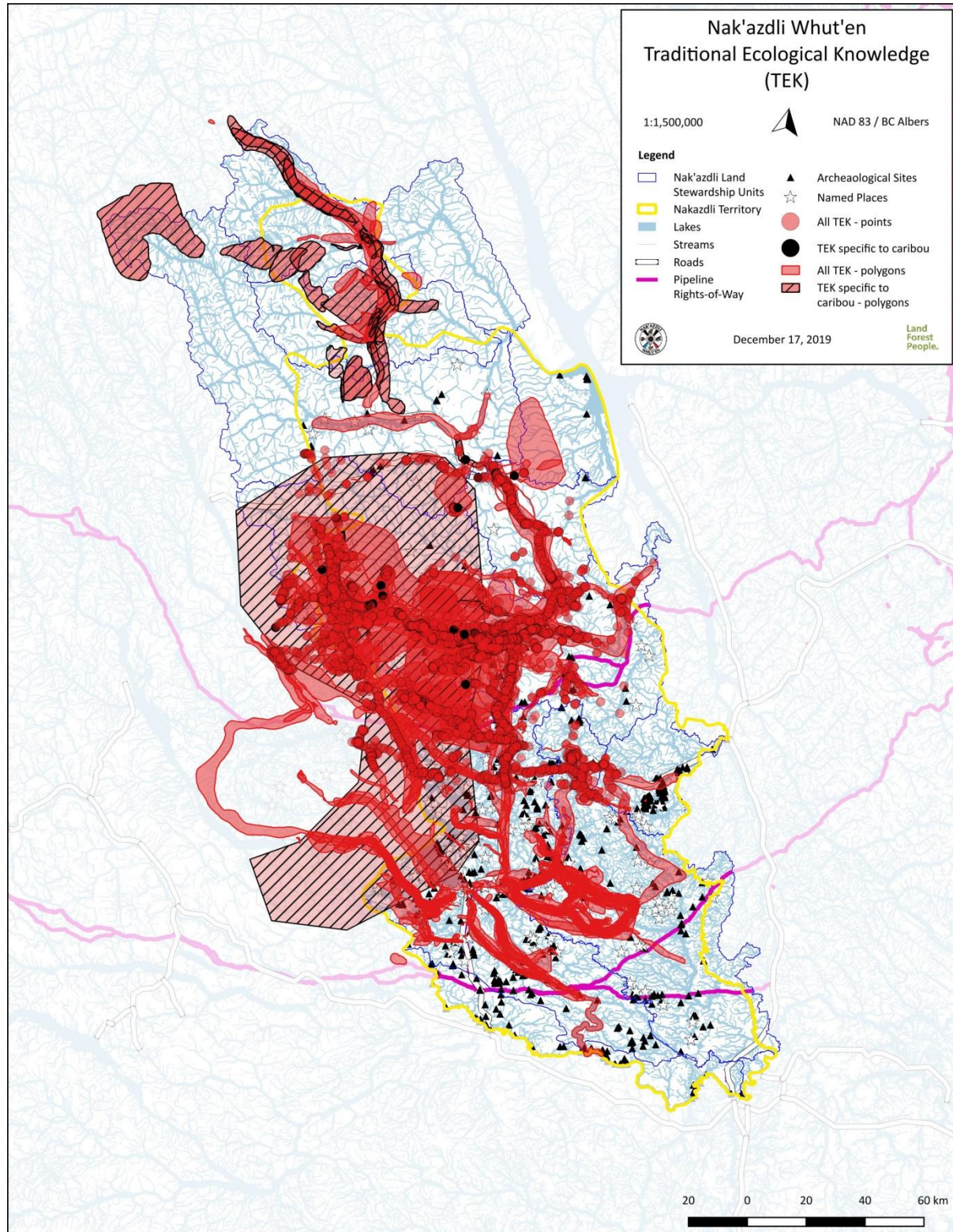


Figure 2 - Traditional Ecological Knowledge

This map is best viewed at its full size.

1.7 DELIVERABLES

Phase I - Preplanning and Current Values

Phase I of the project addressed preplanning and the gathering of pertinent materials. Land Forest People worked with Nak'azdli to gather, review, and consolidate existing strategy and planning documents and available mapping, and other data covering Nak'azdli territory in order to fully inform the project. Gathering this information ensured that the planning team was fully informed and that any information gaps were identified early.

An initial community visit included a team meeting, information gathering, and project and communication planning,

Deliverables in Phase I included: a *Project Plan*; a *Communications Strategy*; a concept video product for community engagement, a *Current Land Use and Values Map*; and a reference library of documents, spatial data, and multi-media files.

Phase II - Focusing Community Vision

Phase II built on information assembled in the pre-planning phase. Land Forest People worked with the Planning Intern and the Planning Team to engage the community in a discussion which would culminate in a single vision of the future to which all members had opportunity to inform, influence, and identify with.

Vision documents were prepared addressing: 1) land and water stewardship; 2) forests; and 3) water.

Phase III - Land Use Planning and Designations

In Phase III, based on community input and staff direction, a draft stewardship plan including land use designations was prepared.

The *Land Stewardship Plan* is a map-based product allowing for visual engagement by the people. The plan is a cartographic quality map of the Nak'azdli traditional territory presenting land use and environmental guidance in an interesting and intuitive way and as devised by the community.

The *Land Stewardship Plan* is documented by this *Land Stewardship Planning Report*.

The *Nak'azdli Whut'en Land Stewardship Implementation Report* addresses processes and actions required to implement the Land Stewardship Plan.

Phase IV - Land Use Plan Finalization

Phase IV involved further development and finalization of the plan, with an emphasis on implementation. A community visit was held to review all work and new information and validate the plan.

PHASE V - Interactive Digital Map Products

The Land Stewardship Plan interactive digital map products make the land use plan as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. are:

- A digital Land Stewardship Plan map, delivered via Google MyMaps;
- A digital Traditional Use and Occupancy map, delivered via Google MyMaps; and
- A GIS spatial data package, compatible with any GIS platform, e.g. ArcGIS or QGIS.

Digital Land Stewardship Plan Map

Accessible at [Interactive Land Stewardship Plan](#)

(https://drive.google.com/open?id=1UxtN-bf0bkmhO__4uMUfVfUnSkTSuOff&usp=sharing)

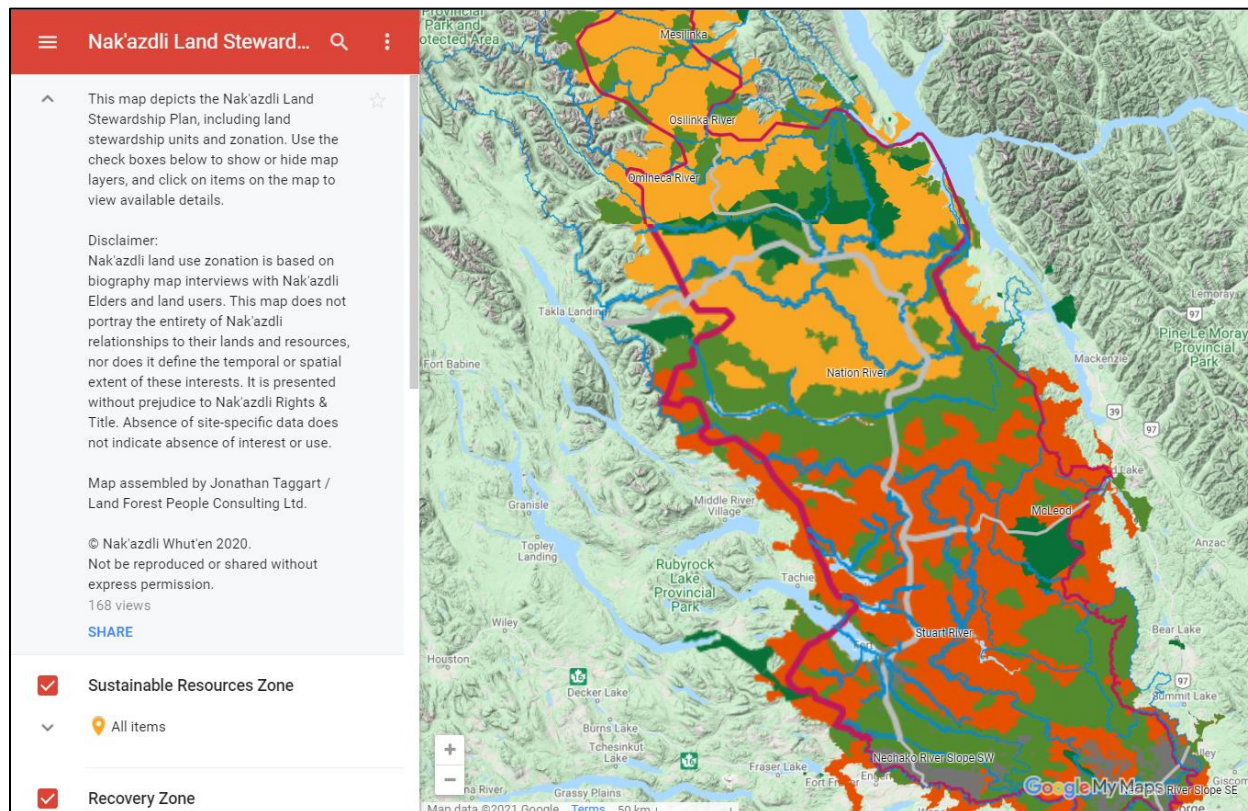


Figure 3 - Representation of the Interactive Land Stewardship Plan

The digital Land Stewardship Plan map depicts the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan, including land stewardship units and zonation. It is for communicating the broad strokes of the Land Stewardship Plan with Nak'azdli membership and outside organizations as necessary. Viewers may use checkboxes to show or hide map layers, and may click on items on the map to view available details.

Digital Traditional Use & Occupancy Map

Accessible upon

The digital Traditional Use & Occupancy map depicts Nak'azdli Whut'en land use and knowledge recorded during biography map interviews with Nak'azdli Elders and land users over the course of several traditional use and occupancy studies and through the Nak'azdli Whut'en Land Stewardship Planning project. It is the 'background information' that has informed the land use zones described in the Land Stewardship Plan map.

Nak'azdli Whut'en Land Stewardship Planning Report

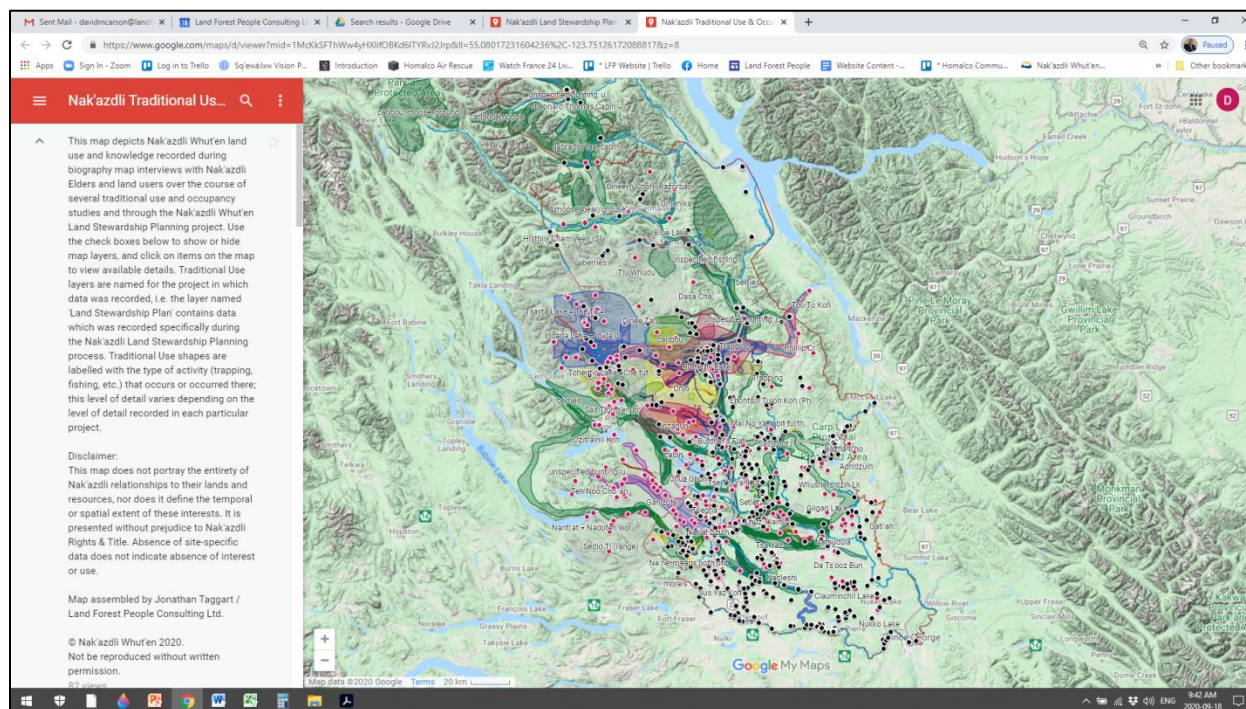


Figure 4 - Representation of the Interactive Traditional Use Map

Viewers may use the checkboxes to show or hide map layers, and click on items on the map to view available details. Traditional Use layers are named for the project in which the layer's data was recorded, i.e. the layer named 'Land Stewardship Plan' contains data which was recorded specifically during the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Planning process. Traditional Use shapes are labelled with the type of activity (trapping, fishing, etc.) that occurs there, and this level of detail varies depending on the level of detail recorded in each particular project.

GIS Spatial Data Package

The GIS Spatial Data Package contains all of the spatial (map) data used in the Land Stewardship Plan, including all Land Stewardship units and zones, relevant Nak'azdli and outsider jurisdictions, infrastructure, biophysical detail, and Nak'azdli traditional use & occupancy data.



2.0 GOVERNANCE AND JURISDICTION

Nak'azdli Whut'en has exclusively occupied, stewarded, and benefited from our traditional territory since time immemorial and has never ceded, surrendered, or in any way relinquished our title to the land or resources.

Our Aboriginal title and rights are grounded in our deeply intimate relationship to the land and resources. All generations of Nak'azdli Whut'en have been sustained through this relationship, which is expressed through our language, laws, culture, economy, society, governance, and spirituality. Nak'azdli Whut'en asserts title over the unceded territory of our people, and we exercise daily our rights of jurisdiction and decision making.

Nak'azdli asserts leadership and control in the stewardship of all resources coming from the land and water of the Nation. Assertion and recognition of inherent rights will be the foundation for rebuilding the natural environment, including our lakes, forests, rivers, and streams.

2.1 OUR PEOPLE

"The ground is yun'kut. 'kut' means on. 'Yun' is 'the ground', but the 'kut' refers to 'on the ground' – it refers to that concept of "where your feet touch."...They call us Yinka Dene, which is "People of the Earth." But Yinka is actually a derivative of 'Yunke', so "the feet of the ground"; "the ground and feet that we walk on"; "the people who walk on the earth". That's what it refers to."

– Francois Prince, 21 May 2019

Nak'azdli is a vibrant, holistic community made up of approximately 1,800 members who believe in maintaining and enhancing our traditional values and businesses by working together to promote sustainable cultural practices, education, health, and economic progress.

For thousands of years our people have lived on our lands, and by using the gifts of the land and water we built a culturally rich and complex society.

Nak'azdli Whut'en are part of a larger Athapaskan Carrier-speaking cultural group – our people refer to our language as *Dakelh*. Our territory is in the upper reaches of the Skeena and Fraser Rivers in what is now called British Columbia, Canada. Before contact we were semi-sedentary hunters, fishers, and harvesters. Today we are largely settled in the town of Fort St. James; our blended economy and way of life still emphasizes hunting, fishing, and harvesting, but the cumulative effects of settlement and development have made these activities less viable than in earlier times.

Before contact we were divided into geographically isolated areas governed by an extended family, each with a distinct territory – a *keyoh* – that was geographically bounded by lakes, rivers, and heights of land.

The matrilineal clans, led by the *deneza'* and *ts'ekeza'* organized within the potlatch governance system to manage territories, titles, justice and so on.



Although the priests banned matrilineal inheritance in 1868, people continued to recognize and practice matrilineal inheritance.

The extended families worked together to harvest resources: our permanent villages were inhabited during the summer months when we fished for salmon and harvested wild foods, and in the winter our families travelled separately to seasonal homes to hunt large and small game and to trap fur-bearing animals within their respective *keyoh*.

The provincial government established the trapline system in the 1920s and many families outlined the boundaries of their *keyoh* and registered them as traplines.

Unlike the matrilineal *keyoh* system which was held by the extended family and clan, the registered traplines could only be held by one male person, and this change interrupted our patterns of inheritance and stewardship. Today the term *keyoh* has come to express overlapping concepts: both traditional territories once stewarded by families and the provincially-registered traplines still held by many of our people. Some families recognize patrilineal inheritance while others recognize matrilineal inheritance within both systems. This plan uses the term *keyoh* in the former sense, to refer to naturally bounded and traditionally-held units of land and water, rather than to registered traplines.

2.2 SETTLER POLICY - CANADA

International Law: The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Canada fully supports the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). Throughout the Declaration there are statements which affirm the rights of Nak'azdli Whut'enne to the land, water, and resources of our land.

All those engaging with Nak'azdli Whut'en territory must be familiar with all contents of the Declaration and understand the ramifications with regard to their work. The following excerpts are provided for the reader's convenience.

Article 8

2. States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for:

(b) Any action which has the aim or effect of dispossessing them of their lands, territories or resources;

Article 11

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

Article 13

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.



Article 18

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision making institutions.

Article 19

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

Article 20

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions, to be secure in the enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities.

Article 24

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and to maintain their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals. Indigenous individuals also have the right to access, without any discrimination, to all social and health services.

Article 25

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

Article 26

- 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned, occupied or otherwise used or acquired.*
- 2. Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired.*

Article 29

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

Article 32

- 1. Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources.*
- 2. States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources.*

All activity within Nak'azdli lands requires free, prior, and informed consent of Nak'azdli Whut'en.



Canadian Common Law

Aboriginal Rights

While Nak'azdli Whut'en continues to reinforce, practice, and live by our Indigenous laws, we are also impacted by Aboriginal law, or the Canadian common law as it applies to Aboriginal people. This includes the creation of Aboriginal rights, including Aboriginal title, and the Crown's duty to behave honourably when engaging with us and other Indigenous peoples.

Aboriginal rights are recognized and affirmed in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The purpose of s. 35 is reconciliation. The Constitution recognizes that Aboriginal rights exist, but does not define them. In summary terms, an Aboriginal right is a practice, custom, or tradition that is integral to an Aboriginal peoples' distinct society. While the Courts look to "first contact with a European" as the date to determine whether Aboriginal rights exist, these rights are not frozen in time and find modern expression in present day. Fishing, hunting, and trapping have all been recognized as Aboriginal rights, in some cases including a commercial element as well.

Seeking a declaration of an Aboriginal right is a costly endeavour that few nations have undertaken. Many find that their resources are better spent focusing on implementation rather than pushing through the Courts to define the precise boundaries of their existing rights.

Nak'azdli Whut'en intends to fully exercise its constitutionally protected s. 35 rights, including title to land, and stewardship of our resources to ensure the vibrancy and longevity of our culture.

Aboriginal Title

Aboriginal title is also a constitutionally protected Aboriginal right. Aboriginal title is the right to use and control the land, and the rights to benefits that may flow from the territory. In order to prove Aboriginal title in the courts, Aboriginal peoples must show sufficient, exclusive, and continuous control over their territory from the time of the assertion of British sovereignty. In British Columbia, this is generally accepted as beginning with the Treaty of Oregon in 1846.

To date, the Canadian courts have made only one declaration of Aboriginal title, in the 2014 *Tsilhqot'in* decision. While it is a landmark decision, and much credit is owed to the Tsilhqot'in, the declaration covers only a small, largely unpopulated portion of Xeni Gwet'in territory, and the case reportedly cost tens of millions of dollars.

A critical element of Aboriginal title is consent – title holders must grant their consent to Crown or third party undertakings that would occur in their territory. Similarly, it is possible that approved projects could be cancelled if they are found to unjustifiably infringe Aboriginal title. The Courts have cautioned that when a Nation is close to a declaration of title, deeper consultation and accommodation must occur.



Further empowered by the Tsilhqot'in decision, Nak'azdli Whut'en continues to assert title and inherent rights and demand co-management across our lands. The *Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan* will be our foundation for going forward.

Title by Agreement: The Crown-Wet'suwet'en MOU Example

Courts are not the only forum capable of recognizing and implementing title. In the *Tsilhqot'in* decision, the Supreme Court explicitly stated that title may be recognized by the courts, or by agreement. Reconciliation, a stated priority of the Federal and Provincial Crowns, would clearly favour title by agreement.

The Provincial and Federal governments are presently engaged in discussions with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, on behalf of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, to come to an agreement on title to the Wet'suwet'en yintah (territory). The ongoing discussions are occurring under the terms established in a Memorandum of Understanding which has been made publicly available. The MOU recognizes that Aboriginal rights and title throughout the yintah (territory) are held by Wet'suwet'en Houses. Negotiations for legal recognition of jurisdictions will be undertaken in accordance with Inuk Nuatden (Wet'suwet'en laws). "Intensively mediated" negotiations will be consistent with the B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. The MOU provides a list of jurisdictions to be transferred (in full or shared) and a timetable for negotiations.

In the MOU Canada and BC make bold statements recognizing Wet'suwet'en title and rights. Notable jurisdictions are water, wildlife, fish, land use planning, lands and resources, and revenue sharing.

The MOU suggests a new age of:

- Recognition of First Nations governance without the *Indian Act*;
- First Nations as equal governments with natural resource jurisdiction; and
- Actual implementation of free, prior, and informed consent.

If the MOU represents current policy for Canada and British Columbia, Nak'azdli comes to the table assuming the same considerations.

Consultation and Accommodation

In the absence of a declaration of rights or title, vulnerable Aboriginal rights find some protection under the duty to consult and accommodate. Recognizing the time and costs involved in seeking a declaration, the Supreme Court of Canada in *Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forests)* (2004) established that when the Crown has real or constructive knowledge of an Aboriginal right, and is contemplating undertaking an action that may impact that right, it must consult and, in some cases, accommodate the rights holders. The nature of consultation required varies based on both the strength of the right, and the severity of the infringement.

A recent decision of the BC Supreme Court considered the cumulative impacts of Crown actions and decisions in Blueberry River First Nation's territory. Although specifically dealing with treaty rights, this decision made it clear that the Indigenous perspective and a wholistic view of Crown dealings within a nation's territory are critical considerations for consultation, accommodation, and Crown-Indigenous relations. Consultation processes have almost always been siloed into discrete decision-making

channels, often allowing for low levels of consultation occurring in relation to multiple projects across Indigenous peoples' territories. This decision helps to break down the walls of consultation, requiring that the impacts of contemplated Crown action be considered in the context of what else is occurring on the territory. Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

The findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission woke many Canadians up to the dark history of residential schools and the genocide of Indigenous peoples. The Commission called all Canadians to action. Shared here are a few key calls.

43. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

47. We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous peoples and lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius, and to reform those laws, government policies, and litigation strategies that continue to rely on such concepts.

92. We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- I. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.*
- II. Ensure that Aboriginal peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Aboriginal communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.*
- III. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.*

Nak'azdli Whut'en will work with organizations that tangibly put these principles into action.

2.3 SETTLER POLICY - BRITISH COLUMBIA

B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act

In November 2019 British Columbia passed the *B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA), with the purpose of implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). DRIPA provides for the creation of agreements between Indigenous governing bodies and British Columbia for shared decision-making, mandates a review of legislation through the lens of the rights of Indigenous peoples, and calls for action planning and reporting. Nak'azdli will proceed in all dealings with the Province in line with this new legislation.

Prior to this British Columbia had committed to working with Indigenous peoples in the spirit of respect and collaboration. In May of 2018 the Province brought forward a draft set of principles to guide provincial government employees in support of respectful partnerships and collaboration with First Nations. This action was in partial fulfilment of the Province's implementation of UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

The Province wants to renew its relationship with Indigenous peoples in B.C., and affirms its desire to achieve a government-to-government relationship based on respect, recognition and exercise of Aboriginal title and rights and to the reconciliation of Aboriginal and Crown titles and jurisdictions. We agree to work with Indigenous peoples to jointly design, construct and implement principled, pragmatic and organized approaches informed by the Supreme Court of Canada Tsilhqot'in decision and other established law, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action.

Everyone should familiarize themselves with the list of principles, particularly those interested in working constructively with Nak'azdli Whut'en. Based on the draft principles, the following applies to activities on Nak'azdli Whut'en lands:

- The Province must uphold the honour of the Crown in all of its dealings with Nak'azdli Whut'en, at a minimum this includes integrity, transparency, good faith, and fairness.
- Relations with Nak'azdli Whut'en are based on the implementation of our right to self-determination and self-government.
- The Province will respect the authority of Indigenous jurisdictions and laws
- The Province will enter into innovative and flexible arrangements with Nak'azdli Whut'en according to its aspirations, needs, and circumstances and in the spirit of implementation of rights.
- A renewed economic and fiscal relationship must ensure that Nak'azdli Whut'en has the fiscal capacity, as well as access to land and resources, in order to govern effectively and to provide programs and services to those for whom we are responsible.

B.C. Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

The mandate letter of the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation includes the following priority: Work collaboratively and respectfully with First Nations to establish a clear, cross-government vision of reconciliation to guide the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, and his common law obligations.

Nak'azdli Whut'en expects the Minister and his delegates to engage as required by UNDRIP and DRIPA, the TRC, and the common law.

Fort St. James LRMP



The Fort St. James Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) was released in 1999 and is the last comprehensive land use document produced by British Columbia for the area within which the Nak'azdli territory is found.

The LRMP is intended to guide ongoing resource management activities including designation of new provincial parks and planning for forest development. The Omineca Peace Interagency Management Committee is charged with ensuring that the plan is implemented, monitored, and reviewed.

The plan divides a 3.174 million hectare landbase into 36 Resource Management Zones (RMZs), which fall into five categories and are described in the plan as follows:

- Settlement/Agriculture RMZ — This category represents < 1% of the LRMP landbase, and designates lands within the zone that are currently used or proposed for farming, and/or are used or proposed for settlement in an Official Community Plan, Crown Land Plan, or LRMP. Management on these lands integrates Crown lands with the historic pattern of settlement and agriculture in the planning area, and management of natural resource values and resource development is compatible with this.
- Resource Development RMZ — Representing 32% of the landbase, these are lands with existing or future potential for intensive resource development. These are managed with consideration of other resource values and within the guidelines of specific zone objectives and strategies. Management on these lands emphasizes the development of resources such as mineral extraction and timber harvesting, while minimizing impacts on other resources through a variety of integrated resource management strategies. Access is relatively unrestricted, with the exception of any land that may need special management considerations.
- Multi-Value RMZ — Representing 45% of the landbase, these lands are managed to integrate a wide range of resource values. Access within these zones is relatively unrestricted, with the exception of specific areas that are recommended for special management considerations.
- Special Management RMZ — Representing 16% of the landbase, these lands are managed for a wide array of resources, but in general indicate the need for more sensitive resource management. Resource development (including roaded access development) may proceed as long as impacts on other resource values are minimized and resource values are maintained.
- Protected Area RMZ — Representing 6% of the landbase, Protected Areas are established in perpetuity so that the ecological systems they encompass can continue to evolve with a minimum of intervention.

Interior Forest Sector Renewal Engagement

This is a report to government and does not represent Provincial policy.

British Columbia undertook the Interior Forest Sector Renewal (IFSR) engagement process in 2019. The results indicate widespread support for many of the concepts and directions advocated by this Land Stewardship Plan.

Take home messages identified by the Province are listed below, with some modifying statements in italics from the viewpoint of Nak'azdli community vision:

- Forest Tenure and Fibre Supply: maintain certainty of fibre supply that supports the investment of the industry and provides security to communities; *but get certainty at the correct level of fibre supply.*
- Climate Change and Forest Carbon: communities want to have more input into and control of the forests that surround their communities for sequestration and storage of carbon, and for wildfire mitigation; *but also for environmental protection.*
- Wood Products Innovation: provide incentives for innovation and support the development of wood products markets;



- Manufacturing Capacity and Fibre Utilization: focusing on value over volume, getting the right log to the right mill, and fostering more business to business relationships;
- Reconciliation: support reconciliation by increasing forest resource management and tenure opportunities for Indigenous communities; *must address jurisdiction and control*; and
- Fibre and Sustainability of Timber and Non-timber Forest Values: Communities want to see land use planning at a strategic and tactical level. Inventory of the resource needs to be improved. *and timber supply analysis without timber as a primary goal.*

The report does not acknowledge the fibre supply impact of past over-harvesting, especially local over-harvesting, in unreasonably large and ever-larger amalgamated forest estates.

Objectives of the study excluded reconciliation of indigenous title and rights. The objective is limited to identifying opportunities for greater Indigenous engagement in the forest products industry. The report does acknowledge that the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act addresses “joint decision-making”.

Nak'azdli Whut'en supports redistribution of forest tenure (to smaller and local holders), tenure reform (including area based tenures), and sustainable practices. Indigenous respondents did comment that Indigenous communities should have more power in the management of their resources.

Respondents emphasized climate change and use of carbon sequestration, reduced emissions, and control of forest management allowing for attention to biodiversity (resiliency) and carbon sequestration.

Suggested policy changes associated with reconciliation include participation in the industry, development of capacity for forest management, increased Indigenous management and ownership, and increased share in revenue.

With regard to sustainability, respondents suggested that the Province should support a sustainable approach to forest management. Forest management should aim to maintain the biodiversity of ecosystems. Restricting industry practices that harm biodiversity, such as the use of herbicides, clear-cutting, and monocultures. A number of comments also mentioned the need to revalue non-timber uses, such as tourism. We must improve B.C.'s forest resource knowledge base and improve timber supply analysis processes.

A New Future for Old Forests

This is a report to government and does not represent Provincial policy.

Although specifically targeted at old forests, the report acknowledges implementation in a holistic manner will be required. Recommendations and advice to government represent a substantial change in direction made necessary by past failures. The need for change has been made clear by changes in society views and values, and the lack of social licence in the hands of government and industry.

The report identifies the following failings:

- The complete failure in implementation of the old growth management area (OGMA) concept.
- High risk to loss of biodiversity in many ecosystems.
- Risk to potential economic benefits due to uncertainty and conflict.
- Widespread lack of confidence in the system of managing forests.
- Absence of involvement of Indigenous communities in forest management.

We are encouraged by the report's frank admission of the need to switch from management for timber as impacted by other factors to the foundational goal of conserving long-term

ecosystem health. This admission came with the observation that there is wide support for indigenous involvement in that switch.

The table below provides a response to recommendations made in the report

Recommendation	Comment
Recommendations - On conditions required for change:	
Engage the full involvement of Indigenous leaders and organizations to review this report and any subsequent policy or strategy development and implementation.	Supported by Nak'azdli Whut'en with "involvement" transitioning to "leadership" within keyoh and territory.
Declare conservation of ecosystem health and biodiversity of British Columbia's forests as an overarching priority and enact legislation that legally establishes this priority for all sectors.	Supported by Nak'azdli Whut'en and the foundation for Nak'azdli stewardship across the territory.
Adopt a three-zone forest management framework to guide forest planning and decision-making.	The three zone system as described does not allow for recovery of intensely impacted areas. The converted category admits defeat in, or at least abandonment of, good stewardship. There are no areas of potential "industrial timberlands" that are not unceded First Nations' land. Any "conversion" must be with Indigenous leadership. Zoning is an unreliable way of reducing conflict as views change and no law or decision is without challenge.
Adopt a more inclusive and stable governance model that gives local communities and stakeholders a greater role in forest management decisions that affect them.	Nak'azdli will assume governance of natural resources across the territory.
Provide the public with timely and objective information about forest conditions and trends.	The secrecy of current planning initiatives is a significant barrier to change.
Recommendations - For immediate response:	
Until a new strategy is implemented, defer development in old forests where ecosystems are at very high near-term risk of irreversible biodiversity loss. If old-growth thresholds of a maximum range of variability have been surpassed, then the development of a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan will be triggered.	It is disappointing that B.C. has not identified any deferments within Nak'azdli territory despite the critical situation.
Bring management of old forests into compliance with existing provincial targets and guidelines for maintaining biological diversity.	Compliance is a necessary first step and expected immediately.
Recommendations - For improving management:	
Establish and fund a more robust monitoring and evaluation system for updating management of old forests.	This role will be undertaken by Nak'azdli Whut'en and our guardian program.
Establish a standardized system and guidance that integrates provincial goals and priorities to local objectives and targets.	Nak'azdli through our Natural Resources Department will lead in management of all values across the territory. Through tools such as the Land Stewardship

Recommendation	Comment
Update the targets for retention and management of old and ancient forest.	Plan and Implementation Plan, our consultation and referrals system, and our Guardian program we will provide the strategic guidance that has been missing since the introduction of euro-colonial ways.
Improve the mapping and classification of old forests to recognize multiple values.	
Create a silviculture innovation program aimed at developing harvesting alternatives to clearcutting that maintain old forest values while promoting the development of "more natural" forest composition that includes the proliferation of deciduous tree species.	This is very welcome.
Recommendations - For orderly transitions:	
Once developed, implement the new policies and strategies for the management of old forests through mandatory provincial and local transition plans that define, schedule and monitor the process.	Nak'azdli is already developing the implementation plan.
Support forest sector workers and communities as they adapt to changes resulting from a new forest management system.	This is very welcome.

The report supplies a rich body of implementation recommendations which deserve close attention.

2.4 RESERVE LANDS

Nak'azdli reserve lands are governed by Nak'azdli under the *Nak'azdli Whut'en Reserve Land Code*. While in general the vision and goals and objectives of Nak'azdli Whut'enne apply to reserve lands, this Land Stewardship Plan does not apply directly to reserve lands. It is assumed here that community land use planning will take place separately.

2.5 ACCOMMODATION AGREEMENTS

Agreements between First Nations and the Province help build relationships with First Nations, resolve conflicts, or address concerns associated with development on nation lands. Among the agreement types negotiated within British Columbia in the spirit of the above mandate are:

- Incremental Treaty Agreements;
- Atmospheric Benefit Sharing Agreements;
- Cut-off Claims;
- Economic & Community Development Agreements;
- Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreements;
- Natural Gas Benefits Agreements;
- Reconciliation Agreements;
- Revenue Sharing Agreements;
- Forest Consultation & Revenue Sharing Agreements;

- Strategic Engagement Agreements; and
- Off-Reserve Action Plans.

The Province and a number of project proponents have undertaken benefit agreements of various kinds with Nak'azdli.

Economic Participation Agreement, 2008

Nak'azdli was one of several First Nations who negotiated this agreement with the Province relating to the Pacific Trail LNG pipeline. Payments were made to First Nations in return for considerations that provided certainty on the construction of the pipeline. This compensation is connected to the common law obligation to consult and accommodate Indigenous peoples when considering activities that may impact Aboriginal rights.

Environmental and Socio-Cultural Initiatives Agreement, April 2, 2015

This agreement between the Minister of Natural Gas Development, the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Carrier Sekani First Nations individually, and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council was intended to address environmental and socio-cultural cultural matters in connection with natural gas pipelines that were being proposed in the CSFNs' traditional territories.

The agreement addressed environmental stewardship principles, collaborative decision making, levels of engagement, and issue resolution. The agreement establishes a stewardship working group and directs the development of a stewardship work plan including priorities, traditional use studies, compliance and monitoring, a cumulative effects assessment as part of the environmental stewardship initiative, collaborative management, capacity funding from the Oil and Gas Commission, establishment of a Socio-Cultural Working Group, and funding for language initiatives.

Collaboration Agreement, April 2, 2015

This three year agreement between the Minister of Natural Gas Development, the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Carrier Sekani First Nations individually, and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council was intended to facilitate the ongoing reconciliation of Crown and Aboriginal title and rights, the negotiation of government-to-government agreements in relation to natural resource development and environmental stewardship, and the creation of new government-to-government relationships based on collaboration and agreement.

Environmental Stewardship Initiative, Oct 28, 2016

The Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) involves First Nations, industry, the province and the government of Canada. The goal of the ESI is to develop a new, collaborative approach to establishing environmental legacies and to generate high quality, accessible and trusted environmental information.

The Carrier Sekani First Nation Omineca ESI Demonstration Project is a government-to-government agreement with the goal of achieving sustainable use of resources, stewardship of values, and development of certainty and predictability. The initiative is investigating cumulative effects and collaborative land management inclusive of socio-economic aspects and environmental, technical and traditional ecological knowledge. The process is one of: (1) data gathering; (2) analysis; and (3) identifying management responses.

The agreement was amended in March of 2017 and again in March of 2018, extending the agreement to 2021. It continues to be in effect.

Whubats'ut'en Nus Whetee Agreement, March 28, 2017

The Whubats'ut'en Nus Whetee Agreement, also known as the *Interim Pathway Forward Agreement*, is an agreement between British Columbia, the individual Carrier Sekani First Nations, and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council.

Building on the Collaboration Agreement the Parties agree to continue their work together in a collaborative, step-wise manner towards ongoing reconciliation of Carrier Sekani and B.C. titles, rights, and interests in the territories.

The purposes of this Agreement are to jointly commit to work towards the negotiation of a Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement, identify immediate measures, provide capacity support to facilitate the CSFNs' participation in this Agreement, and clarify the roles of the negotiation tables, the Collaboration Working Group, the Stewardship Working Group, and the Socio-Cultural Working Group in relation to the implementation of this Agreement, the Collaboration Agreement, and the Environmental and Socio-Cultural Initiatives Agreement.

2017 CSTC Interim Forestry Revenue Sharing Agreement

This agreement for the 2017/18 fiscal year was built on the following agreements:

- Collaboration Agreement 2015
- Forestry Table January 2016
- Letter of intent May 2016
- Whubats'ut'en Wus Whetee Agreement (Interim Pathway Forward Agreement) March 2017

The purposes are to provide revenue sharing while the forestry agreement is being negotiated, define an engagement process, and provide certainty for activities. Payment of \$4,000,000 was split amongst the Nations who agreed to not impede operations.

Scoping Document

Parties to the negotiation of a Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement (see below) drafted the Scoping Document in order to seek mandates to continue negotiations past March 31, 2018. The document:

- (i) provides a concise summary of the forestry technical table's proposals for the economic components and additional proposals in respect of the Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement;
- (ii) provides the basis for the Parties to seek the mandates required to complete the negotiation of the Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement;

Amended and Restated Bridging Agreement (March 2018)

An agreement between British Columbia, the individual Carrier Sekani First Nations, and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, the Bridging Agreement provides a view to completing the negotiation of the Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement.

The terms of the Collaboration Agreement and the Interim Pathway Forward Agreement (the "Existing Agreements") expired on March 31, 2018. The Parties confirmed their intentions to be bound by the terms of the Existing Agreements, as if they had not expired, for a bridging period while they negotiate the Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement in the 2018 Bridging Agreement; and

Resolutions:

- Term of collaboration agreement extended to Nov 30 2018 or the date the parties enter into a Pathway Forward 2.0 agreement or replacement agreement
- Existing agreements continue
- Focused efforts:
 - Pathway Forward 2.0
 - Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement elements
 - New forest tenures in parallel with the Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement negotiations
 - Collaborative stewardship approaches
 - Collaboration on land and resource issues
 - Canada's participation in Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement negotiations

- Capacity funding:
 - Implement focused efforts
 - Mining contribution agreements
 - Economic Development Review
- Roads funding
- Economic benefit payments
- Economic review

Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement, December 1, 2018

This government-to-government agreement between the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, the Carrier Sekani First Nations, and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council is to consolidate their government-to-government arrangements and build towards comprehensive reconciliation. The parties seek to enhance their government-to-government relationships in a manner that:

- Integrates economic development, stewardship, culture, and governance;
- Increases CSFN participation in the economy and closes socio-economic gaps;
- Sustainably manages lands, water, air, and natural resources in a way that contributes to the CSFNs' ability to meaningfully exercise their Aboriginal title, rights, and interests in the Territories while also enabling enhanced economic development that benefits the CSFNs and the regional economy;
- Builds CSFNs capacity in governance, community involvement, decision making;
- Moves CSFNs to self-government;
- Enhances predictability for the parties, industries, and the public; and
- Establishes a framework to negotiate a comprehensive reconciliation agreement.

The approach is one of:

- Shared vision and shared purpose;
- Stated principles; and
- Commitment to comprehensive reconciliation.

A Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement will be negotiated based on recognition and implementation of Carrier Sekani Aboriginal title and rights:

- Agreement on an outline, structure, and core elements of priority topics: Governance and Decision-making, CSFN Lands, Environmental Stewardship, Forestry, Carbon, Socio-Cultural Matters, and Fiscal Relations.

An economic advisory group will be established.

An economic development fund will provide stepwise payments to support CSFN economic development initiatives.

A CSFN Wealth Fund will be developed to increase the capital investment over time in a manner that assists the Parties in working towards, and contributing to, reconciliation and provide each CSFN with a predictable source of revenue in the future.

Economic Benefit Payments will be made and constitute an economic accommodation or compensation in relation to any impacts to, or infringements of, Carrier Sekani Aboriginal title and rights in connection with provincial forest and range decisions.

Governance and decision making by the parties will reflect:

- Use of joint and collaborative decision making;

- Collaborative management approaches;
- Performance and compliance monitoring;
- Culturally appropriate governance systems and governance payments;
- Shared socio-cultural principles and socio-economic payments; and
- Capacity Funding Payments to support any negotiation related to, and the implementation of, the agreement, including costs of engagement with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development and engagement with the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources for major project collaboration.

The agreement provides for socio-cultural programs and services.

Forestry Revenue Sharing Agreement

Within the context of the Pathway Forward 2.0 Agreement, a key component of the Scoping Document involves the Parties entering into an interim forestry revenue sharing agreement (IFRSA). The agreement sets out the Parties' commitments in relation to interim revenue sharing.

Interim revenue sharing payments are made as partial economic accommodation with respect to timber harvesting and range activities. In return CSFNs participate in decision making, the Province continues its consultation obligations, and the parties participate in consultation and collaborative processes in good faith.

Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement

A comprehensive reconciliation agreement is the ultimate goal of the above discussed initiatives.

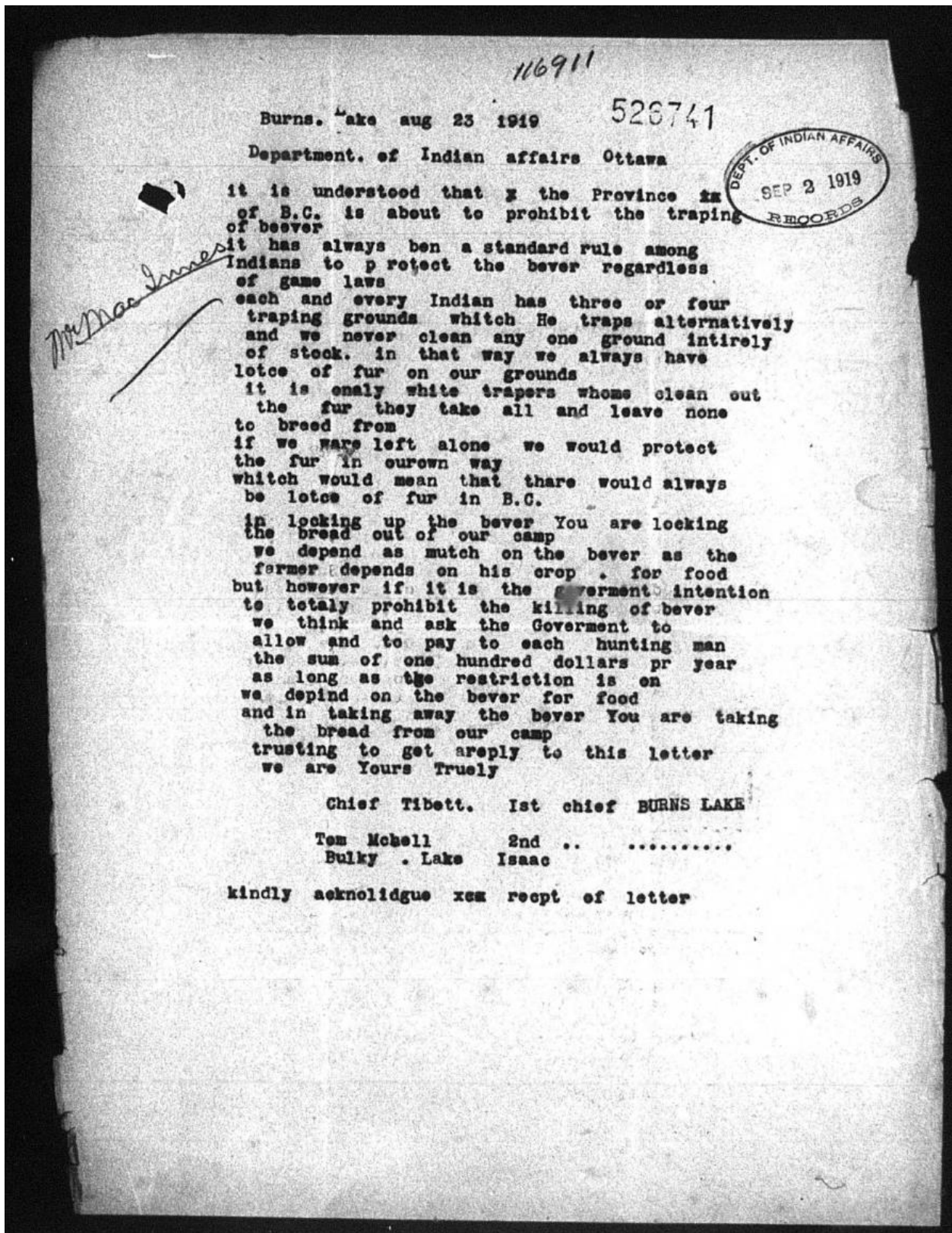


Figure 5 - Dakelh Stewardship 1919

3.0 THE STATE OF THE WATER AND THE LAND

The territory of Nak'azdli Whut'enne is a great expanse of land and water covering over 28,000 square kilometres.

"I just thought about how much the land must miss the people. What does that feel like for the land, that people are not on there like they used to be? We're there, but we don't use the land the same as [the ancestors] did. So the land must ache too."

– Colleen Erickson, 28 April 2017

"People notice things in the forest, the little things that are there. We just go into the bush and we look at things, we feel things, we smell things. And we know what the bush is supposed to smell like and feel like and look like. If there's anything different, we'll know it. Whether you see it or not, our subconscious knows that there's something wrong here. Our spirit knows that there's something out of place"

– Clara Jack, May 2019

3.1 WATERSHEDS

Watersheds have natural boundaries which persist over time and define where water lives and plays out its cycle of rain and snow and melt and flow. Watersheds are the home of the community of streams, creeks, rivers, wetlands, and lakes which give life to all. Each watershed is unique in extent, geography, plant and animal life, and sacred and spiritual places.

Nak'azdli Whut'enne see watersheds and keyoh in a similar way. Please see section 1.3 for a discussion of this. Each keyoh is entrusted to a family which has responsibility for stewardship of the land which has been passed down within the family. This has always been so.

Our ancestors lived in the territory and had knowledge of the streams, lakes, and places. They were intertwined with nature in a sustainable dance that was balanced for all eternity with the belief it would continue in perpetuity. Every living thing, every place, every lake, stream and creek was important to the health of the whole watershed.

The watersheds have recently become unbalanced and unhealthy. Our families need healthy watersheds as this is where water lives. To us water is a higher living entity, a source of life, and sustains all living creations. Water is sacred and must be respected. Water feeds, heals and cleanses us and is our connection to the land, to our past and is a pathway to our future. Water sustains us physically and mentally and is essential to our wellbeing. Water is harvested from specific places and brought home to drink and give to the elders, that water is more than just water to drink, it is spiritual. The water is us and we are the water. If the watershed is not healthy the water will be sick and we will be sick. We are the trees in a watershed and our ancestors of all eternity are the soil of the watershed that holds secure our roots and nurtures us.

A healthy watershed is complete and whole and not cut up, dug up, or broken. There is abundant biodiversity with healthy populations of animals, birds, flora, fish and man all in a sustainable balance of

living as one community. The watershed was the traditional sustainable store that provided all necessities of life. It used to have many moose, caribou, beaver, ducks, fish, all animals and berries and plants to harvest as a family. Watersheds are also now trap lines which provides us with a livelihood. The water in a healthy watershed is not polluted and is good to drink. A good characteristic of a healthy watershed is a healthy streamflow. A healthy stream flow is defined by a steady strong flow of good quantity of water with no obstructions to severely impede the water flow so animals and people can drink the water and all living creatures are sustained for their lifetime by the stream flow. A healthy stream flow is fed by a good snowpack and is pristine with no dams, no industry waste or man's sewer waste discharged in the watershed. A healthy streamflow has enough water all year round for the fish and animals to live. Animals, birds, flora and fish are abundantly associated with the healthy stream flow.

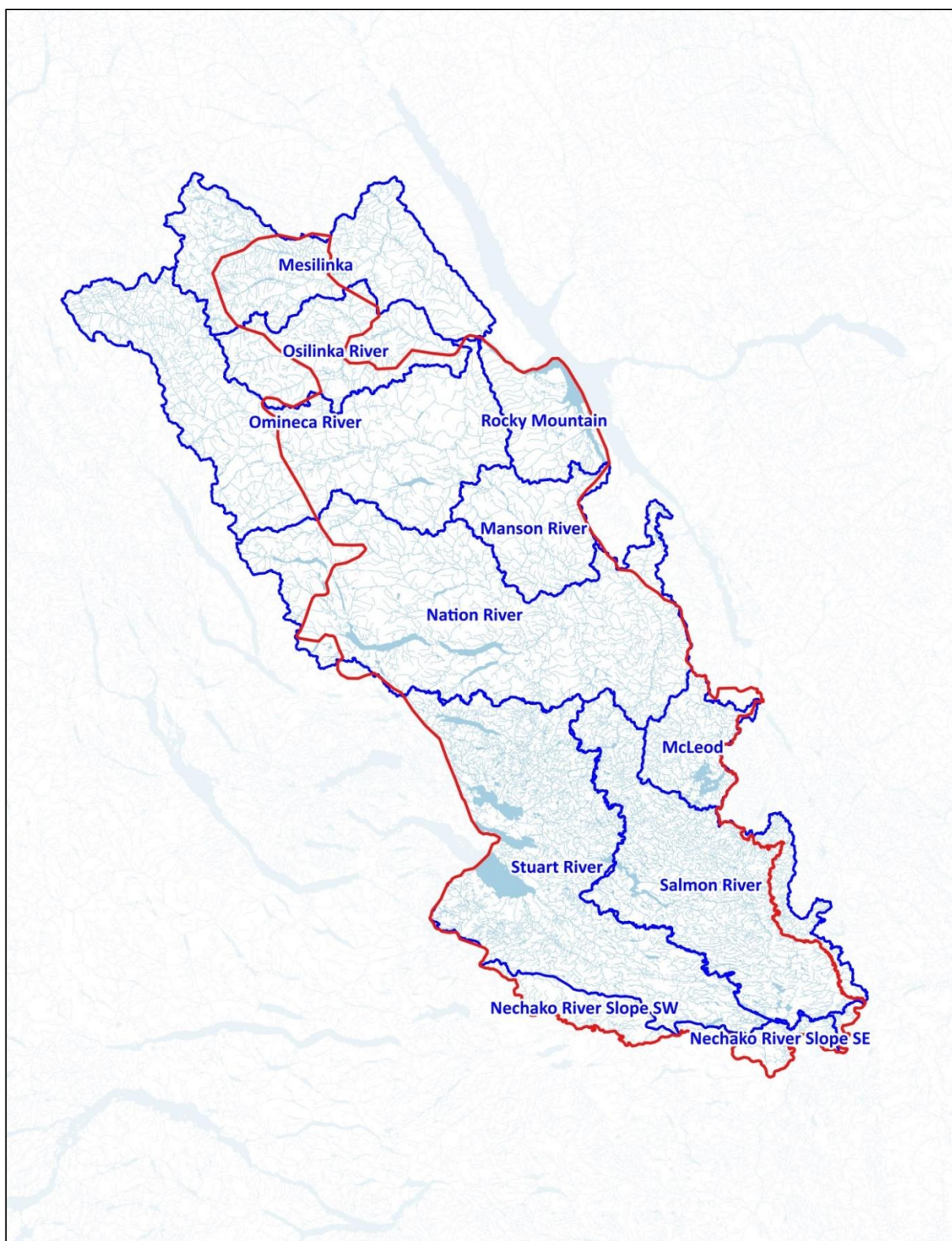


Figure 6 - Watersheds as Units of Stewardship

The Nak'azdli territory is shown in red.

3.2 WATER SUSTAINABILITY

"When you talk about 'Dakelh', that just refers to "travel by boat on the water"... 'ne' is people, so "Dakelhne" is "The People who Travel by Boat on the Water." That's how we got our name as Carrier People because we're the ones that travel by boat, and our main travel is dugout canoes... That's one of the cool things about our name as a Nation, the Dakelhne and how we conduct ourselves as people who travel... My Dad told me...everyday that we worked on a canoe, at the end of the day, they would go to the lake and get water and pour it on the canoe that they were working on. And they would do that until the day that they launched the canoe...so that the canoe would become friends with the water, so that they were familiar with each other..."

– Francois Prince, 21 May 2019

The Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan takes a watershed-based management approach to designating protections for areas of Nak'azdli Territory. This approach takes two scales: the broader identification of watershed clusters that approximate major keyoh clusters (Figure 6 - Watersheds as Units of Stewardship), and – at finer scale – the adoption of 3rd-order watersheds as Provincially-accepted and locally relevant units of biophysical assessment. The Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan map presents land use zonation drawn along 3rd-order watershed boundaries. Below we describe the cultural and ecological logic for adopting a watershed-based approach through findings from the Water Sustainability Project (2017).

Water Sustainability Project

Watersheds and water sustainability are important topics for Nak'azdli Whut'en and we have in recent years spent considerable effort in better understanding the health of our watersheds.

The Nak'azdli Water Sustainability Project (2017) explored many aspects of our water and watersheds in order to support informed decisions on sustainable resource management in the territory of the Nak'azdli Whut'enne. Healthy watersheds have intact vegetation on banks, good spawning beds, and water flowing in natural rates and rhythm.

Our family watersheds (keyoh) have places that connect us to our ancient family history. We are an integral part of the watershed and the watershed is an integral part of us. The places give us a sense of continuity into the future. These memory places, often in recent times predominantly a cabin, were built by a father or grandfather and are where our grandparents exist and our memories reside. They give us a sense of place, home, and purpose in time and space. There is an overwhelming frustration that memory places are being erased by logging.

We were taught to preserve and protect surface and ground water quality and quantity for future generations of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Water sustainability means for the watershed to stay the same, no mining, no logging, no sawmills, or development. The water has to flow unobstructed steady and natural with its nutrients so it can pass to the fish and provide lots of growth for animals and plants. Water sustainability means constant state of flora, fauna and fish, no net loss of any form of life. The Keyoh is the land unit for protecting water sustainability and that is why it was way more than just a trapline. We need to protect more of the Keyoh from development.

Our people were like the wind in our territory - we traveled through and occupied all our territory, but left only rare traces of where we went in our territory. We lived in harmony and had a sustainable



relationship with everything. Now our watersheds are out of balance and in many cases destroyed. There are less moose, caribou, martin, fisher, wolverines, salmon, and sturgeon to name only a few to an ever growing list. Our watersheds have been denuded of the forest and numerous logging roads crisscross and negatively impacted our waterways and land. Logging patches are now in some cases 10s of kilometres wide with only the odd trace of vegetation held within. This destructive altering of the watershed has had detrimental effects on the wildlife, fish and their habitat and plants. Our traplines are been degraded and destroyed; cabins and places of memories are erased and eradicated. The watershed no longer can sustain us as the berry patches have been logged, the fishing places altered and the hunting places gone of game and cover. We see and read every day how logging has degraded the watersheds, has degraded fish habitat, has degraded caribou habitat, has degraded moose habitat, to name only a few examples.

Mining is occurring in our territory and many watersheds are almost all under mineral claims which are being actively explored for mining potential.

To the south in our Territory there is agriculture which has completely altered the natural occurring watersheds in huge areas. Indigenous plant species are totally removed and foreign plants are planted as crops. Domestic livestock walk through creeks and the water is not fit to drink. Other industries occur of which we do not know. Domestic private ownership also has taken up vast tracks of our ancestral territory.

Nak'azdli has and will continue to protect our water. Doing so is a critical step in reasserting our stewardship of our land. We will protect all streams, lakes, and waterways. We will repatriate water rights. We will control logging to minimize further changes in water yield volume and patterns. We will exercise our title by showing all waterways on our maps and reintroducing their true names.

Just by their sheer number and lengths, 1st and 2nd orders streams have an extremely high probability of introducing human activity derived fine sediments into a watershed compared to the higher order streams. Our data indicate that when constructing logging roads or other access roads 1st and 2nd order streams should not be treated any different in the regulations as the higher order streams.

Land Use

Watersheds are jeopardized by land use patterns. Large areas of the territory are held under mineral claims (20% of the Nak'azdli Whut'en Territory). A total of 46.4% of Nak'azdli Whut'en Territory is under some form of tenure or development preventing Nak'azdli Whut'en from exercising our ancestral rights. Forest harvesting activities are in addition to this.

Water Use

We have significant concern with water production volumes and the allocation of those volumes in a rational way given widespread unlicensed use. Evaluating water use referrals is not possible.

Timber Harvesting

The following diagram describes the rapidly escalating harvest of forests in the Territory.



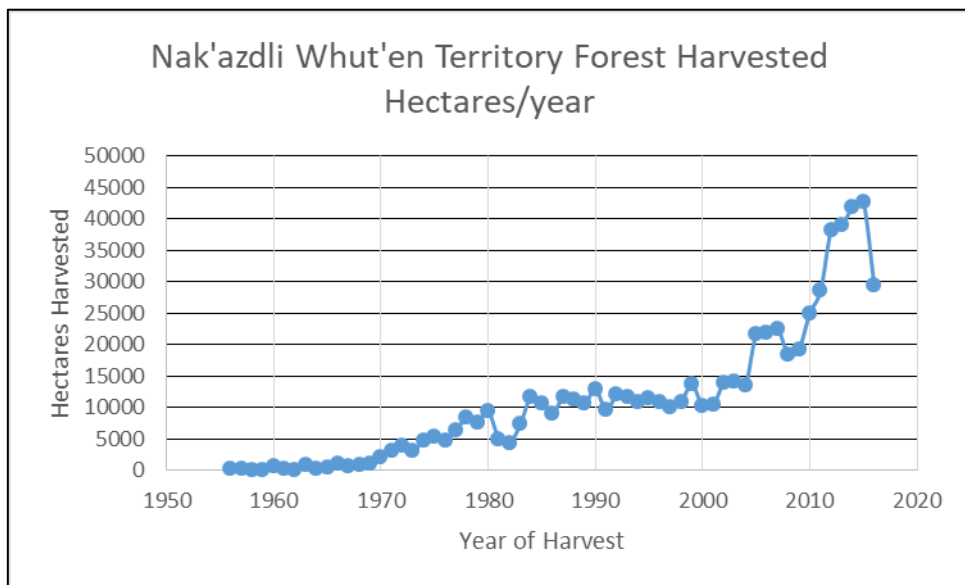


Figure 7 - Graph of Logging History

Logging has decimated large and small animal habitats in some areas having a large impact on hunting and trapping.

Across the territory 32% of coniferous forests have been logged. Intensity of logging varies by watershed through the territory, as provided in the table below.

Watershed	Percent of Coniferous Forest Harvested
North	
Mesilinka River	12.2
Osilinka River	19.5
Omineca River	7.0
Rocky Mountain Trench	30.6
Manson River	26.5
South	
Nation River	21.0
McLeod River	27.5
Salmon River	67.0
Stuart River	55.7
Nechako South East area	60.8
Nechako South West area	90.5
Average	31.9

Figure 8 - Table of Logging History

Logging is changing water yield patterns and salvage logging is greatly increasing the area denuded and the size of the cut areas.

Forest harvesting has changed the flow characteristics in the watersheds' creeks, streams and rivers which directly and negatively impact the fish habitat found within those waterways. These are fish habitats where Nak'azdli Whut'en have had valuable traditional food and cultural fisheries.

With decreased forest cover, peak flow time shifts to earlier in the year. This has dramatic negative impact on the streams ecosystem and the habitat and life cycle of the fish that live in the streams. There has already been a shift in water runoff peak flow to about two weeks earlier in the Salmon River watershed and about one week earlier in the Stuart River watershed. Those watersheds have already suffered the damage and this has to be prevented from occurring within the other watersheds.

For each watershed a biophysical summary is given including land features, vegetation, and water courses. Provided also is data on quantity of water, water flow patterns, timber harvesting, land ownership and water use.

Generally speaking the watershed analysis describes a complete failure in the management of the water resource. Like the land, the water of Nak'azdli was taken from the people and misused. Nak'azdli asserts our inherent right of jurisdiction and stewardship of the water.

Source: NAK'AZDLI WHUT'EN, Water Sustainability Project, BCCI 1617, Colleen Erickson, Natural Resources Department Manager, May 30th, 2017

Watershed Health Analysis

Evaluation of watershed health normally focuses on water yield and patterns of yield, and the impacts that timber harvesting has on fish habitat - such as fine sediment introduction, temperature change, bed form change, and flow characteristics. The measure typically used for this is equivalent clear cut area (ECA).

ECA is calculated as the proportion of a watershed that responds hydrologically as a clearcut. It is the sum of individual ECA values of disturbed areas divided by the total area of the watershed. A new clearcut has zero hydrological recovery, and as it regenerates it experiences incremental recovery. Recovery is related to the characteristics of the regenerating stand, most practically measured by the height of the regenerating stand.

Current and accurate height data in regenerating harvest areas was not available to the analysis. The analysis introduces the measure Equivalent Cut Area Whut'en (ECAW) to make clear the use of a local sampling process to determine regeneration height. For each watershed a sample of regenerating stand height by age of clearcut was used.

A healthy watershed is not just based on the state of the water and hydrological system. A healthy watershed is composed of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems with a distribution of living things and their thriving communities functioning similarly to those in place before its disturbance. The Nak'azdli Natural Resources Department has undertaken an evaluation more in line with this Indigenous holistic perspective of a healthy watershed.

The *Watershed Health Analysis* evaluated the health of watersheds in which pine beetle salvage logging had taken place. A set of measurable criteria were used to assess watershed health in terms of addressing water, fish, vegetation, and wildlife. A primary goal was to devise a non-complicated method for the evaluations which had excellent defensible results - a method that could be utilized by Keyoh holders to gather data from within their Keyoh.

The Nak'azdli Natural Resources Department has introduced a new calculable parameter termed Relative Logged Wildlife Habitat (R%LWH) to better address the impact that ECA based continuous logging of a watershed have on wildlife quantity and distribution. The age of prime wildlife habitat is defined as >100 years (i.e. marten, wolverines) so the term is written R%100LWH.

Fish Impediments

Fish impedance is mostly associated with culverts, and the study of impedance at culverts is hampered by a paucity of data. For the five studied watersheds with data on culvert impedance to fish passage, an average of 79% of the culverts were found to be impassible to fish.

Results

Watershed health may be defined by:

- Water health:
 - Equivalent cut area
 - Equivalent Cut Area Whut'en (ECAW)
- Fish health:
 - Equivalent Cut Area Whut'en (ECAW)
 - Percent culverts not passable for fish
- Vegetation health:
 - Logged percent of watershed



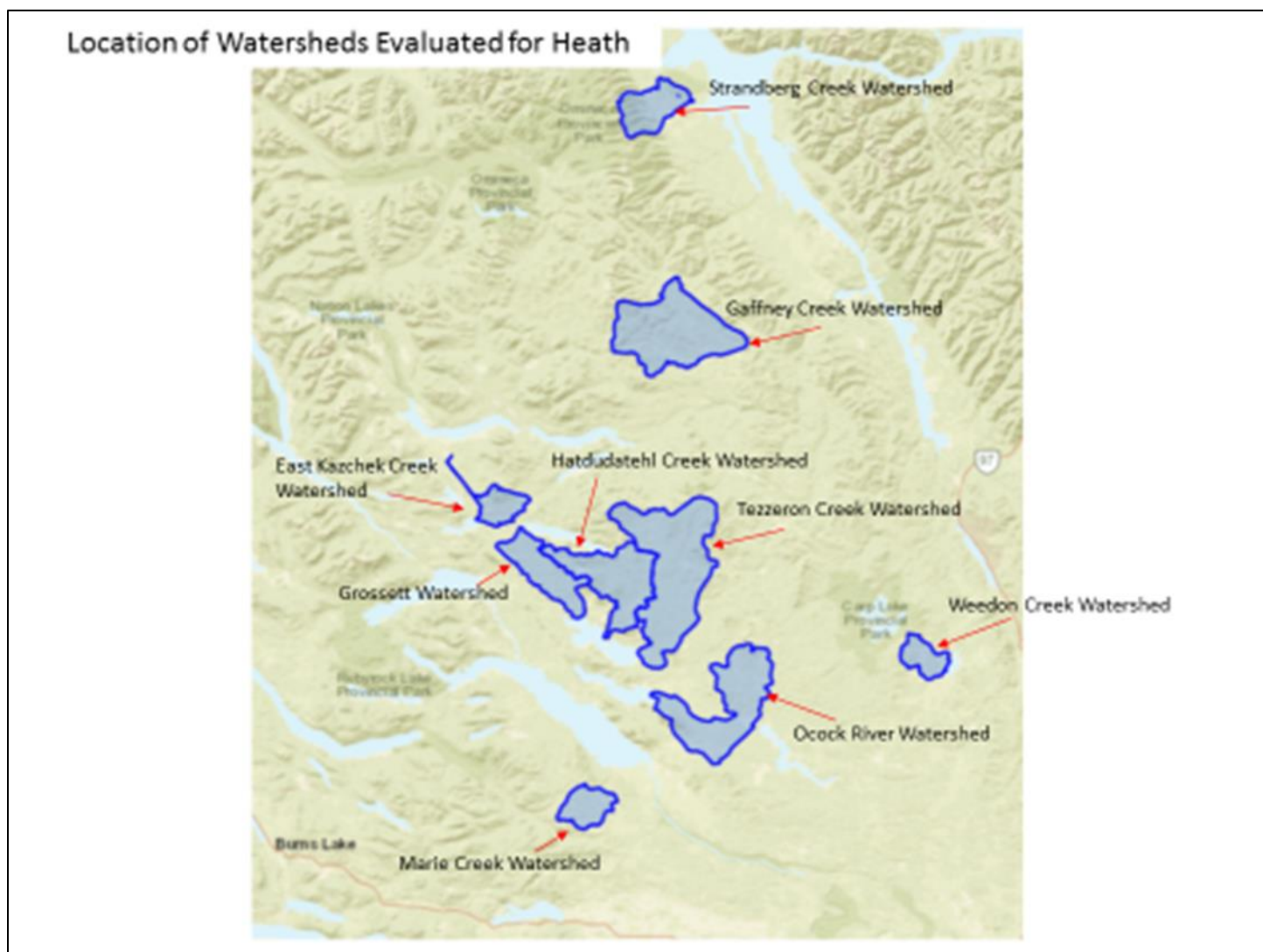
- Logged percent of watershed in the last seven years
 - Logged percent of coniferous forests
- Wildlife health:
 - Relative Percent Logged Wildlife Habitat (R%100LWH)
 - Road density

Nine watersheds were evaluated for their health and it was found that five watersheds failed and are in extreme distress, three watersheds failed and are in distress, and only one watershed passed. The three watersheds that failed and are only in distress do not have culvert data and if the culvert results were the average seen in the other watersheds those three watersheds would be in extreme distress. The one watershed with a pass for watershed health has two parks within its boundary.

- Vegetation health
 - Failure is 40% of the area logged
 - 7/9 failed
- Water health
 - Failure is ECWA greater than 20%
 - 7/9 failed
- Fish health
 - Failure is 25% of culverts blocking fish passage
 - 5/5 failed
- Wildlife health
 - A fail is R%100LWH of greater than 40%.
 - 7/9 failed
 - A fail is a road density greater than 0.5 kilometers of road per square kilometer area
 - 7/9 failed

The nine watersheds evaluated in this study indicated that past and current logging practices are destroying the watersheds within the Nak'azdli Whut'en Territory. A High rate of pine beetle wood salvage logging has accelerated this destruction of the watershed pushing some of the watersheds to or past the point of no return for wildlife and fish. The watersheds are altered in vegetation and hydrology and will not return to normal within our lifetime and the lifetime of our children. Other watersheds that have not been subject to such a high logging related denudation of forest have to be identified and severe management strategies put in place.

The data indicates that culvert placement must be addressed immediately as average is 79% failure rate for fish passage through culverts. Logging should be severely managed if not halted in seven of the watersheds to prevent logging of what little of the coniferous wildlife habitat that remains.



Source: Arthur Halleran, Watershed Health Analysis BCCI 2017/2018.

Figure 9 - Watersheds Evaluated for Health

3.3 HEALTH OF THE LAND

The Crisis - The Current Forest Management Regime

The following factors have led us to a crisis in our forests:

- Provincial Forest Policy that enabled an unsustainable level of clear-cut harvesting of old-growth native forests and the replacement of these forests with young coniferous tree plantations (devoid of deciduous tree species) which has led to a degraded state of the territory for fish, animals and humans alike.
- Decades of forest fire suppression and timber harvesting predominantly targeting to the most productive and healthy forests that are generally more resilient to fire and disease;
- Increased pressure on the forests of the territory as timber in other areas has been depleted;
- In the face of widespread severe losses of remaining native old-growth forests in the territory through epidemic levels of insects and disease, Provincial salvage harvest policies failed to protect critical forest habitats and/or features;
- The lack of broad-based strategic forest stewardship planning; and
- Little or no recognition of Nak'azdli jurisdiction, interests, and knowledge.

The land has endured intensive harvesting such that:

- Biodiversity has been depleted to the point that our lands and ecosystems are at a heightened risk to withstand catastrophic fire, insects and disease particularly in consideration of climate change;
- Watershed health including flow patterns, water quality, and riparian ecosystem health is such that fish returns are decimated; and
- Moose, caribou, grizzly bear, furbearers and all other wildlife have declined to levels at which Nak'azdli members are no longer able to meaningfully exercise their rights.

The landscape is devastated and would be unrecognizable to our ancestors.

B.C. Forest Service

As discussed in Section 2.3 above, the Province of British Columbia will engage with Nak'azdli on a government-to-government basis as required by the common law, including the Supreme Court of Canada's *Tsilhqot'in* decision, , the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action.

Timber

The unsustainable extraction of our primary/native forests and replacing these forests with tree plantations on our lands represents the most extensive landscape-altering activity. All timber extraction within the traditional territory of Nak'azdli Whut'en is subject to the *Land Stewardship Plan*. We recognize that area-based timber tenures do have their own strategic forestry planning documents and are considered a special case for stewardship.

Timber Supply Analysis

The B.C. *Forest Act* requires that the Chief Forester of British Columbia determine the allowable annual cut for Crown Land within each timber supply area (TSA). The territory of Nak'azdli Whut'en falls largely within the areas described by British Columbia as the Prince George TSA and the Makenzie TSA.

At 7.97 million hectares, the Prince George TSA is too large to provide any measure of certainty of local sustainability, even across large subsets of the land.

The Chief Forester's rationale for determination of AAC acknowledges "Aboriginal Interests" within the TSA. Nak'azdli rejects this approach and demands acknowledgement of inherent rights.

Cultural Heritage Resources

Nak'azdli Whut'en views all resources as a cultural heritage resource. British Columbia takes a narrower view of cultural heritage resources.

The Province of British Columbia manages these resources under the Forest and Range Practices Act (FRPA) and the Heritage Conservation Act (HCA). The provisions of the HCA apply whether sites are located on public or private land. The *Forest Act* defines a cultural heritage resource as an object, site or location of a traditional societal practice that is of historical, cultural or archaeological significance to British Columbia, a community or Aboriginal people.

Cultural heritage resources and archaeological values belong to the Nak'azdli Whut'enne and will be managed as defined by Nak'azdli Whut'en.

Planning Framework

The Nak'azdli *Land Stewardship Plan* is the primary over-arching land use planning document for the territory.

The Province of British Columbia has no strategic forest management plan for the territory of Nak'azdli.

The Fort St. James Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) was released in 1999 and is the last comprehensive land use document produced by British Columbia for the area within which the Nak'azdli territory is found. The LRMP is discussed briefly in Section 2.3 above.

Various provincial government plans and orders establish scenic areas and visual quality objectives, landscape biodiversity options, old growth management areas, mountain caribou habitat, ungulate winter ranges, and wildlife habitat areas.

Species at Risk

The territory is home to numerous plant and animal species at risk such as: Nechako white sturgeon, mountain caribou, grizzly bear, bull trout, western toad, olive-sided flycatcher, northern myotis, and whitebark pine. Several ecosystems are also identified as at risk and are monitored through the provincial Conservation Data Centre including grassland, wetland and forested ecosystems.

Both chinook and sockeye salmon are in decline due to harvesting activities and these must be addressed as well.

Young coniferous plantations, devoid of any retention characteristics required by wildlife in combinations with high road densities and increased human access all contribute to the continued threat to species at risk.

Wildlife

Conservation strategies aim to maintain the mix of landscape conditions necessary to sustain all species. Management tools include protected areas and old-growth management, wildlife habitat areas and ungulate winter ranges, wildlife tree patches, and landscape seral-stage targets. A full range of ecosystems is needed because many potential impacts are poorly understood, such as changes in predator/prey dynamics or effects of invasive species and climate change. Simplifying ecosystems can reduce resilience, leading to greater risk of future catastrophic pest infestations, susceptibility to climate change and trend towards species generalists.

Ungulate Winter Range

Ungulate winter range is designated under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* as an area necessary for the winter survival of an ungulate species such as moose, deer, and caribou. Designations are based on best available science, local knowledge, and other expertise, and are supported by extensive

consultation. A reduced area of suitable winter habitat would impact the abundance and distribution of ungulate species.

Wildlife Habitat Areas

A wildlife habitat area is designated under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* as an area identified as necessary habitat for the survival of a species at risk. The largest wildlife habitat areas manage and protect woodland caribou habitat. Reductions in wildlife habitat areas are likely to result in negative population implications for species at risk, possibly resulting in locally and regionally depressed populations. In the worst case scenario, it could lead to compromised population status and possibly extirpation (long-term loss of the species from the area).

Visual Quality

Visual Quality - Scenic Areas and Visual Quality Objectives (VQO) are established on the landscape in response to public input and land use plans. Harvesting is allowed but the VQO classes provide direction with respect to size and scale. Removal or relaxation of VQOs may decrease public acceptance of forest harvesting, and could significantly impact tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Water

Loss of forest cover allows more precipitation to reach the ground, reduces evaporative losses, increases soil moisture and, when forest cover loss is extensive, results in more water leaving the watershed. Timing of water yields are also changing, particularly in terms of spring freshets. This can lead to more flooding and erosion, deterioration of aquatic habitat and water quality, changes to plant communities and ecosystems, and risks to community safety, infrastructure and property, fish and fisheries.

Culverts are not used on all stream crossings and should be on ephemeral streams and streams that are not fish bearing. Only then will natural flows be maintained and silting eliminated.

Riparian Management Areas

Riparian areas – lands next to wetlands or bodies of water such as swamps, streams, rivers or lakes – frequently contain the highest number of plant and animal species found in the forest, and provide critical habitats, home ranges, and travel corridors for wildlife. Streamside vegetation protects water quality, stabilizes streambanks, regulates stream temperatures, and provides a continual source of woody debris to the stream channel. Reducing the size of riparian management areas can affect ecosystem resilience, lead to habitat fragmentation and reduce connectivity. Potential deterioration of terrestrial and aquatic habitat and water quality could increase risk to fish, fish habitat and listed species, and increase the instability of streams, putting infrastructure and productivity of forests at risk.

Resource Roads

Resource roads needed for timber harvesting provide access for backcountry recreation and fire management but can have negative terrestrial and aquatic environmental impacts such as:

- Dispersion of invasive plant and animal species that can put biodiversity and native species at risk;
- Loss of habitat or habitat fragmentation;
- Injury or death from vehicle collisions;
- Modified animal behavior;
- Increased sedimentation in streams;
- Increased predator effectiveness; and
- Increased pressure on previously unmanaged fish and wildlife populations.

3.4 RISKS TO THE LAND

Loss of Biodiversity and Ecological Risk

Current forest management is based on the theoretical premise that human-made disturbances (i.e. forest harvesting) emulate natural disturbance regimes, leaving mature forest structure across the landscape to maintain wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and hydrological and ecosystem function. However, current forest management practices exceed the amount of what is considered natural. The current practice of continued large scale clear-cuts with minimal reserves that are amalgamating to becoming "extremely large" (>10,000 hectare) primarily mono-cultural tree farms diverges from much of the natural landscape patterns endemic to Nak'azdli territory thereby reducing species richness and abundance, changes in watershed hydrology, and increased risk of catastrophic forest health challenges.

Measures to conserve biodiversity include coarse filter and fine filter approaches, and both are important to maintain ecosystem resilience and increase options to respond to changing environmental conditions. A coarse filter for biodiversity would be setting an appropriate sustainable level of cut based on the "natural" spatial and temporal scale of the forested ecosystem, to ensure critical ecosystem thresholds are not being surpassed.

A coarse filter approach to biodiversity would be to set a landscape/ecosystem-level sustainable rate of harvesting (i.e. Allowable Annual Cut) based on the natural range of variability (i.e. how often is the forest "naturally" disturbed) and set aside critical habitat areas from harvesting (i.e. in old-growth management areas and/or ungulate winter ranges). A fine filter approach to biodiversity would be to identify unique "stand-level" features and apply appropriate harvesting techniques dependent on the stand in question. For example, for multi-aged wet old-growth forests, single-tree and/or group selection may be the most appropriate fine filter harvesting approach, whereas for more dry fire-driven stands, clearcutting with reserves (representative of the forest stand) may be the most appropriate.

The *Order Establishing Landscape Biodiversity Objectives for the Prince George Timber Supply Area* sets out an aspatial (i.e. not identified on the landscape) target percentage for old growth retention at the broad land-scape level management unit. A government-industry technical group is currently exploring ways to improve the Order to increase timber supply without risking landscape-level biodiversity. However, it is worth noting that the Order puts all ecosystems at moderately high to high risk to biodiversity (see Price and Daust 2018).

Old growth management areas are spatially identified forests identified to retain and recruit the old-growth structure needed to conserve ecosystems and species biodiversity. They are difficult to reproduce once lost. Old growth enhances ecosystem resilience, which means it is better able to respond to changing environmental conditions, e.g. climate change, wildfire, or pests. Old growth management areas provide habitat and connectivity; some species depend on old growth for survival.

For the purposes of timber supply analysis, spatially delineated old growth management areas (OGMAs) and old forest retention areas are removed from the timber harvesting land base (THLB). Aspatial old forest retention thresholds are modelled implicitly, wherein the model retains or recruits to meet old forest thresholds on a priority basis; first by retaining old forest in the non-contributing land base (often non-productive and potentially more susceptible to natural disturbances), second by retaining old forest in the THLB and third by recruiting mature stands on an oldest first basis.

The thresholds established in the landscape biodiversity Order are too low to maintain the ecological integrity of the territory and therefore result in risk to meaningfully exercise inherent rights including physical (survival), cultural, and spiritual continuity.

Nak'azdli is participating in a collaborative cumulative effects assessment, management and monitoring framework referred to as Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI).

The Omineca Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) Demonstration Project is developing approaches to managing forest biodiversity. The project maps locations for four target amounts of mature and old forest retention (biodiversity management options), based on spatially-explicit forest level modelling. One target level reflects current legal objectives for mature and old forest (policy); the remaining three are based on minimum (min), mid-range (mid), and maximum (max) estimates of the natural abundance of mature and old forest. Natural abundance is defined by historic disturbance levels for different ecosystem types (natural disturbance units).

However, forest biodiversity is not the only value of concern and conservation-oriented management of old forest contributes to achievement of broader biodiversity objectives across the landscape. The report *Omineca ESI Risk Assessment for Biodiversity Management Options* (Price, 2018) assesses the potential benefits and risks associated with the four biodiversity management options described above to watershed health and fish and moose, as well as forest biodiversity.

Ecological risk assessment evaluates the probability that management activities, in combination with natural disturbance, will have important impacts on ecological function, biodiversity, or focal species. Risk is defined as the proportion (%) of the natural occurrence of the ecosystem that is left. The analyses assessed risk to three ESI values (indicators):

1. Forest biodiversity in each eco-type as a proportion of natural:
 - a. Mature-old forest (> 140 years old further than 100m from a road);
 - b. Natural young forest;
2. Watershed health, riparian ecosystems, and fish;
3. Moose.

The complexity of the study is demonstrated in the following table which describes the structure of the analysis.

Element	Descriptions		Comments
Study Area (1)	Territories of the Carrier Sekani Nations		
Regions (2)	1. North 2. South		Differing landscape and development context.
Values (indicators) (4)	1. Forest biodiversity old 2. Forest biodiversity natural young 3. Watershed, fish, riparian 4. Moose		
Zones (5)	1. Forest > 140 years old 2. Young natural forest 3. Riparian ecosystems 4. Valuable and sensitive watersheds 5. Moose habitat		Zones are related to the values above and defined spatially for input to modelling.
Temporal frames(2)	1. Short-term 2. Long-term	Short-term risk considers the current level of risk associated with a particular option given the current state of the forest. Short-term risk assumes that areas outside zones will be logged and that the age-class structure within the zones will remain constant. Long-term risk assumes that areas beyond zones will be logged and includes recovery of disturbed forest and disturbance of mature and old forest within the management zones.	
Spatial management options (4)	1. Policy 2. Min 3. Mid 4. Max	Target levels of spatially-explicit biodiversity areas. Policy refers to current management commitments. Min, Mid, and Max represent the estimated minimum, mid-point and maximum range of historic disturbance by Natural Disturbance Unit.	
Spatial management sub-options (4)	Natural young: 1. Plus retain natural young Fish and Riparian: 2. Focus on riparian ecosystems 3. Focus on high value and sensitive watersheds Moose: 4. Focus on static habitat (forage + cover) and dynamic habitat		
Selection weights (5)	Selection for retention.	1. Mature and old forest: first selects old forest in large patches, including special and riparian ecosystems, away from human influence 2. Young natural forest: first selects young naturally-disturbed forest, then old forest 3. Moose: first selects moose habitat (old forest cover near static browse); then selects 80 – 140-year-old cover near static browse; then selects old forest 4. Riparian: first selects riparian ecosystems; human influence and old forest weighted less heavily 5. Watershed (high value and sensitive): first selects watersheds with heightened-value fish habitat and watersheds sensitive to development; then selects old forest.	

Element	Descriptions	Comments
Management strategies (7)	<p>Natural young:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 7% in-stand retention 2. 15% 3. 30% <p>Fish and Riparian:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Current 5. Increased buffer <p>Moose:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Current 7. Browse and cover 	Applied during modelling, some management options include sets of strategies applied outside the selected areas (zones) that influence young forest structure, moose habitat and watershed health/fish.
Nations (7)	Stellat'en, Tsil'kaz'koh, Nadleh, Saik'uz, Nak'azdli, Tl'azt'en, Takla	

For a full understanding of the process the reader should consult the report (Price, 2018).

Take home messages for Nak'azdli are as follows:

- Options are limited by the current condition;
- Old forest biodiversity:
 - All areas of the territory are at moderate to high risk ;
 - The situations in the north and south are very different (however risk levels are becoming relatively similar, as northern forests tend to be less susceptible to disturbance and are quickly becoming the target of forestry activity);
 - All areas in the south are at moderate-high to high risk;
 - Even at maximum natural rate of variation the south is moderate-high short-term risk;
- Young Forest:
 - Negatively impacted by salvage and at high risk everywhere;
 - Under all policy options the entire territory is at high risk for natural young forest;
- Fish and Riparian
 - Assessment of risks to fish and riparian ecosystems focuses on indicators of peak flow, riparian integrity, habitat connectivity and sediment input;
 - Indicators are equivalent clear cut area, riparian clearance, and road density;
 - The southern half of the territory is at moderate to high risk for fish and riparian ecosystems;
- Moose:
 - Moderate risk in the north;
 - High risk in the south;
 - Moose and old forest weightings are consistent; and
 - Without changes in policy with regard to disturbance and road access the entire territory is at high risk for moose habitat.

10.1.1 Mature and Old Forest

Currently, mature and old forest biodiversity in the large portion of Nakazdli territory in BWBSdk, ESSFmv3, SBSdw3 and SBSmk1 is at low to moderate risk, with about a quarter of the forest over 140 years old (Table 39). The total amount of mature and old forest in spatialised zones almost doubles from 11% based on existing policy to 20% in the maximum NRV scenario (Table 39, Figure 55).

Table 39. Risk to mature and old forest biodiversity currently and over the short-term based on four spatial retention scenarios. Numbers show the proportion of each BEC variant >140 years old and > 100 m from a road. Colour codes represent risk classes based on the amount > 140 years as a proportion of expected amount.

BEC	Area	Current	Policy	Min	Mid	Max
BWBSdk	151,204	0.32	0.09	0.23	0.25	0.27
ESSFmv1	5,670	0.12	0.06	0.07	0.09	0.11
ESSFmv3	565,334	0.52	0.24	0.37	0.40	0.43
SBSdk	2,132	0.08	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04
SBSdw3	333,918	0.13	0.07	0.07	0.09	0.10
SBSmc2	33,723	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.04
SBSmh	1,082	0.14	0.08	0.08	0.10	0.11
SBSmk1	900,073	0.15	0.05	0.06	0.08	0.10
SBSmk2	45,114	0.14	0.05	0.07	0.09	0.11
SBSwk1	13,803	0.22	0.10	0.12	0.16	0.18
SBSwk2	30,786	0.19	0.09	0.12	0.14	0.15
SBSwk3	11,738	0.29	0.01	0.03	0.07	0.11
TOTAL	2,094,577	0.26	0.11	0.16	0.18	0.20

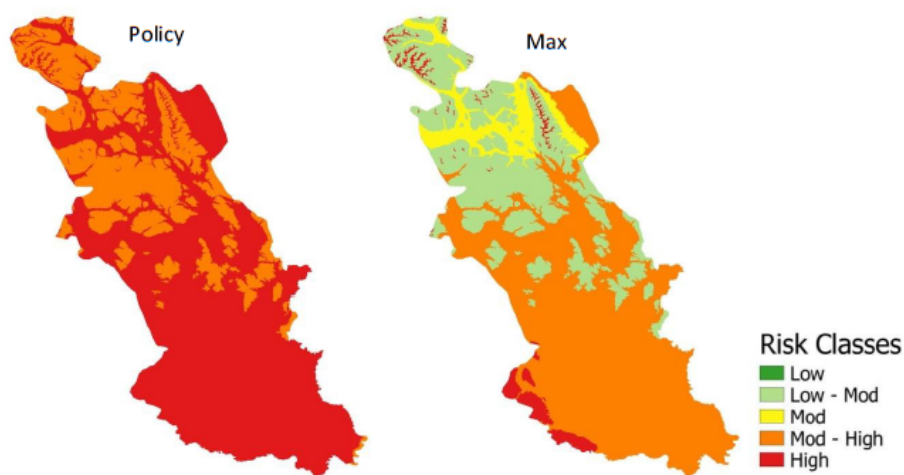


Figure 55. Short-term risk to mature and old forest biodiversity on Nak'azdli territory under the policy and max scenarios. Risk is reduced considerably in the max scenario except in the area covered by private land in the south.

Based on the above, current provincial policy is not acceptable. Policy development by Nak'azdli must address the following factors:

- What is the acceptable risk to Nak'azdli Whut'enne?
- Why would Nak'azdli accept more than a low or low-moderate risk?
- Consider resiliency in a changing climate and the impact on risk.
- Recognizing the differing current status, we can avoid further risk by applying Max NRV in the south and Mid NRV in the north during timber supply analysis using harvest restrictions in subsets of the forest estate.
- Acknowledging that the issue must also be addressed at the operational planning level, and simplifying the process, we recommend the application of Max NRV targets to all ecosystems. As various ecosystems cross natural levels a mitigation and offsetting plan will be required. Mitigation can include full and/or partial avoidance. Old-forest weighting is good for moose as well.
- Use management strategies for riparian and young natural.
- Focus moose management strategies on security.

4.0 COMMUNITY VISION

"All I've ever been taught is that we were put here to look after this part of the earth. That's the only creation story that I know. For me, when you've taken away our ability to look after this part of the earth, then my purpose – what is my purpose then? Our identity is tied to our ability to look after it, to teach those things to others so that they can look after the earth."

– Tina Erickson, 27 April 2017

The Nak'azdli Vision Statement is:

To become a stronger self-governing Dakelh community supporting our culture and heritage through education, healthy lifestyles, and economic progress.

The Nak'azdli Mission Statement is:

Nak'azdli Whut'enne are a holistic community that believes in maintaining and enhancing our traditional values by learning, living, and teaching our culture and heritage. Nak'azdli is a vibrant, self-determined community made up of diverse individuals and businesses working together to promote education, health and economic progress. We challenge the future.

4.1 LAND AND WATER STEWARDSHIP

Nak'azdli Whut'enne have a deep and natural sense of stewardship of the land and waters - our territory. For uncounted generations the gifts of the land and water have sustained us. We have accepted those gifts to meet only our needs, while ensuring that future generations were also provided for. It is only a few generations ago that Nak'azdli Whut'en were displaced from our role as stewards of the land and water. In that short time the territory has seen devastation at the hands of outsiders. The salmon, moose, caribou, marten, grizzly, and that forests and waters they inhabit are all in crisis. Climate change continues to exacerbate these ongoing effects.

Nak'azdli Whut'en will assert leadership and control in the stewardship of all resources coming from the lands and waters of the Nation. Assertion, recognition, and settlement of inherent rights will be the foundation for rebuilding the natural environment, including our lakes, forests, rivers, and streams. Nak'azdli Whut'en will continue to accept the gifts of the land and water in a management regime focused on rebuilding and stewardship. Emphasis will be on restoring fish stocks and wildlife populations. This will be done through habitat enhancement and restoration, locally sustainable forest harvest levels, and lower impact forest harvesting techniques. We will further manage for climate change impacts to ensure a healthy environment for future generations.

The creation of a healthier social and cultural environment is directly related to good stewardship of the natural environment. Directly related to control of the resources is the increased flow of wealth to our community which will support the rebuilding of our traditional ways and practices.



4.2 WATER

Watersheds have natural boundaries which persist over time and define where water lives and plays out its cycle of rain and snow and melt and flow. Watersheds are the home of the community of streams, creeks, rivers, wetlands, and lakes which give life to all. Each watershed is unique in extent, geography, plant and animal life, and sacred and spiritual places. Nak'azdli Whut'enne refer to each watershed as a keyoh. Each keyoh is entrusted to a family which has responsibility for stewardship of the land and water which has been passed down within the family. This has always been so.

A healthy watershed is complete and whole and not cut up, dug up, or broken. There is abundant biodiversity with healthy populations of micro-organisms, animals, birds, flora, fish, and humans all in a sustainable balance of living as one community. The water in a healthy watershed is clean and pure and flows in natural seasonal patterns and volumes.

The watersheds have recently become unbalanced and unhealthy. Resource management by others has focused on extraction and has resulted in pollution and disruption of natural places and cycles. There has been a complete failure in water management, evidenced by a lack of knowledge of water demand and use. Mining and placer mining are drawing vast quantities of water without analysis of supply. Logging and road building is changing water yield patterns and the quality of that water. Extensive salvage logging is greatly amplifying those issues.

Like the land, the water of Nak'azdli Whut'en was taken from the people and misused. Nak'azdli has an inherent right of jurisdiction and stewardship of the water of our ancestors.



Nak'al Bun (Stuart Lake) viewed from Nak'azdli.



View from the Airline Lake Rd.

4.3 FORESTS

It is only a few generations ago that Nak'azdli Whut'enne have been displaced from our role as stewards of the land. Yet, in that short period, forest management by others has led us to a state of crisis. Contributing to the crisis are: forest practices which did not protect the habitat of people, animals, and fish; increased pressure as timber in other areas has been depleted; widespread severe losses of timber through epidemic levels of insects and disease; the lack of strategic forest planning; and no recognition of Nak'azdli jurisdiction, interests, and knowledge.

Nak'azdli Whut'en will continue to accept the gifts of the land and water in a forest management regime focused on rebuilding and stewardship. Emphasis will be on restoring fish stocks and wildlife populations. This will be done through habitat enhancement and restoration, locally sustainable forest harvest levels, and lower impact forest harvesting techniques.

Nak'azdli will be equal partners in forest stewardship on our lands. This includes inventory, planning, analysis, decision making, harvesting, silviculture, restoration, and monitoring.

Nak'azdli Whut'en asserts title over the unceded territory of our people, and we continue to exercise our Indigenous rights of jurisdiction and decision making. We assume leadership and control in stewarding our forest resources including timber, plants, and medicines. We are open to collaboration with parties who intend to adhere to the standards set out in this document, reflected in the common law, international law (UNDRIP), and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

This forestry vision applies to all forested land within the Nak'azdli territory. No lands were ceded by Nak'azdli Whut'en.

Lands claimed by Canada or British Columbia, or alienated without consent of Nak'azdli Whut'en, are subject to Nak'azdli jurisdiction.

Nak'azdli Whut'en recognizes significant shared territories with neighbouring First Nations and addresses these on a government-to-government basis with those neighbours.

"This is how the Indians used to get their firewood...by burning the bottom of the tree and when the tree would fall over, they would put the fire out and then they'd bring the wood back home. That's how they kept warm and cooked their food. So one day this man couldn't find a dead tree, and that was kind of like a common rule, you could only burn down the dead trees. So as he was walking, the further and further he got he couldn't find any dead trees and then he finally spotted one that still had a little bit of green leaves on the top of it. And, he figured it's probably going to die anyway, so he starts making his fire down on the bottom of that tree and then one of the trees, the Poplar tree, he says "Hey, you're not supposed to do that! He's not dead yet, he's still alive." And the Balsam tree says "No just let him burn." And so the Pine trees going "Yeah, let him burn cause I need more light anyway cause I grow faster than all you guys." And the Spruce tree's going, "No, He's not allowed to take live trees, he has to wait 'til he's dead. Go find a dead tree."

And then, the Cottonwood and the Fir tree were arguing too about letting it burn or not, and so they all started fighting. The Poplar tree grabs the Balsam tree and they start wrestling around, and the Balsam tree rolls in the fire and gets all these blisters and the Poplar tree was trying to kick the fire out and he ended up getting burnt in the bottom of his tree. And then the Pine tree and Spruce tree started fighting each other and the Pine tree was whipping the Spruce tree, and the Spruce tree, his skin was getting all frayed, and the Pine needles ended up splitting on the Pine tree he whipped him so much. And the Cottonwood and the Fir tree both grabbed...sharp rocks and they started fighting each other...and they were cutting each other up on their barks. And so the Man, finally got everybody to settle down and he said "The Tree is already burnt...so I have to take it now. While you guys were fighting it burnt. And you guys shouldn't be fighting." He says "Now you guys have fought already, you guys are going to be taught a lesson and those scars that you have now are gonna always be with you to remind you that's what happens when you fight." He said "Balsam tree, you're always going to have those blisters. Poplar tree, your ashes are always going to stay on you at the bottom of your tree." And he told the Pine tree, "Pine tree, your needles are going to grow split now." And he told the Spruce tree, "Your bark is always going to be rough on the outside, it's going to be frayed." He told the Cottonwood and the Fir, he said "You guys are always going to keep your cuts on you to remind you of what happened. So you don't fight again."

– Francois Prince, 21 May 2019

5.0 GUIDANCE

This guidance applies to all who would impact our lands including forest operators and other project proponents operating within the territory of the Nak'azdli Whut'enne. The individual and cumulative outcomes of all activities on the land and waters must be in line with the vision of the people. With this document we answer the question: "What must be done to ensure that forest practices and all activities sustain the full range of gifts offered by the land and the water?"

Further guidance is to be found in the *Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan Implementation Report*.

5.1 WATERSHEDS

Watersheds as defined in section 3.1 will be the unit of stewardship. Key voices in forest stewardship will be the keyoh holders in the watershed. It is our families who carry ultimate responsibility for passing the gifts given by the ancestors to future generations.

Watershed stewardship will directly address resiliency to climate change. In the face of changing temperature and precipitation patterns we must re-focus on watershed level management, pay attention to new levels of low and peak water flows, rethink harvest patterns and intensities, and redouble efforts to retain and protect riparian areas.

To address overall watershed health:

- Cross-tenure watershed analysis (risk identification, analysis, evaluation) are a standard requirement;
- Total chance harvest planning is required in order to fully evaluate watershed impacts;
- In strategic harvest analysis and planning harvest location and intensity will be restricted at the watershed level using natural range of variation to protect biological diversity. Each watershed within the territory falls into a land use 'zone'. Harvest location shall be largely driven by Nak'azdli traditional use and occupancy underlying any given zonation; harvest intensity shall be determined by a given watershed's base zone designation, i.e. Recovery Emphasis or Sustainable Resource Emphasis. (see Figure 10 - Watershed Stewardship Guidance);
- Harvest intensity will comply with Nak'azdli equivalent clear cut guidelines to avoid significant changes in water yields;
- Modified stocking standards will be used to achieve high plant and animal diversity after reforestation; and
- End use of chemical herbicides and pesticides.

To assist in the recovery of our fish:

- All species of fish will be of consideration in stewardship;
- All streams will have sufficient forested buffers to prevent silting and increases in water temperature;
- We will require full protection and rehabilitation of spawning beds; and
- We will have a high priority for fish passage, no new culvert impedance, and full restoration.

Watershed	Equivalent Clearcut Area	Rate of Natural Variation
North		
Mesilinka River	20	Moderate
Osilinka River	20	Moderate
Omineca River	20	Moderate
Rocky Mountain Trench	20	Moderate
Manson River	20	Moderate
Nation River (north)	20	Moderate
South		
Nation River (south)	30	High
McLeod River	30	High
Salmon River	30	High
Stuart River	30	High
Nechako South East area	30	High
Nechako South West area	30	High

Figure 10 - Watershed Stewardship Guidance

5.2 FOREST MANAGEMENT

Forest practices in the territory of the Nak'azdli Whut'enne must reflect our values and interests. Any accommodations in the past have been cursory and inadequate.

All forest policy development, planning, and on-the-ground activities will:

- Take place in a transparent and collaborative environment;
- Happen under co-management by Nak'azdli Whut'en and the province based on equal partnership across the territory;
- Include Nak'azdli as an active partner in resources inventory, planning, decision making, and sharing in resource revenues, and economic and ecological benefits;
- Incorporate and leverage Nak'azdli knowledge, including traditional and contemporary use and ecological knowledge and recognize more clearly the inter-relatedness of all things; and
- Have appropriate respect, restoration, and protection for all culturally and spiritually important resources.

Good forest stewardship supports the sustainability of all living things on the land and in the water, as well as clean air.

"The springtime is when we strip cambium off the pine tree. Usually June when the sap is running we strip the bark off and then we peel the cambium underneath. It comes out in long white strips, however long you want it. And then you can either eat it which is just – by the end of the day it will clean you out because you're kind of stagnant from all winter eating dehydrated foods and everything, so it cleans your whole body out...

Summertime is when we pick the spruce roots because we find these spruce stands that have moss all in the understory and then there are all these dead logs that have moss on them. So we look at these dead logs because the spruce roots will go down and run along these dead logs and we pick them for whatever – for nets, for snares, for making birch bark baskets. They said that if you have long hair you'll probably get a long root, if you had short hair, you'd probably just get short roots...

Birch bark we'll pick at the end of May at the soonest...for baskets and for whatever else we need. It's the easiest time to pick it...The birch sap we'll pick in March...All you do is make a little V on it and put a stick behind the V and let it drip into a container....Tastes like water but you know it's more than water. It has all your minerals...birch is one of the best for our health and for the most uses that we have.

And we use the willow bark. We find a really tall, tall grey willow and strip it from the bottom all the way to the top. We'll bend it and take the outer bark off and keep the inner bark and that's what we use as rope...Very strong rope. That's what they used to use to make snares and fishnets with...

And then the balsam, we'll get the balsam pitch with the blisters on it, we'll get that usually starting in June. Usually July, we'll start getting the balsam bark and we'll collect the pitch if we can in little containers...and use that for cough medicine in the wintertime..."

– Clara Jack, 29 April 2019

Recognizing that gifts from the forest support spiritual, environmental, social, cultural, and economic wellness, forest stewardship must take a holistic approach based on the principle of ecosystem integrity.

Forest stewardship will:

- Consider logging, fishing, recreation, tourism, and cultural pursuits;
- Be evolutionary, incorporating Indigenous knowledge and emerging science;
- Be predicated on greater recognition of the inter-relatedness of forests, streams, and lakes;
- Emphasize the restoration of fish stocks and wildlife populations. This will be done through habitat enhancement and restoration, locally sustainable forest harvest levels, and lower impact forest harvesting techniques;
- Protect and lift up spiritual, cultural, sacred, and historic places which to-date have been minimized;
- Restore all ecosystems to a healthy state;
- Protect, restore, and facilitate the cultivation of traditional food and medicines and lift up traditional resource use to support cultural rebirth.

The following is the forest management regime for application in the territory of Nak'azdli:

- Manage timber harvest to the maximum range of natural variation (NRV) in the south;
- Manage to mid-range of natural variation in the north;
- If old-growth quantity is reduced past the maximum threshold level for natural disturbance, an Avoidance, Mitigation, Reclamation, and Offsetting Plan will be developed by Nak'azdli Whut'en;
- The application of modified stocking standards to achieve high plant, and in turn animal, diversity after reforestation;
- Allow for the development of deciduous stands;
- Deactivate all harvesting roads not required for the major transportation network;
- All harvesting to create complex edges to maximize wildlife benefits;
- Maximize riparian buffers;
- Allow zero impediment of fish passage;
- Increased stand level retention that is representative of the forest pre-harvest;
- Redesign retention including wildlife patches to be smaller and more distributed;
- Ensure that operational direction retains big trees and young natural for wildlife use;
- Include partial/selection harvests and prescribed fire to better emulate natural regimes (especially in the north) and pre-contact human management;
- Utilize critter piles and critter crossings in the cut blocks;
- Leave younger trees standing in harvest blocks;
- No herbicide or fertilizer use;
- No further losses in critical ungulate winter range;
- No further losses of at risk ecosystems and no-harvest in forests greater than 250 years of age (unless forest health issues identified); and
- Include and value keyoh local stewardship inputs

All operations in the Nak'azdli territory will utilize as a minimum the immediate measures approved by the ESI Leadership Table on Sept 20, 2018.

Forest biodiversity:

- Avoiding disturbance within spatial option areas;
- Changing management practices to reduce impacts;
- Look for offsetting opportunities;
- NRV area management:
 - Planning for preservation of the integrity of NRV areas
 - Respond to existing guidance and Carrier Sekani First Nations' input on timber supply review;
 - Prioritize areas with forest health issues;
 - Avoid rare and culturally sensitive areas;
 - Avoid young natural stands;

Moose UWR core winter range:

- No harvest;

Moose UWR Practice Requirements:

- Are spatially identified by a 5km buffer from UWR core winter range that is not overlapping with biodiversity spatial option areas (that require avoidance); ;
- Cut block design to integrate increased edge and decreased dash distances as per progress report;
- Increased brush retention adjacent to cut block edge to increase security and forage for wildlife;

Biodiversity and Moose:

- Road Density Management
 - Apply to active roads within 5KM of identified UWR candidate areas (Specified Areas);
 - Focus on road decommission strategies that address wolf predation and hunting pressure within as soon as feasible (considering post-harvest activities and obligations);
 - Focused on block access and in-block roads;
- Increase stand level retention above current averages AND towards 30% in harvest areas within 5km of areas identified as candidate UWRs (Specified Areas);

Biodiversity:

- Stand level retention outside of “avoidance areas” and “specified areas”;

Fish and Aquatics:

- Within 10 m of an S4, S5 and S6 stream, L3 and L4 lakes, W3 and W4 wetlands, retain wind firm buffers with representative stand structure and species composition pre-harvest.

5.3 STEWARDSHIP ZONES

Land use zones and associated stewardship guidance are tools to ensure that Nak'azdli Whut'enne may continue to live with the land as our ancestors did. These tools directly address the purpose of the Land Stewardship Plan (Section 1.1) and the goals set out in Section 6.2. These tools defend our inherent title and rights on the land and allow us to practice those rights. Specific resource use guidance is available from the Nak'azdli Natural Resource Department.

The entire territory is divided into two over-arching zones, sustainable resources north of the Nation River and recovery emphasis south of the Nation River. These are all inclusive zones on which other zones are layered.

Sustainable Resources Zone

The objective of the Sustainable Resources Zone is to provide for economic opportunities while recovery takes place in other areas and in the context of territory wide and individual watershed sustainability.

Sustainability refers to a wide range of ecological and social values and is not limited to, or weighted toward, sustainable timber harvest.

Sustainable resources zones are areas where current resource extractive activities (e.g. forestry, mining, etc.) will continue to provide economic benefits to Nak'azdli Whut'en and to B.C. society, while ensuring a sustainable level of fish and wildlife remain to ensure Nak'azdli members have the ability to exercise their rights.

Within the Sustainable Resources Zone, harvest intensity at the watershed level will reflect mature and old growth retention at a maximum range natural rate of variation. If this threshold is surpassed, then the development of an Avoidance, Mitigation, Reclamation and Offsetting Plan is required.

Sustainable resources zones will be managed as per the approach being currently developed between B.C., Nak'azdli, and Industry concerning operations, methods, and requirements. However, they are subject to further Nak'azdli management directives, including but not limited to: restricted harvest intensity and distribution (including cut block design, e.g. with regard to habitat connectivity), modified reforestation practices (particularly with regard to species diversity), increased riparian protection, improved stream crossing requirements, and other requirements as pertain to environmental impact avoidance, mitigation, and restoration. These biodiversity-oriented management directives will ensure the continued viability of Sustainable Resources zones as habitat for all fish and animal species.

Harvest intensity in sustainable resource zones will be subject to harvest level restrictions dictated by the watershed in question.

In addition, operations will comply with the guidance given in Sections 5.1 and 5.2 above including implementation of immediate measures.

All water crossings including bridges and culverts must be at least fully compliant with the *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation* protecting natural drainage patterns and accommodating 200 year flows, preventing erosion and siltation, and fully maintaining fish passage.

Monitoring by Nak'azdli will ensure that activities and methods are fully compliant.

Recovery Emphasis Zone

The objective of the Recovery Emphasis Zone is to minimize ongoing impacts and allow the recovery of areas subjected in the past to unsustainable levels of resource utilization.

Recovery emphasis zones are currently over-used sustainable resource zones that have previously been heavily targeted by resource extraction activities. Allowable activities within recovery areas are those that will permit or accelerate the recovery of resources and ecosystems to states permitting continued sustainable harvest and a return or conversion to resource emphasis status.

Recovery emphasis zones are subject to the full range of management directives applicable to the sustainable resources zone with more stringent harvest level restrictions dictated at the watershed level.

Within the Recovery Emphasis Zone, harvest intensity at the watershed level will reflect mature and old growth retention at maximum natural rate of variation. If this threshold is surpassed, then the development of an Avoidance, Mitigation, Reclamation and Offsetting Plan is required.

Due to the poor current condition of this zone, and to ensure no further deleterious impacts, within recovery areas:

- No further harvesting will take place without Nak'azdli approval;
- If any harvesting is approved:
 - Cover will be retained within 10m, or to a farther wind firm boundary, of S4, S5, and S6 streams, L1, L2, L3, and L4 lakes, and W1, W2, W3, W4, and W5 wetlands;.
 - Retain wind firm buffers with representative stand structure and species composition pre-harvest within 20m, or to a farther wind firm boundary, of S1, S2, and S3 streams; and
 - Mitigation and offsetting activities will have to be applied in other zones.

Protection Zone

The objective of the Protection Zone is to ensure no further loss of critical elements underpinning ecological function within the territory.

Protection zone areas are targeted for the preservation and restoration of cultural and natural areas. These areas guard ecological function, and support culturally-significant activities and values. No modification of the landscape is to be permitted. Identification of eligible values for classification as Protection areas include both local knowledge and Provincial databases, and it is understood that Nak'azdli management directives may extend beyond the site protections outlined in the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, the *Wildlife Act*, the *Heritage Conservation Act*, the *Government Actions Regulation*, and other acts as may be relevant.

Example values indicating classification as Protection zones include:

- Burial sites;
- Cultural significant areas, including sacred/spiritual areas as identified;

- Medicine gathering sites;
- Training grounds and other culturally-supportive ecosystem areas, as identified;
- Heritage cabins;
- Trails;
- Registered and reported archaeological sites;
- Registered and reported critical habitat, corridors, and breeding grounds for culturally-significant and SAR-listed species, including but not limited to moose, caribou, grizzly, and furbearers; and
- Registered and reported fisheries-sensitive watersheds and spawning streams.

No harvesting or modification of the landscape will be permitted unless approved through the Nak'azdli consultation and referrals process.

Habitation Zone

The purpose of the Habitation Zone is to acknowledge areas alienated from the control of Nak'azdli Whiten and not subject to Nak'azdli to this land stewardship plan.

Habitation zone area include towns, villages, reserves, and private lands. The *Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan* does not address these areas. Land use planning on reserve lands is addressed through implementation of Land Code.

5.4 TRADITIONAL USE AND OCCUPANCY

In addition to, and overlapping the stewardship zones described in Section 5.3, is the traditional use and occupancy “super zone”.

The objective of the traditional use and occupancy overlay is to protect and mitigate damage done to cultural values in areas of high importance to the immediate health and long-term social and cultural sustainability of our people.

Section 1.6 above documents the production of this information layer. It provides area detail for important past and current land and water use. The detail and extent of this layer will change as more information is constantly gathered.

In addition to the full range of management guidance provided in this plan and the implementation report, areas within the traditional use super zone are subject to additional Nak'azdli management directives to preserve the viability and sustainability of cultural activities and values and the retention of memory places, including but not limited to the creation of appropriate buffer zones.

All resource extraction activities will be scrutinized in terms of traditional and current cultural use through the Nak'azdli consultation and referrals process. Through the referrals process, the traditional use and occupancy information will be used to advance cultural goals by influencing resource utilization. Direction to referring agencies may require site protection or may include improvements to access or the abundance of cultural resources through modified harvest practices.

Allowable activities within cultural emphasis areas are those which can be harmonized with cultural resources and use. Some resource extraction activities may support some cultural activities, e.g. logging creating edge habitat and forage for ungulates, as well improving vehicle access to hunting and trapping areas.

Example values indicating classification as Cultural Emphasis zones include:

- Hunting and trapping;
- Fishing; and
- Gathering.

Full and sufficient protection of memory places is required.

6.0 MEASURING SUCCESS

Inherent in the planning process are the measurement of success and the use of that information in an evolving stewardship regime. Measurement depends on the clear articulation of the purpose of the planning exercise, the goals to be reached, the objectives to be met along the way, and the strategies to get there.

6.1 PURPOSE OF THE LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN

It is worth repeating here the purpose of the *Land Stewardship Plan* as defined above in Section 1.1:

By way of the Land Stewardship Plan, Nak'azdli Whut'enne carry out our obligation and birthright to be the caretakers and protectors of our lands and waters.

6.2 GOALS OF THE LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN

In setting land stewardship goals it is instructive to look at greater goals set by the community, starting with the community vision defined in Section 4.0 above.

The *Nak'azdli Stewardship Policy*, the primary document for resource referrals, advances the following goals (paraphrased here):

- No further irreparable environmental, cultural, or resource damage;
- Restoration of the natural and/or cultural health of the territory;
- Progress on net positive social impacts on our people;
- Nothing will jeopardize, prejudice, or otherwise compromise Nak'azdli and the traditional stewards' title, rights, and interests;
- Growing opportunities for education and direct employment;
- Growing opportunities for economic participation; and
- Increased financial ability to engage in resource stewardship.

Based on the above and a wide range of internal sources, we summarize the goals of the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan as follows:

1. A strong self-governing community fulfilling the role of stewards of the land and water.
2. A healthy community with a strong cultural foundation.
3. A progressive membership well educated in traditional ways and modern influences.
4. Healthy and functioning watersheds providing naturally abundant, free flowing clean water supporting all living things.
5. Vibrant, diverse, and resilient forests supporting all manner of wildlife.
6. A strong economy rooted in and supporting a healthy environment.

In the following sections we fully develop these goals with measurables, objectives, and strategies.

While there is tremendous overlap with multiple Nak'azdli programs, we have attempted to stay within the realm of land use and natural resource stewardship.

6.3 MEASURABLES: GOVERNANCE

Nak'azdli Whut'en asserts title over the unceded territory of our people. Nak'azdli Whut'enne will be equal partners in resource stewardship on our land and waters.

Goal: A strong self-governing community fulfilling the role of stewards of the land and water.
Measurable: Area of land and water under direct control of Nak'azdli Whut'en either solely or in full partnership
Short-term Objective: 10% of the territory Long-term Objective: 90% of the territory
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Negotiate co-management of provincial park lands. 2) Assumption of all area-based tenures or other interests in land (except Fee Simple) created by Canada or British Columbia within unceded Nak'azdli territory. 3) Transfer of control of Nak'azdli protection areas to Nak'azdli Whut'en. 4) Negotiate a new relationship with British Columbia which addresses jurisdiction and resource revenues across the territory.
Measurable: Area of land and water under which the stewardship of natural resources is in adherence to Nak'azdli policy.
Short-term Objective: 10% of the territory Long-term Objective: 100% of the territory
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Negotiate partnerships with outside governments in all phases of natural resource stewardship (inventory, planning, analysis, decision making, harvesting, care-taking, restoration, and monitoring). 2) Fully utilize traditional land and ecological knowledge. 3) Build upon the leadership strength of the people through project leadership and sustainable research. 4) Empower the community through direct involvement in planning. 5) To support rights-based goals present evidence of the abundance of the past and the reduced resource availability which prevents exercising of rights. 6) Prepare a Nak'azdli practices policy for land, water, wildlife, fish, and non-renewable resources.

Measurable: Area of land in watersheds under effective water management including inventory and regulation.
Short-term Objective: 25% of the territory Long-term Objective: 100% of the territory
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) As quickly as possible undertake full study of water supply, use, and demand in every watershed. 2) Develop with British Columbia an effective water rights management regime applying to all water use, and addressing quality, quantity, and timing.

6.4 MEASURABLES: CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The health of our community depends on the strength of our cultural links to our land, our language, and our ancestors.

Goal: A healthy community with a strong cultural foundation.
Measurable: Full expression of being Dakelh in our daily lives.
Short-term Objective: Cultural elements, symbols, and language embedded in all Nak'azdli events and publications. Long-term Objective: Numbers of speakers, days on the land, and consumption of traditional foods.
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Celebrate Nak'azdli tradition and culture as guiding forces in all activities. 2) Promote Nak'azdli presence in a culturally and environmentally productive landscape. 3) Protect and enhance all manner of natural and cultural resources which provide cultural or economic support the community. 4) Teach language, cultural activities, and life skills on the land.
Measurable: All known heritage values under the protection and care of Nak'azdli people.
Short-term Objective: Establish the process and begin the negotiations. Long-term Objective: Custody and care of all sites, knowledge, and artifacts.
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Partner with Parks Canada to build and operate a Nak'azdli cultural centre which would house, protect, and share publicly the wealth of the Dakelh culture. 2) Expand the Nak'azdli digital atlas to identify and catalogue all knowledge, known sites, and related artifacts. 3) Assume the control and protection of all cultural heritage artifacts and sites within the territory. 4) Research the existence of artifacts in the custody of others. 5) Bring home the ancestors and their property held by outsiders.

6.5 MEASURABLES: EDUCATION

Our stewardship of land and water will support traditional ways of learning and lift students up in their studies.

Goal: A progressive membership well educated in traditional ways and modern influences.
Measurable: High school graduation
Short-term Objective: 100% of members Long-term Objective: 100% of members
Strategies: 1) Maximize the delivery of school and training on the land.
Measurable: Post-secondary achievement
Short-term Objective: 25% of members complete post-secondary education. Long-term Objective: All members achieve traditional, scholastic, or technical advancement in the career of their choice.
Strategies: 1) Identify and support territorial land use career paths (guardians, life on the land). 2) Through land stewardship ensure opportunities exist for technical or professional careers in our natural resources sector. 3) Create or support culturally safe space for learners where ever they choose to attend. 4) Youth program to build traditional river boats and cottonwood canoes.

6.6 MEASURABLES: WATER AND FISH

Abundant high-quality water is the essential element of our sustainability.

Goal: Healthy and functioning watersheds providing naturally abundant, free flowing clean water supporting all living things.
Measurable: Equivalent Clearcut Area or Equivalent Cut Area Whut'en (ECAW) used as a measure of hydrological and fish health.
Short-term Objective: <= 40% in all watersheds Long-term Objective: <= 20% in all watersheds
Strategies: 1) Up-to-date and detailed assessment of equivalent clearcut area in every watershed 2) Watershed plan to move to <= 20% for all watersheds

Measurable: Percent of culverts impeding fish passage as a measure of fish health.
Short-term Objective: <= 50% in all watersheds Long-term Objective: 0% in all watersheds
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Up-to-date and detailed assessment of fish impediment in every watershed 2) Watershed plan to move to 0% for all watersheds
Measurable: Metres of fish habitat restoration projects completed.
Short-term Objective: 100 metres of stream length per year Mid-term Objective: 1000 metres of stream length per year Long-term Objective: No streams requiring restoration
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Establish the role of the Nak'azdli Guardians in this work. 2) Identify and negotiate partnerships and funding. 3) Conduct fish habitat restoration work as a core activity. 4) Ensure planning and monitoring results in no new stream degradation.
Measurable: Increase in fish quantity and quality.
Short-term Objective: Return to levels of 10 years ago Long-term Objective: Return to pre-contact levels
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Harvest intensity reduction addressing water yield patterns. 2) Road and culvert improvements addressing water quality. 3) Expand water quality sampling. 4) Re-establish and expand fish hatchery work. 5) Bring back traditional fish management practices (weirs, raking spawning grounds). 6) Continue and expand cooperation with fish stewardships groups down stream of our territory.

6.7 MEASURABLES: FORESTS AND WILDLIFE

Stewardship of forests will focus on the watershed level. Forest harvesting will take place within a regime focused on the restoration of fish and wildlife populations.

Goal: Vibrant, diverse, and resilient forests supporting all manner of wildlife.
Measurable: Coniferous forest logged in each watershed.
Short-term Objective: $\leq 60\%$ in each non-protected watershed Long-term Objective: $\leq 40\%$ in each non-protected watershed
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Implement Land Stewardship Plan guidance on mature and old growth retention. 2) Build internal monitoring and reporting capability.
Measurable: Increase in Wildlife Quantity and Quality.
Short-term Objective: Return to levels of 10 years ago Long-term Objective: Return to pre-contact levels
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Build monitoring and reporting capabilities. 2) Habitat enhancement and restoration (critter piles, functional restoration). 3) Create Nak'azdli species recovery plans. 4) Inforce Stewardship Plan guidance.
Measurable: Road density as a measure of wildlife health.
Short-term Objective: All watersheds evaluated. Long-term Objective: Road density targets set for all watersheds.
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Undertake road density investigations. 2) Develop a road density work plan including targets. 3) Actively partner in all harvest layout work to minimize road requirements while meeting natural resource policy requirements. 4) Actively promote and undertake road decommissioning and structural recovery activities.

6.8 MEASURABLES: ECONOMY

We will build a robust economy through culturally and environmentally appropriate economic opportunities and entrepreneurship.

Goal: A strong economy rooted in and supporting a healthy environment.
Measurable: Nak'azdli and member economic activity
Short-term Objective: Double economic activity Long-term Objective: Multiply economic activity by ten
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Support businesses and initiatives that respect Nak'azdli natural resource policy. 2) Increased access to timber through Nak'azdli controlled area-based tenure. 3) Support local vertical integration to retain economic rewards. 4) Support non-timber natural resource business opportunities. 5) Support local forest sector small business operators. 6) Establish and operate a system of career development and work experience. 7) Identify new ventures. 8) Strengthen existing joint ventures. 9) Enforce the land stewardship plan
Measurable: Community employment levels
Short-term Objective: 50% of members able to secure needed employment. Long-term Objective: 100% of members able to secure needed employment.
Strategies: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) See culture and heritage, and education, strategies in Sections 6.4 and 6.5 above. 2) Develop a comprehensive employment strategy plan.

7.0 COLLABORATION AND MONITORING

The *Nak'azdli Land and Resources Stewardship Policy* guides resource stewardship collaboration between outside government agencies, resource users, and Nak'azdli Whut'en. The Policy declares our jurisdiction, articulates our vision, and outlines our expectations.

7.1 REFERRALS AND CONSULTATION

The *Nak'azdli Land and Resources Stewardship Policy* is a living document and will be updated to reflect this land stewardship plan and recent developments on the land.

Recommendation: Update and modernize the referrals and consultation process integrating the Land Stewardship Plan and the Guardian program.

The referrals process currently in use requires update and reinforcement to meet the obligations of Canada and British Columbia. Information sharing is one area of highest priority for improvement.

Recommendation: That Nak'azdli require provision on a quarterly basis to Nak'azdli the following as a precursor of engagement in harvest planning consultation:

- Wall-to-wall harvest planning inclusive of blocks in all states of planning and harvest;
- Full forest stand details for all harvested, permitted, pending, and planned blocks ;
- Replicate digital copies of the full submission to the Provincial decision maker for all submitted and pending permits;
- Wall-to-wall mapping of all decommissioned, existing, permitted, pending, under consultation, new consultation, and planned roads.

7.2 INDIGENOUS GUARDIANS PROGRAMS

Indigenous Guardians programs work to uphold and enforce traditional and contemporary Indigenous laws passed down over countless generations, and work together to monitor, protect and restore cultural and natural resources in traditional territories. Guardians are employed as the “eyes on the ground” in Indigenous territories: they monitor ecological health, maintain cultural sites, and protect sensitive areas and species. They play a vital role in creating and upholding land-use and marine-use plans. They further promote intergenerational sharing of Indigenous knowledge by helping to train the next generation of educators, administrators, and nation builders. Their work ensures resources are sustainably managed, that rules and regulations are followed, and that land and marine use agreements are implemented effectively. There are many such formal and informal guardians programs throughout the province of British Columbia and Canada broadly.

In the 2017 Budget, the Government of Canada announced \$25 million over four years to support an Indigenous Guardians Pilot Program. This program purports to provide Indigenous Peoples with greater opportunity to exercise responsibility in the stewardship of their traditional lands and waters, and to support Indigenous rights and responsibilities in protecting and conserving ecosystems, developing and



maintaining sustainable economies, and continuing the profound connections between Canadian landscape and Indigenous culture. For the purposes of the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan, the Pilot Program is indicative of Federal recognition of the rights of Indigenous communities to assert and assure compliance with customary law – including that governing land use decision making – in their traditional territories. A Nak'azdli guardian program will be invaluable in helping assure the communication and compliance with the policies and land use directives outlined in the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan.

Recommendation: That Nak'azdli Whut'en develop and deploy a guardians program to uphold the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan through environmental monitoring and data collection, policy communication, compliance monitoring, and knowledge transmission.

A May 2019 application to the Pilot Program submitted by Nak'azdli was unsuccessful in securing funding for a Nak'azdli guardians program; however, the vision, goals, and activities outlined in that proposal can and should form the basis of a guardians program regardless of funding source(s).

7.3 THE NAK'AZDLI GUARDIAN PROGRAM

The following description of a recommended Nak'azdli Guardian Program is adapted from the First Nations Guardians Pilot Tier 2 Proposal for Established and Emerging Community-Based Initiatives submitted by Nak'azdli Whut'en to the Joint Working Group Secretariat on May 3, 2019.

Overview

Under the Nak'azdli Guardian program, guardians will be present on the land as a positive monitoring unit. Their non-confrontational role will be to record and report activities and impacts on the land to the proper legal and environmental enforcement agencies. Where Nak'azdli land use directives are more stringent than existing regulations, non-compliant activity will be addressed directly via Nak'azdli's existing referrals process. The Nak'azdli Guardians will also serve an educational role. They may inform outside land users (e.g. proponents, recreational hunters, ecotourists) of Nak'azdli land use directives as outlined in the Water Sustainability Project and the Land Stewardship Plans. Their role will also include mentoring youth in developing environmental awareness, stewardship practices, and, traditional knowledge inherent with our Keyoh. The guardians' presence in the community will raise further awareness of Nak'azdli's traditional and continuing role as stewards of the land.

Vision

Nak'azdli Whut'en's vision is to assert our leadership role in stewarding all the resources – the land and waters within our keyoh, and to reconnect our membership to their ancestral territory through stewardship activities that include monitoring and restoring fish stocks and wildlife populations and maintaining forest and watershed health.

Goals

The Nak'azdli Guardian Program will have the following goals:

- To enhance the existing informal community-based monitoring efforts through technical and cultural training and, implement formal data collection protocols. By so doing we will enact a resurgence of Nak'azdli presence on, and stewardship of, the land;
- To increase proponent and environmental activity monitoring capacity among Nak'azdli membership;
- To monitor and report on impacts to lands, waters, plants, and animals;
- To engage membership in cultural and physical activities on the land;



- To support transmission of traditional knowledge between members and across generations. Youth involvement and learning, in all activities, is a priority;
- To aid Nak'azdli Natural Resource staff to collect data that supports land-use decision-making;
- To monitor and encourage proponent compliance with environmental regulations, best practices, and Nak'azdli land use management directives as outlined in the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan; and
- To support Nak'azdli land users' infrastructural needs (e.g. cabins, smokehouses) to encourage increased engagement with, and presence, on the land.

Outcomes

The Nak'azdli Guardian Program will aim to have the following outcomes:

- Expanded community knowledge base pertaining to cultural and natural resources and their use, distribution, and cultural significance throughout the territory, with particular emphasis on knowledge transmission to youth;
- Improved voluntary proponent compliance with environmental regulations, best practices, and Nak'azdli land use management directives as outlined in the Nak'azdli Land Stewardship Plan;
- Improved referrals response capacity and shorter timelines supported by a systematic collection of in-house data on community land use and impacts;
- Improved response time to environmental disturbance supported by increased monitoring and improved community environmental response training;
- Improved physical and cultural wellbeing supported by increased engagement with the land; and
- Improved health and increased abundance of cultural keystone and sensitive species supported by better habitat protection.

Pathway

The Nak'azdli Guardian Program will fulfill its vision, goals, and outcomes through the following activities:

- Expand and formalize training in scientific monitoring (e.g. water sampling, wildlife monitoring) to increase the quality and availability of scientific data to Nak'azdli natural resource managers;
- Establish baselines in the first two years of the program, and record future observations against these baselines, in order to measure the practical application of scientific and indigenous knowledge in both water and land stewardship;
- Expand and formalize training in the documentation of TEK (e.g. biography mapping, traditional use and occupancy research) to provide additional spatial and meta-data useful to Nak'azdli natural resource managers;
- Increase and formalize Nak'azdli presence on the land. This will be combined with improved monitoring capacity and will increase the quality and quantity of both TEK and scientific data available to Nak'azdli natural resource managers;
- Record and report traditional-ecological and scientific observations using Nak'azdli's the Keyoh Monitor mobile app (in development) to streamline data input and analysis for natural resource managers.
- Work closely with Keyoh holders and community members to raise awareness of the guardian initiative, and work closely with the Nak'azdli Natural Resources Office to apply traditional and scientific monitoring and share their observations with Keyoh holders.



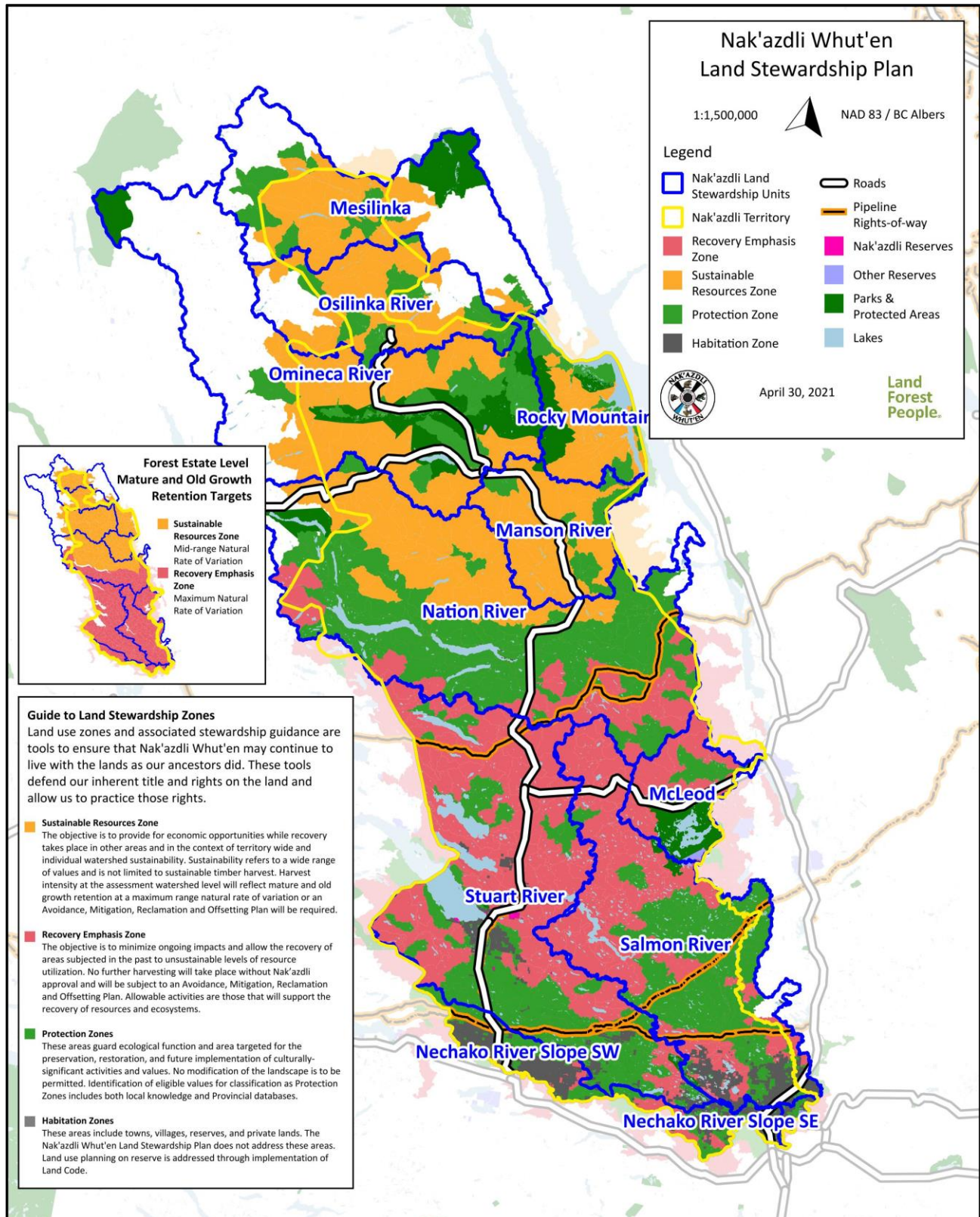
8.0 LAND STEWARDSHIP PLAN

Figure 11 - Nak'azdli Whut'en Land Stewardship Plan on the following page presents the *Nak'azdli Whut'en Land Stewardship Plan*.

This plan reflects the values and wishes of our people and was prepared as documented above in this planning report.

How Nak'azdli Whut'enne intend to implementation of this plan is described in a companion volume entitled the *Nak'azdli Whut'en Land Stewardship Implementation Report*.





This map is best viewed at its full size.

Figure 11 - Nak'azdli Whut'en Land Stewardship Plan

9.0 SOURCES

- Alsek Renewable Resource Council.** 2004. *Strategic Forest Management Plan for the Champagne and Aishihik Traditional Territory.*
- B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development.** 2012. *Backgrounder, Mid-term Timber Supply, Prince George Timber Supply Area.*
- B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development.** 2017. *Prince George Timber Supply Area Rationale for Allowable Annual Cut (AAC) Determination.*
- British Columbia.** 2018. *Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples.*
- Clayoquot Sound Scientific Panel.** 1995. *First Nations' Perspectives Relating to Forest Practices Standards in Clayoquot Sound.*
- DeRoy, S.** 2015. *Direct-to-Digital Mapping Methodology: A Hands-on Guidebook for Applying Google Earth.* Victoria, BC: Firelight Group Research Cooperative.
- DeRoy, S., & Olson, R.** 2015. *Mapping the digital terrain: Towards Indigenous geographic information and spatial data quality indicators.* Keynote presented at Indigenous Mapping Workshop 2015, Waterloo, Ontario.
- Gorley, A. and G. Merkel.** 2020. *A New Future for Old Forests: A Strategic Review of How British Columbia Manages for Old Forests within its Ancient Ecosystems.* Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.
- Harris, L. M., & Hazen, H. D.** 2006. *Power of Maps: (Counter) Mapping for Conservation.* ACME, (4)1.
- Horgan, J.** 2017. *Minister Scott Fraser Mandate Letter.*
- In-SHUCK-ch Nation.** 2013. *Forestry Business Options Analysis.*
- Kovach, M.** 2009. *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- (R.A.) Malatest & Associates.** 2020. *What We Heard: Engagement on Interior Forest Sector Renewal.* BC Government Communications and Public Engagement.
- Markey, N.** 2001. *Data "Gathering Dust": An Analysis of Traditional Use Studies conducted within Aboriginal Communities in British Columbia.* Simon Fraser University.
- Nak'azdli First Nation.** 1998. *Strategic Plan and Community Profile.* Westcoast CED Consulting Ltd.
- Nak'azdli Whut'en.** 2015a. *Community Plan Framework.*
- Nak'azdli Whut'en.** 2015b. *Nak'azdli Land and Resources Stewardship Policy.*
- Nak'azdli Whut'en.** 2016. *Reserve Land Code and Supporting Documents.*
- Nak'azdli Whut'en.** 2017. *Watershed Sustainability Project.*
- Nak'azdli Whut'en.** 2018a. *Land and Water Stewardship - Community Vision and Guiding Principles.*
- Nak'azdli Whut'en.** 2018b. *Nak'azdli-Whut'en First Nation Woodland License No. N1T Management Plan.*
- Peluso, N. L.** 1995. *Whose Woods Are These?: Counter-Mapping Forest Territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia.* Antipode, (27)4.
- Povinelli, E.** 1995. *Do rocks listen? The cultural politics of apprehending Australian Aboriginal labour.* American Anthropologist, 97(3).
- Price, K. and D. Daust.** 2018. *Omineca ESI Risk Assessment for Biodiversity Management Options.*
- Radies, D.** 2018. *ESI Summary Tables: Immediate Measures for Forest Biodiversity*
- Rasmussen, P. and C. Richie.** 2018. *Saving the Caribou.* BC Forest Professional September-October 2018.

- Scientific Panel for Sustainable Forest Practices in Clayoquot Sound.** 1995. *First Nations' Perspectives*.
- Smith, L. T.** 2012. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Thom, B.** 2014. Reframing Indigenous territories: Private property, human rights and overlapping claims. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, (38)4.
- Tobias, T. N.** 2000. *Chief Kerry's moose: A guidebook to land use and occupancy, research design and data collection*. Vancouver: Ecotrust Canada / Union of BC Indian Chiefs.
- Tobias, T. N.** 2009. *Living proof: The essential data-collection guide for Indigenous use-and-occupancy map surveys*. Vancouver: Ecotrust Canada / Union of BC Indian Chiefs.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.** 2012. *Calls to Action*
- Tsilhqot'in National Government.** Undated. *Summary of the Tsilhqot'in Aboriginal Title Case (William Case) Decision*.
- Turner, N. J.** 2014. *Ancient pathways, ancestral knowledge: Ethnobotany and ecological wisdom of indigenous peoples of northwestern North America*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press
- United Nations.** 2004. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.
- Waatainen, Jeff.** 2018. *Southern Mountain Caribou and the Species at Risk Act*. BC Forest Professional July-August 2018.
- Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs.** 2020. *Memorandum of Understanding between Canada, British Columbia, and Wet'suwet'en as agreed on February 29th, 2020 and signed May 14th, 2020*.
- Willow, A. J.** 2013. Doing sovereignty in Native North America: Anishinaabe counter-mapping and the struggle for land-based self-determination. *Human Ecology*, 41, 871-884.
- Wilson, S.** 2008. *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods*. Halifax: Fernwood.



