

# On-The-Ground Indigenous Stewardship Programs Across Canada

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## Inventory Project



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**Prepared by: Karen Peachey Consulting**

**Prepared for:**



**The Indigenous  
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## Executive Summary

In February 2014, TNC Canada, Tides Canada and the Indigenous Leadership Initiative hosted a two-day workshop in Squamish, BC, with approximately two dozen indigenous stewardship program leaders from across Canada. Out of that meeting came a directive to develop an inventory of on-the-ground indigenous stewardship programs in Canada. Between July and December 2014, over twenty organizations were interviewed for the development of the first phase of the inventory. Interviews focused on finding out more about the type of stewardship work participating organizations engage in, identifying successes, challenges and opportunities, and better understanding the value of stewardship networks to these organizations. Developing the inventory is a first step toward building knowledge and awareness of the important work indigenous stewardship organizations are engaged in, facilitating linkages and partnerships between programs, and better directing resources to support enduring stewardship outcomes. Key findings from the interviews are presented in this report. Profiles of each of the participating organizations can be found in a separate report titled: On-the-Ground Indigenous Stewardship Program Inventory Project: Organizational Profiles.

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# 1 Project Purpose

## 1.1 Background

In February 2014, TNC Canada, Tides Canada and the Indigenous Leadership Initiative hosted a two-day workshop in Squamish BC with approximately two dozen indigenous stewardship program leaders from across Canada in attendance. The objective of the workshop was to bring these practitioners together to share experiences, highlight successes and challenges, and to discuss priorities and strategies to better support and strengthen their work in communities and regions across the country.

From that gathering, several directives for follow up were prioritized by the group. These included:

- 1) Developing a better understanding and inventory of on-the-ground indigenous stewardship programs across Canada;
- 2) Increasing opportunities for indigenous stewardship practitioners in Canada to network and share experiences, program information, training resources, strategies and methodologies; and,
- 3) Developing a business case to support stewardship programs to better reach financial self-sufficiency and develop new and enduring partnerships.

This report is a result of the first directive: to develop an inventory of on-the-ground indigenous stewardship programs across Canada.

## 1.2 What is On-the-Ground Stewardship?

This project focused in particular on inventorying and better understanding “on-the-ground” stewardship programs being undertaken by indigenous organizations across the country. While the definition of “on-the-ground” was intentionally kept rather loose, in general, it was defined as stewardship work focused on getting people out of the office and into the field – for instance, field-based research, sampling, monitoring, observation, enforcement, outreach, education, training, or community engagement.

These “hands-on” or “boots-on-the-ground” stewardship programs are of particular interest for a number of reasons. In many cases, this work is generating new knowledge and data, and forming the foundation of new and more effective management approaches. This field-based work is also serving to reconnect people to the land and inspiring a new generation to see and assert themselves as rightful stewards of ancestral lands. Furthermore, this work is developing future leaders who truly understand the value of the lands and waters entrusted to their care, and who can advocate for better management practices grounded in direct local experience, scientific methods, and community values.

Indigenous peoples in Canada have been stewarding the lands and waters of this vast country since time immemorial. The colonial period and the creation of Canada wrested much of the

responsibility for resource stewardship from Indigenous peoples and ignored the knowledge Canada's first people had built up over millennia as land managers.

Increasingly, however, indigenous rights are being recognized, treaty, land settlement, and co-management agreements are being signed, and landmark legal decisions are paving the way for change. Canada's indigenous peoples are building new organizations and institutions, gathering and applying traditional ecological knowledge from elders and community members active on the land, training a new generation of stewards, researchers, monitors and technicians, and building resource management strategies and plans that reflect a more holistic and comprehensive set of values.

### 1.3 Why an Inventory?

Currently, there is no single inventory, listing or network of indigenous stewardship programs in Canada. While there are many local, regional and political networks and partnerships, many organizations continue to work in isolation or are simply unaware that other organizations may be tackling very similar issues. This lack of connectivity may represent missed opportunities for co-learning, collaboration, joint action, policy influence, and maximal use of limited resources.

Developing an inventory of on-the-ground stewardship programs across Canada is a first step toward building knowledge and awareness of this important work, increasing linkages between organizations, facilitating strategic partnerships, reducing isolation, attracting and retaining support and investment, and supporting enduring stewardship outcomes.

## 2 Project Methodology – Building an Inventory

### 2.1 Getting Started

Building an inventory of indigenous organizations involved in on-the-ground stewardship work is no small exercise. There are innumerable First Nation, Metis and Inuit organizations across the country, most of which are engaged in some form of stewardship work. With that in mind, and recognizing the very real constraints of time and budget to conduct an inventory, it was determined that a first phase of this work should target approximately 40 organizations to contact and interview.

The project partners generated an initial outreach list of 42 organizations to approach and invite to participate in the inventory project. This first phase list was built organically: it reflects existing and emergent on-the-ground stewardship programs familiar to the project partners from TNC Canada, Tides Canada, and the Indigenous Leadership Initiative. An effort was made to identify organizations from all parts of the country.

Once a strong Phase 1 list was generated, organizations were invited by email and follow up phone call to participate in the study (see Appendix I – Letter of Invitation to Participate). Participants were invited to conduct a 1 to 1.5 hour telephone interview to share the details of their on-the-ground stewardship programs and to become part of the stewardship inventory.

### 2.2 Response and Participation

Just over 50% of those contacted to participate in the project proceeded to schedule telephone interviews. For those that chose to participate, general interest in the project was high and there was enthusiasm regarding the potential for more support, information sharing, and networking focused on this type of stewardship work. After an initial screening call for more information, several organizations determined that their programs were not a fit for the study as they were either just getting launched, inactive, or not primarily indigenous-led initiatives. For others, participation in the study represented one more demand on already strained work plans and human resources. In total, 22 organizations were interviewed over the August to December 2014 period. A summary of the organizations contacted is provided in Table 1 below.

A summary profile of each of the organizations that were interviewed can be found in Appendix V: On-the-Ground Indigenous Stewardship Program Inventory Project: Organizational Profiles.



**Table 1.** Organizations Contacted to Participate

Organizations Contacted to Participate		Contacted	Interviewed
1	Alderville First Nation	✓	
2	Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society	✓	✓
3	Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation	✓	
4	Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation	✓	✓
5	Carcross/Tagish First Nation	✓	✓
6	Cree Nation Government	✓	
7	Cree Nation of Wemindji	✓	
8	Daylu Dene Council, Kaska Dene	✓	✓
9	Dehcho First Nations	✓	
10	Dena Kayeh Institute	✓	✓
11	Environment Yukon, Fish and Wildlife Branch	✓	✓
12	Friends of the Nemaiah Valley	✓	✓
13	Gwa'sala- 'Nakwaxda'xw Nations	✓	✓
14	Heiltsuk Nation, Integrated Resource Management Department	✓	
15	Innu Nation	✓	✓
16	Inuit Qaujisarvingat Knowledge Centre	✓	
17	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation	✓	
18	Kitasoo/Xai'Xais Nation	✓	✓
19	Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government	✓	
20	Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation	✓	
21	Metlakatla Stewardship Society	✓	✓
22	Miawpukek First Nation	✓	✓
23	Misipawistik Cree Nation	✓	
24	Musqueam First Nation	✓	
25	Nisga'a Nation	✓	
26	Nunatsiavut Government	✓	✓
27	Nunavut Wildlife Monitoring Board	✓	✓
28	Nuxalk Nation	✓	✓
29	Office of the Wet'suwet'en	✓	
30	Okanagan Nation Alliance	✓	✓
31	Poplar River First Nation	✓	✓
32	QQS Projects Society, Coastwatch Program	✓	✓
33	Splitrock Environmental (Sekw'el'was)	✓	
34	Ta'an Kwäch'än Council	✓	
35	Taku River Tlingit First Nation	✓	✓
36	Teslin Tlingit Council	✓	
37	Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations	✓	
38	Trondek Hwech'in	✓	✓
39	Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources	✓	✓
40	Vancouver Aquarium, Ikaarvik Barriers to Bridges Program	✓	
41	Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation	✓	✓
42	Xeni Gwet'in First Nations	✓	

### Key Areas of Inquiry

Participants were asked approximately 40 questions to develop a profile of their organization. Questions focused on the type of stewardship work they engage in, identifying successes, challenges and opportunities, and better understanding the value of stewardship networks to these organizations.

Key areas of inquiry can be summarized as follows:

- Emergence and evolution of stewardship programs.
- Focus of current on-the-ground stewardship activities.
- Governance and program delivery context.
- Human resource issues: staff, skills and training.
- Program funding and budgets.
- Successes, challenges, and opportunities.
- Link to community health, wellness and cultural revitalization.
- Stewardship networks and partnerships.

The complete interview question set can be found in Appendix II.

## 3 Findings

### 3.1 Emergence and Evolution of Stewardship Programs

Many different pathways have been taken by the participants interviewed to arrive at the on-the-ground stewardship programs they have today. Their programs have evolved to reflect the historical context, needs, priorities, and opportunities of the organizations themselves.

#### 3.1.1 Land Agreements

Generally, on-the-ground stewardship activity has increased as land settlement, co-management, interim treaty measures, and other agreements have been signed with provincial, territorial and federal governments. These agreements may shift authority and responsibility for land, fisheries, or wildlife management entirely or in part to indigenous organizations, and may spell out specific requirements for monitoring or community engagement.

Across the Yukon, land claim settlements signed in the 1990s have meant First Nations are now more engaged through local resource councils and co-management boards in wildlife management and land planning. Environment Yukon's Community Moose Monitoring Project with Na-Cho Nyäk Dun hunters has delivered 14 years of field observation data, providing a strong basis upon which to make ongoing management decisions.

The Community Forest Tenure Agreement signed between Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation and British Columbia was a negotiated interim treaty measure signed in 2011. This agreement enabled the Xaxli'p First Nation to develop a forest stewardship plan for territorial lands, train field crews, conduct forest restoration work, and build a Range Riders horse patrol and outreach program.

Poplar River First Nation negotiated a land management agreement with the Province of Manitoba in 2009 after developing a community vision for land management in their territory. Poplar River has since developed a small land guardian program, initiated muskeg/climate change research, and worked with neighbouring First Nations and the province to obtain UNESCO World Heritage Site designation for their territorial lands.

#### 3.1.2 Community-Led Planning

Stewardship programs may also be rooted in community-driven land use and marine use planning processes. For instance, Gwa'sala 'Nakwaxda'xw Nation developed a Comprehensive Community Plan in 2010 which provided a clear mandate from the community to develop a guardian program. Taku River Tlingit (TRT) also developed a land use vision in 2003 and subsequently a land use plan, both of which identified the need for TRT citizens to monitor their lands.

With the completion of the Heiltsuk Nation's land and marine use plans in recent years, the need for more specific territorial data became apparent as the community pushed forward to implement these plans and develop more detailed area and conservancy management plans. Qqs Projects Society, a Heiltsuk NGO, has developed the Coastwatch program, which focuses on culturally informed scientific research, monitoring and conservation management planning. The on-the-ground experience and information gathered by this program, feeds directly into the Heiltsuk Nation's planning and decision-making.

### **3.1.3 Crisis and Frustration**

Oftentimes, participants in the inventory would point to a specific crisis (i.e. fishery collapse) or external development pressure as the impetus for their stewardship work. Frustration at the inability or unwillingness of other levels of government to sustainably steward lands and resources has pushed many indigenous organizations to step up and in. “Enough is enough,” as one participant put it.

The formation of the Unama’ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) was in response to what is known as the Middle Shoal Incident of 1996. Mi’kmaq Chiefs came together to overturn approvals to dredge the channel at the entrance to Bras D’Or Lakes. This was also occurring at the height of escalating tensions between Mi’kmaq food fishers and non-native commercial lobster fishers.

The formation of the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) and its ongoing stewardship work has its origins in the creation of the ONA Fish Commission in the 1970’s. The ONA Fish Commission was formed by the Okanagan Chiefs in response to the near extinction of Sockeye salmon due to dams and development on the Columbia River System.

Similarly, the decline of Atlantic salmon stocks saw Miawpukek First Nation organize to develop a fisheries guardian program and to develop monitoring and research programs to address the management of other species at risk and other culturally important wildlife in their territory.

Increasingly, participants noted, the federal and provincial governments are stepping away from conducting and supporting scientific research, baseline data collection, and on-the-ground monitoring and enforcement. Into this void, indigenous organizations are stepping up to address stewardship and management gaps.

### **3.1.4 Funding**

Engaging in stewardship works sometimes comes down to having the funding to do it. As indigenous organizations have secured access to funding, be it through signed agreements, new government structures, conservation trusts, or strategic partnerships, their capacity to build, deliver and sustain stewardship programs has grown.

For instance, the Coast Opportunities Fund in British Columbia has enabled some coastal First Nations to strengthen their resource management capacity and build out guardian and other stewardship programs. Because fisheries and species at risk program funding has been some of the most consistently available from the federal government, many stewardship programs focus on projects supported by these funds. In other cases, funding through philanthropic sources may shape the stewardship work undertaken.

### **3.1.5 Partnerships**

Stewardship activity often evolves out of partnerships with external organizations. For instance, Beardsy’s and Okemasis First Nation has developed their stewardship programming around university partnerships they have built through their engagement with the Prince Albert Model Forest network. Nunatsiavut Government has built strong relationships with ArcticNet partners to support several ongoing studies related to monitoring climate change impacts, contaminants, and traditional Inuit knowledge of caribou. The Heiltsuk Coastwatch Program delivered by Qqs

Projects Society evolved from a two-year study with the University of Montana to develop monitoring strategies for the Koeye River watershed.

### **3.1.6 Youth Education and Training**

Participants often cited the goal of supporting indigenous youth to know their culture, lands, and themselves as the impetus behind their stewardship initiatives. The Junior Rangers program operated by Beardsy's and Okemasis First Nation and the Dechenla Environmental and Cultural Studies program of the Dena Kayeh Institute focus on giving youth the knowledge, technical skills and direct experience needed to develop into future community guardians and leaders. Similarly, in both Kitasoo Xai'Xais and Heiltsuk territory, TNC's Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards (SEAS) Community Initiative is supporting youth to build their stewardship awareness and capacity.

### **3.1.7 Success follow Success**

Sometimes, it is inspiration from the outside that shapes a community's stewardship approach. For instance, the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Network on the Central Coast of British Columbia was pointed to by the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the Gwa'sala Nakwaxda'xw First Nation, and others as a model that they looked to when developing their own land guardian programs.

## **3.2 Focus of Current On-the-Ground Stewardship Activities**

Participants in the inventory were asked about the general stewardship areas and specific on-the-ground stewardship activities they currently undertake. Responses covered a wide range of focal areas, with some organizations running dozens of programs whilst others focused in on one or two. Collectively, the range of activity described gives us a compelling understanding of the many ways in which indigenous organizations are demonstrating leadership and taking direct action to steward resources.

### **3.2.1 Management Planning**

While planning isn't typically thought of as "on-the-ground" stewardship, it is the backbone of many stewardship programs. Good plans are iterative and shaped by the information generated by on-the-ground activities – be it the general experience and observations of community land users or targeted monitoring and research projects that deliver specific management information. In short, it is impossible to separate what happens in the field with what happens in the office or boardroom, and many of those people engaged out in the field are also engaged in developing the plans, processes, policies, laws and strategies of the communities and organizations they work with. Land and marine use plans, conservancy and protected area plans, wildlife management plans, corridor plans, source water plans, forest stewardship plans and climate change strategies are just some of the plans that participants cited as being an active focus of their daily stewardship work.

### **3.2.2 Patrolling and Monitoring**

Having "eyes and ears" out on the land, asserting presence and authority, engaging with land and marine users, and observing and monitoring activity and ecosystem changes are critical activities reported by stewardship programs.

Some organizations have dedicated guardians on staff and the capacity to schedule patrols (by boat, horse, ATV, vehicle, foot, skidoo, etc.) These trips may focus on patrolling protected areas,

settlement lands, or areas where there is concern about fish and wildlife harvesting, commercial activity, development projects, or recreation use.

Typically, there is an education, reporting or enforcement element to these patrols, where guardians remind users of local protocols, agreements or laws with respect to the activity they are engaged in. Patrols may be tied to specific monitoring objectives such as ensuring commercial fishers abide by openings and closures, recreational users stick to designated trails and sites, designated hunting areas are respected, mine conditions are being met, or a specific complaint is actively investigated.

### **3.2.3 Community Engagement and Local Knowledge**

An important element of many on-the-ground programs is community engagement. On-the-ground stewardship activities are usually developed as a response to specific issues of concern or the need to monitor regulated activities on the land or water. It is important, therefore, that community members understand the role of guardian or monitors, see the value of these programs, understand the authority they hold, and feel confident that concerns are being addressed. Many participants highlighted the importance of keeping the community well informed of stewardship activities, integrating community priorities and perspectives into the program, and inviting the community to participate in stewardship activities out on the land or water when possible.

Information, education and outreach are key to success especially with respect to the implementation of land use designations, by-laws, protocols, or harvesting or use restrictions. Stewards and guardians play an important role in ensuring that community and non-resident land users are aware of and abide by these. Information, signage, permits, reporting requirements, and the physical presence of monitors are all ways in which stewardship programs are managing land and resource use.

Another important element of on-the-ground stewardship programs is the collection of local knowledge and use data. Stewardship programs are engaging in local and traditional knowledge interviews, community (harvester) monitoring and reporting programs, and mapping and GPS of cultural and other data.

### **3.2.4 Wildlife Research and Monitoring**

Wildlife research and monitoring is one of the primary activities indigenous stewardship programs are engaged in. In this inventory project alone, more than thirty species of animals were mentioned as being actively researched and monitored. Organizations are monitoring a wide range of species including bear, salmon, moose, caribou, wolves, crab, eels, oysters, lobsters, seabirds, turtles, bats and toads just to name a few.

Habitat concerns, development impacts, food security issues, harvest levels, species numbers, climate change, or other concerns may drive wildlife research and monitoring priorities. This work may be conducted independently, in partnership with government, universities or conservation organizations, or with local communities. In some cases, land users and harvesters are being engaged in monitoring efforts to provide harvest reports, field observations, and/or technical data collection activities. Some projects, like that managed by the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society have now gathered over twenty years of monitoring data focused on the Porcupine Caribou Herd by working annually with local harvesters and land users.

### **3.2.5 Harvest Management**

Food harvest management is another area in which indigenous stewardship programs are focused. Organizations have established permit systems, harvest reporting requirements, monitoring systems, and information programs to manage community food harvests, food storage, and/or food distribution. These programs may be focused on settlement lands, territorial lands, or in areas of specific harvesting concern. In some cases, monitors are also observing, approaching and reporting commercial and non-resident or local fishers and hunters who violate provincial or federal regulations or who may not be aware of indigenous laws, settlement boundaries, or other restrictions.

### **3.2.6 Monitoring Development Projects**

Monitoring hydroelectric, mining, oil and gas, forestry, and other industrial development projects is part of the work indigenous stewardship programs are undertaking. This may involve field studies to support a referral response or more comprehensive baseline work to understand pre-development conditions, traditional use and occupancy, or habitat conditions. Where development is proceeding, some stewardship organizations such as the Innu Nation have secured monitoring agreements with the proponent and have staff stationed at or regularly visiting project sites to observe practices, monitor impacts, and report out. Other organizations report fieldwork involving monitoring for environmental contaminants or, in the case of the Gwa'sala Nakwaxda'xw, tsunami debris.

### **3.2.7 Restoration Work and Water Management**

Restoration work, such as riparian and stream restoration, forest thinning, contaminated site cleanup, invasive species management, and trail restoration, are just some of the hands-on projects stewardship programs report being involved with. Relatively consistent federal funding for fisheries and species at risk habitat work has meant that often field crews and guardians focus a good part of their work on these activities.

Increasingly, water is becoming an important issue that stewardship programs are tackling as urban development, agriculture, power generation, and industrial extraction all place heavy demands on water systems, impacting the quantity and quality of that water. Climate change is also pushing this issue to the forefront as water storage systems are affected, flooding and drought patterns change, and water temperatures increase.

### **3.2.8 Climate Change Monitoring**

As indicated above, climate change research and monitoring is increasingly the focus of stewardship fieldwork. For instance, Innu Nation, Poplar River, Qqs Projects Society and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in all have research and monitoring projects focused on understanding the impacts of climate change. Organizations are building climate change scenarios and baseline studies, researching carbon sequestration, and actively monitoring wildlife behaviours, habitat changes, weather patterns, water temperatures, and other indicators of climate change.

### **3.2.9 Engaging the Next Generation of Land Stewards**

Several organizations are focusing efforts on engaging youth in stewardship training and leadership activities. To name a few, Beady's and Okemasis First Nation has developed a Junior Resource Ranger Program, the Dena Kayeh Institute has developed the Dechenla Environmental and Cultural Studies Program, and Nunatsiavut has developed their Going Off Going Strong program for at-risk youth. Many other organizations such as Qqs Projects Society, Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation, Carcross/Tagish First Nation, and Kitasoo Xai'Xais First Nation

run summer youth camps and out programs to teach youth about their culture and traditions and to provide them with skills and experience out on the land. Other programs focus on bringing information into schools, creating youth advisory groups and forums, pairing youth with researchers, and inviting youth to participate in fieldwork.

### **3.3 Governance and Program Delivery Context**

#### **3.3.1 Program Structure**

Organizations are structuring and delivering their stewardship programs in a variety of ways. In many cases programs and projects are organized under government departments. Programs may reside, for instance, under Environment, Lands, Fisheries, Heritage or Natural Resources departments. Some First Nations have established Stewardship offices that bring all these functions (and others) together under a single integrated group. Often, the work of the department is overseen by a manager or director, and guided by the decisions of a board, advisory committee, or traditional and/or elected council. These advisory and governing bodies typically have strong representation from a range of community entities, organizations, and members ensuring stewardship programs reflect community priorities and values.

In some cases, community non-profit entities are delivering stewardship programs. For instance, in the case of Metlakatla, the Metlakatla Stewardship Society was purposely established as an arms-length organization designed to work independent of the Metlakatla Governing Council and the Metlakatla Development Corporation. It is guided by a board with representation from the Governing Council, Development Corporation, and Treaty Office.

In other cases, non-profit organizations like the Dene Kayeh Institute, the Okanagan Nation Alliance, and the Unama'ki Natural Resources Institute deliver territorial stewardship programs on behalf of member bands/nations. Qqs Projects Society is another example of an independent community non-profit that has taken on work to support the Heiltsuk Nation's land and marine use vision implementation.

The Nunavut Wildlife Monitoring Board was specifically created by the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement as the main instrument of wildlife management in Nunavut. It is governed by a board made up of regional and technical appointees. Xaxli'p First Nation established a development corporation to manage the Xaxli'p Community Forest. This entity is governed by a board of directors elected at the Xaxli'p First Nation's annual general meeting.

#### **3.3.2 Integration and Alignment**

Participants were asked how well aligned they felt their stewardship programs were with other initiatives undertaken by their First Nation or respective governing authority. Almost universally, respondents felt positive that the work they undertook in the field and on-the-ground was well aligned with community values and priorities and supported planning and decision-making. Where programs were small (in terms of budget or human resource capacity), this sense of alignment or integration was sometimes less so. For instance, the Nuxalk Nation emphasized the need for governance work to ensure stewardship initiatives were better integrated with other Nation initiatives and decision-making structures. Others spoke of the need to build internal capacity to effectively engage in planning and management responsibilities and catch up to the expectations and opportunities of co-management and other land agreements.



### **3.3.3 Influence**

When asked if on-the-ground stewardship programs contributed to building or strengthening control or influence over what happens in the territory, responses were generally positive. Often, respondents focused on the power of good data – in its ability to support planning and decision-making, influence policy, and establish indigenous organizations as the holders of some of the best management information available. Organizations like the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Society and the Okanagan Nation Alliance report that other organizations regularly approach them to learn from their data collection methodologies and utilize the sizeable data sets they have amassed. Others emphasize the role on-the-ground stewardship activities played in the development of robust land and marine plans and the subsequent negotiation of management agreements.

### **3.3.4 Compliance and Enforcement**

About a third of respondents said that compliance and enforcement was not a component of their stewardship work. This was sometimes deliberate in that the projects involved did not want to jeopardize relationships with community monitors they had recruited to provide harvesting and other observation data. In other cases, it was issues of human resource capacity, budgets, or recognized authority to conduct this work. Enforcement of laws is legally complex, very costly, and requires advanced training for enforcement officers. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, for instance, had to repeal their enforcement law when they encountered legal and implementation challenges.

About two thirds of respondents did indicate that their programs were involved in some way with compliance. Some respondents emphasized the importance of skilled communicators and diplomats on their stewardship crews – people able to interact with land and marine users in a way that was non-threatening and dialogue and education oriented. Where serious violations occur, observe/record/report protocols are followed. Respondents emphasized the open-communication lines between their monitors and relevant government agencies such as the RCMP, DFO, and departments of energy and mines, parks, wildlife, etc. However, they also pointed to the dearth of federal and provincial enforcement officers available to quickly respond to or investigate illegal activities.

Some organizations are engaged in or preparing to engage in enforcement. Miawpukek First Nation, for instance, through the Aboriginal Fisheries Guardian program, monitors and enforces fisheries regulations. Other organizations are actively developing rules, protocols and policies to regulate land use, harvesting, and other restricted activities on territorial and settlement lands. Various enforcement systems are being considered (i.e. Clan System, Elders Council) to deal with enforcement issues. First Nations on Canada's Central Coast are working together to monitor and develop policy for food, social and ceremonial harvesting.

## **3.4 Human Resource Issues: staff, skills and training**

### **3.4.1 Staffing Levels**

Staffing levels for stewardship programs vary from one organization to the next. Smaller programs may be delivered by between one and three individuals, often working part-time, seasonally, or in-kind. Larger programs may have anywhere between eight and twenty full time individuals with upwards of 40 staff working seasonally. There is no 'typical' program, as staff levels relate to budgets, the number of active projects, and the focus of the stewardship work.

In addition to full-time and seasonal staff, contractors are often retained for specific deliverables, project phases, or needed technical skills or expertise.

#### **3.4.2 Skills and Experience**

Not surprisingly, when asked what skills or experience are sought when recruiting for stewardship programs, participant responses were as varied as the range of programs being delivered. However, some generalizations can be made. Key attributes frequently mentioned include:

- Good attitude, values-fit with the work, interest in and commitment to the work
- Experience on the land and water
- Community, cultural or traditional knowledge
- Experience working with boats, ATVs, skidoos, or vehicles and related maintenance/repair skills
- Drivers license, boat operator/small vessel operator ticket
- Basic computing and field equipment skills required for data collection/input, equipment readings, and remote communications

#### **3.4.3 Training**

Larger programs with higher management and project demands, sought to recruit individuals with more advanced training in disciplines such as natural resource management or biology or other vocational training (i.e. game guardian, conservation officer, watchmen training, BEAHR program, etc.) For the most part, however, training is provided to staff at the time of recruitment and periodically thereafter as required. Training provided to staff may include:

- Boat, ATV, skidoo operator training/ticket/engine repair
- Swift water rescue
- Ice safety, ice rescue
- Marine emergency
- Wilderness first aid
- Wilderness survival
- Bear awareness, bear safety
- Map and compass
- VHF and satellite phone
- GPS, data input
- Guardian training (fisheries, watchmen, junior rangers, game guardian, etc.)
- Project specific methods for sampling, surveying, counts, tracking etc.

#### **3.4.4 Training Priorities**

Looking forward, training priorities varied amongst organizations reflecting the near-term priorities and program needs of the participating organizations. Key areas for training that were regularly mentioned included:

- Guardian training, including compliance and enforcement training
- Technical and scientific training to conduct research and associated monitoring, sampling, surveys, testing, etc.
- Environmental monitor training, to monitor mines, oil and gas, forestry, construction, and energy projects

- Training to support data collection, input, management, storage, analysis, mapping and reporting
- Training focused on new areas of knowledge such as climate change, carbon storage, carbon credits, water management, fracking, etc.
- Certifications such boat, ATV, and skidoo operator, first aid, etc.
- Training focused on governance, project management, fundraising, etc.

### 3.5 Program Funding and Budgets

Participants were asked about funding, budgets, and key expense and equipment categories. A summary of the responses is presented below.

#### 3.5.1 Key Funding Sources

Stewardship programs are funded by a wide variety of government, corporate, charitable, academic/research, community, and entrepreneurial organizations as well as agreement legacy funds. The list below itemizes funding sources referenced by participants in the inventory (note: this is not an exhaustive list of all funding sources and types but a useful snapshot of current primary revenue sources).

Funding Source	Funding Source Detail
Settlement Agreements, Trust Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innu Trust Fund</li> <li>• Nunavut Wildlife Research Trust</li> <li>• Northern Strategy Trust Fund</li> <li>• Yukon Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Trust Fund</li> <li>• T'akhu Â Tlèn Conservancy Fund</li> <li>• Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board Wildlife Fund</li> <li>• Coast Opportunities Fund</li> <li>• BC Treaty Interim Measures Agreements</li> </ul>
First Nation/ Indigenous Territorial Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core department budgets</li> <li>• Nation-owned economic ventures, investments</li> <li>• Proceeds from sale of carbon credits</li> </ul>
Federal, Provincial, Territorial Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DFO, AFS, AAROM</li> <li>• AANDC</li> <li>• Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk</li> <li>• Environment Canada, ecoAction</li> <li>• Canadian Forest Service</li> <li>• Natural Resources Canada</li> <li>• Human Resources Canada</li> <li>• Health Canada</li> <li>• Parks Canada</li> <li>• Yukon Community Development Fund</li> <li>• BC Capacity Funds</li> <li>• BC Parks</li> <li>• US Fish and Wildlife</li> </ul>
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact benefit agreements</li> <li>• Development monitoring funding and training agreements</li> <li>• Referrals</li> </ul>

Funding Source	Funding Source Detail
Foundations and Charities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McConnell Foundation</li> <li>• Vancouver Foundation</li> <li>• Bullitt Foundation</li> <li>• Salamander Foundation</li> <li>• Full Circle Foundation</li> <li>• Tides Canada</li> <li>• TNC/TNC Canada</li> <li>• Canadian Boreal Initiative</li> <li>• Ducks Unlimited</li> </ul>
Universities, Research Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universities, colleges</li> <li>• Research collaboratives (i.e. ArcticNet)</li> </ul>
Contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vegetation removal contracts</li> <li>• Fuel management (forest thinning) contracts</li> <li>• Park management contracts</li> <li>• Contracted services by First Nation government</li> </ul>
Private Donors, Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private and individual donations</li> <li>• Community fundraisers</li> </ul>

### 3.5.2 Budgets

Annual stewardship program budgets reported varied wildly, with a low of \$1,500 in the case of the Environment Yukon's Community Moose Monitoring Project to a high of \$2 million in the case of the Nunatsiavut Government's Environment Division. A summary of the ranges provided by respondents is presented below.

Budget Range	Number	Percent
\$0 - \$100,000	7	32%
\$100,000-\$500,000	7	32%
\$500,000-\$1,000,000	7	32%
\$2,000,000	1	4%

From these numbers, we can see that approximately a third of the programs are delivered with annual budgets under \$100,000, a third with budgets between \$100,00 and \$500,000, and a third with budgets between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000. While these figures are very general and may not accurately reflect the exact dollar value of the programs directly linked to on-the-ground stewardship activities (i.e. some may reflect overall department/division budgets) it is apparent that in many cases organizations are stretching relatively small budgets in order to deliver this work.

### 3.5.3 Funding Adequacy

Not surprisingly, participants generally reported that funding was insufficient to deliver the full range of on-the-ground stewardship work they'd like to be doing and that more would certainly enable them to expand the reach or number of projects. Participants emphasized that more funding would see more terrain actively monitored, more thorough baseline and scientific research gathered, more field data processed and analyzed, and better equipment and gear purchased.

Others pointed to the annual struggle they face in funding their stewardship programs. Some are simply without adequate in-house capacity to raise program funds, court donors, write proposals, and report against them. Others expressed frustration at the shifting landscape they face every year as they try to fund new or established programs: traditional government programs may no longer be there, funder-fatigue means even successful programs need to find new sponsors, and changing funder criteria and priorities means only some aspects of programs are fundable, while other critical program elements are not. This leaves some programs feeling both vulnerable and dependent and makes it very difficult to recruit and retain staff and build sustained stewardship capacity and impact.

That said, however, some felt more money *per se* wasn't what was needed. They pointed to the need to focus on community engagement and building local awareness and capacity first, in order to build a solid base of local support and talent for the successful delivery of on-the-ground stewardship programs.

#### **3.5.4 Expenses**

When asked about key expense categories respondents focused in on the following areas:

- Salaries, wages, contract staff, consultants, staff training
- Fuel and fleet management costs (gas, insurance, storage, maintenance, repair, replacement)
- Travel to and from remote areas (including air access) and travel expenses for meetings/training/conferences etc.
- Database management, data analysis and processing
- Honoraria – elders, community monitors, community engagement
- Field equipment

#### **3.5.5 Equipment, Infrastructure**

Some stewardship programs operate with no to little additional dedicated equipment. More typical, however, programs own, lease, rent, share use of, and maintain the following types of infrastructure and equipment:

- Office space, furnishings, equipment
- Trucks, ATVs, skidoos, boats, outboard engines
- Cabins, trailers
- Traps, nets, saws, monitoring equipment, etc.
- Computers, tablets, handheld computers, GPS
- VHF radio, satellite phones, radar equipment
- Cameras
- Safety equipment

### **3.6 Successes, Challenges, and Opportunities**

Participants in the interview were asked to reflect on the successes, challenges and key opportunities facing their respective organizations. These questions were geared to better understand the impact on-the-ground stewardship programs are having, the practical challenges that limit success and the achievement of meaningful impact, and the areas and activities of opportunity that organizations are looking to move into and build support for.

### 3.6.1 Successes, Impact and Key Supports

Almost all interviewees reported that their stewardship work had been successful. Respondents explained what elements of their programs had been most successful and why. Many focused in on the community engagement process surrounding their stewardship work. They pointed to the importance of engaging with the community, sharing information, and building the program itself from a solid foundation of local knowledge, concerns and priorities. Others pointed to the power of research, monitoring and local knowledge to improve wildlife management outcomes, including the recovery of threatened species. In some cases, the indigenous organizations have become the holders of some of the most comprehensive and sought after management data available. Organizations report that they are successfully using local knowledge, research and monitoring data, mapping analysis, satellite imagery and other information to respond to referrals, make decisions, build land and marine management plans, and negotiate agreements.

Measuring the success or impact of on-the-ground stewardship programs is difficult but respondents pointed to several indicators that reflect their success. These included:

- Positive support and feedback from the community.
- Increased interaction and engagement of youth and elders through stewardship activities and education. Mentorship and development of young leaders. Reduction of youth suicide.
- Utilization of stewardship data and analysis to support decision-making and planning.
- The quality, integrity and value of the data collected, including local knowledge data. Data is sought after by other organizations.
- Land plans, conservancy plans, management plans, etc. shaped and supported by stewardship work.
- Areas protected, habitats restored, wildlife populations recovered.
- Household income supported through employment, contracts, stipends, and honoraria.
- Local and meaningful jobs supported, creation of new employment opportunities, and capacity building.
- Constructive relationships with enforcement agencies, commercial operators, etc.
- External recognition, awards, and requests for support and mentorship.

Success can be attributed to many things, but when asked, respondents pointed to a few key issues that helped position their programs to realize successful outcomes. Key factors included:

- Strong leadership and vision.
- Community support and direction.
- Good governance structures, clear mandates and workplans.
- Funding and partnerships.
- Benefit agreements negotiated with industry.
- Supportive federal legislation (i.e. SARA), court rulings (i.e. Tsilhqot'in decision), and consultation requirements.
- Land settlement agreements, conservancy and co-management agreements, land and marine plans, etc.
- Established models (i.e. Coastal Guardian Watchmen Network) and monitoring methodologies (i.e. Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society) to learn from and adapt.

- Integrated programs and workspaces bringing all aspects of stewardship and management together under one roof.
- Commitment of community harvesters and monitors.

### **3.6.2 Challenges**

Many issues challenge the development and delivery of stewardship programs. One of the most significant is the sheer size of the areas many indigenous organizations are actively trying to manage, with much of it remote and expensive to access. This requires that programs focus on specific issues or areas and not others. Often organizations report feeling overwhelmed by the sheer number of pressures, development fronts, and referrals they are being inundated with. As land settlements are negotiated, more and more time is required for the development of governance structures, new laws and legislation, plans, policies and procedures. Similarly, government and industry negotiations, referrals, and co-management agreements require constant attention, often pulling people away from on-the-ground stewardship activities and solidly into the office environment.

Funding is another major challenge. Organizations struggle to raise the funds they need. Often they can't rely on predictable or core budgets and report frustration with the time and effort required to raise funds for projects often from many different granting programs and funding sources. Unpredictable funding from one year to the next hampers recruitment and retention, especially so in remote communities where it can be hard to find or attract needed skills and expertise. The inability to invest in people and long-term skills and capacity building further affects program development and success. Small organizations, without the ability to contract-in additional technical or consultant expertise, struggle with the ability to address complex issues.

Other challenges come in the form of local infrastructure. Many communities do not have sufficient housing, office space, or transportation infrastructure to adequately support people and programs. Other issues such as governance discord, health and wellness, high cost of living, and low incomes also affect the ability for programs to gain traction or the community support they require.

### **3.6.3 Focusing Resources**

When respondents were asked where they would like to see more resources focused, responses varied reflecting their respective needs and priorities. Key areas needing deeper investment included:

- Program funding that addresses all aspects of the project, not just some elements.
- Funding to continue or expand successful projects (i.e. engage more harvesters, expand the monitoring season, analyze collected data).
- Funding to support and secure core staff positions.
- Staff training and capacity development.
- Youth stewardship capacity.
- More scientific research and monitoring and developing related research and technical field skills.
- Data collection, management systems, and applied analysis.
- Implementation of land and marine plans.
- Enforcement and assertion of authority.

### **3.6.4 Opportunities**

When asked what opportunities lay ahead and where organizations felt they wanted to focus efforts, similar themes repeated themselves. Participants focused on the desire to build out successful programs and expand patrols, analyze more of the data they've collected, deepen the integration of science and traditional knowledge in monitoring and management efforts, build staff and community capacity and engagement, implement plans, develop laws, regulations, and policies to support management and enforcement, and to continue with vital restoration and recovery efforts.

## **3.7 Link to community health, wellness and cultural revitalization**

There is often a strong connection between on-the-ground stewardship programs and community health, wellness, and cultural revitalization. This link may be purposeful and integrated into programming or an indirect benefit of engaging in this type of work. By and large, most respondents felt that these attributes were an important aspect of their stewardship work.

### **3.7.1 Cultural and Local Knowledge**

Many stewardship programs involve conducting interviews with elders, land users, and community members, documenting oral histories, and mapping traditional use and occupancy information. The collection of this information is a powerful affirmation of the important role of culture and local knowledge in shaping stewardship priorities, developing management plans and strategies, and responding to development referrals. Land users are valued for their acquired knowledge and skills, communities benefit from the sharing of information, and carefully documented knowledge becomes a powerful tool for planning, management and resource negotiations. One interviewee powerfully expressed the link between culture and stewardship this way: "our resilience and cultural survival as people depends on the resilience of our land and resources." Or in another's words: "if you bring back the salmon, you bring back the culture."

### **3.7.2 Inter-generational Sharing, Youth Engagement**

Stewardship work often presents the opportunity to bring community members of different generations together to share, learn and act. Engaging youth is a focus of many of the stewardship programs that participated in this study. This engagement happens in a variety of ways, from creating opportunities for inter-generational exchange and knowledge transfer through school programs, culture camps, monitoring trips, and harvesting trips, to dedicated youth stewardship training and employment programs. Connecting youth and older community members through stewardship helps to build shared purpose and values, strengthen community cohesion and reduce isolation and alienation.

### **3.7.3 Pride, Sovereignty, Authority**

Community wellness is strongly affected by community identity, pride and sense of autonomy. Several respondents referenced the importance of their stewardship work in building community members' sense of self, pride, or sovereignty. As one respondent put it, "getting people out and using the territory expands the feeling of who they are, where they are from, and what is theirs to protect." Furthermore, the presence of both monitors and community members out on the land and water helps to limit illegal or unpermitted activities and messages to users that the area is being actively stewarded and rules enforced.



#### **3.7.4 Food Harvesting**

Stewardship, for many organizations interviewed, means securing and managing food harvesting activities. Traditional and country foods provide healthy dietary choices for community members. Stewardship programs are working to secure sustainable access to these foods through monitoring and management, conservation strategies, and harvesting protocols, regulations and restrictions. Some programs are building cabins, allocating land for family camps, or operating community freezers to support community members to keep traditional foods in their diets.

#### **3.7.5 Employment and Income**

Another way in which on-the-ground stewardship work is contributing to community wellness is through the provision of employment, skills training and advancement, and personal/household income. Whether through full-time or part-time wages, contracts, stipends, honoraria or paid expenses, stewardship programs contribute to local economies and household incomes and demonstrate the economic value of land- and marine-based experience, knowledge, and skills.

### **3.8 Stewardship Networks**

To better understand if and how organizations are working in partnerships or networks to deliver their on-the-ground stewardship work, participants were asked a number of questions. These focused on current relationships with other First Nation or indigenous organizations, working relationships with government, and participation in other stewardship partnerships and networks. Subsequent questions focused on the value of stewardship networks and how they can be most effective.

#### **3.8.1 Participation in partnerships and stewardship networks**

Many of the organizations that participated in the study have already built relationships with other First Nation or indigenous organizations to address stewardship goals. Others are actively trying to develop these, recognizing that they may have more influence, be more effective, or be able to pool resources by working with neighbouring nations. For instance, Beardy's and Okemasis is working with the seven nation Island Forest Group; Carcross Tagish First Nation is working with the Inter-Tribal Watershed Monitoring Council; and the Heiltsuk and Nuxalk Nations are working with the Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance. There are many examples of this kind of issue, area, or nation-based stewardship alliances.

Organizations are also working with federal, territorial and provincial governments. Relationships are built around funding programs, technical consultation and referrals, co-management agreements, monitoring agreements, wildlife monitoring, and, in some cases, enforcement. Other networks such as the Canadian Boreal Initiative, ArcticNet, an invasive species group, local resource boards, and wildlife federations were some examples of other types of alliances indigenous stewardship groups are actively participating in.

#### **3.8.2 Interest in participating in an expanded stewardship network**

About two thirds of respondents felt strongly that there was real value in building indigenous stewardship networks. When asked what role such a network might play, a wide range of potential functions were suggested, including:

- Building the stewardship value proposition – a bigger, stronger voice for on-the-ground stewardship work.

- Platform to scale-up stewardship initiatives, leverage success, and strategize.
- Reduce isolation and increase opportunities for networking, learning, building partnerships, and getting inspired.
- Information and knowledge exchange, both in-person and on-line.
- In-person meeting opportunities to exchange ideas, find partners, build strategies, etc.
- Online searchable database of indigenous stewardship organizations, stewardship programs, monitoring data and research, etc.
- Source of best practice, success story, and how-to materials.
- Guardian training and standardized and certified training modules.

A third of the respondents cautioned that such networks can be effective but often demand both time and resources that are in scarce supply or can be taken off course by politics, negativity or a diluted mandate that can't hold partners together. One respondent emphasized the importance of the network being applied or technical in focus, and not a forum for the "woes and what ifs" of stewardship work.

### **3.8.3 How Broad a Network?**

Participants were also asked how broad a stewardship network is useful (i.e. national, regional, bioregional, etc.) Responses were mixed with support for national, regional and northern-based stewardship networks. For some issues or objectives, a national alliance of stewardship organizations resonated with respondents. For instance, issues around energy and mining policy, enforcement, boreal forest management, and wildlife research were cited as issues which transcended local political boundaries, geographies and cultures. There was also support expressed for a national gathering of more senior stewardship directors and managers.

Many respondents focused on regional networks, citing that these were often already established and working well or more likely to naturally evolve. Regional networks tend to form around shared geographies, common issues, and jurisdictional boundaries. People cited the benefits of easier communication, travel, and common concerns. There was a strong sense, especially among northern organizations, that an arctic stewardship network was the most effective place to focus efforts. Both the issues and governance structures in the north are different enough from other regions of Canada that there was some uncertainty in the value of building beyond arctic/subarctic partnerships. The very different issues faced by territorial, settlement land, treaty and non-treaty groups were also raised by other organizations as a real barrier to developing an effective broad-based network.

### **3.8.4 Value of a Stewardship Manual or Guidebook**

Participants were asked if they saw value in the development of a manual or guidebook for on-the-ground stewardship programs that could be used by existing or emerging organizations across Canada. On this question feedback was quite mixed.

There was strong or more general support amongst about half the organizations. Support for the idea particularly appealed to emergent programs. Nonetheless, more established organizations also cited the value of reference tools that they had utilized to develop their stewardship programs (i.e. Climate Change, Adaptation and Resilience Manual; Mine Medicine Manual; Source Water Protection Plan; etc.) Shared resources available as online reference tools and adaptable to local needs had broad appeal.

Participants were then asked what a manual or guidebook should include. Responses focused on:

- Profiles of indigenous stewardship organizations.
- Listing of ongoing monitoring studies.
- Highlight best practices and research and monitoring methodologies.
- Setting up a stewardship or monitoring program.
- Governance models and structures.
- Program management tools: accountability, reporting, budgets, financial management.
- Funding stewardship programs. Overview of funding sources.
- Job descriptions.
- General protocols and procedures.
- Safety policies.
- Developing laws and policies.
- Overview of precedent-setting legal decisions.
- Overview of current applicable government policies.
- Utilizing traditional knowledge.
- Data and information management.
- Communications, engagement and education tools.
- Building networks and joint stewardship strategies.

Concern was expressed by some respondents that more printed materials would either not get read, would be almost immediately dated once published, or would be too general and unsuited to local priorities, needs, or interests. Some respondents felt strongly that developing stewardship programs was necessarily a complex process, that deeply engaged and reflected the knowledge, values and priorities of the community. While tools were helpful, they pointed out, that they could not replace or substitute the important processes and capacity phases organizations move through as they build out programs. Others commented that in addition to written reference materials, a focus on training, video profiles, face-to-face meetings, and community-to-community exchanges would be valuable. One organization encouraged funders to focus efforts on supporting established groups with demonstrated capacity to really scale up and build out influential regional networks capable of really changing the conversation around stewardship issues and having deep impact.

## 4 Conclusions and Recommendations

Building an inventory of indigenous stewardship organizations in Canada is an ambitious exercise. While this limited study could only tap into the insights of twenty-two such organizations, it is evident that there is much to learn from the on-the-ground stewardship experiences of both small and large programs. Reaching out to more organizations will yield even more insights and help to further illuminate how best to support this important work.

Canada's indigenous stewards are a passionate, committed, and ambitious group. People are working hard, often without sufficient resources at their disposal, to tackle pressing environmental and resource management challenges. Interview participants were incredibly generous with their time, their perspectives, and their good will in participating in what must have felt like just another study and one more demand on them. They were grateful and hopeful that by participating in the conversation, more support, attention and resourcing would find its way to these on-the-ground stewardship programs.

Indigenous-led on-the-ground stewardship work in Canada is having impact. Individuals are gaining employment and skills, resource management capacity is being strengthened, and both young and senior leaders are emerging. Organizations and communities are articulating strong visions for stewardship, backed up by local knowledge and scientific data. They are implementing plans and negotiating agreements that reflect a holistic and culturally informed approach to managing resources. Some of the best available monitoring and research data is now in the hands of indigenous stewardship organizations.

This work is being done despite the challenges. Challenges include the difficulty in obtaining sufficient and reliable funding, recruiting and retaining staff for year-to-year projects, stewarding large and remote areas, managing collected data, and dealing with the constant demands of development and new land management responsibilities. Some struggle with working in isolated communities, often in small teams or alone, and without the mentorship or tools they need to support their work.

To bolster efforts, indigenous stewardship organizations are working with neighbouring nations, regional alliances, and with non-profit, academic and government organizations. There is strong interest in building these partnerships and networks further, at national and regional scales and around specific issues of common interest. There is an appetite for focused technical and knowledge based exchanges, both in person and through online information tools. Centralized and searchable online material profiling indigenous stewardship organizations, research and monitoring studies, data sets, and support tools would be welcomed by emergent and established organizations alike.

Observations obtained through this study can provide useful insight to organizations like TNC Canada, Tides Canada, the Indigenous Leadership Initiative, and others interested in providing deeper support and resourcing to Canada's indigenous resource stewards. Key messages from participants shared through the interview process regarding resources and support are summarized below.

Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase funding levels.</li> <li>• Provide multi-year funding.</li> <li>• Fund all components of stewardship programs.</li> <li>• Leverage impact of established stewardship programs funded by government and non-government sources.</li> </ul>
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support organizations to establish and retain in-house stewardship capacity.</li> <li>• Support training for guardians, monitors, researchers, field technicians, and data/GIS managers.</li> <li>• Support development of program governance and project management systems.</li> </ul>
Research and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support development of local capacity for scientific and technical research and monitoring.</li> <li>• Support systems for data and information management, data analysis and mapping, and integration of findings into resource planning and decision-making.</li> <li>• Support exchange and sharing of research and monitoring methodologies and results.</li> </ul>
Local Knowledge and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community leadership, engagement and local knowledge are essential components of strong stewardship programs. Support programs to engage communities and harness local knowledge.</li> <li>• Support initiatives that engage youth in stewardship training and other land-based cultural initiatives to support development of future leaders and stewards.</li> </ul>
Boots On-The-Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support field capacity to patrol and monitor vast territories and settlement lands. Eyes and ears on the ground are essential to establishing stewardship authority and effectiveness.</li> <li>• Support development of compliance and enforcement protocols, policies, and legal frameworks.</li> </ul>
Scaling Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look for strategic opportunities to scale up the impact of successful initiatives and organizations through regional, national or issue-based collaborations, partnerships and campaigns.</li> </ul>

## Appendix I – Invitation to Participate



September 5, 2014

### **Invitation to participate in an inventory of *On-the-Ground Indigenous Stewardship Programs* in Canada**

It's a bit of a mouthful, we know. But we want to find out more about Canada's thriving indigenous stewardship programs – in particular those that have active “**boots-on-the-ground**” program elements such as monitoring, enforcement, restoration, research, or stewardship-related outreach and education.

We know there is amazing work happening from coast to coast to coast -- Nations are out on their lands and waters protecting, managing and stewarding their territories. Unfortunately, much of this work is taking place in isolation or without adequate support.

In response, we are conducting a nation-wide inventory of indigenous on-the-ground stewardship programs in Canada. This follows up on a key recommendation from a meeting held in February 2014, in Squamish, BC, where a group of about two-dozen Indigenous program leaders from across Canada came together to speak about their experiences, needs, and priorities for on-the-ground stewardship. Once the inventory is compiled, the summary information of each program will be profiled and shared in an effort to increase the connections and share knowledge and resources among emerging and established indigenous stewardship programs.

The inventory will also feed into the development of a business case that will outline the social, economic, cultural, and ecological benefits of on-the-ground indigenous stewardship programs and why they should be broadly supported and funded. In addition, a larger national gathering of indigenous resource stewardship leaders is being contemplated for 2015 to discuss and move these important issues forward.

This inventory work is being coordinated by TNC Canada, working in partnership with Tides Canada and the Aboriginal Leadership Initiative (part of the International Boreal Conservation Campaign). Together, these three organizations are committed to supporting “boots-on-the-ground” stewardship work across Canada through increased program support and direct funding.

**With this letter, we'd like to invite you to participate in this ambitious exercise to inventory and profile indigenous organizations in Canada with on-the-ground stewardship programs.**

To build this inventory, we'd like to set up a telephone interview with you to hear more about your direct experience with on-the-ground stewardship activities, any opportunities or challenges you've faced, and your reflections on best practices for building a stewardship program. We'd also like to know more about where you'd like to see more support or resources directed in the future.

Our first phase goal is to reach out to 40 indigenous organizations with active on-the-ground stewardship programs. Each participating organization will be profiled in, and provided with, the complete inventory once compiled. Participating organizations will also have the opportunity to get connected to other organizations.



**To recognize organizations for engaging in this project, all participating organizations will have the opportunity to apply for one of three \$750 competitive grants from TNC Canada. This grant can be used to purchase field equipment of your choice for your on-the-ground stewardship program.**

Claire Hutton of TNC Canada and Karen Peachey, an independent community planner based in BC, will lead this project – reaching out to you, conducting phone interviews, and following up with you to review and approve any summary documentation about your program. If you are interested in participating, please respond by email or phone to [chutton@tnc.org](mailto:chutton@tnc.org) / 250-882-5195 and [kpeachey@telus.net](mailto:kpeachey@telus.net) / 604-879-4432.

We sincerely hope that conducting this inventory will help to build a vibrant and active network of indigenous resource stewards across Canada, produce valuable information that will help you and others to further build and strengthen your programs, and set the stage for more funding and support for this incredibly important work.

Sincerely,

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Claire Hutton, TNC Canada

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Karen Peachey, Independent Consultant

## Appendix II – Interview Question Set

### Background

1. What general stewardship areas does your on-the-ground stewardship work focus on? (i.e. forestry, fisheries, wildlife, marine use, land use, cultural/heritage, protected area management)
2. What specific on-the-ground stewardship activities does your organization currently undertake? (i.e. monitoring, reporting, data collection, research, enforcement, education, etc.)
3. How long has your organization been actively involved in on-the-ground stewardship work?
4. What led to the creation of your program and has your on-the-ground stewardship work changed or evolved over time?
5. Does your on-the-ground stewardship program integrate or address issues related to community health/wellness and/or cultural revitalization? If so, how?

### Program Structure, Governance and Authority

6. How is this on-the-ground stewardship work organized and delivered? (i.e. through a single organization, through various departments, through a non-profit entity, etc.)?
7. How does your program integrate or align with other efforts, plans and programs undertaken by your Nation or broader governance structure?
8. How does your on-the-ground stewardship program contribute to building and strengthening your Nation's role in asserting control or increasing influence over what happens in your territory?
9. Do you work with any neighbouring or partner indigenous organizations in your on-the-ground stewardship work? If yes, what is the nature of your relationships?
10. Does your organization work with federal, provincial or territorial government staff/agencies/programs in your on-the-ground stewardship work? If yes, what is the nature of your relationships?
11. What role does your organization play in ensuring compliance and/or enforcement with rules and regulations of your Nation or of the provincial, territorial or federal governments? What role would you like to play in the future?

### Staffing, Training, and Professional Development

12. How many staff do you currently employ? (specify number of FT, PT, seasonal, or contract positions)
13. What are their job titles and primary functions?
14. When recruiting people into your stewardship programs, what pre-existing knowledge, experience, or competencies are you looking for? (specify for program managers, field staff/technicians, etc.)
15. Are there specific certifications, training courses, or mentorship you require of or provide to your staff?



(i.e., boating courses, first aid, safety, DFO AFG, certificate/degree programs, computer literacy/training, leadership, management, other)

16. What are your training/professional priorities over the next few years for your staff?

### **Funding and Budget**

17. How is your on-the-ground stewardship work currently funded?  
(i.e. what mix of gov't, service contracts, resource agreements, own-source revenue, philanthropy, etc.)?
18. What is your approximate annual budget for your on-the-ground stewardship programs?
19. What are your primary expense categories related to running these programs?  
(i.e. salaries/benefits, office overhead, field equipment, safety equipment, training, etc.)
20. What infrastructure and field equipment does your organization own, lease or rent?  
(i.e. boats, trucks, safety equipment, field equipment, office, field cabins, etc.)
21. Do you have adequate funding for the on-the-ground stewardship work you do or would like to be doing? What would you consider to be adequate funding for your program?

### **Successes, Challenges and Opportunities**

22. Overall, has your on-the-ground stewardship work been successful?
23. What have been the most successful activities/initiatives?
24. How do you measure this success or impact?
25. Are there specific conditions or supports that have been in place that have helped you succeed?
26. What are some of the key challenges that have made the development of your on-the-ground stewardship program(s) difficult to get started or to sustain over time?
27. Where would you like to see more resources or support focused?  
(i.e. capacity, funding, information, training, etc.)?
28. What are the key opportunities that lie ahead for your organization or program? Where do you plan to focus efforts going forward?

### **Support and Networking**

29. Do you see value in organizing a network of Indigenous organizations that are actively engaged in on-the-ground stewardship activities?
30. How broad a network is useful?  
(i.e. regional, provincial/territorial, Canada-wide)
31. What could the role or function of this network be? How would it support the work that you do?
32. Are you currently part of a network or alliance related to your stewardship work?
33. Are you aware of any other Indigenous communities or organizations that are engaged in on-the-ground stewardship work that you recommend we talk to?
34. Beyond a network, what other ways do you think you could be more supported to achieve your vision/goals/objectives?

## Tools

35. Are you comfortable sharing a summary of information about your program on a website that highlights on-the-ground stewardship in Indigenous Canada?
36. Do you see value in the development of a Manual or Guidebook for on-the-ground indigenous stewardship programs that could be used by emerging and/or existing organizations across Canada?
37. What do you think the manual or guidebook should include?
38. As we begin to pull resources together in anticipation of the development of a Guidebook, have you developed any resource materials that you would be willing to share with us or with other Indigenous organizations doing this kind of work?

For instance materials such as:

- Org chart (situating your stewardship work)
- Job descriptions, basic qualifications
- HR policies, hiring policies, overtime policies
- Training tools, programs, materials
- Operational budget sample for your program(s), budgeting tools
- Standard policies or procedures, safety procedures, equipment use policies and procedures
- Insurance coverage requirements (for your own staff and others accompanying your staff)
- Data collection or monitoring tools
- Outreach or education materials
- Cabin use
- Other

Please note: specific details about your organization can be removed from any program summaries/publications if you decide to share only some information with other organizations.

## Links to Health, Wellness and Cultural Revitalization

39. Are there other land-based initiatives that address health and wellness or cultural revitalization in your community? If so, is there a stewardship component to these initiatives?

## Appendix III – Stewardship Programs Inventoried

Organizations Contacted to Participate		Contacted	Interviewed
1	Alderville First Nation	✓	
2	Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society	✓	✓
3	Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation	✓	
4	Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation	✓	✓
5	Carcross/Tagish First Nation	✓	✓
6	Cree Nation Government	✓	
7	Cree Nation of Wemindji	✓	
8	Daylu Dene Council, Kaska Dene	✓	✓
9	Dehcho First Nations	✓	
10	Dena Kayeh Institute	✓	✓
11	Environment Yukon, Fish and Wildlife Branch	✓	✓
12	Friends of the Nemaiah Valley	✓	✓
13	Gwa'sala- 'Nakwaxda'xw Nations	✓	✓
14	Heiltsuk Nation, Integrated Resource Management Department	✓	
15	Innu Nation	✓	✓
16	Inuit Qaujisarvingat Knowledge Centre	✓	
17	Inuvialuit Regional Corporation	✓	
18	Kitasoo/Xai'Xais Nation	✓	✓
19	Listuguj Mi'gmaq Government	✓	
20	Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation	✓	
21	Metlakatla Stewardship Society	✓	✓
22	Miawpukek First Nation	✓	✓
23	Misipawistik Cree Nation	✓	
24	Musqueam First Nation	✓	
25	Nisga'a Nation	✓	
26	Nunatsiavut Government	✓	✓
27	Nunavut Wildlife Monitoring Board	✓	✓
28	Nuxalk Nation	✓	✓
29	Office of the Wet'suwet'en	✓	
30	Okanagan Nation Alliance	✓	✓
31	Poplar River First Nation	✓	✓
32	QQS Projects Society, Coastwatch Program	✓	✓
33	Splitrock Environmental (Sekw'el'was)	✓	
34	Ta'an Kwäch'än Council	✓	
35	Taku River Tlingit First Nation	✓	✓
36	Teslin Tlingit Council	✓	
37	Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations	✓	
38	Trondek Hwech'in	✓	✓
39	Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources	✓	✓
40	Vancouver Aquarium, Ikaarvik Barriers to Bridges Program	✓	
41	Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation	✓	✓
42	Xeni Gwet'in First Nations	✓	

## Appendix IV – Other Stewardship Contacts

In an effort to broaden our list of organizations to include in a later phase of this inventory project, participants were asked if they were aware of any other indigenous communities or organizations engaged in on-the-ground stewardship work. In addition to those organizations on our original list (see Appendix III), the following organizations were suggested:

1. Champagne and Aishihik First Nations
2. Clyde River (Dr. Shari Gearheard)
3. Eskasoni Mi'Kmaq Nation
4. Gwich'in Renewable Resources Board
5. Haida Nation
6. Kluane First Nation
7. Ktunaxa Nation Council
8. Kwadacha Nation
9. Mi'kmaq Conservation Group
10. Na-Cho Nyäk Dun
11. `Namgis First Nation
12. Nicola Tribal Association
13. Nunavik Government
14. Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation
15. Sahtu Dene Council
16. Skeena Fisheries Commission
17. St'át'imc Nation
18. Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
19. Teslin Tlingit Council
20. Wuikinuxv Nation

## **Appendix V – On-the-Ground Indigenous Stewardship Program Inventory Project: Organizational Profiles**

# **On-the-Ground Indigenous Stewardship Program Inventory Project: Organizational Profiles**

TNC Canada  
February 2015

## **Organizations Profiled**

**Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society**  
**Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation**  
**Carcross/Tagish First Nation**  
**Daylu Dena Council, Kaska Dene**  
**Dena Kayeh Institute**  
**Environment Yukon, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Northern Tutchone Region**  
**Friends of Nemaiah Valley**  
**Gwa'sala 'Nakwaxda'xw Nation**  
**Innu Nation**  
**Kitasoo Xai'Xais Nation**  
**Metlakatla First Nation**  
**Miawpukek First Nation**  
**Nunatsiavut Government**  
**Nunavut Wildlife Monitoring Board**  
**Nuxalk Nation**  
**Okanagan Nation Alliance**  
**Poplar River First Nation**  
**Qqs Projects Society**  
**Taku River Tlingit First Nation**  
**Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in**  
**Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources**  
**Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation**

## Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society

Whitehorse, Yukon  
(867) 667 3939

[www.arcticborderlands.org](http://www.arcticborderlands.org)



[www.arcticborderlands.org](http://www.arcticborderlands.org)

## Highlights of the Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society (ABEKS) is a collaborative partnership between the villages of Kaktovik, Old Crow, Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic, Inuvik, Tuktoyaktuk, and Arctic Village together with Environment Canada and other partners in the US and Canada.
- ABEKS was created to monitor and assess ecosystem changes in the range of the Porcupine Caribou Herd and adjacent coastal and marine areas in the Mackenzie Delta.
- The program was first envisioned and piloted in 1994 and became formalized in 1996.
- The program has demonstrated how community based data can be used to inform decision-making and assess the status and trends of wildlife and environmental conditions.
- Almost 20 years of observation data has since been collected with approximately 65 indicators developed to monitor ecosystem change over this period.

### Focus

- The program brings together science with local and traditional knowledge and focuses on three areas of overriding concern: climate change, contaminants, and regional development in the range of the Porcupine Caribou Herd.
- The ABEKS works with 10 partner communities to recruit community monitors and land users to collect and input annual observation data. These partner communities lead the on-the-ground work – interviewing land users, recording observations, and entering the data.
- The survey that the community monitors work through with land users is wide ranging. It focuses on caribou observations but also on land use change, weather events, berries, birds, other mammals, fish, and marine life.

# Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Society

- ABEKS staff train and support the community monitors, engage community partners in reviewing and discussing the data, build partnerships with other external organizations and manage the overall program.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- ABEKS is a non-profit society and registered charity, governed by a Board of Directors that meet monthly. Board members are recruited from the communities participating in the program, from regional resource management councils and boards, and from government agencies.

### Staff Capacity

- Staff consists of one half-time program administrator with in-kind project support from Environment Canada.
- Seasonally, 10 community monitors are hired for a 10-16 week season to conduct interviews with land users. Approximately 20 land users in each participating community are recruited into the program to share their field observations from the past year.

### Networks and Partnerships

- ABEKS partners with Gwich'in/Gwitch'in and Inuvialuit organizations, territorial and federal agencies in Canada and the USA, and with scientists and community residents.

### Funding

- Annual funding partnerships are built around the program each year through proposals to government agencies (i.e. US Fish and Wildlife, Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, Aboriginal Affairs (AANDC), Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Environment Canada, Government of the Northwest Territories, etc.)
- The budget for the program has been reduced significantly in the past five years from previous years when multi-year core funding was made available from Environment Canada. Another major funder, AANDC, continues to support the program but policy changes mean that funding may not be available for this program going forward.
- While the program can operate effectively on a leaner budget, ABEKS would like to secure more funding to enable annual monitoring activities as well as secondary data analysis.
- ABEKS has worked with foundations such as the Wilburforce Foundation and the Gordon Foundation to support youth engagement and would like to continue to build up this program element.

**“Build the dream first. Then go looking for funding.”**



## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Monitoring results showed that numbers of the Porcupine Caribou Herd were increasing. This was at odds with herds elsewhere which were showing population declines. As a result, there was noticeable resistance to the project results, and questions were raised about data quality. This encouraged the project team to rigorously test and review our data collection methods. Today results are well received and have become part of the annual reporting cycle for several government agencies that influence management decisions. Other organizations are engaging with ABEKS to learn about methods and in some cases, to use data as a proxy to compare what may be happening elsewhere.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- The commitment and leadership of the board of directors and community partnerships are essential to the success of this program. New organizations are challenged to come in and conduct similar interviews with the same success rate that the communities have achieved.
- Accountability to funders and to the community has been critical to our success. It has forced the project to articulate and explain what the benefits of the program are and to focus our efforts on what is most valuable.

### Challenges:

- In recent years, securing funding for the program has become difficult. It is time consuming to gather budgets together each year. When faced with the prospect of letting the program end, organizations echo ABEKS merits. However that does not necessarily mean funding is forthcoming.
- The Porcupine Caribou Herd lives in a large territory, encompassing many people and communities. This requires ABEKS to maintain many relationships, to find leadership in many places, and to recruit and retain people in support of the project. Naturally, there are issues of turnover, change, and capacity, which challenge the project over time.
- Funding is often tied to very specific activities or outcomes or is hard to attract for some basic components of the program. The program can only work if all components of it are well funded.

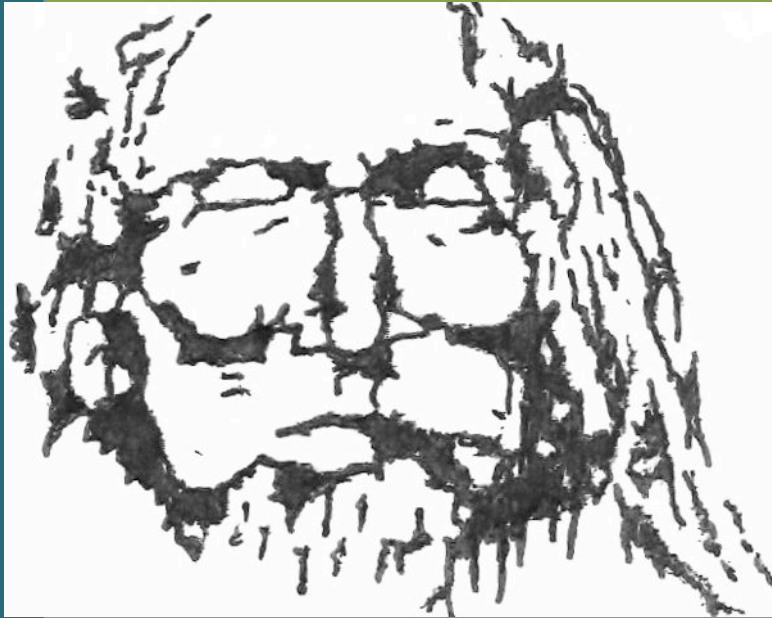
## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- To broaden ABEKS' understanding and analysis of the important issues (i.e. climate change) that affect what is happening at the local level and local geography. We need to look beyond the scope of the project to help explain what is going on.
- To engage in more focused and detailed data analysis, specific to certain areas and indicators.
- To invest in a broader communications approach to share information about the project and its findings.

**“Governments have tended to focus on harvest management. That is a drop in the bucket compared to other influencers on herds.”**

## Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation

Duck Lake, Saskatchewan  
(306) 467-4523  
[www.bofn9697.com](http://www.bofn9697.com)



## Highlights of Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation falls under Treaty 6, and has 50,000 acres of land under its authority.
- Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation (BOFN) initiated its stewardship work with a strong focus on building GIS and mapping capacity and documenting community history and land use.

### Focus

- BOFN has continued to invest in its GIS capacity and grown its stewardship work to focus on a comprehensive Source Water Protection Plan and a Junior Resource Ranger Program.
- The Junior Resource Ranger Program is a six-week summer employment program for 10 community youth to gain a range of stewardship skills.
- BOFN has also initiated an invasive plant management program, a caribou-monitoring program and helped develop a climate change adaptation and resilience guidebook.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- Stewardship work is managed under the BOFN Lands Department.

### Staff Capacity

- BOFN Lands Department has a staff of three, including the Lands Manager, a Lands Clerk and a Technician.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Prince Albert Model Forest/Canadian Model Forest Network
- Island Forest Network

## Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation

- Multiple university collaborations: University of Manitoba, Guelph, Saskatchewan, as well as other universities including one in Sweden.
- Prince Albert Grand Council and Saskatchewan Aboriginal Land Managers.

### Funding

- Core funding is provided by BOFN revenues. Severe floods in recent years has diverted much of this core funding to flood control and flood management measures.
- Secondary funding comes from a mix of funders, including federal and provincial programs, university partnerships, and foundations.
- Funding partners have included: Canadian Forest Service, Source Water Protection Program, Human Resources Canada, Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement, Saskatchewan Forestry Association, University of Saskatchewan, and McConnell Foundation among others.
- Would like to support a staff member to complete the Indigenous Resource Management Program. This will enable us to access funding from AANDC's Reserve Lands and Environmental Management Program.
- In general, BOFN would like to increase its fund-raising capacity for stewardship work.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Our strong focus on building our GIS capacity and mapping analysis, especially on water source issues, has brought us considerable recognition from other First Nations, the Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, and other municipalities. We now have some of the best data and information available on watershed management in this area.
- We have trained over 100 students as resource rangers in the past seven years. The majority of graduates of the program have gone on to obtain further education or to obtain employment.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Ability to undertake mapping analysis and develop good data has been key.

### Challenges:

- Securing adequate funding for stewardship and related research work.
- Dealing with increased annual flooding which continues to require our full attention.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Building community awareness and capacity to implement programs.
- Focus on land restoration initiatives.
- Developing a strategic approach to addressing issues and developing supportive policy and land regulations.

**"We are at the forefront of watershed planning. We've acquired more data and information than anyone else."**

## Carcross Tagish First Nation

Carcross, Yukon  
(867) 821-4251  
[www.ctfn.ca](http://www.ctfn.ca)



[www.ctfn.ca](http://www.ctfn.ca)

## Highlights of Carcross Tagish First Nation Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Carcross Tagish First Nation (CTFN) initiated a planning process in the early 1990s in response to the declining caribou population in the Southern Lakes region. At the same time, monitors were put in place to prevent hunting.
- The Heritage, Lands and Natural Resources Department (HLNRD) has since evolved into the CTFN department responsible for monitoring, protecting, and responsibly managing all CTFN lands. Monitors continue to patrol the territory and manage activities on settlement land and in the traditional territory.
- As the population in Whitehorse and the surrounding region has grown, pressure has increased on CTFN traditional lands, in particular from increased roads, back country trails, commercial tourism, recreation activity, development applications, mining and hunting.

### Focus

- CTFN monitors conduct patrols utilizing the road networks throughout the territory as well as travel by skidoo and ATV to reach less accessible areas. Both settlement lands and territorial lands are monitored daily.
- Monitoring activity may relate to specific development applications under review by CTFN or may be focused on specific issues such as mountain biking or illegal firewood harvesting.
- Much of the work of CTFN monitors focuses on community outreach, education, and information sharing.
- Monitors are also involved in culture camps and community food harvesting and distribution.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- CTFN monitors fall under the Natural Resources and Heritage Department (NRHD). NRHD works with a Land Management Board made up of 6 people representing each of the CTFN clans. The board is regularly consulted and provides direction to NRHD and the monitoring program.

### Staff Capacity

- CTFN's monitoring program has two full-time and two part-time monitors. The part-time monitors are community elders with strong land-based knowledge and expertise.
- A field operations coordinator and a GIS technician also support the program.

### Networks and Partnerships

- CTFN participates in the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council.
- CTFN has initiated contact with Taku River Tlingit and other neighbouring nations to coordinate monitoring work.

### Funding

- Monitoring work is primarily funded by CTFN budgets.
- Additional program funds are applied for annually from other government and non-government programs such as: Yukon Fish and Wildlife Habitat Trust Fund, Climate Change Secretariat, Eco-Action, Vancouver Foundation, Salamander Foundation, etc.
- Funding levels are sufficient to support current environmental monitoring priorities, however, more funding is needed to expand scientific monitoring (i.e. water level monitoring, weather stations, baseline studies, mine site monitoring, climate change monitoring, etc.)

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Our monitoring program was born out of the Southern Lakes Caribou Recovery Management Program. That herd is doing better now; our monitors are responsible, in part.
- There is strong community support for our monitoring program and trust in the work our monitors do. Monitoring information is being utilized for planning and decision-making.
- The monitors are out in the territory and people know it. People know they need to ask permission to hunt. The monitors are finding trails and evidence of activity on CTFN lands which, without them, we may not know about.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Strong governance structures and associated work planning processes ensure the work of our monitoring program is well supported and reflects community priorities.

### Challenges:

- Our internal capacity to manage land planning and development demands is stretched.

**“There is a high level of respect for the monitors.  
People are proud to share information with them.”**

## Carcross Tagish First Nation

- Lack of legislation and policy for the management of CTFN settlement lands. While the Land Implementation Act will deliver this legal framework when it eventually comes into force, in the meantime we are without enforceable laws for settlement lands.

### Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Finalizing our Land Implementation Act.
- Prioritize traditional knowledge information gathering.
- More focus on science and monitoring.
- Improve data management system to maximize use and analysis of collected monitoring data.

**“The monitors are our eyes and ears. Without them, we wouldn’t know what’s happening on settlement lands. ”**

## Daylu Dena Council, Kaska Dena

Lower Post, British Columbia  
(250) 779-3181  
[www.kaskadenacouncil.com](http://www.kaskadenacouncil.com)



[www.kaskadenacouncil.com](http://www.kaskadenacouncil.com)

## Highlights of Daylu Dena Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Daylu Dena Council (DDC) is one of the three Nations of the Kaska Dena Council (KDC), a society formed in 1981 to advance the interests of Kaska Dena people in British Columbia. Kaska Dena territory spans land in northern British Columbia, the southeast Yukon, and the southwest Northwest Territories. KDC is in Stage 4 negotiations (negotiation of an Agreement in Principle) in the BC Treaty Process.
- In March 2012, the province of British Columbia signed a 3-year Strategic Engagement Agreement (SEA) with the Kaska Dena to engage more effectively in resource development application reviews and resource management decisions. This agreement has helped to fund a SEA community coordinator for the DDC.
- DDC works collaboratively with the Dena Kayeh Institute to gather and map traditional knowledge and land use information, negotiate protocols with development proponents, and to undertake land use planning.

### Focus

- The primary focus of the DDC has been on developing a Land Use Plan. This was recently completed in 2014.
- As placer mining and oil and gas development push into Daylu Dena territory, the Daylu Dena have initiated water quality testing to obtain baseline data.
- Focusing on areas of proposed new development, DDC gathers new TUS data and reconfirms older TUS data collected in the 1980's and 1990's.
- The DDC have not yet initiated wildlife monitoring, but would like to do so especially for moose, which are facing over-hunting pressure and trophy-kills by resident and/or non-resident hunters.



## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- DDC works closely with the Dena Kayeh Institute to support land planning, research, mapping and fieldwork. This relationship gives the DDC access to GIS support and technical field support.
- As needed, DDC relies on consultants in forestry and other disciplines through the Dena Kayeh Institute and the KDC.

### Staff Capacity

- The only staff capacity is the Strategic Engagement Agreement Community Coordinator. At present, this is a position funded for 3-years terminating in March 2015.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Focus of partnerships is with the Kaska Dena Council communities. Some common initiatives are developing with neighboring First Nations including the Taku River Tlingit and Tahltan.
- DDC also works with the provincial government through the Strategic Engagement Agreement on conducting moose surveys. Various other working groups are formed as needed to deal with such things as new mines in the traditional territory. For instance, a workshop will be taking place in Kaska communities focusing on placer mining best practices.

### Funding

- Funding primarily from negotiated 3-year agreement with the Province.
- In past years, the BC Capacity Initiative has funded the program.
- Regularly, funding applications are submitted to AANDC for various initiatives (i.e. environmental management plan for Lower Post).
- Budget is very basic to support a single position. The Dena Kayeh Institute provides additional in-kind support for fieldwork, GIS/mapping, research, etc.
- Additional funding needed to support fieldwork, data management and storage, travel within and outside the territory, and training.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Our focus on conservation and land use planning has seen us involved in developing our own Land Use Plan and planning for Muskwa Kechika Management Area, the Dease-Liard Sustainable Land Use Plan and the Ne'ah'/Horseranch Conservancy and Special Management Areas.
- Water quality sampling to monitor impacts of proposed mining and oil and gas development.

**“We have questions about hydraulic fracturing. No one else is out there getting the data. We need to get this ourselves.”**



## Daylu Dena Council, Kaska Dena

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Strong direction from the community.
- Working closely with the Dena Kayeh Institute.
- We've learned from what we see happening with Fort Nelson's heavy oil and gas industry. We need to get out there and do the studies to understand the impacts of hydraulic fracturing and other practices.

### Challenges:

- Lack of economic development in our communities.
- Adequate funding and human resource capacity (especially technical expertise) to support stewardship work.
- Lack of knowledge and information about certain practices such as hydraulic fracturing.

### Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Continue to build and verify our cultural use database.
- Secure resources to get out into the territory and collect data to inform management decisions.
- Focus our efforts on building knowledge and information in areas being targeted for industrial development.
- Develop database and information management systems.
- Learn from other communities that have been affected by development.

**"There is such a push for oil and gas from BC and Canada.  
We don't know if our voice matters anymore."**

## Dena Kayeh Institute

Lower Post, British Columbia  
250-779-3181  
denakayeh@gmail.com



[www.kaskadenacouncil.com](http://www.kaskadenacouncil.com)

## Highlights of Dena Kayeh Institute Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Dena Kayeh Institute (DKI) was created by the Kaska Nation in 2004 to enhance capacity, protect Dena culture, and advocate for conservation.
- As a non-profit charitable organization with a focus on knowledge and capacity, DKI became the natural home for the Dechenla Environmental and Cultural Studies Program, which was launched in 2007.

### Focus

- The Dechenla Environmental and Cultural Studies Program is a three to six-week program that trains Dena youth in the areas of environmental management and monitoring, Dena culture and bush skills. The program was recently authorized by the Yukon Department of Education as a Grade 11 course.
- The program is evolving to build in more technical and certifiable skills that will enable program graduates to obtain work as environmental monitors, game guardians and land managers.
- It is also the goal of the program to help build the capacity of participating individuals to engage in land planning and management processes within their communities and with the Kaska Nation.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- DKI is a non-profit charitable organization with a Board of Directors largely drawn from the five Kaska Dena communities.
- The Dechenla Environmental and Cultural Studies Program is hosted at the remote Dechenla Lodge and Wilderness Resort, a joint venture of the Kaska Nation together with Norman and Barbara Barichello.

### Staff Capacity

- DKI has a full-time Executive Director and relies largely on contracted support for program delivery, research, and support.
- The Dechenla Environmental and Cultural Studies Program is delivered utilizing short-term contracts with instructors and elders and with the lodge for facility use and transport.
- The program has also relied heavily on the ongoing involvement and support of DKI board members.

### Networks and Partnerships

- DKI is working to build connections to strengthen the Dechenla Program and link it to other training initiatives such as the Boreal Leadership Initiative's emerging Boreal Ranger Program and programs at the Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning.
- DKI is also exploring other partnerships with academic institutions like Yukon College, Aurora College, and UNBC, with industry partners, and with northern communities and organizations trying to build local stewardship capacity (i.e. Sahtu Renewable Resource Board).

### Funding

- Funding for the Dechenla Program has varied from one year to the next.
- Program funds have been raised from industry, government (i.e. Yukon Community Development Fund, Federal Northern Strategy Funding), and from environmental and charitable organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Full Circle Foundation, and the Canadian Boreal Initiative.
- With half a dozen mining companies at advanced stages of exploration in Kaska Dena territory, it is expected that DKI will work more with industry partners to train environmental monitors and game guardians linked to their operations in the near future.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Getting the Dechenla Program's curriculum approved by the Yukon Department of Education was difficult but it has given the program credibility and opened up new opportunities to reach youth.
- The Dechenla Program is helping community members get involved in land planning, build credentials to find work as environmental monitors, and find positive mentors.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Federal government support through the Northern Strategy Program and Environment Canada.
- Program development support from Yukon Department of Education and Yukon College.

### Challenges:

- Biggest challenge for DKI has been funding. Every year, DKI is looking for new or renewed funding. The organization is small and this restricts what it can do: "If these projects are funded they have a chance of going somewhere."
- The bigger picture behind the program may not be the priority of potential funders. The Dechenla Program offers a suite of hard and soft outcomes that can help to address issues such as high secondary school drop out rates, drug and alcohol abuse, unemployment and loss of cultural knowledge.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- The program has been successful so far, but needs to move beyond a culture and bush skills camp approach to become a more structured and accredited program that supports graduates to gain employment as land managers, game guardians, and environmental monitors.
- To build our technical tools to record field observations and map traditional knowledge.
- To continue building partnerships to fund and develop an accredited training program to serve communities across the north.

**"The stewardship program is helping the community to get involved in land planning, find work close to home, and build positive mentors."**

## Environment Yukon, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Northern Tutchone Region

Mayo, Yukon  
(867) 996-2162  
[www.env.gov.yk.ca](http://www.env.gov.yk.ca)



[www.env.gov.yk.ca](http://www.env.gov.yk.ca)

## Highlights of Mayo Monitoring Activity

### Background

- Environment Yukon, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Northern Tutchone Region (based in Mayo), is involved with two community stewardship projects: the Mayo Community Ecological Monitoring Project (CEMP) and the Community Moose Monitoring Project (CMMP). These projects have been developed with the First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun and focus on local knowledge and information gathering.

### Focus

- The CEMP project, involves long term environmental monitoring using technical equipment paired with annual interviews with community and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun land users. These results are published in an annual report and community diary. Local land users are interviewed by students and their observations are recorded on a wide range of observations from weather to ice conditions, plants, animals and human activities. Ten years of local observations and scientific data have now been recorded. This information is used to understand environmental changes and to make management decisions.
- The CCMP is a moose monitoring project initiated 14 years ago. Working with the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation and the local co-management body, the project gathers detailed information about moose based on the field observations of local hunters. This information is paired with aerial surveys (typically done every 5 years) and informs moose wildlife management and harvest decisions.

**“Both projects have been successful at engaging local people, gathering local knowledge, and feeding this information into how we understand and do things.”**

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The CEMP and CMMP are projects of the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Branch and are integrated into the management and operational decisions of the Department of Environment. The information gathered is reported on as part of a State of the Environment reporting.

### Staff Capacity

- Approximately 20 local hunters and community members are recruited to provide information every year. Two students are hired in February and March to interview and record their field observations. Yukon Fish and Wildlife's Regional Biologist based in Mayo oversees the program with support from a wildlife technician.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Findings are publically reported and formally presented and shared in the community and with the of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun government. The CMMP project is looking to expand to two more communities.

### Funding

- The CEMP and CMMP programs are delivered on very modest budgets, and funded by Yukon Fish and Wildlife, Northern Tutchone Region. Primary costs are community honoraria and student salaries to conduct the interviews.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- We have built a strong working relationship with First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun. Both projects have been very successful at engaging local people, gathering local knowledge, and feeding this information into how Environment Yukon makes management decisions.
- As we collect more years of data, they become increasingly valuable in terms of informing policy and understanding how the environment and moose populations are being affected.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Land Claims Settlement in the mid-1990s provided increased management authority to First Nations and local co-management and renewable resource bodies. At that time, the Regional Biologist positions were also created within Yukon Fish and Wildlife, Environment Yukon.
- Support for the CEMP project has also come from federal Northern Ecosystems Initiative, enabling us to establish long-term monitoring sites.
- Experience of other organizations in how to effectively engage with First Nation communities and gather local knowledge (i.e. Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Co-op).

### Challenges:

- We are often training new students every year to conduct the interviews, as students tend to move on.
- Expanding the programs to communities we are not physically located in has proved to be difficult.
- Securing basic funding each year to sustain the programs. Both are run on very minimal budgets.

### Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- To expand both programs to two more Northern Tutchone communities and securing the funding to enable that.



## Friends of Nemaiah Valley

Victoria, British Columbia  
(250) 592-1088  
[www.fonv.ca](http://www.fonv.ca)



[www.fonv.ca](http://www.fonv.ca)

## Highlights of Friends of Nemaiah Valley Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Friends of Nemaiah Valley (FONV), a non-profit environmental organization, funded a Wild Horse Ranger Program from 2002-2012 working with the Xeni Gwet'in First Nations (XGFN) rangers<sup>1</sup>.
- The program emerged out of wildlife inventory work in the Brittney Triangle area conducted by FONV from 2000-2002 and the declaration of a one million hectare Wild Horse Reserve by XGFN in 2002.
- FONV provided funding and oversight for the program for ten years, ending in 2012.

### Focus

- Patrols of the Wild Horse Reserve area by horse, ATV, and truck.
- This program expanded the geographic area that patrols were being conducted by Xeni Gewet'in rangers in partnership with BC Parks (beyond the Ts'il?os and Nunsti Park boundaries) and the length of the patrol season into the spring and fall.
- Monitoring focused on hunting and harvesting activity in the area, recording wildlife sightings, protecting remote cabins, watching for fires, developing and maintaining trails, and outreach and education with area visitors.

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<sup>1</sup> We were unable to connect with Xeni Gwet'in First Nation for more information.



## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- FONV provided oversight and funding for the program.

### Staff Capacity

- The Wild Horse Ranger Program had one seasonal staff person who worked from April to November.
- Key competencies for the position: good horsemanship, wilderness experience, diplomatic, observant, and a strong communicator and record taker.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Although BC Parks did not support the Horse Range Program, XGFN and BC Parks do have a joint management agreement which provides for rangers within Ts'il?os and Nunsti Parks.

### Funding

- FONV funded the program through contributions from private donors, the Vancouver Foundation, and gaming grants and other fundraisers.
- In-kind and equipment contributions came from XGFN.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Ten years of a consistent presence and management authority by Xeni Gwet'in rangers on the land.
- Increased awareness and support for the Wild Horse Reserve.
- Strong community and broader political support for the program and protection of the Wild Horse Reserve.

### Challenges:

- Operating a program like this on a "shoestring" budget.
- The program needed a strategy to transition into self-sufficiency.
- Insufficient project management capacity in the community and the difficulty for FONV to do this project management work from afar.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- FONV is no longer funding the Wild Horse Ranger Program but continues to work in close collaboration and in support of the Tsilhqot'in communities of Xeni Gwet'in and Yunesit'in on the development of the Dasiqox Tribal Park, a 320,000 hectare protected area proclaimed by them and the Tsilhqot'in National Government on August 4th, 2014. Dasiqox management principles are based on indigenous governance, law, and land rights, supported by sound science.

**"There was a strong sense of pride associated with the program that related to having people on the land, asserting sovereignty, and revitalizing culture. "**

## Gwa'sala- 'Nakwaxda'xw Nations

Port Hardy, British Columbia  
(250) 902-0550  
[www.gwanak.info](http://www.gwanak.info)



[www.gwanak.info](http://www.gwanak.info)

## Highlights of Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations first piloted a guardian watchman program in 2010 after participating in the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Network's annual gathering.
- Developing a guardian watchmen program aligned well with the stewardship goals articulated by the community in the Comprehensive Community Plan.
- In the first year, the program started out as a two-month pilot. It has since expanded, with guardians patrolling and working in the territory 8 to 10 months of the year.
- The program has been able to grow rapidly, in part, by utilizing the information, protocols, templates and relationships developed through the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Network.

### Focus

- The guardian watchman program currently focuses primarily on monitoring marine and coastal areas of the Gwa'sala-Nakwaxda'xw traditional territory but with a goal to shift to a more equal emphasis on terrestrial monitoring in the future.
- Work varies year to year and through the seasons, but generally detailed float plans are developed to monitor commercial forest, fishery, tourism and recreational activity in the territory. There are also efforts to monitor wildlife, tsunami debris, deactivated logging roads, creek habitat and culverts.
- Recently, a bear DNA sampling study was initiated. Developing a monitoring program for the food fishery is next on the horizon.
- Youth and elders are invited to accompany watchmen on pre-planned outings to ensure that local knowledge, generational knowledge transfer, and increased community awareness is built into the program.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The guardian watchman program is organized and delivered through the Natural Resources Department under the Gwa'sala-Nakwaxda'xw Band Administration.

### Staff Capacity

- A full-time Program Manager, two Guardian Watchmen and two Vessel Operators, both on 8-10 month contracts, staff the program. During the summer, two summer students are hired on short contracts as Junior Watchmen. The Junior Watchmen summer program has been a very successful training and mentoring program serving to build a strong program.
- There has been a strong emphasis on formal training and certification to ensure staff has the required competencies and knowledge.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Informally, we are part of the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Network (CGWN). The annual CGWN meeting at the Hakai Beach Institute is amazing: "we sit down in a room, politics go out the window, and everyone is there for the same reason."

### Funding

- Every year an annual plan and budget is developed for the program. Key expense categories are salaries, boat operations and equipment maintenance, training, and project work.
- Currently, the program is primarily funded through the Coast Opportunities Funds with some additional revenue raised through small grants and contract services (i.e. freight runs).
- A more diversified and long-term funding strategy has been identified as a need going forward.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Accountability and transparency of the program.
- Community engagement through presentations, newsletter, outreach and field trips.
- Positive interactions and relationships carefully built and established with commercial and recreational users in our territory and with law enforcement agencies.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Clear community mandate through our CCP to embark on this type of stewardship program.
- Direct support from the CGWN.
- Strong relationships developed with other communities and people engaged in the CGWN.

# Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations

## Challenges:

- Securing adequate funding to carry out the full extent of stewardship activities we'd like to be taking on in the marine and terrestrial areas of our territory.
- Governments are downloading and delegating responsibilities to First Nations without the corresponding funding to do this work.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Funding to enable us to fully engage in collaborative management agreements for parks and conservancies in the territory.
- Continuing bear research and stopping the trophy hunt.
- Increased monitoring and stewardship of forest resources in the territory.

**“Our community had spoken loudly that this type of program was needed and wanted.”**

## Innu Nation

Sheshatshiu and Natuashish,  
Labrador, NL  
(709) 899-3170  
[www.innu.ca](http://www.innu.ca)



[www.innuplaces.ca](http://www.innuplaces.ca)

## Highlights of Innu Nation Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Innu Nation formally represents the Innu of Labrador, most of who live in the communities of Sheshatshiu and Natuashish. The Innu Nation is involved in on-going land claim and self-governance negotiations with the Federal and Provincial governments, as well as the social and economic development of the Innu community. The Innu of Labrador were formally recognized under the Indian Act of Canada in 2006.

### Focus

- Land referrals, land planning, and development evaluations are all supported by technical and fieldwork as needed in archaeology, ecosystem and habitat assessments, wildlife monitoring, etc.
- For the past 5 years, the Innu Nation has run an intensive woodland caribou monitoring program, informing community hunts as well as wildlife and land management approaches.
- The Innu Nation also has a Fisheries Guardian program that monitors both commercial and community fisheries.
- With several major mines and hydroelectric projects on Innu Labrador lands, the Innu Nation is involved in compliance and impact monitoring of several major development projects.
- Community consultation is an important component of Innu stewardship, linking country-based knowledge to scientific knowledge.

**“Fieldwork changes our stewardship approach. It runs alongside Innu policy.”**

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The Environment Office of the Innu Nation oversees wildlife, fisheries, forestry and industrial development.

### Staff Capacity

- The Innu Nation Environment Office is led by a staff of six, including a Director, Forest Planner, Environmental Analyst, Manager of Operational Programs, GIS coordinator, and Hydro Commissioner.
- Another 12 staff work as guardians or in the field, including 4 fisheries/caribou guardians, 2 forestry guardians, 4 mining/hydro guardians, and 2 field researchers.
- 2 staff work as cultural and heritage workers.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Labrador Inuit Association.
- Monitoring agreements with Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
- Strong working protocols with Department of National Defence re: wildlife management and with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador on a range of issues.

### Funding

- Program revenue is primarily sourced from the Innu Trust Fund as well as from various federal programs and from monitoring contracts and impact benefit agreements with the private sector.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Engagement with the community, consultation with the elders, responsiveness to community priorities, leadership by example.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Supportive federal legislation.
- Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk has been an important source of program revenue.
- Private sector support through negotiated impact benefit agreements.
- Educational institutions that work with us and within our research protocols.

### Challenges:

- The provincial government can be difficult to work with. It seems the federal government is more receptive to working with the Innu Nation on land management and stewardship.
- At times, community leadership and political will present challenges.

**“Funding is not the only answer. The answer lies in connecting our guardians with what the people want in a clear way.”**

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- As our land claim moves forward, we will need to focus more on governance.
- Big issues we need to focus on include: climate change, wildlife monitoring especially for caribou, uranium mining, and hydroelectric and mining development impacts.
- Renewal of forestry co-management agreement with the Province.
- Develop a better understanding of the value of our resources from country foods to forests, clean water, housing, plants and ecosystem health. By valuing our resources, we will know what to protect and what to monitor.

**“We need to place value on the resources. You don’t pollute where you eat.  
You don’t give away what you know you’ve got.”**



## Kitasoo Xai'Xais Nation

Klemtu, British Columbia  
(250) 839-1255



[coastalguardianwatchmen.ca](http://coastalguardianwatchmen.ca)

## Highlights of Kitasoo Xai'Xais Nation Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Kitasoo Xai'Xais Nation has been actively involved in resource stewardship activity for 20 years, but this work has intensified since 2011 with the creation of an integrated Stewardship Department.
- Support for community-led stewardship initiatives has grown alongside community frustration with coastal forestry and fisheries management practices, which claim to be science-based, but which have seen these ecosystems and local economies collapse.
- There is a growing desire in Klemtu to integrate a science-based resource management approach with traditional ecological knowledge.

### Focus

- The Stewardship Department has focused its efforts on community engagement and building trust, marine and land use planning, strategic joint initiatives with neighbouring First Nations, youth stewardship training and leadership development, research, and the development of a guardian watchmen program.
- Research and monitoring efforts have focused on bears, crab, and rockfish. Salmon research will begin in the near future.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- In 2011, a Stewardship Department was created to integrate and align the various resource boards, committees, departments and programs that had previously functioned largely independently of one another.



## Kitasoo Xai'Xais Nation

- The Stewardship Department is managed by a Resource Stewardship Board made up of a diverse cross-section of the community including representatives from Treaty, Elected Council, Hereditary Chiefs, youth, Economic Development, Co-Management, Tourism, and Forestry.

### Staff Capacity

- The Stewardship Department is currently made up of nine staff positions including a Director, a GIS technician, a youth stewardship program coordinator, a bear science coordinator, 4 guardian watchmen, and a consultant to support programs.
- Because Klemtu has an almost 100% employment rate, it can be difficult to recruit people from the community. The Department relies on importing people from outside the community and utilizing contractors. However, this is difficult too as housing availability and office space is limited in the village.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Kitasoo Xai'Xais participate in several stewardship networks and partnerships including: the Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance (CCIRA); Great Bear Initiative Coastal Stewardship Director's Network; Marine Planning partnerships; and the Central Coast First Nations Bear Working Group.

### Funding

- The Stewardship Department has a diverse funding base, with interim core funding provided by the Coast Opportunities Fund.
- Program funding comes from a mix of community fundraising efforts, NGO and Foundation partnerships with organizations such as TNC and Tides Canada, university research and education partnerships, and in-kind contributions from Kitasoo Xai'Xais Band Council.
- More funding generally, and less restricted funding in particular, is needed to build out Kitasoo Xai'Xais' stewardship programs. There is a need for base funding for core positions and to support other efforts such as legal challenges.
- Reliance on the Coast Opportunities Fund is not sustainable over the long term.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Building youth engagement and participation in community and territory planning and issues through the Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards (SEAS) community initiative has been very successful.
- Establishing more open communication with the community, holding regular meetings, bringing more information to our members on a regular basis, and building dialogue around resource decisions.
- Rebuilding the community's trust in scientific work by developing community-led research approaches.

**"The community's trust of science was low in the past.  
Now, the community is getting involved in the scientific work."**

## Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Working closely with the community to engage people, build trust, and overcome barriers.
- Input from our elders and youth. Hearing these voices and perspectives has helped people in the community to open people up and to assume a stronger stewardship role.
- Funding to support our initiatives has been critical to our success. More funding is needed, but we've been able to get good work done.
- Being able to demonstrate that there are sustainable economic options available to the community such as in ecotourism and wildlife viewing.

## Challenges:

- Generally, a lack of funding has made it difficult to implement the full range of stewardship activities we'd like to be undertaking.
- High employment in the community has made recruitment challenging.
- Obtaining needed capacity and technical skills locally has also limited the growth of the programs.
- Availability of accommodation and office space in the community of Klemtu limits our capacity to develop and grow.
- We need to develop stronger coordination with neighbouring nations on land use planning and conservation management planning much like we've done for marine use planning.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- We want to continue to focus on youth engagement, stewardship capacity building, and leadership development.
- We also want to focus on engaging our elders and documenting their territorial, cultural and language knowledge.
- We need to develop more housing in the village to retain and attract staff to work for the Nation. We also need to build a central Stewardship Office, to put all our people to work in the same physical space. They are currently spread out and overcrowded.
- In addition to building out our various programs, we will turn our attention to obtaining a forest tenure and implementing EBM management.

## Metlakatla Stewardship Society

Prince Rupert, British Columbia  
(250) 628-3201  
[www.metlakatla.ca](http://www.metlakatla.ca)



[www.metlakatla.ca](http://www.metlakatla.ca)

## Highlights of Metlakatla Stewardship Society Stewardship Activity

### Background

- In 2011, after strategic discussions about the respective role each organization played in stewardship, the Metlakatla Governing Council, Development Corporation and Treaty Office created the Metlakatla Stewardship Society with a mandate to protect the lands, waters and resources of the territory.
- Shortly after, in 2012, the Metlakatla Stewardship Office was established and a Director and other core staff were hired.
- The responsibilities of the Stewardship Office include land and marine use planning and implementation, the reconciliation protocol agreement, conservancy management, environmental assessments, referrals, fisheries, and culture and heritage preservation.

### Focus

- Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) proposals in Metlakatla Territory and the negotiations and impact assessment work associated with those, have occupied much of the effort and energy of the Stewardship Office since its start up.
- The Stewardship Office also runs a Guardian Watchmen Program to monitor commercial and recreational activity in the territory and to support marine and land use planning.
- The long-established Metlakatla Fisheries Program is engaged in baseline habitat assessments, stream surveys, monitoring food/social/ceremonial fisheries, environmental assessment work, marine use plan implementation, and policy and regulatory review.
- The Metlakatla Stewardship Office contracts directly with Khtada Environmental Services, a Metlakatla environmental services company, to undertake specialized environmental field-work.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The Metlakatla Stewardship Office was developed as a separate arms-length organization and non-profit society. Representatives from the Metlakatla Governing Council, Metlakatla Development Corporation and Metlakatla Treaty Office sit as board members.
- Directors of each Metlakatla Department (e.g. Stewardship, Development Corporation, Governing Council) also meet regularly as the Metlakatla Advisory Committee to coordinate work and exchange information. In this way, the Stewardship Program is well aligned and integrated with other program areas and strategic initiatives of the community.

### Staff Capacity

- The Stewardship Office has a full-time staff of 15, with additional capacity from consultants and contractors.
- Staff includes the Stewardship Executive Director, Fisheries Manager, Lands Manager, Environmental Assessment Coordinator, TUS Contractor, Communications Manager and supporting staff and technicians.

### Networks and Partnerships

- The Metlakatla Stewardship Office participates in the Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative and through that, the Coastal Guardians Watchmen Network and Coastal Stewardship Directors Network
- Metlakatla is also a member of the regional North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society and the lead community behind the North Coast Abalone Watch program.
- In addition Metlakatla has participated in newly structured organizations active in the Pacific NorthWest Coast: the Skeena Area Marine Research Collaboration, the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Prince Rupert Port Authority-Environmental Stewardship Committee.
- Metlakatla has been involved with two regional marine planning initiatives: Pacific North Coast Integrated Management Area (PNCIMA) and Marine Planning Partnership for the North Pacific Coast (MaPP). Preliminary discussions have also begun with Oceans Network Canada to develop a regional data sharing initiative.

### Funding

- Core funding for the Stewardship Program currently comes from consultation agreements signed with LNG (liquid natural gas) proponents. The remainder is funded by a mix of grants, fee for service work, and revenue from Coast Opportunity Funds and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
- LNG (impact-benefit agreements/development corporation), monitoring agreements and carbon credit revenues are expected to provide additional funding in the future.
- Additional resources are still needed to fund on-the-ground stewardship and monitoring activities (beyond administrative handling of referrals), and to build Metlakatla's GIS, database, and plan implementation capacity.

**“Stewardship needs resourcing. It needs to be held up as a value to be invested in by communities.”**

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- The community leadership, clear vision and arms-length structure behind the Metlakatla Stewardship Office have enabled it to succeed from start-up.
- As a young organization, the Metlakatla Stewardship Society is still “finding its feet” and racing to keep up with the pace of development, especially LNG, and with our Treaty Office and Governing Council. But our strong staff and centralized office with all of us under one roof has enabled us to hit the ground running.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Key sources of strength for the establishment of the Metlakatla Stewardship Office have been the strong leadership and vision provided by the community, core funding, and the availability of a large office facility able to house the entire program under a single roof. Without this, it would have been difficult to build a strong and integrated program.
- Precedent setting court cases have enabled us to assert our right to manage resources.
- Regional support from the Coastal First Nations-Great Bear Initiative provides networking and capacity development opportunities.

### Challenges:

- Challenges early on have been recruiting and retaining technical and field staff. People are being drawn away to other opportunities related to the development interest in this region.
- After years of planning for the marine and terrestrial environment, we are struggling to shift these plans into their implementation phase. Increasingly, this is what the dialogue is about: how do we realize the vision expressed in the plans?

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Full implementation of Metlakatla’s Land and Marine Use Plans through a *One-Plan* approach.
- Increase our capacity for terrestrial-based research, data gathering and monitoring.
- Building our GIS, database, and data management capacity and tools.

## Miawpukek First Nation

Conne River, Newfoundland and  
Labrador  
(709) 882-2470  
[www.mfngov.ca](http://www.mfngov.ca)



[www.mfngov.ca](http://www.mfngov.ca)

## Highlights of Miawpukek First Nation Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Though established as a permanent Mi'kmaq community in 1822, Miawpukek Reserve was not designated under the Indian Act until 1987.
- Since that time, the Miawpukek have been actively pursuing fisheries conservation and related guardian work.
- Initially the Miawpukek focused efforts on conservation of the Atlantic salmon, as numbers were showing drastic decline. Since then, the Miawpukek have expanded their efforts to other culturally important species in the traditional territory.

### Focus

- Fisheries and terrestrial guardian work.
- Focus on research, monitoring and enforcement activities related to species at risk, including Atlantic salmon, pine martin, American eel, and northern wolf.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- Miawpukek's Natural Resources Department (NRD) leads the fisheries guardian and wildlife monitoring work, reporting to the General Manager, the Governing Council, and the community.
- NRD manages Miawpukek's traditional food harvest, food fishery and commercial fishery.

### Staff Capacity

- The Natural Resources Department employs up to 39 people. Most of these positions are seasonal, with 8 full-time positions.

**“Previously we were shunned and shut out of discussions. Now there is a willingness to listen to us, to be influenced by us.”**

# Miawpukek First Nation

- Full-time positions include the Natural Resources Director and Forestry Manager. This is augmented by up to 11 winter and summer seasonal guardian positions.

## Networks and Partnerships

- Key partnerships and networks Miawpukek is involved with include: Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy and Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management (AAROM) related networks; the Atlantic Salmon Federation; the Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation; and various local conservation committees, councils, advisory boards.

## Funding

- We are limited by our funding – the types of funds we have access to govern the activities we can undertake.
- Majoring of our funding is from our First Nation's core funding agreements. We then leverage additional funds from other (largely federal) programs related to species at risk, fisheries, forestry, etc.
- We've not yet built relationships with non-profits or foundations to any significant degree but would be interested in building in that direction.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Local, provincial and national recognition for our work on our fisheries guardian program and conservation of salmon stocks.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- The Natural Resources Department moved into its own building about five years ago which has enabled us to house our staff under one roof.
- Increasing awareness and concern amongst our people regarding conservation issues.
- The federal species at risk act and other management regulations together with federal management changes that require aboriginal engagement and input. Previously, we were shunned and shut out of discussions. Now there is a willingness to listen to us, to be influenced by us.

### Challenges:

- Securing adequate funding. Most of our programs are federally funded and we've not seen any increases in that funding since our core agreements were signed in 1990. We are trying to do the same amount of work but with less money.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Integrating aboriginal traditional knowledge into our species at risk and related wildlife research.
- Better understanding the science behind the decline of key species such as salmon, caribou, and eel.

**"If anything happens in our territory we are the first to be contacted - prior to the feds and the province."**



## Nunatsiavut Government Department of Lands and Natural Resources

Nain, Newfoundland and Labrador  
(709) 922-2942  
[www.nunatsiavut.com](http://www.nunatsiavut.com)



[www.nunatsiavut.com](http://www.nunatsiavut.com)

## Highlights of Nunatsiavut Stewardship Activity

### Background

- After three decades of land claims negotiations on behalf of the Labrador Inuit, on December 1, 2005 the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement was passed and the regional Nunatsiavut Government was formed.
- The Nunatsiavut Government is involved in many aspects of land and marine resource management. This summary focuses primarily on the work conducted through the Environment Division of the Lands and Natural Resources Department.

### Focus

- The Environment Division of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources focuses its work on monitoring climate change, environmental contaminants, and major resource developments.
- This work may include baseline and monitoring studies of major developments, mercury contamination studies, or Inuit knowledge studies of caribou.
- Programs also focus on fostering healthy connections between generations and between people and the land. For example, *Going Off, Going Strong* is an outreach program that brings Inuit youth together with harvesters and healthy role models, encouraging knowledge transmission, social connections and improved mental health.

**“Anything we do tends to be cross-cutting. Can we create employment? Can we support mental health? We rarely just run a monitoring program.”**



## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The Nunatsiavut Government is organized into seven departments.
- The Department of Lands and Natural Resources is responsible for all matters related to the protection, use, and development of renewable and non-renewable resources in Nunatsiavut. The department's mandate is to ensure the sustainable management of Nunatsiavut land and natural resources while maximizing benefits from the development of these resources for Inuit.
- The department is organized into four divisions: Lands, Non-Renewable Resources, Renewable Resources, and Environment.

### Staff Capacity

- There are eight staff members in the Environment Division, all involved with stewardship work, including monitoring, research, youth programming, food harvest and distribution, and regional planning.
- In the Renewable Resources Division, there are another seven conservation officers, one for each Inuit community as well as communities in Upper Lake Melville.
- The Nunatsiavut Department of Lands and Natural Resources recruits locally and from outside the communities. Availability of local housing is a major barrier to recruitment and retention.

### Networks and Partnerships

- On a case-by-case basis, we work with partners from universities, ArcticNet, federal and provincial governments, other Aboriginal organizations and industry.
- For example, we have developed a social Char fishery, and trade Char for Cod with the Inuit Metis from southern Labrador.
- We have developed good working relationships with Inuit from other regions of the Canadian Arctic.

### Funding

- About 50% of the Environment Division's Budget is core internal funding.
- The remainder is sourced broadly, primarily through federal agencies such as AANDC, Health Canada, NRCAN, etc. but also from partnerships with universities, ArcticNet, the Province, and the private, non-profit and charitable sectors.
- We have managed to build our funding base over the past four years, but this has been a time consuming process which often pulls us away from program implementation.
- With more funding, we could do so much more.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Our contaminant-monitoring program has been developed holistically, where the collecting of samples is as important as the samples themselves.
- Our *Going Off, Going Strong* program for young people has been very successful. We are evaluating it now, but have observed that male youth suicide rates in Nain have dropped substantially since that program was introduced.
- We are bringing the idea of sustainability and stewardship right into the communities and also working on issues like culturally appropriate housing, affordable heating, and social determinants of health in the communities.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Committed and capable staff, relatively low turnover compared with other remote regions.
- Strong relationship building emphasis with Nunatsiavut communities.
- Collaborative working relationship with Federal government and other partners across the Canadian Arctic and Sub-Arctic.

### Challenges:

- There has been a decrease in the critical scientific baseline work that is being done by other levels of government. For instance, DFO has cut its senior contaminants scientists. We, along with organizations like ArcticNet, are left to fill the void.
- Monitoring work is not perceived to be as interesting as other kinds of innovative research. It is difficult to fund but necessary.
- Limited capacity forces us to focus our efforts.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Resources aimed at social determinants of health.
- Environmental and experiential education opportunities tailored to local needs and culture.
- Housing that is culturally appropriate and built for the subarctic environment.
- Basic infrastructure and resources (transportation, energy, food security, housing, health) needed. Once these basics are addressed we can better broaden perspectives and tackle other issues.

**“The on-the-land stewardship work is important, but it’s critical we think about well-being in the community too. Over 50% of community members in the region don’t have regular access to the land ”**

## Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

Iqaluit, Nunavut  
(867) 975-7300  
[www.nwmb.com](http://www.nwmb.com)



[www.nwmb.com](http://www.nwmb.com)

## Highlights of Nunavut Wildlife Management Board's Community Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) was established in 1994 in accordance with the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. It is the main instrument of wildlife management in the Nunavut Settlement Area, encompassing an area of 1.9 million square kilometres including the marine areas in the territorial sea adjacent to Nunavut.
- The mission of NWMB is to conserve wildlife and wildlife habitat for the long-term benefit of all Nunavut residents while fully respecting Inuit harvesting rights and priorities. The NWMB vision is to conserve wildlife through the application of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (Inuit traditional knowledge) and scientific knowledge.
- The Community Based Monitoring Network (CBMN) of NWMB was initiated in 2011 as a pilot study in three communities to record harvesting information and local wildlife observations. The program plans to shift to two new communities in April 2015 for another 3-year data gathering cycle.

### Focus

- The CBMN program focuses on working with local hunters to record ecological knowledge in the form of catch data, wildlife observations, and other ecological and environmental conditions using hand-held computers. The goal of the program is to build a long-term monitoring database, identifying critical harvesting travel routes and areas, important habitats, harvest rates, key conservation concerns, and information about important species (both those under active management and those that are not).

# Nunavut Wildlife Management Board

- Currently, the program is run in three communities: Arviat, Sanikiluaq, and Cambridge Bay. Within each community, there is a community data clerk and harvesters who are under contract as data collectors with NWMB. In total approximately 40 harvesters are engaged in the program. Once back in the community, the harvester will bring the computer to the data clerk who uploads it directly to an online secure database.
- Harvesters are collecting data on a variety of harvested and observed species, including geese and other bird species, beluga, narwhal, caribou, muskox, polar bear, char and others.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- NWMB is the wildlife decision-making body for all of Nunavut lands. There are Hunters and Trappers Organizations within each community that work with NWMB to develop management recommendations. These organizations have also helped to shape and deliver the CBMN program.
- For the CBMN program, the data clerk in each partner community manages the program within their community. There are 3 levels of access to data. NWMB has access to all the data. The data clerk has access to all community-specific data. Harvesters have access to their own data. A data sharing agreement is being developed to enable communities to utilize and share the data.

### Staff Capacity

- The CBMN program is mainly managed in-house by one of the NWMB's Wildlife Management Biologists and relies on part-time data clerks in each of the three participating pilot communities and approximately 40 local harvesters who are compensated for reporting.
- The program also relies on a software contractor, Noreca Consulting Inc., to develop IOS software for the handheld computer and to manage the online database and database security.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Many land claims agreements across Canada require harvest studies to be conducted. As a result, NWMB is often approached by other organizations looking for information on how to initiate a community harvest and monitoring study.
- The CBMN works informally with partners such as government of Nunavut to identify complementary opportunities related to wildlife data gathering and management planning.

### Funding

- CBMN is funded through NWMB core funding agreements with Canada.
- Funding for the program was reduced in 2014.

**"The harvesters involved in this project, speak highly of it, feel like they are making a difference, and have a sense of ownership."**

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- The harvesters involved in this project, speak highly of it, feel like they are making a difference, and have a sense of ownership. It has been well received in the communities.
- The data gathered from harvesters is showing some promising results and warrants deeper analysis than we have yet been able to do.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Data clerks and harvesters are essential to this program. NWMB is based out of Iqaluit and is not present in the three communities the program is running out of. Without the commitment of data clerks and harvesters the program simply wouldn't work.

### Challenges:

- Communication can be difficult between NWMB staff and harvesters. For instance, there are language barriers, information lost in translation, and technology can be difficult for certain individuals to learn how to use or use correctly.
- Adequate funding for the program is also a challenge. We would love to have more harvesters involved and increase our sample size but we don't have that in the budget.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Big focus right now is shifting the CBMN into two new communities.
- Program would be enhanced by more visits to the community to do more hands-on training with NWMB staff and Noreca consultant.
- As more and more data is being generated, we need to develop data sharing protocols and conduct more analysis to maximize the data's use in management and planning at the community and territorial level.

## Nuxalk Nation

Bella Coola, British Columbia  
(250) 799-5613



<http://coastalguardianwatchmen.ca>

## Highlights of Nuxalk Nation Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Active stewardship work lead by the Nuxalk Nation has been ongoing since 1997, with a strong emphasis on fisheries issues and related habitat work.
- As resource use has intensified in the territory, the Nuxalk have expanded their capacity for in-house stewardship and land management.

### Focus

- Over the past number of years, the Nuxalk Nation has further built up capacity with the establishment of a Guardian Watchmen Initiative and the Nuxalk Stewardship Office.
- Nuxalk Coastal Guardian Watchmen patrol the territory to monitor activities as well as conduct research work related to crab, eulachon, salmon, bear and other species. They are also involved in stream assessments and sockeye enhancement.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The Nuxalk Nation has established a Stewardship Office under which all of its fisheries, guardian, marine planning, referrals and other stewardship programs are managed.

### Staff Capacity

- Currently the Stewardship Office has a dedicated staff of seven, including: a Stewardship Director and Office Assistant, Coastal Guardian Watchmen Coordinator, Referrals Coordinator, Field Projects Coordinator, and a Marine Use Planner.
- In addition, a dozen or more people are hired seasonally to work as guardians, researchers, monitors, and project consultants/contractors.

# Nuxalk Nation

- If funding allows, the Stewardship Office would like to expand staff capacity to include a Lands Manager, Aquatics Manager, and a GIS/Data Manager.

## Networks and Partnerships

- The Nuxalk Nation is actively engaged with Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative and the Coastal Stewardship Network and is a member of the Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance (an alliance of the four Central Coast First Nations).
- The Nuxalk Nation also works with the First Nations Fisheries Council and BC Parks.

## Funding

- Core funding for the Stewardship Office comes from the Coast Opportunity Fund.
- Project-specific funds come from grants and small contracts from philanthropic organizations like TNC Canada, Tides Canada, the Vancouver Foundation and others.
- Provincial and federal government funding for the program is minimal.
- In future, additional funding may become available through forest conservation Carbon Credits.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Key successes have related to fisheries work such as the monitoring of Nuxalk food fisheries, the eulachon study, and sockeye enhancement, and the related employment and community engagement this work stimulates.
- While the coastal guardian watchmen work is relatively new, it is growing and evolving and demonstrating strong potential.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- We've enjoyed strong support from outside organizations and funders, enabling us to tackle broader issues and challenges.

### Challenges:

- Linking stewardship work with decision-making and policy. There is still a gap here. We need to focus some effort on our own local governance systems and capacity building needs.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- To really succeed, we need to focus on our own internal governance systems and how to effectively integrate the work of the Stewardship Office with the decisions and direction of the Nation and our interactions with the federal and provincial governments.

**"We can't have healthy people if we are not connected to the land.  
This work connects to our well-being."**



## Okanagan Nation Alliance, Natural Resources Department

Westbank, British Columbia  
(250) 707-0095 ext. 221  
[www.sylx.org](http://www.sylx.org)



Okanagan Nation Alliance

## Highlights of Okanagan Nation Alliance Natural Resources Department Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) is governed by the Chiefs' Executive Council (CEC) made up of the seven *Sylx* Chiefs and the Chairman of the Colville Confederated Tribes in Washington State.
- Formed in 1981, ONA represents the Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Osoyoos Indian Band, Upper Similkameen Indian Band, Penticton Indian Band, Westbank First Nation, Upper Nicola Band and Okanagan Indian Band and the Colville Confederated Tribes.
- ONA works to advance and assert Okanagan Title and Rights over *Sylx* (Okanagan Nation) Territory. The ONA has four Departments all of which have a stewardship component: Natural Resources, Fisheries/Aquatics, Economic Development and Wellness. The Natural Resources Department (NRD), the focus of this overview, has about eight staff and runs over 60 projects annually.
- NRD, in conjunction with member communities, addresses stewardship and research on territorial lands on a range of issues including water, wildlife, ecosystems, cultural interests and impacts.

### Focus

- NRD's primary focus is on working with Okanagan communities to undertake land-use planning, develop community plans for water, develop decision support systems, address government referral systems, undertake comprehensive research, and foster sustainable working partnerships through capacity building.



# Okanagan Nation Alliance

- A comprehensive *Syilx* Water Strategy for the territory is currently under development and review. Also under development is an Okanagan Connectivity Plan, to identify and prioritize natural areas and green spaces for conservation, restoration and enhancement.
- NRD works on caribou and grizzly connectivity corridors, wildlife monitoring and management, habitat restoration, and water reservoir management.
- Providing technical support to the Chiefs Executive Council on natural resource policy review, associated initiatives and government negotiations.
- Coordinating and conducting impact assessment studies and activities related to major developments and industrial activities proposed in the territory.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The NRD reports to the ONA's Executive Director, works with senior advisors, and consults with the Natural Resource Council (NRC), an advisory sub-committee of the CEC that includes political and technical representation from each of the eight *Syilx* communities. This includes working closely with the Traditional Ecological Knowledge Keepers as needed and other ad-hoc or sub-committees when required.

### Staff Capacity

- NRD currently has a staff of 8, including the NRD Manager, Biologist 3, Biologist, Project Lead, Cultural Research Lead, GIS Technician, and a Technician. 10-12 field technicians work seasonally and several special advisors support the efforts of the department.

### Networks and Partnerships

- NRD works extensively, primarily at a technical level, with other federal and provincial agencies, NGOs and community organizations, and with neighbouring First Nations and other tribal groups.

### Funding

- NRD's growing budget is proposal/project driven, without any dedicated or core funding.
- The NRD budget has grown substantially in the past 3 years, reflecting the capacity and ambition of the growing team to build out the program, attract funds, and build working partnership arrangements.
- About 80% of NRD's funding currently comes from foundations. Other funding comes from federal funds (i.e. SARA, AANDC), programs like BC Capacity Initiative, other provincial programs, research projects, and third party project assessments. Member *Syilx* communities also bring some project partnership funds to NRD.
- With the retreat of federal and provincial programs, NRD and ONA Fisheries/Aquatics have increasingly stepped in to fill the void and take a leadership role in regional conservation monitoring and management.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- ONA Water Declaration was signed and endorsed at our General Assembly in 2014.
- Engaging Syilx youth and elders in our planning and stewardship projects.
- Training Syilx citizens in research and GIS as part of our program objectives.
- Collecting cultural information, place names, use and occupancy points.
- Wildlife monitoring for turtles, bats, snakes, herons, caribou, and grizzly.
- Working with ONA Fisheries to revitalize Sockeye salmon - a run that was near extinct 20 years ago.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Strength of the CEC's mandate and our title and rights.
- Strong guidance and direction from the NRC has enabled coordination between member Syilx communities and expanded partnership initiatives. The NRC is made up of two representatives from each of the eight Syilx communities: one political and one technical. It also has two traditional ecological knowledge keepers and two cultural resource technicians. For three years now, twenty people have met every month. Through that, we've built a solid group and foundation of knowledge for our work.

### Challenges:

- Insufficient funding for long term planning. There is a lot of passion and drive here but we don't have the funding and capacity to do it all. Funding cycles often mean building temporary expertise then losing it when project funds run out.
- We need to be able to recruit, train, and retain full-time people. In our uncertain funding environment, we are never certain of what projects we can pursue and how many people we can support to deliver them.
- Conflicting provincial and federal environmental policy and legislative frameworks do not incorporate indigenous worldviews or frameworks.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Build internal capacity to respond to pressing issues and long-term stewardship initiatives.
- Invest in Syilx peoples - train them and retain them.
- Develop and retain specialized technical expertise (i.e. vegetation biologists, hydrologists, archaeologists) to address ecosystem science and impact assessment needs.
- Implement Syilx vision for water management.
- Build our understanding of climate change impacts in Syilx territory.
- Support ONA strategic policy reviews of Columbia River Treaty, energy generation, forestry, mining, etc.

## Poplar River First Nation

Poplar River, Manitoba  
(204) 244-2267  
[www.prfn.ca](http://www.prfn.ca)



[www.prfn.ca](http://www.prfn.ca)

## Highlights of Poplar River First Nation Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Poplar River is a remote community in Manitoba on the east side of Lake Winnipeg at the mouth of the Poplar River, accessible only by boat or winter roads.
- In response to pressure from forestry and hydroelectric development, Poplar River conducted an extensive community planning exercise over 10 years to develop a Land Use Plan. The plan was finalized in 2011 and a lands management agreement was signed with the Province of Manitoba, protecting 2 million acres of land from industrial development including mining, logging and forestry.
- Through this process, Poplar River also developed strong relationships with neighbouring First Nations, developing a formal First Nations Accord to work together to protect their lands.
- Together with the FN Accord partners and the Province of Manitoba, Poplar River First Nation has submitted a proposal to UNESCO for World Heritage Site status for their traditional lands.

### Focus

- Developing a Land Use Plan that expresses our vision for land management and protection.
- Working with our First Nation, community and provincial partners to obtain UNESCO World Heritage Site status.
- Developing a comprehensive Lands Guardian program.
- Building our research, knowledge and understanding of the muskeg environment.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- Planning and stewardship work is organized and delivered under Chief and Council and the Lands Working Group. The Lands Working Group is a voluntary board made up of a cross section of local people (elders, women, youth, etc.) with a representative from Chief and Council. This group meets to set workplans, make decisions, and to consult further with Chief and Council as needed.

### Staff Capacity

- A part-time Lands Director on contract and a part-time Lands Guardian. Between a .5 and .75 FTE in total.

### Networks and Partnerships

- Focus on connecting with other First Nation communities trying to do the same things. Building these networks is most valuable to us.
- We are one of five First Nations who are part of the First Nations Accord and Protected Lands Agreement and the World Heritage Site nomination group.
- We have worked with the Canadian Boreal Initiative and intermittently with other philanthropists.

### Funding

- The Province funded the World Heritage site bid for Poplar River to work with five First Nations and two local levels of government.
- Current funding is minimal. Primary support comes from a provincial agreement signed each year. It supports a part-time Lands Manager and a part-time Lands Guardian.
- Have received some support from partners like the Canadian Boreal Initiative, various philanthropic organizations, and through student/university projects.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- Outreach and education with the community. Combining the cultural side and healing with our land stewardship work.
- Recognition from the community of all the work our elders have done and that the land should be protected.
- Working with our neighbouring First Nations to develop an Accord to protect our lands.
- Working with the Province to obtain World Heritage status for our lands.
- Development of our Lands Plan. We now have a recognized land use plan and a negotiated management agreement with the Province.

**“One of our biggest successes is the healing that is occurring. We are combining the cultural side and healing with the land.”**

# Poplar River First Nation

## Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- The vision and commitment of our elders.

## Challenges:

- Lack of funds to do what we want to do.
- The Province moves slow and continues to try and retain full control. We have to keep working with them, ensuring we are thinking the same way and using the same language/terminology and understanding one another.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Building our Lands Guardian program: build a decent, workable, equipped and trained program.
- Continuing our research toward better understanding muskeg environment and the effects of climate change. Training for our people to engage in this research.
- Research opportunity for carbon credits related to carbon storage in the muskeg.
- Build up our networks with other First Nation organizations across Canada.

**“We were able to put a hold on a hydro transmission line in our territory because of networking with others. You can’t do these things alone.”**

## Qqs Projects Society Coastwatch Program

Bella Bella, British Columbia  
(250) 957-2917  
[www.qqsprojects.org](http://www.qqsprojects.org)



[www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)

## Highlights of Qqs Projects Society Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Qqs Projects Society (Qqs) is a Heiltsuk non-profit organization formed in 1999 with a mandate to support Heiltsuk youth, culture and environment.
- Beginning in the mid-1990s, the Heiltsuk Nation began to actively engage in land use planning and in 2005 released a Land Use Plan for Heiltsuk territory. This plan was used as the basis for negotiations with British Columbia and continues to guide Heiltsuk policy and planning.
- With the implementation of the Land Use Plan, it became apparent that detailed planning would require more area-specific territorial knowledge, new research, updated baseline data sets, and increased monitoring activities.
- In 2010, the Heiltsuk Integrated Resource Management Department (HIRMD) was created and a formal partnership with Qqs was formed to support the Heiltsuk Nation.
- Coastwatch, a scientific research project of Qqs initiated in 2007, supports the Heiltsuk Nation to collect this baseline data, to monitor key species and systems in the territory, to develop conservation and resource management plans, and to build Heiltsuk capacity for conservation management and sustainable resource management.
- Coastwatch activity is fully aligned with HIRMDs stewardship vision and related programs delivered by Heiltsuk Fisheries and Heiltsuk Guardians. All Coastwatch data and analysis is provided to HIRMD for use in management planning and decision-making.

### Focus

- The Coastwatch program is currently focused primarily on the southern territory and mainland areas of the Koeye and Namu watersheds. Monitoring programs for these conservancy areas have been developed and baseline data is being systematically collected. Two years of baseline data was also collected on Goose Island on the outer coast.



## Qqs Projects Society, Coastwatch Program

- Key species being monitored include sockeye salmon, grizzly, and Dungeness crab.
- Climate change monitoring and other focused projects are also part of the work conducted by Coastwatch.
- Coastwatch has developed a methodology for building conservancy management plans for conservancies in Heiltsuk Territory.

### Program Delivery

#### Program Structure

- Qqs' Coastwatch program takes strategic direction from the Heiltsuk Nation's hereditary leadership, the Hemas, and from Tribal Council, through HIRMD's Board of Directors.
- Practically, Coastwatch programming serves HIRMD's mandate, providing fieldwork services, scientific research, and conservation management decision support.

#### Staff Capacity

- Coastwatch's staff consists of a Director, Salmon Coordinator, Crab Monitor, and Field Technicians.
- Typically eight to ten people are working through the summer and fall, with a core of three staff working through the winter and spring seasons.
- Staffing is budget and seasonally determined.

#### Networks and Partnerships

- Organizations like the Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance (CCIRA) and Coastal First Nations facilitate information sharing and mutual support between Coastwatch, HIRMD and neighbouring nations.
- Coastwatch and HIRMD are engaged with Central Coast First Nations on regional crab and bear monitoring projects. These projects are also supported by relationships with the Museum of Natural History and the Raincoast Conservation Society.
- Coastwatch and HIRMD work directly with neighbouring First Nations on developing conservancy management plans, harmonizing marine use plans, and conducting research and monitoring activities.
- Other issues such as the commercial herring fishery, Enbridge pipeline proposal, and treaty negotiations have also increased cooperation and joint action amongst Central and North Coast First Nations.
- Coastwatch and HIRMD also work with the BC Ministry of Environment, BC Parks, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and other government departments around a range of issues from referrals, to fisheries, conservancy planning, data sharing, patrols, etc.

#### Funding

- Coastwatch program funding varies year to year, based on project priorities and available funding.
- This reliance on grants has made some successful projects vulnerable and difficult to sustain year to year (i.e. salmon weir project).

**“Once we had big picture information from our land use plan, we were able to hone in on what specific data we really wanted to collect.”**

## Qqs Projects Society, Coastwatch Program

- A mix of philanthropic and individual donors, university partnerships, and contracts to HIRMD currently support Coastwatch programming.
- Going forward, increased funding will be needed to fully implement marine and conservancy management plans and conduct sufficient monitoring and research work in the conservancy areas.

### Successes and Challenges To Date

#### Successes:

- Coastwatch's salmon research program has developed excellent data on sockeye in several important sockeye systems in Heiltsuk Territory. This data brings people "knocking on our door" to get it. We've been very successful in our mark recapture methods, smolt traps, weir use, etc.
- Similarly, Coastwatch's grizzly bear research is being recognized as providing significant new information about this species on the Coast and helping to support the campaign to end trophy hunt. Over eight years of data have been collected and an academic paper has been published profiling the grizzly bear population trends in the Koeve Watershed.
- Coastwatch data and research is contributing to Heiltsuk policy and decision-making.

#### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- The foundation work that was done in the past decade: negotiated land agreements, designated conservancy areas, designated EBM areas, etc.

#### Challenges:

- Our biggest stumbling block has been obtaining funds on an annual basis, making it difficult to move forward. We need more security of program funding to reliably conduct this work.

### Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Looking forward, our priorities are to continue to develop and implement conservancy management plans, continue with our sockeye salmon population study, and build our technical and management capacity through training, all focused towards taking care of our land and sea for the future generations.

**"Data is powerful. People are knocking on the door to get it. We go to the table well-informed."**



## Taku River Tlingit First Nation

Atlin, British Columbia  
(250) 651-7922  
[www.trfn.yikesite.com](http://www.trfn.yikesite.com)



[www.takhuatlen.org](http://www.takhuatlen.org)

## Highlights of Taku River Tlingit Stewardship Activity

### Background

- In 2003, Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) created a land use vision document that described the need for land guardians to monitor activities in the traditional territory. Community members felt concerned that hunting, mining and other development impacts were not being sufficiently mitigated or monitored by the province. It was clear that TRTFN needed better information, data, and oversight of activities to make management decisions.
- An initial patrol program was initiated approximately ten years ago and focused on monitoring hunting in the territory, with a focus on wasteful hunting practices.
- In 2014, TRTFN developed and launched an expanded Land Guardian program.

### Focus

- The Land Guardian program focuses on monitoring a range of activities in the territory.
- Patrols currently focus on mitigating human/wildlife conflict, creating an inventory of abandoned equipment and contaminants, monitoring wildlife, hunting activity, mining activity, invasive species, and other issues of concern to the community.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- The Land Guardian program is managed under the Lands and Resource Department of TRTFN. This department works directly with the Elected Council and Clan leadership, as well as a group of community members interested in fish and wildlife issues.

# Taku River Tlingit First Nation

## Staff Capacity

- TRTFN's Land Guardian program is staffed by a lands technician and three part-time on-call land guardians. All three guardians were trained through Yukon College's Game Guardian Program.

## Networks and Partnerships

- The Coastal Guardian Watchmen Network, Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nation, Carcross Tagish First Nation (CTFN) and Teslin Tlingit First Nation (TTFN) supported TRTFN in setting up the Land Guardian Program, sharing program information and basic tools such as report templates and data forms.
- Early discussions have been initiated between TRTFN, CTFN and TTFN on conducting joint patrols and more formal collaboration in the future.
- TRTFN's Land Guardian Program has also worked with the provincial conservation officer to plan and coordinate patrols and support TRT guardians through mentoring and training.
- TRTFNs guardians may begin to work more closely with BC Park Rangers and DFO on monitoring recreation activities in the near future.

## Funding

- The Land Guardian program is currently funded for 18 months by the Tlatsini Conservation Fund established by the T'akhu Â Tlèn Conservancy. TRTFN Lands and Resources Department also provides in-kind funding.
- Following this pilot year, TRTFN plans to expand the program budget to allow for more staff time to conduct patrols and to support transportation into remote areas in the territory.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- The first year of this program has been very successful in terms of learning how to build and deliver the program, collecting patrol data, building a team, and shaping the program for future years.
- The community has been receptive to the role of the guardians and the approach they have taken to educating the community on issues such as hunting, garbage management, etc.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- The interest, commitment, and diligence of the Land Guardians themselves.
- Building collaborative relationships with other local First Nation guardian programs, with the Coastal Guardian Watchmen Network, and with the provincial Conservation Officer.

### Challenges:

- Recruiting staff into the program has been challenging: we are looking for the right combination of experience, aptitude, training, and availability for part-time work.
- The program requires more funding to support more regular patrols, dedicated staffing positions, and flight access into the more remote areas of the territory.

**"Having land guardians strengthens our voice, gives us leverage, and helps us in discussions with the province. "**

## Taku River Tlingit First Nation

- There is a need to develop more communication materials to assist guardians in their work educating and informing the public and TRTFN members.
- There is also a need to focus the data gathering in a more structured way, that answers specific questions and delivers clear results that the TRTFN Land and Resources Department can use for management decisions and in work with other management agencies.

### Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Funding to support full-time management of the program, more guardian patrols and dedicated staffing, and transportation in to remote areas of the territory.
- Develop a more structured approach to increase youth and community involvement in, and awareness of, the guardian program.
- Build out research and data collection components of the program.
- Focus the data collected around answering specific questions that support management decision-making.
- Create a database for storing and analyzing data, so it can be easily accessed in the future.
- Build in community program elements that facilitate cultural experiences on the land.

**“When designing and developing the Land Guardian program, getting feedback from other First Nations was really important. ”**

## Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in

Dawson City, Yukon Territory  
(867) 993-7100  
[www.trondek.ca](http://www.trondek.ca)



Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Government

## Highlights of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Stewardship Activity

### Background

- The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in are a Yukon First Nation based in Dawson City. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in began negotiating a land claim in 1973 and signed a Final Agreement with Canada and the Government of Yukon in 1998.
- Stewardship work of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in government largely falls to the Natural Resources Department, comprising the Lands and Resources Branch and the Fish and Wildlife Branch, as well as to the Heritage Department. This overview focuses on the work of the Natural Resources Department.

### Focus

- Since signing the Final Agreement with the Yukon Government, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in has focused primarily on establishing governance and administrative systems, developing laws and regulations for settlement lands, and ensuring that the First Nation's rights are fully considered and protected on territorial lands.
- Field-based stewardship work and information-gathering have not been a focus to date, though the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in would like to increase their involvement in these activities to support land planning and management processes.
- Current land-based stewardship work includes managing and monitoring commercial forestry on settlement lands, as well as monitoring commercial forestry on non-settlement lands in the territory in cooperation with Yukon Government. Similarly, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in work with territorial mine inspectors to ensure adherence to licenses issued by the Government of Yukon and permits issued by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in for projects on settlement land. In addition, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is working to provide the Yukon Placer Secretariat with detailed reports on traditional camps and ecologically or culturally

## Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in

important areas so that placer mining regulators can effectively protect those places in the mine licensing process.

- Wildlife monitoring work focuses on the Porcupine and woodland caribou herds along the Dempster Highway. In addition, every fall, a fish and wildlife monitor is hired to monitor the Chinook run, which is closed to fishing for conservation reasons. The Department also carefully manages game hunting on settlement lands by designating hunting areas, issuing consent forms, imposing reporting requirements, conducting wildlife inventories, and carrying out monitoring and enforcement activities.
- Working with the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in monitor water resources in the territory to protect this valuable resource and to better understand the effects of climate change.

### Program Delivery

#### Program Structure

- The Natural Resources Department works directly with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Executive Director, under Chief and Council, and with the Natural Resources Advisory Committee.

#### Staff Capacity

- The Natural Resources Department is made up of 8 full-time employees as well as part-time seasonal employees and contractors as required.
- Key positions include the Department Director, Policy Analyst, Planning Manager, Development Assessment Coordinator, Lands Manager, Resources Officer, Geospatial Technologist, Wildlife Manager, Wildlife Officer, and Wildlife Monitor.

#### Networks and Partnerships

- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in participates actively in the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council. We meet regularly with regional First Nation Natural Resources Directors to collaborate and share information.
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in works closely with many Yukon Government agencies and branches, constantly feeding them information on project referrals and consultations. We are also working together to collect baseline data for lands and resources.

#### Funding

- Stewardship funding for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in comes primarily from federal transfer packages.
- Permit fees provide some funding for reclamation and reforestation work.
- Consultation funding is sometimes required to enable staff and contractors to respond to consultation requests, travel for meetings, etc.

### Successes and Challenges To Date

#### Successes:

- Our fish and wildlife program has been very successful. This is some of our most visible work. For instance, our caribou and moose harvest management work brings respect and

## Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in

recognition from the community for properly protecting these resources. People have less a sense of what we do inside the office with respect to managing the land base.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Settlement of our land claim agreement and associated requirements for ongoing consultation with other governments.

### Challenges:

- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is bombarded by referrals and consultation requests on projects in our traditional territory. Building and maintaining our relationship with the Yukon Government is critical to our ability to influence regulations, projects, etc. However, it means we don't get out on the ground enough to gather information to really support the work we are doing.
- Engagement with Yukon Government has too often taken priority over internal concerns, such as developing a land tenure system to provide citizens with secure access to settlement land.

### Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Diversify our funding and reduce reliance on yearly contribution agreements.
- Build long-term internal capacity.
- Conduct more land-based research, monitoring, and community engagement work.
- Build our in-house technical expertise to support field-based work (i.e. stream sampling, inventories, etc.) We need to pair our professional office-based experience with technical field expertise.

**“When we are out there on the land people can see we are paying attention, that we are protecting the resources.”**



## Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources

Cape Breton, Nova Scotia  
(902) 379-2163  
uinr.ca



www.uinr.ca

## Highlights of Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources Stewardship Activity

### Background

- Since 1999, Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) has represented Cape Breton's Mi'kmaq voice on natural resources and environmental concerns. UINR represents the five Mi'kmaq communities of Cape Breton (Eskasoni, Potlotek, Wagmatcook, Membertou, and We'koqma'q) and was formed to address concerns regarding natural resources and their sustainability. UINR works closely with government and other First Nations organizations.
- The formation of UINR was spearheaded by the five Unama'ki Chiefs in response to a 1996 proposal to dredge the Middle Shoal area of Cape Breton for a gypsum project. A subsequent crisis in 1999 between non-native commercial lobster fisherman and Mi'kmaq food fishers escalated the need for a strong and united Mi'kmaq voice on resource management issues.

### Focus

- Utilizing and integrating traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and cultural research methodologies in natural resource management and planning.
- Working with Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) guardians in the five Unama'ki Mi'kmaq communities.
- Natural resources research and management, focusing on culturally important species including lobster, eel, moose, salmon, striped bass, cod, and oyster.
- Conducting water quality, shoreline, and river assessments, and invasive species monitoring.
- Species at risk research and management.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources is a society governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Chiefs of each of the five Unama'ki communities.
- Key program areas managed by staff and contractors include: Research and Stewardship, Commercial Fisheries, Forestry, Guardian Program, Moose Management, Communications, Publications, and Education.

### Staff Capacity

- The Aquatic Research and Stewardship Division has a staff of three. UINR currently employs seventeen staff, including this program.

### Networks and Partnerships

- UINR works primarily with its five member Bands focusing on how communities can work together better.
- UINR facilitates the Bras D'Or Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI), which brings together federal, provincial, municipal, and Mi'kmaq governments, industry, academia, and NGOs.

### Funding

- Core funding for the Aquatic Research and Stewardship Department is provided by federal sources, in particular AAROM (Aboriginal Aquatic Resource and Oceans Management) and AFSAR (Aboriginal Fund for Species at Risk).
- Research partnerships (i.e. with Dalhousie University) and other contracts bring in additional revenues.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- UINR develops projects blending Mi'kmaq knowledge with scientific knowledge, bringing this information back to the community. For instance, UINR's first stewardship report on lobster was rewritten in accessible language and illustrated to engage the community in the findings and recommendations. UINR's eel study resulted not only in new knowledge being shared and generated, but a children's book to share with young people in the community. UINR's moose management project has since published another children's book and traditional knowledge booklet.
- UINR developed a best practices guide to building residences on the Malikewe'i, land jointly shared by the five Unama'ki Bands but without a governing body.



## Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- There has been consistent funding from AAROM for one position (Director of Aquatic Research and Stewardship) for two five-year funding cycles, enabling UINR to focus on building the program.

## Challenges:

- Multi-year funding has been limited to one staff position. All other positions need to be funded by grants on a year-to-year basis. This is very time consuming and makes it difficult to sustain the momentum and capacity needed to grow projects and programs.
- Staff and projects are spread between multiple workspaces, with some home-based workers, because of office space constraints.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Continue to build upon the “Two-Eyed Seeing” research and stewardship approach pioneered by Dr. Albert Marshall, applying traditional knowledge together with scientific knowledge to develop resource management plans and research strategies better suited to people and the local environment.
- Bring programs together under a single roof. UINR’s work would be much easier to manage and deliver if staff were not so dispersed and could work in the same physical space.
- Increase capacity for field research and on-the-ground stewardship work.

## Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation

Lillooet, British Columbia  
(250) 256-4228  
[www.xcfc.ca](http://www.xcfc.ca)



[www.xcfn.ca](http://www.xcfn.ca)

## Highlights of Xaxli'p Stewardship Activity

### Background

- In 2011, Xaxli'p entered into a Community Forest Agreement with British Columbia. It was established as an interim measure pending full recognition of Xaxli'p Title and Rights.
- Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation (XCFC) now manages the forest resources of Xaxli'p Survival Territory.
- The mandate of the XCFC is to restore degraded ecosystems, restore cultural resources and activities, and create a sustainable community economy based on high quality value-added timber and non-timber forest products.

### Focus

- To date, work has focused on forest restoration and enhancing habitat and forest conditions for food plants, wildlife and water storage. XCFC also funds forest restoration thinning through fuel management contracts in partnership with regional districts, municipalities and FN Emergency Services Society.
- In 2012, a Range Riders Patrol Program was started to reach backcountry areas in Xaxli'p Survival Territory. The Range Riders focus their efforts on monitoring backcountry activity, education, enforcement of Xaxli'p community policies, and trail clearing and maintenance.
- XCFC actively engages with the community through education and outreach, trail building to increase community access to the territory, and through an annual summer youth culture camp.
- XCFC is working to bring together the management of the Range Riders Patrol Program with a pre-existing fisheries monitoring program to standardize enforcement of traditional laws and policies across Xaxli'p Survival Territory, and to enhance the sustainability of both

# Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation

programs. In addition, XCFC is working with the Xaxli'p community to develop other community laws and policies such as community hunting protocols.

## Program Delivery

### Program Structure

- XCFC is a 100% community owned corporation. Xaxli'p Chief and Council represent the community as shareholders of the corporation. XCFC has five community members that sit on its Board of Directors. Board members are nominated and elected by community members at the annual AGM.
- Xaxli'p Band Council is not formally represented on the Board, but a monthly update is provided to the Band through the community newsletter. Representatives from the Board and the Xaxli'p Band Council sit together on a joint working group for referrals.
- XCFC also provides technical assistance on referrals to Xaxli'p and works at a technical level with neighbouring communities to respond to referrals in areas of shared interest.

### Staff Capacity

- Currently, XCFC has a staff of five, including a Community Forest Manager and four Forest Technicians.
- Seasonal staff is hired for the Range Rider Program (2 positions) in the summer and for Fuel Management Contracts in the winter (4-5 positions).

### Networks and Partnerships

- XCFC is actively engaged with the St'át'imc Nation, Xaxli'p, and neighbouring communities in shared interest areas.
- XCFC is building local partnerships with the Lillooet Regional Invasive Species Society and the Lillooet Naturalist Society, through collaboration on special projects.
- XCFC is developing a relationship with the Indigenous People's and Community Conserved Territories and Areas Consortium (ICCA) and is interested in cultivating more mentorship connections.

### Funding

- XCFC's current funding mix is about 50% provincial funds (from Provincial Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreement) and 33% from fuel management contracts with regional district partners, Union of BC Municipalities, and First Nation Emergency Services Society.
- The remaining budget comes from a mix of Xaxli'p settlement funds, community service contracts (i.e. firewood provision), various training programs, and other small grants and private contracts.
- XCFC's funding context is changing. Initial start-up funding from Provincial Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreement won't be there to the same degree in the future. It has been gradually decreasing.

**"We need this land to survive and to survive well."**

# Xaxli'p Community Forest Corporation

- We are looking to develop more relationships with partners such as foundations, BC Hydro and others, and to assess the feasibility of selective logging to bring in revenues as part of the restoration work.

## Successes and Challenges To Date

### Successes:

- XCFC's forest restoration work has been very successful: "we have restored our forests and employed our people". Through our eco-cultural restoration thinning work we have employed and trained more community members than we would have, had we pursued conventional logging.
- The role of XCFC forest crew and the work they do is recognized and appreciated by community members.
- Forest stewardship work is connecting the community to the land and to cultural practices.

### Key Sources of Strength and Support:

- Key sources of strength have been a strong Board of Directors, early investment in setting the vision, priorities, policies and focus of program development, and obtaining good program funding at start-up.
- We are currently working from a strong 3-5 year plan with clear goals.

### Challenges:

- Funding context means budgets must be "cobbled together" - this challenge is only growing.
- Difficulty of providing year-round employment to contract staff.
- Need mechanisms to facilitate improved communications with the Band and St'át'imc Nation to ensure work is well aligned.
- Community Forest Agreement is part of a Xaxli'p strategy to protect the integrity of our territory, but it does not adequately address mineral claims. This is a current gap in XCFC's stewardship strategy.

## Looking Ahead: focus and priorities

- Finding sufficient funding for more restoration work and continued year-round employment of our staff.
- Building capacity, training people, developing a Community Forest Manager from the community.
- Doing more wildlife surveying, monitoring, and science-based research and building territorial knowledge.
- Building on the Range Patrol Program and securing funding to do that.
- Developing a longer term funding strategy.
- Researching the feasibility of selective logging, and value added forest products.

**"The people, the land, the language - they are all one."**