Appendix 10.12-1

Tahltan Traditional Use and Knowledge Report

Rescan™
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British Columbia Transmission
CORPORATION™

Northwest Transmission Line Project:
Tahltan Traditional Use and Knowledge Report

Prepared By:
Rescan™ Environmental Services Ltd.
Vancouver, British Columbia

December 2009

Rescan™

Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to inventory and describe Tahltan Traditional Use and Traditional Knowledge (TU/TK) related to the proposed Northwest Transmission Line Project (the Project). The collection of Tahltan TU/TK has spanned two time periods of the Project, including February to November 2007 and January to September 2009. On November 26, 2007, NovaGold Resources Inc. and Teck Cominco Limited announced a decision to suspend construction of the Galore Creek mine project. As a result of the loss of this main customer to the Project, the Province and BCTC suspended the Project for a year. In December 2008, the Province provided a mandate and additional funding to complete the Environmental Assessment. Rescan re-initiated and again engaged in discussions with Tahltan First Nation regarding conducting a TU/TK study in 2009.

A mixed methods approach, including desk-based and field research, was undertaken in order to collect Tahltan TU/TK from June to November 2007 and January to September 2009. The results of the Tahltan-led field program were provided in a preliminary report on Tahltan Use sites (Appendix 1), whereas, the desk-based research was compiled by Rescan Environmental Services (Rescan) from publicly available sources. The key findings of the research indicate that the study area was, and to a large extent continues to be, travelled and used by the Tahltan, whose traditional territories intersects with 84.8 km of the Project. According to the results of the ethnographic research, Tahltan traditional activities include hunting, trapping, fishing, and berry/plant harvesting. As indicated in the Tahltan TUS report, the Tahltan Nation places a high value on the network of Aboriginal trails emanating from Mount Edziza. The trails and Mount Edziza were historically associated with trade, including obsidian.

Disclaimer: This TU/TK report represents Rescan's understanding of the views expressed by the Tahltan Nation in the preliminary TUS report and by their representatives on the subject matter discussed.

Acknowledgements

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Acknowledgements

Sarah Martz (B.A.) of Rescan Environmental Services Ltd. (Rescan) compiled and summarized the ethnographic information and Kathy Scott (M.A.) summarized the interim results provided by the Tahltan Heritage and Resource Environmental Assessment Team (THREAT). Paul Mitchell-Banks (Ph.D.) and Rolf Schmitt (M.Sc., P.Geo.) of Rescan reviewed the report. Rose Spicker (B.Sc., Dip. Tech.) and Luke Powell (B.Sc., Dip. Tech.) of Rescan produced the maps. Lorraine Gevatkoff of Rescan was responsible for report production.

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TAHLTAN TRADITIONAL USE AND KNOWLEDGE REPORT

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

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BC EAO	BC Environmental Assessment Office
BCH	BC Hydro
BCH ARN	BC Hydro Aboriginal Relations and Negotiation Department
BCTC	BC Transmission Corporation
CEAA	Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
CCFA	Comprehensive Capacity Funding Agreement
DIAND	Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
EA	Environmental Assessment
kV	kilovolts
the Project	the Northwest Transmission Line Project
TCC	Tahltan Central Council
THREAT	Tahltan Heritage and Resource Environmental Assessment Team
TU/TK	Traditional Use/Traditional Knowledge
TUS	Traditional Use Study

1. Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 OVERVIEW

British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC) is proposing a project to expand the existing transmission system into the northwestern region of British Columbia. The Northwest Transmission Line Project (the Project) would consist of a new 335 km long 287-kilovolt (kV) AC overhead high voltage electric transmission line. The proposed Project would commence at the Skeena Substation south of Terrace and proceed north paralleling the existing 1L387 transmission line alignment, but in a new right-of-way (ROW), to the confluence of the Cedar and Nass rivers. From that point two alternative routes are proposed: a northeastern route through the Cedar-Kiteen River Valley, and the other route farther northwest through the Nass Valley and near the town of New Aiyansh, both alternative routes concluding close to Highway 37 at Cranberry Junction. Thereafter a single route is proposed paralleling Highway 37 to Bob Quinn Lake. The Skeena Substation would require upgrading within the existing physical area, whereas the Bob Quinn Substation would be a new facility at the northern terminus. A temporary tap into the 1L381 line at Meziadin Junction would be established, if necessary, to energize the northern section of the transmission line before the southern portion is completed.

The Project study area is located on provincial Crown land within the Kitimat-Stikine Regional District, on private lands and within an area of overlapping asserted territories of seven First Nations: Kitselas First Nation; Lax Kw'alaams First Nation; Metlakatla First Nation; Kitsumkalum First Nation; Gitxsan Wilp Tenim Gyet, Wilp Wii Hllengwax, Wilp Lelt, and the Skii km Lax Ha; Gitanyow Wilp Wii'litsxw, Wilp Malii, Wilp Gamlakyeltwx, and Wilp Watakhayetswx, and the Tahltan Nation. The Project also intersects the Nass Area and Nass Wildlife Area, and potentially the fee simple Nisga'a Lands of the Nisga'a Nation as represented by the Nisga'a Final Agreement.

BCTC initiated a request for review of the NTL with the BC EAO in May, 2007. The Project was accepted for assessment June 1, 2007 and a Section 11 Order setting out the framework for review was issued on November 12, 2007. On November 26, 2007, NovaGold Resources Inc. and Teck Cominco Limited announced a decision to suspend construction of the Galore Creek mine project. As a result of the loss of this main customer to the Project, the Province and BCTC suspended further development activity. In December 2008, the province provided a mandate and additional funding to complete the Environmental Assessment for the Project. On September 16, 2009, the federal government announced that it is providing funding for the Project from its Green Infrastructure Fund.

1.2 TAHLTAN TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

The Tahltan asserted traditional territory overlaps with the Project from Deltaic Creek at the southern extent of the Tahltan boundary to Bob Quinn Lake. Historically, the Naskoten had resource rights and responsibility to this area of the Tahltan asserted territory (Albright, 1984). Today the closest Tahltan community to the proposed project are the Iskut First Nation located at Iskut. The Cassiar Highway, or Highway 37, creates a north-south route directly connecting the locations of Meziadin Junction, Bell II, Bob Quinn, and further north with the Tahltan communities of Iskut and Dease Lake. The Cassiar Highway represents an important modern access route for the Tahltan to get to their seasonal resources for hunting and gathering (McIlwraith, 2007).

Tahltan territory is located in northern British Columbia, in the area of the Stikine River drainage basin on the high plateau set in the northern regions of the Coast and Cassiar Mountains. While the heart of Tahltan territory was centred at the confluence of the Tahltan and Stikine Rivers, their seasonal hunting rounds covered a much greater area. The Tahltan asserted territory includes the Stikine River watershed and its tributaries as far south as the mouth of the Iskut River, as well as the headwaters of the Nass and Skeena Rivers. It extends north to include the lower half of Dease Lake, Tahltan River and the southern branches of the Taku River and east to take in the west branch of the Turnagain or Black River (MacLachlan 1981). The territory is divided into two main regions: the upper and the lower Stikine River area, each described to have "its own landforms, climate, plants and animals" (School District 87, 2000).

Figure 1.2-1 depicts the location of the Project with a particular focus on the northernmost segments which are located in the southern part of the Tahltan traditional territory. Table 1.2-1 provides a summary of the lengths (in km) of the proposed route through Tahltan territory per segment.

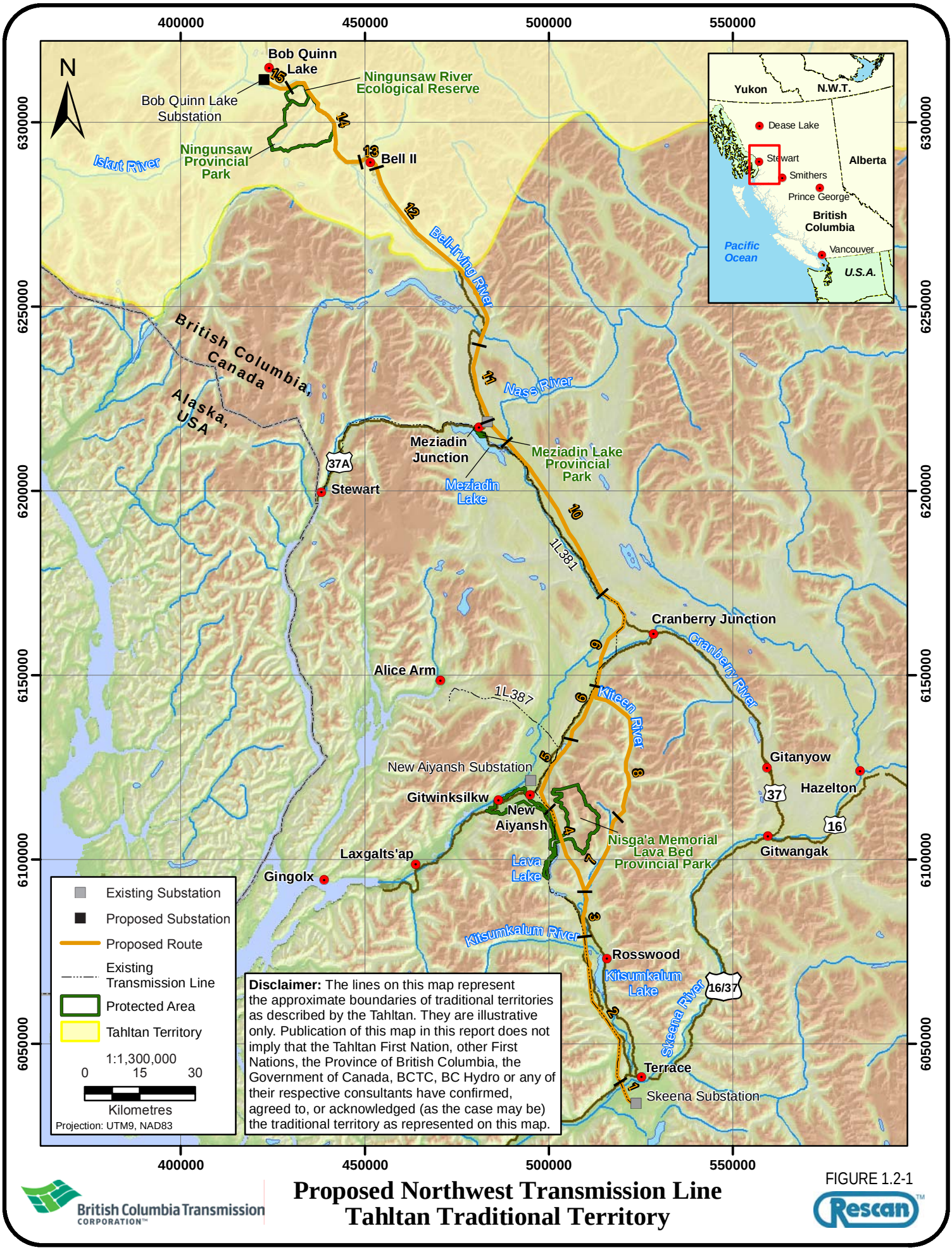
Table 1.2-1. Summary of Lengths of Overlap with Project and Tahltan Traditional Territory

Relevant Segment Number(s)	Length (in km)
12	37.2
13	5.7
14	34.4
15	7.5
Total	84.8

According to ethnographic and Tahltan sources, the Tahltan share boundaries with various other First Nations, including the Kaska to the northeast, Sekani to the east, Gitxsan and Nisga'a Nation to the south, and Tlingit to the west. The *Tahltan Traditional Use Study of the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line Project – Interim Report* (Appendix 1) defines the boundary at Treaty Creek as an agreement reached between Nisga'a and Tahltan in 1898, which was reaffirmed on two later occasions (1977 and 1993).

As territorial relationships and boundaries are complex between groups there are various interpretations of territorial boundaries. The Tahltan Nation defines its boundaries based on information available on traditional land use and historical records and recollections (School District 87, 2000).

In the past, relationships with bordering Nations varied. Friendly relationships existed with the Tlingit to the west and Kaska to the east (School District 87, 2000). These Nations were major trading partners with the Tahltan, and for this reason territorial boundaries with these Nations often overlapped with protocols for shared use of certain areas. To the west, Tahltan territory reaches down the Stikine River part way through the Coast Mountains and some claim is marked by cairns on mountain tops. To the east, the territory reached as far as McDame Creek, sharing land with the Kaska along Dease River. Tension with neighbours existed to the north and south (School District 87, 2000). In the north, disputes, including war, occurred with the Atlin Tlingit. To the south, wars were waged with the Nass people. Originally Tahltan territory extended south past Stewart and Meziadin Lake, east to Comb Peak and north past Thutade Lake. This area was given up to the Nisga'a Nation in peace negotiations in recompense for "overaggressive behaviour" (School District 87, 2000). The new boundary is marked by cairns on hillsides at Treaty Creek (School District 87, 2000).



British Columbia Transmission Corporation

Proposed Northwest Transmission Line
Tahltan Traditional Territory

FIGURE 1.2-1

Rescan

1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to describe the methodology of collecting Tahltan TU/TK and summarize the information provided by Tahltan in their *Tahltan Traditional Use Study of the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line Project – Interim Report*. This report is included in full in Appendix 1 of this report. Specifically, the following topics are addressed: wildlife, fish, culturally significant vegetation, land and resource use, and major water bodies of importance.

1.4 REPORT OUTLINE

Chapter 2 presents the study methodology and Chapter 3 summarizes and synthesizes the common themes and information, which was provided by the Tahltan and included in Appendix 1 of this report.

2. Methodology

2. Methodology

2.1 STUDY AREA

Given the necessity for consistency across the affected First Nation groups' TU/TK information for ease of distribution to the discipline leads and the proponent for effects assessment and design considerations, a study area of 1 km on either side of the Project was proposed to determine First Nation interests, values, concerns, and understanding of the area directly and indirectly overlapping the Project. There was flexibility built into the study area with an additional buffer on either side for areas and sites that were relevant or linked to those inside the study area.

2.2 TU/TK PROCESS

There were several initial steps to setting up the Tahltan TU/TK study, including discussing TU/TK proposals, obtaining funding from BC Hydro (BCH), developing detailed workplan and timelines, and mobilizing Tahltan field crews. These are documented in more detail in Section 2.6 of the Environmental Assessment application. BCH, Rescan, and Tahltan representatives met on 10 separate occasions to discuss various details of the TU/TK study in 2007 and 2009, including funding, workplans, timelines, existing TU/TK information, interviews with knowledge holders, and division of labour between Tahltan and Rescan. Table 2.2-1 provides a summary of the engagement chronology related to the Tahltan TU/TK study.

2.3 APPROACH AND SOURCES

This report consists of desk based ethnographic research and a summary of the interim results of the Tahltan field reconnaissance (the methods of which are described in interim TUS report in Appendix 1). The ethnographic and cultural information is high level and broad. While the interim field results provide some indication of site specific issues, the Tahltan are scheduled to complete a more comprehensive TU/TK study in January of 2010. Nevertheless, the overview provides an important cultural and historical context and deeper understanding for the Tahltan land and resource use, and insight into the existing and past land uses along the proposed transmission line.

The methodology of the interim report employed by the Tahltan Heritage and Resource Environmental Assessment Team (THREAT) was based on interviews with Tahltan cultural advisors, research and mapping, and preliminary field reconnaissance. According to the THREAT report, most of this work is still in progress; however, preliminary results of the TU/TK program were provided by the THREAT in the *Tahltan Traditional Use Study of the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line – Interim Report*. The Tahltan-directed field work focussed on identifying and locating parts of Aboriginal trail networks related to Mount Edziza and travel between Tahltan communities. Appendix 1 presents a more thorough account of the methodology employed by the Tahltan in collecting the information for the interim report. Rescan Environmental Services (Rescan) reviewed and summarized the TCC findings by thematic headings for this report.

Ethnographic and historical studies of the Tahltan, in areas where its traditional territory overlaps with the Project, were identified using search engines at major academic institutions throughout British Columbia as well as World Cat. The information gathered was collated and compiled with a particular focus on land and resource use and any mention of locations specific to the areas that the Project is proposed to traverse. The sources were reviewed for content and information on several broad

themes of asserted territory, seasonal rounds, social, cultural and political context, language use, settlements and travel.

Table 2.2-1. Details of the Tahltan TU/TK Engagement Chronology (2007 and 2009)

Year	Date	Location	TU/TK Discussion Summary
2007	June 20-21	Dease Lake, BC	TU/TK kick off meeting.
	July 9	Conference Call	Discussed confidentiality concerns, Rescan's involvement, and next steps. Tahltan want to assess effects to Tahltan TU/TK beyond the 2 km study area.
	August 8	Vancouver, BC	Discussion of TU/TK study workplan, timelines, types and formats of TU/TK information, and interview questions.
2009	January 26	Vancouver, BC	Confirmed main TU/TK contacts. Discussed that they would conduct their own TU/TK study and obtain necessary funding from BCH.
	May 29	Vancouver, BC	Rescan provided a copy of the TU/TK Toolkit Binder to Tahltan for their consideration and use.
	June 2	Vancouver, BC	Discussed next steps and culturally appropriate methods (e.g., engaging Elders Council).
	June 25	Vancouver, BC	Rescan provided responses and questions to the Tahltan Traditional Use Study (TUS) proposal. Rescan agreed to send Tahltan ethnographic overview for Tahltan review and the interview questions. Tahltan indicated that they would start on TUS.
	August 11	Vancouver, BC	Tahltan introduced their team. Key contact established for the Tahltan TU/TK study. Rescan provided details on the types of TU/TK information they would like to incorporate into the EA application. Tahltan can start on the TU/TK field work immediately. Agreed to include as much as possible in the Tahltan interim TU/TK report. Rescan followed up with Tahltan on a prioritized list of TU/TK information needs.
	August 14	Conference Call	Requested shapefiles of route. Raised confidentiality concerns. Discussed different levels of TU/TK disclosure to public and internal to Rescan. Explained field reconnaissance methodology for identifying Aboriginal trails. Discussed how to transfer Tahltan TU/TK information to Rescan. Requested more detail on Rescan's TU/TK information requirements. Expressed concerns about the timeline for gathering the information.
	August 27	Terrace, BC	Reviewed Rescan's TU/TK information requests. Developed action plan for collecting critical TU/TK information and discussed timelines.
	September 9	Email	Receipt of Interim Tahltan Traditional Use Study.

2.4 DATA SOURCES

The primary source for project specific Tahltan TU/TK for this report is the *Tahltan Traditional Use Study of the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line – Interim Report* (Appendix 1). The interim report submitted by the Tahltan provides an overview of Tahltan values, concerns, predicted effects, and field observations related to the Project. Although the results are preliminary with additional information due in January 2010, the interim report indicates specific areas of focus and importance to the Tahltan that may overlap or interact with the Project.

Secondary and broad information is provided by a diversity of sources reporting on Tahltan people available through published and unpublished manuscripts, as well as publicly available resources online. The main sources for this Tahltan TU/TK report are from publications by Tahltan and ethnographers reporting on Tahltan people. A publication by the Stikine School District #87 (2000) is based on interviews with Tahltan elders and provides an overview for Tahltan traditional and current use from a Tahltan perspective. The CD-ROM is accessible online through the Stikine community website (School District 87, 2000). Tahltan perspectives are also provided on several Tahltan based or

supporting websites, such as the Tahltan Central Council (http://www.tahltan.org/) and the Sacred Headwaters (http://www.sacredheadwaters.com/) websites.

Sylvia Albright (1984) has conducted the most comprehensive ethnographic overview of the Tahltan, using both primary ethnographic and archaeological data and her own observations during her field visit during the summer of 1978. The earliest published accounts on Tahltan people were made by George Dawson (1887), as well as A.J. Stone who made detailed notes on Tahltan culture and their stories from 1896 to 1898. Accounts of A.J. Stone and early ethnographer James Teit, as well as interviews with Tahltan elders collected in the 1980s are found in a publication by the Tahltan Tribal Council and edited by J.K. Krueger (1992). Early principal ethnographers George Emmons (1911) and James Teit (1906, 1909, 1912, 1919, 1921 and 1956) reported on Tahltan people living at Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake in the period of 1903 to 1915. Other accounts of the Tahltan include publications by Frederick Hodge (1912), Bruce McLachlan (1957, 1981), C.J. Fenn (1993), Iskut First Nation et al. (2003), S.R. Isaac (1995), and T.F. McIlwraith (2007) among others. Alderete and McIlwraith's (2007) manuscript *Annotated Bibliography of Tahltan Language Materials* provides a comprehensive overview of linguistically related publications.

2.5 DATA CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

In writing this report, several data collection challenges and limitations were encountered and noted. They generally relate to issues with ethnographic sources and data gaps.

It is recognized that ethnographic information and observations have limitations and should not be considered conclusive or complete or necessarily reflective of Tahltan values, interests, and concerns. Ethnographic sources were recorded by Euro-Canadians in the late 1880s and early 1990s, who were largely informed by a western worldview and their own particular agenda. However, their work provides important accounts (even if incomplete and subjective) into daily life, social and political structures and subsistence methods employed by members of the Tahltan Nation at the turn of the twentieth century.

There are some Tahltan data gaps which will be filled with a more comprehensive Tahltan TU/TK study, scheduled to be completed by the Tahltan Heritage and Resource Environmental Assessment Team (THREAT) in January 2010. These gaps are generally related to limited site specific information. The historical and cultural overviews are limited to broad information about culture, land use and travel, and do not indicate exact locations or areas along the proposed transmission line that may overlap with current Tahltan land and resource uses.

3. Summary of Findings

3. Summary of Findings

3.1 OVERVIEW

Section 3.2 to 3.4 provide results from desk based research on publicly available sources about the Tahltan Nation. Section 3.5 provides an overview of the main issues raised in the *Tahltan Traditional Use Study of the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line – Interim Report* (Appendix 1). Together the desk based and preliminary field results indicate past and current Tahltan use of the area where the Project overlaps with Tahltan traditional territory.

3.2 CULTURAL CONTEXT

3.2.1 Social Organization

The Tahltan are described to be matrilineal and use a clan system as a framework for personal identity, marriage system, and government (School District 87, 2000; MacLachlan, 1981). Historical and current sources on Tahltan kinship provide a diversity of knowledge and viewpoints (School District 87, 2000; Albright, 1984; MacLachlan, 1981; Emmons 1911; Teit, 1906). Most sources agree that two major moieties (kinship or social groups) exist. These are the Wolf and Raven (Crow) moieties. A more recent Tahltan publication called these moieties 'clans' (School District 87, 2000). Within these moieties, several clans or extended family groups are described. Families demarcated with a capital 'F' refers to a major recognized extended family named after geographical areas in which the family had hunting resource rights (School District 87, 2000; Albright, 1984). The names for clans or families vary between ethnographic publications, and most likely this is due to different written interpretations of sounded out word, as well as the incorporation of Tlingit terms (Albright, 1984). Table 3.2-1 shows alternate names used in reference to Tahltan clans or families.

Table 3.2-1. Alternate Names Used in Reference to Tahltan Clans or Families

	Teit n.d.	Current Term	Thorman n.d.	Emmons 1911
Raven or Crow	Tceskea (Tahltan) Katcede (Tlingit)	Cheskie		Cheskea
Clan 1	Tudenekoten Ilkaihitoten Edaxhoten	Iskahigotine Edatigotine	Tich'an'oten	Kartchottee
Clan 2	Naloten	Nahlotin	Nahlodeen	Subfamily Narlotin
Clan 3	Tlepanoten	Tlepanotin Klogotine	Thlegtodeen	Subfamily Klabbahnotin
Wolf	Tseone (Tahltan) Taxtlowede (Tlingit)	Chiyone		Cheona
Clan 1	Talakoten	Tahlogotin	Tahlagoteen	Talarkotin
Clan 2	Naskoten	Tlkowedi	Nassgodeen	Tucklarwaytee
Clan 3	Tagicoten Nakagotin			
Clan 4	Nana'ai	Nana'a Nanga'ai	Shutin	Naniyee

Source: Albright, 1984: 11.

3.2.2 Spirituality and Worldview

From Tahltan descriptions, their traditional society was organized to follow values of cooperation that encouraged individual freedom, while honouring responsibilities to the entire community (School District 87, 2000). Tahltan laws were not written, but rather they were instilled from birth on. Tahltan ancestors "learned and lived" by three R's: religion, respect, and responsibility (School District 87, 2000). 'Religion' included the belief in a Creator, or God, who created everything and that all things for this reason were imbued with spirit or life (School District 87, 2000). Even those things deemed inanimate today, such as rocks. And since the Creator made everything, all things were seen to be part of "one sacred family" and thus related and treated with respect (School District 87, 2000). 'Respect' was practiced for everything in the Tahltan world, including the environment, plants, animals, and people (School District 87, 2000). This started with teaching children self-respect, as it was believed that only through a person having respect for one-self can they respect all other people and things. In traditional Tahltan society, each person was valued for their contributions and given the freedom of choice. 'Responsibility' was directly related to freedom of choice. It is said that "natives do not talk about rights, they talk about responsibility" (School District 87, 2000). Each person was responsible for their own learning, to become self-reliant, to be the best person they could be, to support their community, and to learn and show respect for all things in the world. For each person religious or spiritual beliefs were a personal matter between themselves and the Creator. The way people honoured their beliefs was personal to them. However, a person's actions should not cause harm and there were consequences for inappropriate behaviour (School District 87, 2000).

3.2.3 Political Organization

The Tahltan chose headmen for each of the main families to be their advisor, spokesperson and representative. This position was inherited matrilineally, and a headman's sisters' sons were candidates for becoming the future headman (School District 87, 2000). However, all Tahltan took part in choosing the new headman who needed to be 'Lani Etie', which means a person of good character and wealth, and who was "well rounded, skilled, energetic, intelligent and wise" (School District 87, 2000). The headmen of the Crow clan were called 'Nonnock' and for the Wolf clan 'Kentai'. The responsibilities of a headmen included being the family's spokesperson, advisor, and representative in peace and war times, as well as ensuring family members were cared for, hunting and gathering areas were cared for, settling disputes, and looking after communal property (School District 87, 2000). When European epidemics drastically reduced the Tahltan population it was decided that one headman, a Nonnock or Nan-nok of the Iskahigotine Family in the Crow clan was to lead the Tahltan (School District 87, 2000; MacLachlan, 1981).

Historically decisions were led by the headman, often his assistant or second headman, and a council. The council consisted of wise men, but could also include women with specialized knowledge or wisdom. Decisions were made by consensus through a process of 'collective wisdom' where all had to agree (School District 87, 2000). The headman and council were also responsible for settling disputes or grievances. Input from family members was taken into consideration for this. If a family member was misbehaving at the cost of himself or others, the Family would try to assist and remedy the situation (School District 87, 2000). In the harshest cases individual punishment was carried out, with the serious offences such as incest, or repeat offences having the consequence of death or banishment (School District 87, 2000). It is claimed though that in the traditional society crime, particularly serious offences, was rare (School District 87, 2000). Today there are elected Chief and Councils for both the Tahltan Band and the Iskut First Nation.

3.2.4 Ceremonies and Celebrations

3.2.4.1 Marriage

A.J. Stone noted in his diary of 1897 (TTC and Krueger, 1992) that if a man wanted to marry a woman he had to negotiate a bride price with the bride's family. After the marriage was agreed to and the bride price paid, the man would live under the bride's father's roof without any further ceremony. The groom would become a member of her father's family and her father's hunting party thus having access to his hunting grounds. In other ethnographic sources, it is mentioned that moiety exogamy (marrying outside the family/clan/other social unit) was strict, and that proper marriages were negotiated between responsible clanswomen of the potential couple (MacLachlan, 1981). Also, it was expected of the groom to work for the bride's parents (MacLachlan, 1981).

3.2.4.2 Death and Funerals

Tahltan ancestors believed that with death the spirit did not disappear, and instead entered the spirit world (School District 87, 2000). They also believed that spirits could be reborn and shared stories about people who could account for events in a past life-time. Funeral arrangements were made by older people of the opposite clan. Before the influence of Christian missionaries, the dead were wrapped in hides, new moccasins were placed on the dead person, and the body would lie in a place of honour for one or two days. At this time a large pyre was built and the body cremated with items needed for the journey such as new moccasins, clothing, and/or household items (School District 87, 2000). The cremated remains would then be collected and stored (i.e., in a grave house). Often the family members of the deceased would take the cremated remains back to heart of the Tahltan territory at the confluence of the Tahltan and Stikine River (Albright, 1984). A.J. Stones in 1897 (TTC and Krueger, 1992) also commented that people were also buried.

3.2.5 Language Use

3.2.5.1 Description

Tahltan belongs to the Athapaskan language group. The Tahltan language is typically grouped with Kaska and Tagish, and is described "as a former dialect of single language" (Alderete and McIlwraith, 2007; Krauss and Golla 1981). The name Tahltan is an adaptation of a Tlingit term used to describe an important trading ground at the mouth of the Tahltan River (Canadian Encyclopaedia 2007; YDLI, 2006). The Tahltan language has been described as endangered, and efforts are being made in continuing and revitalizing the Tahltan language (Alderete and McIlwraith, 2007; TCC, 2006). Most speakers of the Tahltan language live in Tahltan territory in the main communities of Telegraph Creek, Dease Lake, and Iskut (Alderete and McIlwraith, 2007). As well, some speakers are reported to live in Lower Post, BC and Watson Lake, Yukon Territory. In addition, there are many Tahltan that live outside of Tahltan territory, including urban centres such as Smithers, Terrace, Prince George, and in Greater Vancouver (Alderete and McIlwraith, 2007).

3.2.5.2 Numbers of Speakers

There are various sources which have estimated the number of people who speak Tahltan. The Tahltan Central Council (2006) released a report called Tahltan Language and Culture Strategic Plan, which asserts that there are 55 people in Tahltan territory that speak the language fluently. Of the 55 people who speak Tahltan, 53 are above the age of 65, and two are younger than 50. An additional seven of the Tahltan speakers live outside of Tahltan territory, and include three non-Tahltan linguists: John Ritter, John Alderete, and Collin Carter. Census Canada statistics prepared for the Department of

Indian and Northern Development (DIAND) report that in 2001 there were 50 Tahltan speakers, whereas in 1996, 60 were reported. In the Tahltan community, about 17% had knowledge of Aboriginal language. The most recent information on Tahltan language use is from the Tahltan Nation Census conducted in 2007. The results of the Tahltan Census (CMG 2009) indicate that "43% of respondents … indicated that they understood and spoke some of their native language or were fluent. Another 26% of the population was currently learning the language, and less than quarter of the population did not speak or understand the language."

3.2.6 Pre-Contact

The Tahltan followed semi-nomadic lifestyles of hunting, trapping, fishing, and gathering (School District 87, 2000). Their lives followed seasonal rounds and included extensive travel throughout their territory to meet seasonal needs. Tahltan had a close connection with the land, in order to live successful lives with plenty of sustenance from the land (School District 87, 2000). Historically, the core of Tahltan territory s situated at the confluence of Stikine and Tahltan Rivers (Albright, 1984). This is where Tahltan clans or extended family groups would meet to exchange knowledge and goods. Historically, clans had certain areas in Tahltan territory where they had hunting rights and responsibility for management (Albright, 1984).

3.2.7 Post-Contact

The influence of non-natives in Tahltan territory began before physical contact was made. Fur trading companies established trade relationships with the coastal First Nation, such as the Tlingit. At this time, diseases from Europe, such as measles and smallpox, were spread throughout many First Nation communities. In the case of the Tahltan, the epidemics were said to have come from the coast through trade relationships with the Tlingit (Albright, 1984). Until 1860 there were virtually no Euro-Canadians in Tahltan territory (School District 87, 2000). This changed in 1861 when Alexander "Buck" Choquette discovered gold in the Stikine River, and a short-lived gold rush to the area ensued. Because the gold rush came and went quickly, it did not have a great effect on Tahltan people (School District 87, 2000). However, the Cassiar gold rush in 1874 did have an effect on the Tahltan Nation. This gold rush brought thousand of non-Tahltan people into Tahltan territory, and in 1897 the mining community of Glenora (near Telegraph Creek) had an estimated population of 3,500, which far outnumbered the entire local Tahltan post-epidemic population of approximately 300 at this time. Furthermore, it is estimated that over ten thousand people passed through Glenora during the Cassiar gold rush (School District 87, 2000).

With the discovery of gold, Tahltan territory was claimed as part of the Stikine Territory by the crown colony of British Columbia in 1863 (School District 87, 2000). This opened the opportunity for non-Aboriginal traders to become active in Tahltan territory. This affected the traditional Tahltan-Tlingit trade relationships, which dwindled and faded (School District 87, 2000). In 1863, all territory north of the 60th parallel was claimed by Governor Douglas as part of the crown colony of British Columbia, and this claimed territory entered the Canadian confederations in 1871 (School District 87, 2000). In 1910, the Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe was signed at Telegraph Creek, which asserted title to Tahltan lands (Tahltan Band Council; TCC; Isaac, 1995). Today, Tahltan people are engaged in various ways of representing and seeking recognition of their asserted Aboriginal title and rights, including direct action, media awareness, and negotiations with Crown and provincial representatives.

3.3 TRADITIONAL AND CURRENT USE OF AREA

3.3.1 Seasonal Rounds

The Tahltan were traditionally semi-sedentary, spending part of the year in large multifamily villages and the remainder of the year in small family groups in mobile hunting camps (Emmons, 1911). With the advent of the fur trade and gold mining activities, winter shelters changed to European-style log cabins and summer villages changed to European-style canvas tents. Hunting patterns also changed to focus more on furbearing animals during both the summer and winter months (Emmons, 1911).

In the autumn, once the fishing season finished, the hunting season would begin. Small groups, generally two or three families, would set off together to their hunting grounds and would select a favourable area to set up camp (Emmons, 1911). Once the wildlife resources in the general vicinity had been depleted, the camp would be moved, this could potentially occur several times throughout the fall and winter. A stock of furs from winter hunting efforts would be taken for trading at the end of the season. Upon the arrival of spring, they would make their way to the summer fishing grounds, by mid-June, when the salmon start their run. They would remain there until September enjoying fresh fish and berries. Social functions and celebrations would often occur towards the end of the fishing season (Emmons, 1911). Table 3.3-1 summarizes the activities related to the Tahltan seasonal rounds.

Table 3.3-1. Tahltan Seasonal Rounds

Season	Month	Productive Activity	
Summer	June to July	Fishing	People begin to catch fish, including king salmon; work continues on fishing
	August	Fishing	Put up fish for winter, after August 10, fishing season is over
Fall	September	Hunting	People head to the mountains to obtain caribou, groundhog, gopher; "at end of this time, people work on grease and drying skins."
	October	Hunting	People leave mountains and head to village locations
Winter	November to February	Trapping	Women and children remain in village, while men pursue trapping and rejoin their families in the village, only teenage boys hunt
Spring	March		Men finish trapping, return to village
	April		People leave villages and head to Teslin and Tuya Lake.
	May		Trap beaver until the middle of this period

Source: Albright 1984:83 and Emmons 1911:39.

3.3.2 Hunting and Trapping

Traditionally, hunting and trapping was an important part of life and sustenance gathering for Tahltan people, and continues to be important today (School District 87, 2000). Historically, it was the men's role to hunt, dress and skin large animals. Women were involved in preserving the meat (usually by drying), taking care of hides, and hunting smaller animals. Historical hunting and trapping methods included the use of fences (particularly to herd and hunt caribou), snaring (for smaller game), deadfalls (for catching carnivores), stalking (particularly for hunting mountain goats), and the use of specially bred and trained bear dogs (School District 87, 2000). Hunting was said to be the principal occupation and source of income for the Tahltan as noted by A.J. Stone in his diary in 1897 (TTC and Krueger, 1992). He also noted that prime hunting seasons were in spring and fall, and in 1897 this was recorded to be from March 1 to May 1 and October 1 to January 1 respectively (TTC and Krueger, 1992). By 1897, introduced hunting methods were reported to be in use including the use of rifles and steel traps (TTC and Krueger, 1992).

Preferred big game in Tahltan territory includes caribou, moose, and bears, and mountain sheep and goat (School District 87, 2000). Today, moose is a mainstay in the Tahltan diet, although moose is reported to have been rare prior to the 1800s and became plentiful in the area only in the last 200 years (School District 87, 2000; TTC and Krueger, 1992). Albright (1984) noted that two moose species were found in Tahltan territory, one species in the area south of the Stikine River and east of the Tuya River and the other northwest of these two rivers. However, in the past and present the preferred meat is reported to be caribou, because it said to taste better than moose, as well as historically it was easier to obtain (School District 87, 2000; TTC and Krueger, 1992). Emmons (1911) noted that Tahltan people greatly valued the caribou whose habitat was found to the north and east of Dease Lake where moss was available. Mountain goat was prized for its meat and hair, and required great skill and knowledge to hunt in the challenging alpine terrains (School District 87, 2000). Historically, bear was a regular part of the Tahltan diet.

3.3.3 Fishing

Fishing was and continues to be a mainstay for the Tahltan. Fish, both freshwater and anadromous, were eaten fresh in the summer or dried for winter consumption. Generally, fishing occurred along the Stikine and its tributaries, in areas that allowed for fishing camps to assemble (i.e., between the Tahltan and Tuya Rivers) (Emmons 1911:86; Friesen 1985:27). Anadromous or migratory fish, which came in their respective cycles into Tahltan territory to spawn, included several varieties of salmon, including pink, chum, Coho, Chinook or king or spring, and sockeye as well as steelhead trout (School District 87, 2000). Most of the fish come up the Stikine or Iskut River and then followed tributaries back to the river and creek beds of their origin, including the Tahltan, Nahlin, and Shesley Rivers (School District 87, 2000). Methods for fishing included using fish-hooks, weirs (fish chutes), basket traps, gaffs, spears, dip nets and gill nets. The use of gill nets is the most common way used today (School District 87, 2000).

3.3.4 Plant and Berry Gathering

Plants represented an important part of the Tahltan diet which contributed to a balanced health diet in the past and present (School District 87, 2000). Green vegetables were gathered mostly in spring time with the emergence of new shoots (School District 87, 2000). Vegetable greens that were collected included wild rhubarb, nettles, lamb's quarter, mountain sorrel, and dandelion (School District 87, 2000). Roots were collected primarily in spring time and sometimes with the aid of a sharp digging stick. Berries were and still are consumed today in Tahltan territory include raspberries, strawberries, low and high-bush cranberries, low, mid and high-bush blueberries, Saskatoon, and soapberries (School District 87, 2000). The cambium, which is the inner living layer of trees, was also consumed as a food (School District 87, 2000), and Teit (n.d.) has noted that cambium was an important springtime resource.

Plants were both a food and medicinal source. The Tahltan believed in preventative medicine, which included eating a balanced diet including health promoting food plants. Herbal remedies were used for minor ailments and disease, whereas major sickness involved the expert knowledge of a Shaman who would use a variety of healing tools that could include plant derived medicines. Examples of plants used for medicine are: caribou weed; the needles and bark of evergreens; and soapberry.

3.3.5 Settlements

3.3.5.1 Description

Before the influences of Europeans, the Tahltan people did not have permanent settlements (School District 87, 2000; Albright, 1984). When Europeans arrived, the Tahltan took part in an economic exchange with the settlers, earning a wage through working, particularly for trading companies and at guide settlements (School District 87, 2000; Albright, 1984). This resulted in the creation of building permanent settlements, such as Goon-da-chagga, now known as Tahltan Village settlements (School District 87, 2000). The Tahltan would pass the winter in longhouses. Emmons (1906) commented that "in truth their houses are little more than storage depots, marks of social standing, and meeting places for feasts and ceremonies."

3.3.5.2 Traditional Housing

Housing had to accommodate a lifestyle of frequent and extensive travel, and it had to be respectful of the land. Therefore, Tahltan had shelters that were light, portable, easy to maintain, and environmentally friendly (School District 87, 2000). There were two basic houses: lean-tos and smokehouses. Other building structures were created for specific purposes, including storage caches or buildings, dog houses for dog-sled teams, sweat lodges for ceremonies, smokehouses for drying salmon and grave houses for the cremated remains of the deceased.

3.3.5.3 Selection Criteria

Settlement criteria changed over time and with the needs of the people. Historically, salmon runs greatly influenced annual settlement patterns and the construction of smokehouses (School District 87, 2000). Villages and settlements were often built in specific locations in proximity to the salmon run. Throughout the year, Tahltan people had settlement locations throughout the Tahltan territory based on their hunting rights in specific areas and annual seasonal rounds and activities (School District 87, 2000; Albright, 1984). This included spring camps, summer fishing villages, fall camps, and winter camp (Albright, 1984).

3.3.5.4 Locations

Each Tahltan clan or family group had allocated areas for their sustenance activities. The Tahltan Village was built on a high terrace 1.5 miles down the Stikine from the Tahltan River's mouth, and flourished from 1875 to about 1920 (MacLachlan, 1981). After World War II, Tahltan Village was gradually abandoned favouring relocation to Telegraph Creek for more economic opportunities. Since then, Telegraph Creek has been an important location and is also the Tahltan Band's headquarters (MacLachlan, 1981). The chief village of the Nassgotin was *Gunakhe*, which was located on the westerly branch of the Nass River. As well, Chikanada, eight miles below Tahltan at the foot of the Grand Canyon, was a major fishing station for the Nassgotin and Thlegtotin.

3.3.6 Travel

Historically, Tahltan people travelled extensively throughout their territory and into the neighbouring territories. Tahltan country is not flat, but hilly, with mountains and foothills full of ravines and rivers (School District 87, 2000). This made the Tahltan territory difficult to traverse, and the best traditional travel method was to go on foot. To facilitate walking when snow was present several types of snowshoes served the traveller depending on purpose of travel, snow conditions, etc. (School District 87, 2000). Pre-1800s, the use of backpacking was the main method of transport, and this included pulling a skin sled (School District 87, 2000). In the early 1800s, Tahltan started using their dogs for

packing and pulling wooden sledges. Travelling on water was not preferred. It was believed that certain water bodies had monsters in them. As well, the Tahltan tended to hunt and gather in the upland areas away from navigable water (School District 87, 2000). Temporary rafts and/or canoes were made for the purpose of crossing water bodies. Sturdy dug-out canoes were brought with Tlingit traders up the Stikine River. In about 1875, the first horses came to the area with non-Tahltan, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples (School District 87, 2000). However, horses were not as effective in the Tahltan environment as dogs were. Only in recent times have horses been adopted into Tahltan lifestyles. In 1928, a major trading and packing trail from Glenora and Telegraph Creek to Dease Lake was converted into a road, making it possible to bring and use motorized vehicles (School District 87, 2000). In 1972, the Stewart-Cassiar highway was built through Tahltan territory and "completely opened up the area" to non-Tahltan, as well as created new transportation opportunities for Tahltan (School District 87, 2000).

A handful of major trails, including the Telegraph Creek Trail, the Hyland Post Trail and the Glenora to Dease Lake Trail, are interspersed with smaller, seasonal trails (Emmons, 1911). These trails also provided access between different key resource gathering areas, including summer villages and winter hunting areas (Millennia Research, 1998).

3.3.7 Trading

The Tahltan had well-established trade relationships with the coast Tlingit and the more inland Kaska (School District 87, 2000). Less important trade relationships were also created with the Sekani and natives in the Teslin area. During times of peace, Tahltan also traded with the Atlin Tlingit and Nisga'a Nation. In the past, the Tahltan acted as middlemen between the coastal Tlingit and interior First Nations. The Tlingit came up the Stikine River in large canoes capable of carrying several tons and set up camps in Tahltan territory to trade their fish oil, dentalium (seashells), woodwork and blankets for items such as hides, furs and obsidian (School District 87, 2000; Teit, 1956). One major meeting point for trading was nine miles upriver from where Telegraph Creek is now established (School District 87, 2000). They travelled into Tahltan territory in the spring and returned as soon as they could sell their goods, sometimes as late as June. The traders would arrive again in September, and return before ice formed on the Stikine River in October. Goods traded in Tahltan territory were canoed or backpacked into the interior by means of well established trade routes such as the one connecting Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake (School District 87, 2000).

3.3.8 Significant Land Formations

There are several significant land formations in Tahltan territory. In the northern areas of the Tahltan asserted territory are the Teslin, Nahlin, Sheslay, and Tuya rivers among others in the northern range of the Stikine Plateau. On the western boundaries of the Territory are the Coast Mountains or Boundary Ranges. In the centre of Tahltan territory are several important contemporary Tahltan communities. Tahltan communities in the Telegraph Creek area are directly on the Stikine River, near the confluence of the Stikine with the Tahltan and Chutine rivers, as well as Mess and Shakes creeks. Bordering this area to the east and south is Mount Edziza Provincial Park located in the Big Raven Plateau in which the legendary volcano Mount Edziza is located. This park is connected through the Stikine River Park with the Spatzizi Plateau Wilderness Park to the east. In between these two areas are the community of Iskut and the headwaters of the Iskut River. In the eastern region of the territory are the headwaters for the Stikine River, and in the Klappan, Spatzizi, Skeena, and Nass rivers in the Klappan area. In the south in between Bob Quinn Lake and Bell II is the Ningunsaw Park.

3.4 SUMMARY OF INTERIM FIELD RECONNAISSANCE RESULTS

According to the *Tahltan Traditional Use Study of the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line – Interim Report* (Appendix 1), the purpose of the report is to "provide an initial description of Tahltan Knowledge (TK) and Tahltan Use (TU)" for inclusion in the EA application.

The report contains a summary of environmental setting, cultural, historical and ethnographic context (which overlaps with Rescan's description provided in Section 3.2 and 3.3 above), and progress towards completing the interviews and the mapping component of the TU/TK program, and high level results of the field reconnaissance effort to the date of report writing. The remainder of this section provides key highlights of the preliminary field outcomes organized by different discipline topic areas. Because of the significance of trail networks to the Tahltan, most of the Tahltan-directed field work focussed on locating and documenting trails and associated cultural features; however, incidental wildlife and fish observations were also noted. The results of the reconnaissance include information about wildlife, fish, vegetation, land and resource use, and water bodies.

3.4.1 Wildlife

The interim report listed Tahltan culturally significant wildlife species, including "mountain goat, moose, grizzly bear, black bear, wolves, marten, fisher, lynx, river otter, snowshoe hare, porcupine, red and flying squirrels, and wolverine" (Appendix 1).

The report also contains a summary of culturally important birds, such as "bald and golden eagles, northern goshawk, ravens, Bonaparte and common gulls, geese, ducks, pileated, downy, and hairy woodpecker" (Appendix 1).

Tahltan field crews made several incidental wildlife observations. First, they indicated in the interim report that the dominant species in Teigen-Snowbank-Ningunsaw corridor are grizzly and black bears. During the field work, crews noted three grizzlies and three wolves. According to the interim report, there were also large numbers of balsam trees with stripped inner bark, which is indicative of late spring grizzly feeding.

3.4.2 Fish

The interim report notes culturally significant fish, including "Chinook, coho, steelhead, Dolly Varden, bull trout, mountain whitefish, and rainbow trout" (Appendix 1). Tahltan field crews noted Chinook abundance as being moderate.

3.4.3 Vegetation

The interim report notes trees of cultural significant to include:

- Subalpine fir,
- Hemlock, spruce,
- Willow,
- Alder,
- Mountain hemlock,
- Lodgepole pine,
- Aspen,

- Birch, and
- Cottonwood.

Of culturally importance among berries, the Tahltan value:

- Alaska blueberry,
- Oval-leaf blueberry,
- Black huckleberry,
- Salmonberry,
- Saskatoon,
- Rose,
- Raspberry, and
- Devil's club.

The interim report also contains references to culturally significant shrubs, including:

- Peavine,
- Bramble,
- Twisted stalk,
- Prince's pine, and
- Feather and leafy mosses.

The report also identified culturally significant habitats, such as:

- Riparian,
- Old growth forests,
- Shrub-herb communities,
- Wetlands,
- Deciduous forests,
- South aspects,
- Avalanche tracks and run out zones, and
- Alluvial fans.

Of importance to the Tahltan on a stand-level includes:

- Snags,
- Dying trees,
- Deciduous trees, and
- Forest canopy gaps and edges.

During the Tahltan field reconnaissance, the field crews noted low levels of plant harvesting, which were mostly concentrated in Bob Quinn area.

3.4.4 Land and Resource Use

Of particular importance to Tahltan are the Aboriginal trails through Ningunsaw and Bell-Irving valleys, which connect a range of Tahltan use sites. In the past, the interim report indicates that these Aboriginal trails were used in the distribution of obsidian from Mount Edziza. Tahltan are currently locating the Aboriginal trail, which "was later used by the 1900-36 Yukon Telegraph Line corridor and trail" (Appendix 1). Associated with the Telegraph Trail are four cabins, which were located during the Tahltan field reconnaissance.

Tahltan have classified culturally important sites including "hunting, fishing, trapping locations and corridors, trail and travel corridors, sacred sites, culturally significant landscapes and landforms, cabins, camps, village, and homeplace sites" (Appendix 1). The interim report indicates that "many Tahltan households participate in non-commercial harvesting of wild plants, wildlife, and fish" (Appendix 1).

Tahltan value continued transfer of traditional ecological knowledge between generations to ensure cultural continuity. Another Tahltan value is their asserted Aboriginal rights and title, which are outlined in the Tahltan Declaration in 1910 (Appendix 2).

3.4.5 Water

The three largest waterways of importance to the Tahltan that may be affected by the Project include Bell-Irving River, Teigen Creek, and Ninungsaw River.

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Appendix 1

Tahltan Traditional Use Study - Interim Report

Rescan™
Engineers and Scientists

Tahltan Traditional Use Study
of the proposed
Northwest Transmission Line Project

INTERIM REPORT

Tahltan Heritage Resources Environmental Assessment Team
Tahltan Transmission Line Project Team
September 4, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

Tahltan Heritage Resource Environmental Assessment Team (THREAT) and Tahltan Central Council (TCC) present this interim report to BC Hydro and British Columbia Transmission Corporation. This Tahltan Traditional Use Study (TUS) interim report is a component of the Tripartite Agreement, dated May 29, 2009, between TCC, BC Hydro, and the Province of BC in respect of the proposed Northwest Transmission Line within Tahltan territory. BC Hydro (BCH) and British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC) propose to construct and operate a 287 kV Northwest Transmission Line from the Skeena Sub-station, located close to Terrace, B.C., to Bob Quinn Lake.

BCTC is responsible for operations, maintenance, planning expansions and extensions to the BC electrical transmission system, and its interconnections with the larger North American grid.

The portion of the proposed NTL Project from Treaty/Deltaic creeks to Bob Quinn Lake is within Tahltan Territory over which the Tahltan Nation asserts Aboriginal Title and Rights. TCC has previously identified issues which, in its view, must be addressed by any proposal to construct a transmission line through Tahltan Territory. These issues were documented in the Tahltan Territory Transmission Report (TCC 2005a), including how a transmission line will dictate the scale and pace of development within Tahltan Territory.

The Tahltan Central Council and BCTC have agreed to establish a relationship and engage in the NTL project with the following objectives:

- Identification and completion of studies and reports which will enable the Tahltan Nation and BC to assess the Project;
- BCTC and TCC consultation and accommodation as may be appropriate during the BCEAA process; and
- BCTC and TCC consultation and accommodation, as may be appropriate, regarding issues related to the NTL, which are in this instance beyond the scope of the BCEAA and other regulatory processes for the Project.

With these objectives in mind, TCC is conducting varies studies such as: Tahltan Traditional Knowledge and Use, Tahltan Socio-Cultural Impacts, Cumulative Effects on Tahltan Rights and Title, Tahltan Archaeological Impacts, and Tahltan Wildlife Values. It is important to note that these studies will include potential impacts and recommend mitigation measures where appropriate.

The purpose of this Tahltan Traditional Use Study (TUS) interim report is to provide an initial description of Tahltan Knowledge (TK) and Tahltan Use (TU) that is required:

- to be included and incorporated into the BC Environmental Assessment process;
- to determine broad level and wide-ranging, as well as specific Tahltan interests and values, potential effects, and mitigation management approaches.

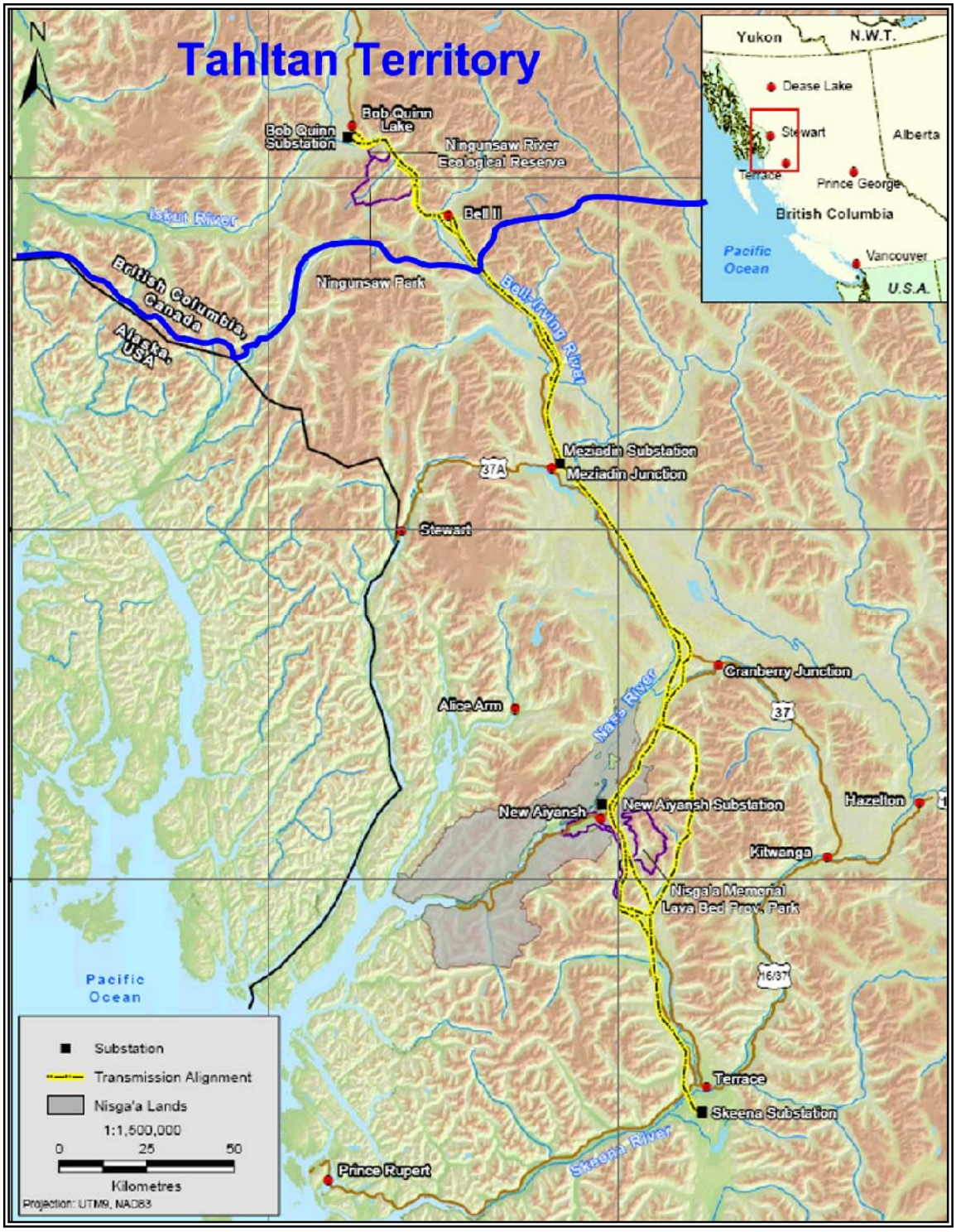

Figure 1. The proposed Northwest Transmission Line location and Tahltan territory.

SCOPE & APPROACH

The scope of this project includes Tahltan territory from Deltaic Creek in the south to Bob Quinn Lake in the north. This area is generally considered to be the southern region of Tahltan territory and was traditionally occupied by the Naskoten, who exercised land and resource stewardship rights, prerogatives, and responsibilities.

The exact route of the transmission line corridor is not yet selected; however, adjacent areas within 2 km of the projected corridor route are being assessed for Tahltan Knowledge and Tahltan Use. This data set will in turn enable the determination of potential effects or infringements to Tahltan rights and title, traditional use sites, Tahltan cultural connections to our land, and other wide-ranging factors from the NTL project, if it is implemented.

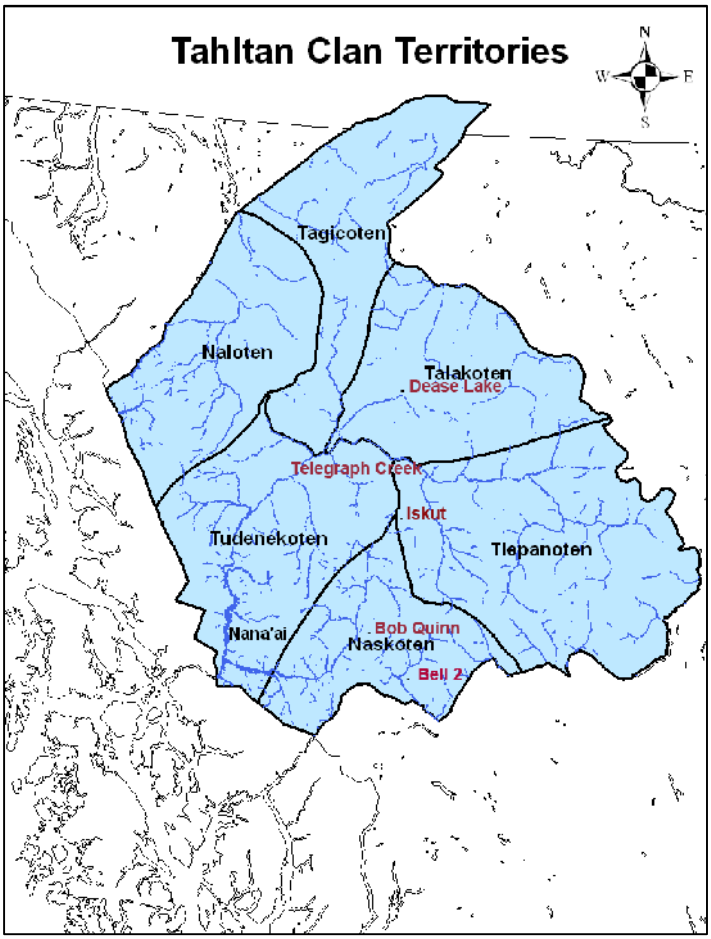

Figure 2. Tahltan Clan Territories and community locations.

This traditional use study does not include a cumulative impacts assessment, an environmental impact study, or a socio-cultural impact assessment. This study will establish Tahltan Knowledge and Use as well as Tahltan interests and values on and adjacent to the proposed NTL corridor in order to participate in the BCEAA process and to facilitate completion of a comprehensive Tahltan NTL Project Assessment.

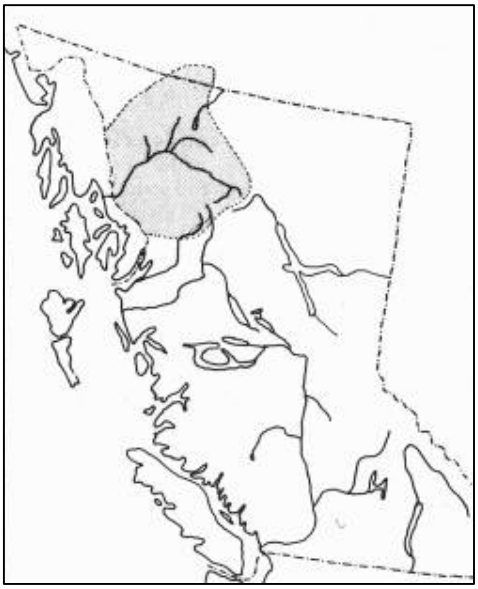

Figure 3. Tahltan territory within B.C.

It is important to note that the accelerated timeline enabling BCH and BCTC to file their BCEAA Application at a relatively early filing date places limitations on this project's results and reporting. As agreed, the final report for this Tahltan TUS will be delivered on January 15, 2010.

METHODOLOGY

This NTL Tahltan traditional knowledge and use study encompasses five interrelated main components or phases that include: 1). Project coordination; 2). Interviewing of knowledgeable Tahltan people; 3). Research and mapping of known relevant traditional use sites and traditional ecological knowledge; 4). Preliminary field reconnaissance; 5). Text and map report.

Project Coordination

Project coordination includes establishing and managing the project, hiring personnel and contractors, conducting effective coordination between Tahltan leadership, the client, and THREAT, as well as providing continuity and accountability in a timely manner. Communications between the field crews, researcher, and mapper has supported significant project results to date.

Tahltan Interviews

The Tahltan Transmission Line Project Team (TTLPT), in conjunction with Tahltan leadership, selected knowledgeable Tahltan Elders and other Tahltan land and resource users to share their cultural and ecological knowledge. Hereafter, these Tahltan will be referred to as cultural advisors. The particular interests of the cultural researchers include traditional and current use, as well as traditional ecological knowledge on both broad and specific levels.

The majority of interviews are conducted in English. The interview procedure is informal and open-ended, which allows the cultural advisor to be relaxed, comfortable, and to a certain extent, control the interview process and content. Interviews are voice recorded and notes are taken. Maps at the 1:50,000 and 1:250,000 scale (NTS) are utilized during the interview sessions; the latter are by far the most popular. Sites discussed are alpha-numerically described with the cultural advisors' initials, along with an ascending numbering order starting from 8,000 and correlated to the voice recorder. Each interview recording is given a unique identification number and will be indexed with previously documented Tahltan cultural advisor material.

Research & Mapping

Data sheets have been created and are organized on the 1:20,000 and 1:250,000 scale with outputs directed towards the GIS mapper and to the field crews. Inputs from the field crew will also be entered following completion of the field work. Inputs from the cultural advisor interviews and field trips will be entered on an ongoing basis.

GIS maps will be created at the 1:100,000 and 1:20,000 scale, with the known cultural heritage and ecological overlaid and labelled with a unique identifier number. Originally, these maps were to be built at the project front end to facilitate ground truthing activities; however, due to the late program start this did not occur. Ground truthed sites will be added to the maps once the fieldwork is completed. Tahltan Knowledge acquired and compiled in Phase 1 will be documented with a unique identification number in a simple database that co-relates to mapped features.

The 1:100,000 scale presentation maps will portray the proposed NTL corridor, transportation features, past development activities, landscape features, and an overview of Tahltan values and interests.

Preliminary Field Reconnaissance

Preliminary field reconnaissance is used to locate and identify Tahltan cultural heritage and delineate areas that potentially need subsurface archaeological inspection. Surface features expected to be recorded include trails, homeplaces such as cabins, camps and village sites, and other cultural property. All cultural features will be ground truthed, GPSd to ensure coordinate location, photographed, described by text, and mapped. The majority of the ground truthing work will involve locating the main north-south trail that provides linkage to cultural sites and branch trails.

Two field crews consisting of a leader and two technicians survey the selected area. The general methodology and level of survey coverage in all areas is reconnaissance. Walking transects are conducted through the valley bottom with surveyors generally 5–20 M apart dependent on landforms and forest cover. CMT's are ribboned with both pink CULTURALLY MODIFIED TREE (CMT) and blue CULTURAL HERITAGE RESOURCE (CHR). Located trailways are marked with blue CHR and pink CMT ribbon where appropriate. All cultural features and traditional use activity centers are GPS'd to facilitate mapping and future location positioning.

A Culturally Modified Tree (CMT) is defined as a tree that has been modified by indigenous people as part of their "traditional" use. Bark-stripped trees are trees from which the bark has been partially removed by people, and are characterized by one or more areas of exposed wood. Blazed trees in a continuous or semi-continuous manner most often indicate trails. Trails generally take advantage of the given topography and are usually located on the easy ground.

Field notes, photographs, and GPS points are downloaded and backed up. GPS coordinates are entered into a GIS database to facilitate 1:20,000 scale mapping. No subsurface surveys are being conducted. A more detailed ground truthing methodology will be presented in the final report.

Figure 4. View downstream on Ningunsaw River from above Alger Creek showing Highway #37 and Echo Lake.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Within Tahltan territory, the NTL Project extends from Deltaic Creek in the south to the Bob Quinn Lake area in the north. The study area, which comprises the southern portion of Tahltan territory, encompasses the northwestern headwaters of the Nass drainage and a relatively small piece of the mid-Iskut basin.

The proposed NTL Project corridor is generally adjacent to Highway #37, which from the south follows the Bell-Irving River, then passes westward into its tributaries Teigen and Snowbank creeks. Highway #37 then crosses into the Ningunsaw River drainage through a gentle pass. Ningunsaw River flows into Iskut River, which is the largest Stikine River tributary.

The topography of the study area is characterized by rugged mountains separated by interlocked, relatively narrow lowland valleys. From Deltaic Creek located at 463 m, the elevation rises to 595 m at Ningunsaw Summit and passes to 612 m elevation at the Bob Quinn Airstrip.

The study area represents a transition from coastal to interior biogeoclimatic values. The low elevation valley bottoms are characterized as very wet, cold or moist cold subzones of the Interior Cedar Hemlock biogeoclimatic zone (ICHvc or ICHwc). Snowfall at Bell 2 is typically 12 m with an average of 3-5 m snowpack depth lasting 6-7 months. Essentially, the topography allows warm, moist coastal weather systems to penetrate up the Nass and Iskut river valleys and drop their moisture. Mid slope vegetation is represented by the moist, cold Engelmann Spruce biogeoclimatic subzone (ESSFwv), which passes by transition into the Alpine Tundra zone.

Figure 5. View southeast of upper Snowbank Creek.

Note the valley-wide wetland complex bisected by Highway #37, the large amount of avalanche run-out terrain on both valley walls, and the relatively narrow valley bottom.

In general, the valley bottoms are wet due to a variety of reasons that include: climatic influences, avalanches, moisture receiving sites, riparian meadows and wetland complexes, and floodplain locations. This is reflected in the dominant vegetation that includes subalpine fir, spruce, oak and lady fern, devil's club, false azalea, black huckleberry, highbush-cranberry, and leafy mosses. Most locations are dominated by

devil's club ecosystems comprised of subalpine fir and spruce. In comparison to the southern portions of the NTL corridor, deep and long-lasting snowpacks restrict some wildlife species presence or abundance; for instance, mule deer and fisher.

The three largest streams in the study area, Bell-Irving River, Teigen Creek, and Ningunsaw River, are characterized as wandering gravel bed rivers. These streams and their tributaries are generally rated high value fish habitat (Schell 1999, SKR 1998). Bell-Irving River and Teigen Creek support anadromous fish including chinook and coho salmon and steelhead, as well as Dolly Varden, bull trout, and mountain whitefish. Ningunsaw River supports Dolly Varden, bull trout, and mountain whitefish; no anadromous fish are known above the Iskut River Canyon.

The Bob Quinn area possesses an unusually dry micro-climate, wherein snowpacks are on average less than a meter in depth, and consequently exhibits characteristics of the ICHmc1 subzone. This is meaningful in terms of overall species diversity including vegetation, wildlife, and birds.

In comparison to the Teigen-Snowbank-Ningunsaw valleys, which are relatively narrow and steep, the Bell-Irving valley from Deltaic Creek north to the Bell 2 crossing is broad and gentle.

Historically, land use in the study area has been relatively scant and has mostly consisted of Tahltan traditional use. The linear Yukon Telegraph Line was established in the early 1900s, but with the advent of wireless radio, telegraph service was discontinued in 1936. Highway #37 was slowly built southward in the late 1960s and officially opened in the mid-1970s. More recently, clearcut forestry was conducted intensively from the late 1980 through to the late 1990s. Since 2000, forestry development activities have occurred at a more relaxed pace due to market downturns and the closure of the Port Edward pulp mill.

Currently, there are approximately 23 cutblocks south and east of the Bell 2 crossing and 14 cutblocks adjacent to the Bob Quinn Lake area. Bell 2 Lodge has a backcountry use tenure where heli-skiing is the main activity; they also offer seasonal guided sport fishing opportunities.

Figure 6. View southward shows forest development land use south of the Bell 2 crossing.

CULTURAL, HISTORICAL & ETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

This interim report presents a brief overview of the Tahltan cultural, historic, and ethnographic context. A more detailed and comprehensive discussion will be presented in the final report.

The discussion of Tahltan culture begins with Tahltan people themselves. Their culture, history, and knowledge have been passed down through generations both orally through formal gatherings and/or casually around fires between a grandmother and her grand children. Tahltan have maintained their heritage, stories, and placenames with precision and detail. The Tahltan oral histories establish the foundation for this Tahltan Traditional Use Study.

Tahltan have continued to maintain complex land use and subsistence practices. Subsistence activities were tightly interconnected with local landscapes, the broader regional environment, and the social structure. Tahltan knowledge and understanding of the environment, the characteristics of each resource, and the seasonal variability in resource abundance, as well as the fluctuation in availability, were necessary for making decisions about what, where, and when different resources were to be gathered or harvested (Allbright 1984).

Over time, families developed systems of access, tenure, and resource management. A strong and adaptive semi-nomadic economy was based around the summer salmon food fisheries located in the mid-Stikine, the upper Nass, and the upper Skeena basin. Dispersal into smaller family groups on varying segments of the territory during the rest of the year strategized hunting, fishing, and gathering. These two modes of subsistence, the summer salmon fishery along with seasonal dispersal, delineated the economic structure.

Tahltan people relied heavily on hunting and fishing to meet their subsistence needs. A key dynamic in regard to hunting and gathering was the flexibility or adaptive strategies that were utilized, which were highly responsive to local variations in wildlife and fisheries resources. The predominant strategy was to move to other nearby areas to procure more abundant food supplies. Mobility and flexibility were primary policies that characterized Tahltan group size and settlement patterns.

Intercultural contacts based around trade, acquiring new technologies, building alliances, and securing resource options were abundant. Central to relatively recent Tahltan cultural history is the fact of continuously adapting to, and relating to, neighbouring indigenous cultures.

Trading was pervasive, with an extensive trail network that connected the coastal areas with the Pacific slope. The cultural infrastructure was underpinned by this trail transportation framework, which linked together villages, homeplaces, hunting, fishing, and resource gathering locales. This transportation network continues to be important, and currently connects Tahltan to ancient traditional sites and features.

By the nineteenth century, hunting, fishing, and trapping remained central to Tahltan subsistence; however, alliances based on survival were important. This is mostly due to major external events such as the arrival of European trade goods, development of the fur trade, epidemics of European origin that severely cut indigenous populations, and finally, the European penetration of the upper Stikine, upper Skeena, and upper Nass drainages with the Cassiar gold rush in 1874-1876.

The impact of Europeans advancing from the east and Russians and Americans from the West changed the nature of indigenous relationships by creating new and intensified opportunities to compete. The developing fur trade modified trade networks and the competitive structure among all subarctic societies. This competition for access to goods considered to be high status, and occasionally competition solely for status, formed the foundation for violent conflict among Gitxsan, Tahltan, Tsetsaut, and Sekani peoples.

Ethnographic Record

More recently, with the onset of colonial and settler society, the works of various ethnographers, surveyors, and observers have accompanied the ancient oral tradition. The first ethnographic research concerning the Tahltan occurred in 1904 and 1906 when Emmons visited Telegraph Creek. Emmons' (1911) research work focused on documenting Tahltan material culture in Telegraph Creek.

During this same time period and shortly thereafter, Teit (1906, 1956, no date) documented information about Tahltan people, their origins, food collection and processing procedures, and their living conditions. Teit also recorded Tahltan songs, legends, and myths, the Tahltan role in the coastal-Pacific slope trade network, and Tahltan social structure including family composition.

A decade later, Jenness (1927) provided a summary overview of the Tahltan in his research on Canadian Indians. Jenness (1937) also conducted research into the Sekani Indians, presenting Sekani movements on and around the eastern boundary of Tahltan territory.

More contemporary ethnographic research was conducted and reported by MacLachlan (1981) during his 1956 stay in Telegraph Creek. MacLachlan utilized Tahltan informants to document Tahltan culture, social organizations, clan systems, and territory. This was followed by Hawkes (1966), who completed a demographic data analysis that concerned employment and residence patterns in Telegraph Creek and Iskut. Important documentation in this study pertained to genealogies and house patterns within each community.

Higgins (1975a, 1976) completed ethnographic research in Telegraph Creek during the 1970s, wherein he documented the daily life of the Tahltan and their seasonal movements. Higgins also noted much about the Tahltan technology and how tools and apparatuses were used during each season of food harvesting. Further information concerned major hunting and fishing areas. Tahltan Winter Subsistence: A New Perspective Higgins' (1975b) looks at how the Tahltan used their local knowledge of wildlife patterns to maintain a livelihood in both winter and summer. He discusses Tahltan hunting techniques and how these hunting systems blend with environmental fluctuations in regard to abundance and effort.

More recent ethnographic studies focusing on Tahltan culture include Albright (1984) and Friesen (1985). There also exist various unpublished notes and observations recorded by various missionaries such as Thorman (n.d.) and Carpentier (n.d.) and surveyors such as O'Dwyer (1899) and Robertson (1912). Ball (1983) conducted research and presented a comprehensive historical overview of the Stikine/Cassiar region. Pertinent to the study area is the historical perspective concerning the tribal boundaries of the Nass watershed put forward by Sterritt et al. (1998).

RESULTS

Results from this Tahltan traditional knowledge and use project are briefly presented here. Further results will be presented in the final report January 15, 2010, due to this traditional use project having started less than two weeks ago on August 21, 2009. It is important to note that all components of this NTL Tahltan traditional knowledge and use study are interrelated. This is meaningful in terms of presenting this interim report.

Overall Project

The project is being implemented as discussed in the methodology. Once the Tahltan TUS project was approved in late August 2009, the Tahltan Transmission Line Project Team was hired and received a two-day orientation workshop. The purpose of this orientation was to inform the team of: the proposed NTL project; the Tahltan TUS program, objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes; field gear, maps and mapping techniques; field data acquisition, storage, and backup; ground truthing techniques; safety issues, concerns and mitigation; and the project communication protocol.

The Tahltan TUS project coordinator has initiated discussions with Tahltan leadership in order to plan community meetings intended to facilitate communication with community members and leadership.

Tahltan Interviews

Approximately thirty Tahltan cultural advisors are in the process of being informally interviewed. In some cases, these cultural advisors have been to the field to locate and identify Tahltan cultural heritage, delineate areas of interest, and/or provide further context to their Tahltan Knowledge. The priorities to date have been to interview cultural advisors who live out of the area but are currently in the territory conducting seasonal hunting and gathering activities.

Significant Tahltan Knowledge in regard to the proposed NTL Project includes: placenames, occupancy, wildlife, trees and plants, trails, Tahltan border references, weather, nature of the ground (i.e. wet or dry ground), fish, birds, significant sites, and traditional use sites. Traditional use sites of interest include: trails, camp or cabin or homeplace, food, stream crossings, burials and graveyards, obsidian or other high value rock, lookouts, areas with decent horse feed, easily accessible berry patches, trapping, food trees, hunting, and fishing. These sites often break out into particular types of sites, such as a sheep or goat hunting area.

The cultural advisor interview process is tightly linked to any existing research concerning Tahltan traditional knowledge, as well as to the fieldwork currently underway. This process works in two ways: through questions coming from the field crew, as well as information from the cultural advisor, which prompts the field crew to investigate on the ground.

Research & Mapping

The Research and Mapping component of the project is well established including a basic project filing system and is producing useful information at this early stage. was established. Information acquisition includes a literature review of readily accessible material, published and unpublished, including maps, archival documents, past Tahltan

cultural heritage information, and previous archaeological reports. Archival research will continue at B.C. and Yukon repositories and museums, where copies are being made of all pertinent source documents and maps.

Research efforts at the Tahltan Central Council archives have produced material and findings relevant to this study. These research results have exceeded the project team's expectations and have helped to focus Tahltan cultural advisor interviews and facilitated productive field crew activity.

Digital base data from the Province has been acquired for both the 1:20,000 and 1:100,000 scale maps. Rescan supplied the NTL corridor shape file, relevant orthophotos, and 1:50,000 scale maps (plotfiles) of the southern Tahltan territory.

Preliminary Field Reconnaissance

Prior to commencing the preliminary field reconnaissance, the Tahltan Transmission Line Project Team received a one-day intensive orientation designed to transfer field skills to the two crew leaders and technicians. The objectives of this field crew orientation included awareness and review of safety and communication, field gear operation, cultural heritage and cultural knowledge identification and recording techniques, ground truth mapping techniques, and determining areas that potentially need subsurface archaeological inspection.

Surface features currently being recorded include trails; homeplaces such as cabins, camps and village sites; other cultural property; culturally important features such as wildlife sign and numbers, fish presence and abundance, plants, berries and trees, landscape features; and general ecosystem dynamics.

Field crews have been active for approximately 10 days and have completed approximately one-half of their investigation. Their investigation started in the Bob Quinn area and has proceeded southeastward to the Bell 2 Bridge crossing, as well as slightly upstream on the upper Bell-Irving River northbank.

The Bob Quinn area received a preliminary reconnaissance level survey with location of trail corridors and camps. An archaeological investigation will be required at several sites. The Bob Quinn area traditional use site will be described more fully in the final report; currently and in the near term, the findings need to be discussed and corroborated with Tahltan cultural advisors.

Figure 7. Light trailbed located east of Bob Quinn Lake.

The major feature investigated along the Ningunsaw, Snowbank, and Teigen drainages has been the aboriginal trail that was later used from 1900-1936 as the Yukon Telegraph Line corridor and trail. The trail is for the most part located on wet ground dominated by the devil's club ecosystem. Trail finding has been difficult, but enough has been located to determine its position. In addition to the trail, four cabins have been found in various locations along the corridor.

Figure 8. Cabin remains at Echo Lake.

Signs of wildlife have been recorded; however, at this point, the field crews have not had the time to map their observations or meet with Tahltan cultural advisors to discuss comparative abundance, wildlife and habitat conditions, and/or the broader ecosystem dynamics. In general, the predator-prey system conditions appear healthy. Grizzly and black bears are the dominant wildlife species in the Teigen-Snowbank-Ningunsaw corridor. Wildlife common or adjacent to the proposed NTL corridor within Tahltan territory include: mountain goat, moose, grizzly bear, black bear, wolves, marten, fisher, and wolverine; all of these wildlife are of significant concern to the Tahltan and their management regime.

Chinook salmon have been documented spawning close to the proposed NTL project corridor. Generally, chinook abundance appears to be relatively moderate with a scattered distribution over their spawning grounds. It is clear from their condition and the number of carcasses that peak spawning has passed. Associated with the spawning chinook are grizzly bears and wolves, who are likely feeding respectively on spawning chinook and the carcasses. Field observations indicate three grizzlies and three wolves; likely there are 3-3.5 times as many not observed. The field crews need to meet with Tahltan cultural advisors to discuss their findings, particularly chinook abundance and spawning locations.

Plant harvesting observations have been low to moderate and are for the most part located in small concentrations in the Bob Quinn area. Unfortunately forest development activities, which include the 14 cutblocks, have disturbed a large part of the Bob Quinn area; this has obscured potential cultural heritage findings. Located throughout the trail corridor are a relatively large number of balsam trees stripped for their inner bark by grizzly bears as part of their late-spring feeding regime; an example of this is shown in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9. Typical Balsam scare resulting from grizzly feeding on the inner bark.

It is important to note that the field truthing program is limited to 20 days and the proposed NTL corridor is located in Tahltan territory for approximately 75 km. For the remainder of the program, the field crew is positioned to investigate approximately 35 km of Tahltan territory downstream of the Highway #37—Bell 2 crossing.

Tahltan TK/TU Discussion

To date, the data collection process for the Tahltan TUS of the proposed NTL Project is re-energizing the cultural landscape along the proposed corridor. As this study progresses, more clarity around Tahltan knowledge, geography, use, and how Tahltan perceive their southern territory landscapes will be presented. More specifically, no individual traditional use site or piece of traditional knowledge exists in isolation to other sites or concepts. Trails connect traditional use sites. If resource gathering occurred, camps are likely located nearby. Distribution of obsidian from Mt Edziza, which is located relatively nearby, likely found its way southward through the Ningunsaw and Bell-Irving valleys. Associated with these resources are: gathering sites, camps, trails, stories, placenames, and other cultural vestiges, such as burials. These concepts will come clear in the final report when all the interrelated project components interlock.

Given the short time frame and the fact that Tahltan use of and understanding of the land is complex, an initial description follows. The majority, but not all of the following may have potential impacts from the proposed NTL Project. This initial description includes, but is not limited to all Tahltan Knowledge and/or Tahltan Use.

Tahltan Knowledge

1. All culturally significant wildlife and their habitats including: mountain goat, moose, grizzly bear, black bear, wolves, marten, fisher, lynx, river otter, snowshoe hare, porcupine, red and flying squirrels, and wolverine.
2. All culturally significant fish and their habitats including: chinook, coho, steelhead, Dolly Varden, bull trout, mountain whitefish, and rainbow trout.

3. All culturally significant vegetation including: subalpine fir, hemlock, spruce, willow, alder, mountain hemlock, lodgepole pine, aspen, birch, and cottonwood.
4. All culturally significant shrubs including: Alaska blueberry, oval-leaf blueberry, black huckleberry, salmonberry, saskatoon, rose, raspberry, and devil's club.
5. All culturally significant shrubs, mosses, mushrooms, and wetland plants including: peavine, bramble, twisted stalk, prince's pine, feather and leafy mosses.
6. All culturally significant birds and their habitats including: bald and golden eagles; northern goshawk; ravens, Bonaparte and common gulls; geese, ducks, pileated, downy, and hairy woodpeckers.
7. All culturally significant habitats at the landscape level including: riparian areas, old growth forests, shrub-herb communities, wetlands, deciduous forests, south aspects, avalanche tracks and run out zones, and alluvial fans.
8. All culturally significant habitats at the stand-level including: snags and dying trees, deciduous trees, and forest canopy gaps and edges.

Tahltan Use

Tahltan Use includes the majority of the species and habitats noted above. Tahltan Use also includes sites and placenames, which are listed below.

1. Tahltan geographical placenames;
2. Hunting locales;
3. Fishing locales;
4. Trapping locations and/or corridors;
5. Trail and travel corridors;
6. Sacred sites;
7. Culturally significant landscapes or landforms that may or may not be interrelated habitats described in the Tahltan Knowledge above;
8. Camps, cabins, village, and homeplace sites;
9. Culturally significant food harvesting areas including: fishing, hunting, trapping, food trees, and food plants.

Tahltan Culture

Tahltan cultural connections to the land;

Transfer of Tahltan Use, Tahltan Knowledge, and cultural connections to the land.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS TO TAHLTAN VALUES AND INTERESTS

Context

This interim report will attempt to clarify potential common resource property conflicts and suggest solutions in regard to the proposed NTL Project from a Tahltan traditional use and knowledge perspective. In the recent past, this perspective has frequently been viewed as anti-development, or in conflict with the Province's economic development promotion, or contrary to putting people to work in the largely untapped, resource rich, northwest B.C., which Tahltan assert and exercise rights and title on.

Within the BCEAA process, the major Tahltan land and resource concerns relate to the fact that Tahltan title, stewardship rights, allocation, habitat, and landscape change are often rated as insignificant or that impacts will not be residual once the duration of development is complete. An example of this type of decision-making is contained in the Environmental Assessment Approval Certificate report for the Red Chris Porphyry Copper-Gold Project[1].

It is important to note that since the Sparrow decision[2] the rights of communities to engage in these activities are recognized under Canadian law as having priority over other resource users. This concept was strengthened with the findings in the Delgamuukw case[3] and other cases and is currently accepted as common law duty.

The Tahltan Rights and Title discussion is brief due to multiple constraints mostly revolving around time; however, the final report submitted January 15, 2010 will comprehensively address BC Hydro and the BC Transmission Corporation's proposed NTL Project in regard to potential infringements to Tahltan title and rights and appropriate consultation and accommodation.

Tahltan TU/TK and Transfer Thereof

Tahltan traditional use and traditional knowledge TU/TK are a basic component playing a critical role in Tahltan land and resource management. Transfer of this knowledge to other common property resource users is frequently straightforward, but can also be relatively complex.

The Tahltan Transmission Line Project Team notes that Tahltan traditional knowledge refers to:

> Contemporary and generations-old knowledge accumulated and applied through generations of living in close contact with nature and including Aboriginal environmental knowledge, traditional ecological knowledge, traditional knowledge, local knowledge, indigenous environmental knowledge, land use and occupancy knowledge, empirical observations about the local environment, systems of land tenure, classification and self-management of resources, traditions, beliefs, legends and customs, which are in oral,

[1] Environmental Assessment Office. July 2005. Red Chris Porphyry Copper-Gold Project Assessment Report.
[2] *R. v. Sparrow*, [1990] 1 S.C.R. 1075
[3] *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia,* [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1010

> written, or machine-readable form (Tahltan Central Council 2005b).

Many Tahltan households participate in non-commercial harvesting of wild plants, wildlife, and fish; for them it is a way of life on their traditional territories. These harvests have net economic, social, and cultural benefits. Cultural continuity, such as educating younger generations in skills, traditions, and values, is of high significance to Tahltan. Further, within Tahltan cultural context these activities provide for a meaningful and abundant life.

At this early stage in the project and as noted in the results above, specific traditional use and knowledge, as well as the broader Tahltan cultural landscape is just beginning to come into focus. It is expected that clarity around this issue will be forthcoming in the near future.

Tahltan Rights and Title

The proposed NTL Project has the potential to profoundly affect Tahltan interests and values through the approximately 75 km corridor in the Tahltan southern territory. This is territory that Tahltan claim stewardship rights and title over since time immemorial, and officially notified the B.C in 1910 with the Tahltan Declaration.

The Tahltan have never relinquished or surrendered the lands and resources and continue to occupy and use the lands and resources and exercise our existing title and interests within our territory.

We have continued to govern ourselves and the lands and resources in Tahltan Territory in accordance with our cultural practices, customs, traditions, values and teachings, as demonstrated in such instruments as the 1910 Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe, which declared our sovereign right to all of our Territory.

On October 18, 1910, the Chief of the Tahltans, Nannock, and other family representatives signed the Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe at Telegraph Creek. We declared that:

> "we claim the sovereign right to all the country of our tribe – this country of ours which we have held intact from the encroachments of other tribes, from time immemorial, at the cost of our own blood. We have done this because our lives depended on our country. To lose it meant we would lose our means of living, and therefore our lives. We are still, as heretofore, dependant for our living on our country, and we do not intend to give away the title to any part of same without adequate compensation."

MITIGATION OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Shared decision-making through full recognition of Tahltan Title and Rights and stewardship responsibilities is the path that must be followed. The Tahltan intend to resolve their pre-existing title, rights, and interests with the assertion of Crown sovereignty through good faith negotiations with the Crown. A necessary corollary of this will be to engage in meaningful consultation, with the aim of addressing Tahltan interests and concerns in the interim, which we attempted to do at the Tahltan—BC Table established by the MOU between the Tahltan Nation and the Province in November 2004.

Section 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes, affirms, and protects existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. The Supreme Court of Canada held that section 35 requires the reconciliation of pre-existing Aboriginal title and rights with asserted Crown sovereignty through good faith negotiations. A necessary component of this process of reconciliation is to consult and accommodate Tahltan title, rights, and interests in order to protect these prior to reconciliation.

The Crown has had knowledge of the Tahltan Nation's strong prima facie Aboriginal title, rights, and interests in our Territory at least since the acceptance of our comprehensive claim, under the federal comprehensive claim process in 1980. The Tahltan also submitted a Statement of Intent under the 1991 BC treaty negotiation process, which expanded comprehensive claims negotiations to include the Province of British Columbia. The Tahltan Nation will continue to work to achieve reconciliation of its Aboriginal rights and title with the assertion of Crown sovereignty through the negotiations of protocols and agreements.

CONCLUSION

Since time immemorial, the Tahltan Nation's identity and the essence of who we are as a distinct society has been integrally tied to the land and the wealth of the resources therein. In order for Tahltan society to continue in the future, we rely on the same territory and resources that sustained our ancestors. Tahltan people continue to practice our traditional economy which includes fishing, hunting, and gathering, as well as participating in the modern economy located within and outside of our traditional territory. Our land is our identity and forms the intrinsic link between the past and future for the Tahltan Nation.

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Appendix 2

1910 Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe

Out of Respect

The Tahltan, Mining, and the Seven Questions to Sustainability

Report of the Tahltan Mining Symposium, April 4–6, 2003

iisd International Institute for Sustainable Development / Institut international du développement durable

The Tahltan First Nation

Out of Respect

The Tahltan, Mining, and the Seven Questions to Sustainability

Report of the Tahltan Mining Symposium
April 4–6, 2003
Dease Lake, British Columbia

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The Tahltan First Nation

The International Institute for Sustainable Development contributes to sustainable development by advancing policy recommendations on international trade and investment, economic policy, climate change, measurement and indicators, and natural resources management. By using Internet communications, we report on international negotiations and broker knowledge gained through collaborative projects with global partners, resulting in more rigorous research, capacity building in developing countries and better dialogue between North and South.

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International Institute for Sustainable Development
161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3B 0Y4
Tel: +1 (204) 958-7700
Fax: +1 (204) 958-7710
E-mail: info@iisd.ca
Web site: http://www.iisd.org

Tahltan Central Council
Reserve No. 9
Dease Lake, British Columbia
Tel: +1 (250) 771-3276

Cover photography: Clockwise starting with main central photo: Eskay Creek Gold Mine camp, Barrick Gold Corporation; Grizzly sow with three cubs near the Golden Bear Mine, R. Dennis Bergen; Tahltan mill worker, Barrick Gold Corporation; Service staff at Eskay Creek Gold Mine, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation, Barrick Gold Corporation; Crow's House above Eagle Rock at the confluence of the Tahltan and Stikine rivers, David Rattray.

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There were no written laws in our history. The rules we lived by were taught to us from childhood and were based on respect. We were expected to respect ourselves, to show respect for others, to show respect for all things in our world, and to show respect for our environment. In this way we believed that our world would be in harmony and we would live a long and healthy life.

- Tahltan belief

Dedication

At the time of European contact in the mid- to late 18th century, tens of thousands of aboriginal people inhabited the Pacific Northwest of North America including the Tahltan people whose traditional territory encompasses the vast inland drainage area of the Stikine River and its tributaries, now part of British Columbia.

In 1896, a federal count registered 296 Tahltan. They, like other aboriginals in this part of the world, had been ravaged by smallpox and other diseases, the effects of substance abuse brought to them by Europeans and a loss of hope in the future that came with the demise of their traditional culture.

In the Spring of 2003, the Tahltan registry included about 5,000 people of which about 1,000 live full-time in Tahltan traditional territory, while the rest have spread out across B.C. and the Yukon. These numbers reflect a remarkable recovery given the challenges they have faced. Once again, the Tahltan are finding their spirit and taking control of their own future.

This report is dedicated to the Tahltan of the past who kept the spark alive, and to today's community for advancing the transformation with pride, talent and passion.

Acknowledgements

The Tahltan Mining Symposium was made possible through the contributions of the following:

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British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

Natural Resources Canada

Noranda Inc.

Wheaton River Minerals Ltd.

Eagle Rock (with Crow's House above) at Tahltan – David Rattray.

Preface

Mining is in an unprecedented period of transition as it continues to face a broad array of interrelated technical, environmental and social issues. Financial implications have multiplied as investors, indigenous people, communities, non-governmental organizations and other interests apply increasing scrutiny to mining operations. With the immediacy of worldwide communications, local incidents become global news overnight. For some, mining's "social licence to operate" is in question.

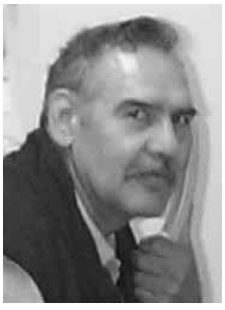
Faced with this situation, in 2001 the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (Geneva) in partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development (London), initiated a global review of mining-related practices using as a vehicle, the project "Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD)."[1] As part of the global review, a number of independent regional reviews were initiated. One of the regional initiatives took place in Canada and the United States where the Mining/Minerals Team of the International Institute for Sustainable Development led MMSD – North America.[2]

The genesis of the Tahltan Mining Symposium lies in MMSD – North America. One output of MMSD – North America was the collaborative development of a robust framework for tracking the contribution of mining and mineral activities as a means of assessing the compatibility of mining/mineral projects and operations with the concept of sustainability. The framework came to be known as the Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS).[3] Following its development, projects were sought in which practical application would test the effectiveness of the framework. The Tahltan Mining Symposium provided an ideal opportunity particularly because the needs and interests of the Tahltan people could be directly addressed while working to find a win-win relationship between the Tahltan and the mining industry.

The Tahltan Mining Symposium was held April 4–6, 2003, in Dease Lake, British Columbia. The symposium brought together 28 Tahltan, nine representatives from industry and government and the IISD facilitator to undertake a review of the relationship between the Tahltan people and territory, and mining/mineral activities—past, present and future. The specific output that was sought was a strategy to guide the Tahltan-mining interface in the years to come.

This report reflects the collective effort of all participants of the Tahltan Mining Symposium. All participants were provided with the opportunity to review the draft report and the full draft was vetted by the Tahltan Band, the Iskut Band and the Tahltan Central Council. During the symposium and in the subsequent development of this report, consensus was always sought although not insisted upon.

Throughout the drafting of this report, we have made every effort to accurately reflect the views of participants, particularly the Tahltan people whose priorities and concerns drove the symposium process. However in the end, final responsibility to bring closure to the report fell to us. Thus, while credit for the insight contained in this report lies with all participants, any remaining limitations are ours.



Jerry Asp, Chief
Tahltan Band

Tony Hodge, Facilitator
IISD Mining/Mineral Team

Tahltan Mining Symposium Participants

Organizers

Jerry Asp, Chief, Tahltan Band
Marilyn Norby, Coordinator, Tahltan Mining Symposium

Telegraph Creek

Lorgan Bob
Sheila Bob
Wayne Quash
Richard Jackson
Rob Morin
Bill McPhee
Beatrice McPhee
Pat Carlick
Edith Carlick

Dease Lake

Ed Asp
Curtis Rattray
Christine Ball
Lil Campbell
Vernon Marion
Christina Lindstrom
Liz Edzerza
Annita Mcphee
Andrea Louie

Iskut

Louis Louie
Marie Quock
Sally Havard
Ramona Quock
Odelia Dennis
Theresa Abou
James Dennis
Feddie Carlick

Barrick Gold Corp.

Vernon Betts
Steve Job
John Kinyon
Marlin Murphy

British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Dave Lefebure

British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

Romona Blackwell
Maija Finvers

International Institute for Sustainable Development Mining/Mineral Team

Tony Hodge (facilitator)

Natural Resources Canada

Lise-Aurore Lapalme

Wheaton River Minerals

R. Dennis Bergen

Tahltan Staff Support

Marilyn Norby (Local Coordinator)
Andrea Louie (Catering, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation)
Catherine Morin (Catering Assistant, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation)
Kailene Louie (Catering Assistant, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation)

IISD Staff Support

Don Berg (Graphic Design, contracted by IISD)
Karen Goulding (Distribution)
Jason Manaigre (Web Support)
Rachel Parry (Media Relations)
Stuart Slayen (Publications Management)

Endnotes

1 Results of MMSD Global are reported in *Breaking New Ground – Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development* (2002, London: Earthscan Publications), available online at http://www.iied.org/mmsd

2 Results of MMSD – NA are synthesized in *Towards Change – The Work and Results of MMSD North America* (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp

3 MMSD – North America, 2002. *Seven Questions to Sustainability – How to Assess the Contribution of Mining and Mineral Activities*. (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp

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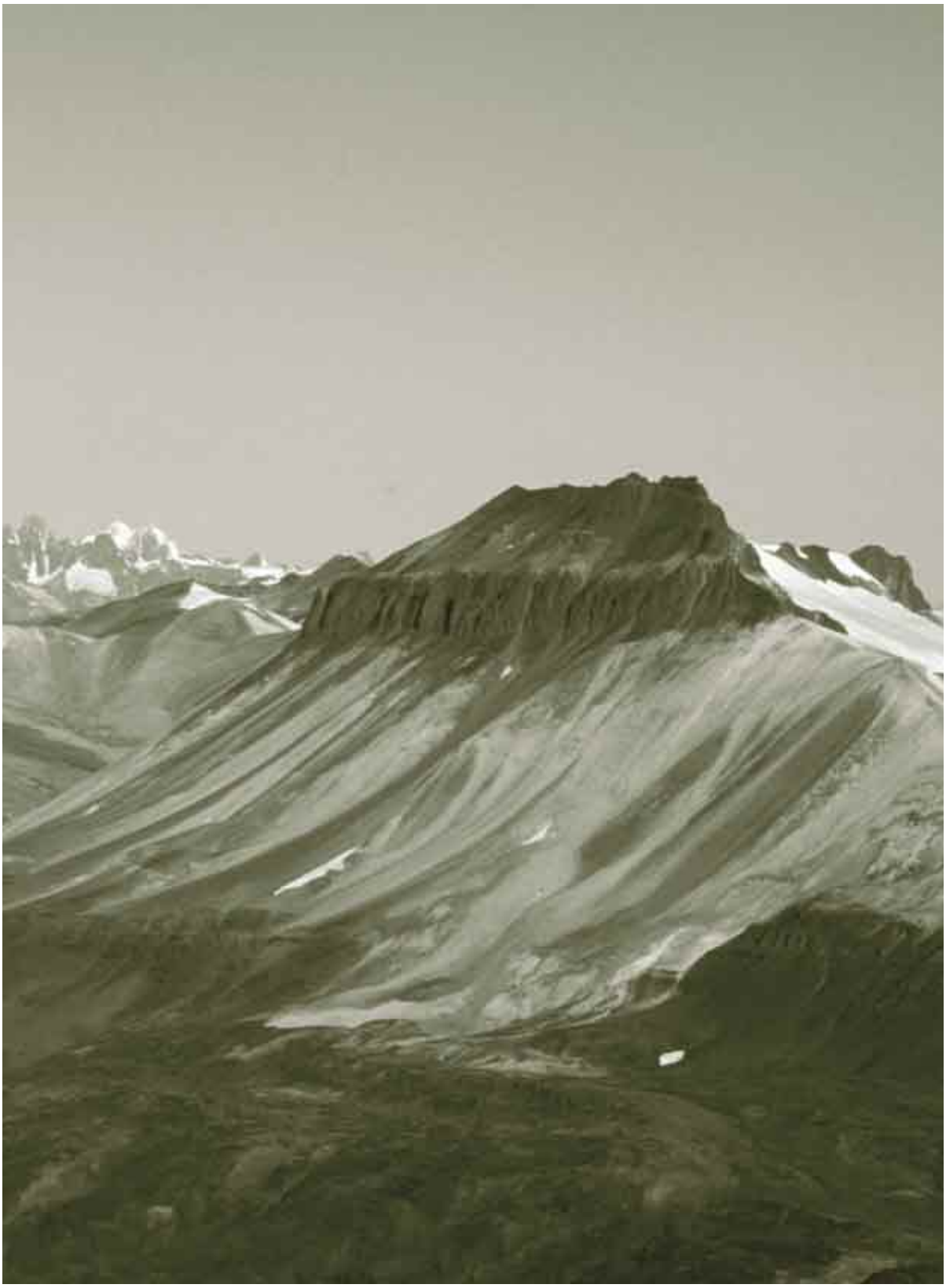


Multi-hued volcanics from the Spectrum Range in Mt. Edziza Park – Geological Survey of Canada.

The most important skill that our ancestors learned was how to live and work in co-operation with each other.

- Tahltan belief

1. Introduction

Tahltan mining experience began several thousand years ago with the extraction and trading of obsidian from the flanks of Mt. Edziza. However, exposure of the Tahltan people to "modern" mining activities dates from 1861 when gold was discovered on the Stikine River and a small rush ensued. Since then, Tahltan involvement in mineral exploration and mining has varied. The benefits that have accrued to the Tahltan people and their land have not always outweighed the costs.

This project marks the beginning of a concerted and strategic effort to ensure that mining and mineral activities that take place in Tahltan traditional territory lead to a net positive gain for the Tahltan people and their territory. The spirit of this initiative is one of fairness and respect. There are many win-win opportunities that can be realized through fair collaboration and respectful relationships among all interests.

Through 2001 and 2002, the Mining/Mineral Team of the International Institute for Sustainable Development led and facilitated the Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development North America (MMSD–NA)[1] Initiative. One output of this effort was the development of a robust framework for assessing the compatibility of mining and mineral projects/operations with the concept of sustainable development. The framework came to be known as the *Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS)*.[2] Following its development, a set of pilot studies was initiated to serve as a means of testing the effectiveness of the approach. The Tahltan mining initiative provided an ideal opportunity from this perspective, one in which the needs and interests of the Tahltan could be directly addressed.

The project was initiated in the late fall of 2002 as a three-phase process:

Phase 1. Decision to Proceed. A project concept paper[3] was developed and reviewed by the Tahltan people. Based on this review, the community decided to proceed.

Phase 2. Tahltan Mining Symposium. After securing sponsorship, the Tahltan Mining Symposium was held April 4–6, 2003, in Dease Lake, British Columbia. The workshop brought together 38 participants: 28 Tahltan; five industry participants; four government representatives; and a facilitator from the International Institute for Sustainable Development. Their task was to undertake a review of the relationship between the Tahltan people and territory, and mining/mineral activities. Specifically, the objectives of the Symposium were to:

a. provide an opportunity for the Tahltan First Nation to apprise itself of mining and mineral activity in the Tahltan traditional territory (the Stikine Watershed)—past, present and future—and to express their sense of what this has meant, or could mean, to the Tahltan;

Tahltan workers with family members, Eskay Creek Gold Mine – Barrick Gold Corporation.

b. use the 7QS Assessment Framework to systematically identify and review implications of mining/mineral activity to the Tahltan people and, in the process, test the effectiveness of the framework;

c. identify issues and concerns from the perspective of the Tahltan people, the mining industry, government and others;

d. undertake a preliminary and cursory assessment in order to build a sense of: (a) sources of data and information; (b) the state of current knowledge; and (c) current capacity to fill gaps;

e. build an initial strategy and action plan for guiding future Tahltan relationships with the mining/minerals industry; and

f. decide on next steps to be taken (if any) for implementation of a more rigorous Phase 3 7QS Assessment.

Phase 3. Follow-up Implementation. The third phase of activity is envisioned as the implementation phase using the strategy and action plan developed at the Tahltan Mining Symposium as a guide. Implementation will take some time and success will depend on the willingness of all parties to move forward.

This report marks the end of Phase 2 of this initiative. It documents the results of the Tahltan Mining Symposium and sets out the strategy and action plan intended to guide Phase 3 implementation of the 7QS Assessment Framework.

Endnotes

1 MMSD–NA was an independent regional component of a global review of mining practices undertaken by the International Institute for Environment and Development (London) on behalf of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (Geneva). Results of MMSD–NA are synthesized in the report *Towards Change – The Work and Results of MMSD North America* (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp. The review was aimed at developing prescriptions for improving mining- and mineral-related practices.

2 MMSD – North America, 2002. *Seven Questions to Sustainability – How to Assess the Contribution of Mining and Mineral Activities*. (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp

3 R. Anthony Hodge. and Ian Thomson, 2002. The Tahltan, Mining, and Sustainability. Unpublished discussion paper prepared for the Tahltan First Nation by The Mining/Minerals Team, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

To our ancestors, Tahltan country was part of their life, their way of living. It was more than a place to live and hunt, it was the root of the culture. Some of us still believe that we belong to the land.

- Tahltan belief

2. The Tahltan, Tahltan Country and Mining

The Tahltan people live in a vast, mainly remote area of northwestern British Columbia. Their traditional territory covers some 93,500 km^2 at the heart of which lies the Stikine River Watershed. The Stikine River rises in the Spatsizi plateau and follows a wide, counterclockwise arc that crosses the Canada-U.S. border and enters the Pacific Ocean near Wrangell, Alaska (Map 1).

For the most part, the watershed is without roads and access is only available by helicopter, float plane, canoe, riverboat, horseback, sled and foot. The town of Iskut is on Highway 37, the only major road in the area, as is Dease Lake which lies just outside the Stikine watershed but serves as the region's service hub. Telegraph Creek, located in the heart of the watershed, is connected by gravel road to Dease Lake.

Two large protected areas lie within the Stikine Watershed: the Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Mount Edziza Provincial Park. They are linked by the Stikine River Recreation Area which also enjoys protected status (Map 2).

The area is home to some 1,300 people, of which about a thousand are from the Tahltan First Nation. Two bands comprise the Tahltan First Nation: the Tahltan Band centred in Telegraph Creek, and the Iskut Band centred in Iskut. Dease Lake is also home to a significant number of Tahltan.

At least three of five jobs in the area come from government and the service sector (including tourism). Remaining jobs are in construction, mining, fishing, trapping, logging and agriculture.[1]

The Stikine Watershed is part of the Skeena Management Region of the B.C. Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management. It is covered by the Cassiar Iskut-Stikine Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), which gained official status in October 2000 after a five-year period of development and public discussion.

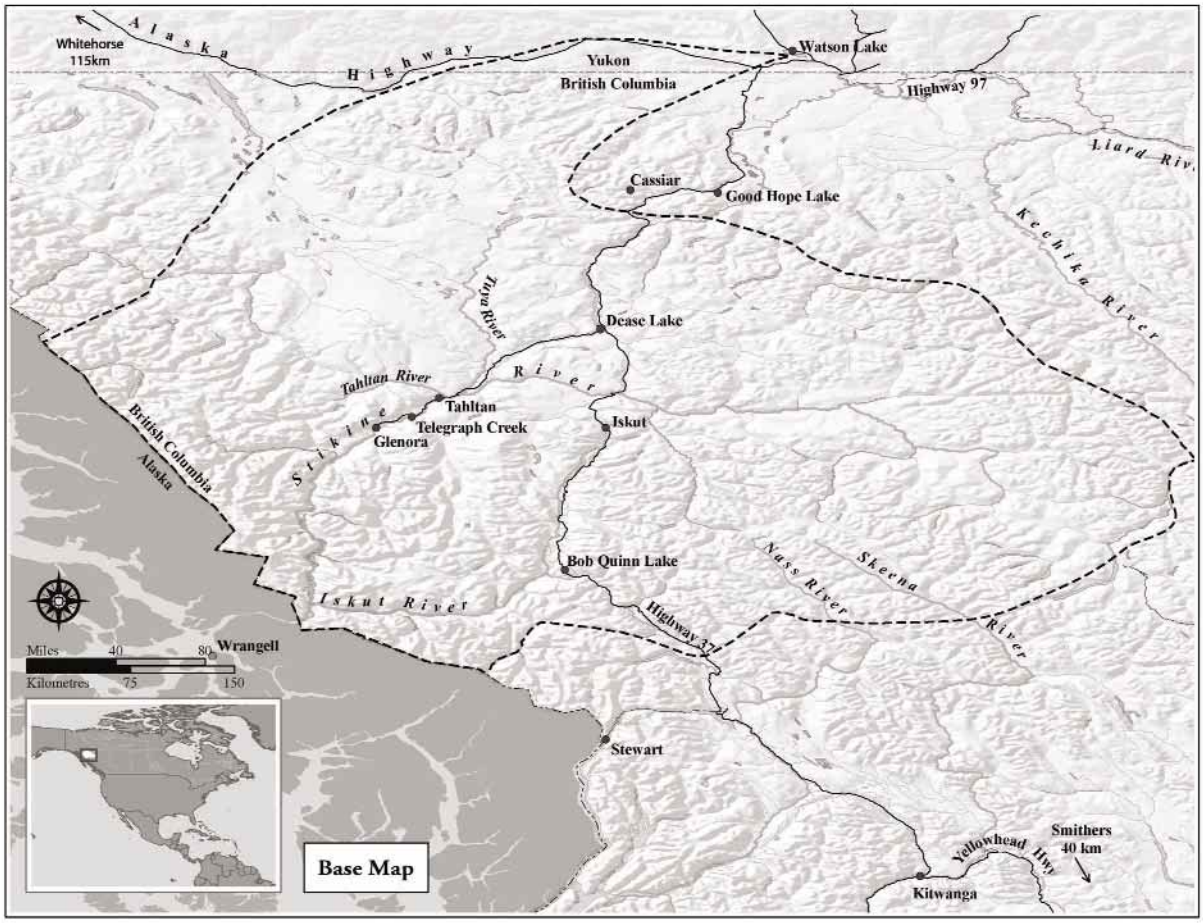
Confluence of the Tahltan and Stikine rivers, spiritual heart of Tahltan traditional territory – Ann Fraser.

Map 1. Tahltan traditional territory

Northwestern British Columbia showing the extent of Tahltan traditional territory with a dashed line along with topography, communities, major roads and larger rivers. Much of the area is mountainous with major river valleys providing the only access to the coast. The Tahltan people have lived and traded with neighbouring First Nations for thousands of years—coastal Tlingit to the west, Taku River-Tlingit to the northwest and Kaska-Dene to the north and northeast.

There are relatively few roads in the region reflecting the difficult topography and limited development of mining and forestry roads. Current access to the region is by the paved Stewart-Cassiar Highway (#37) and scheduled air flights to Dease Lake airport. Highway #37 connects to the Alaska Highway to the north and the Yellowhead Highway (#16) to the south.

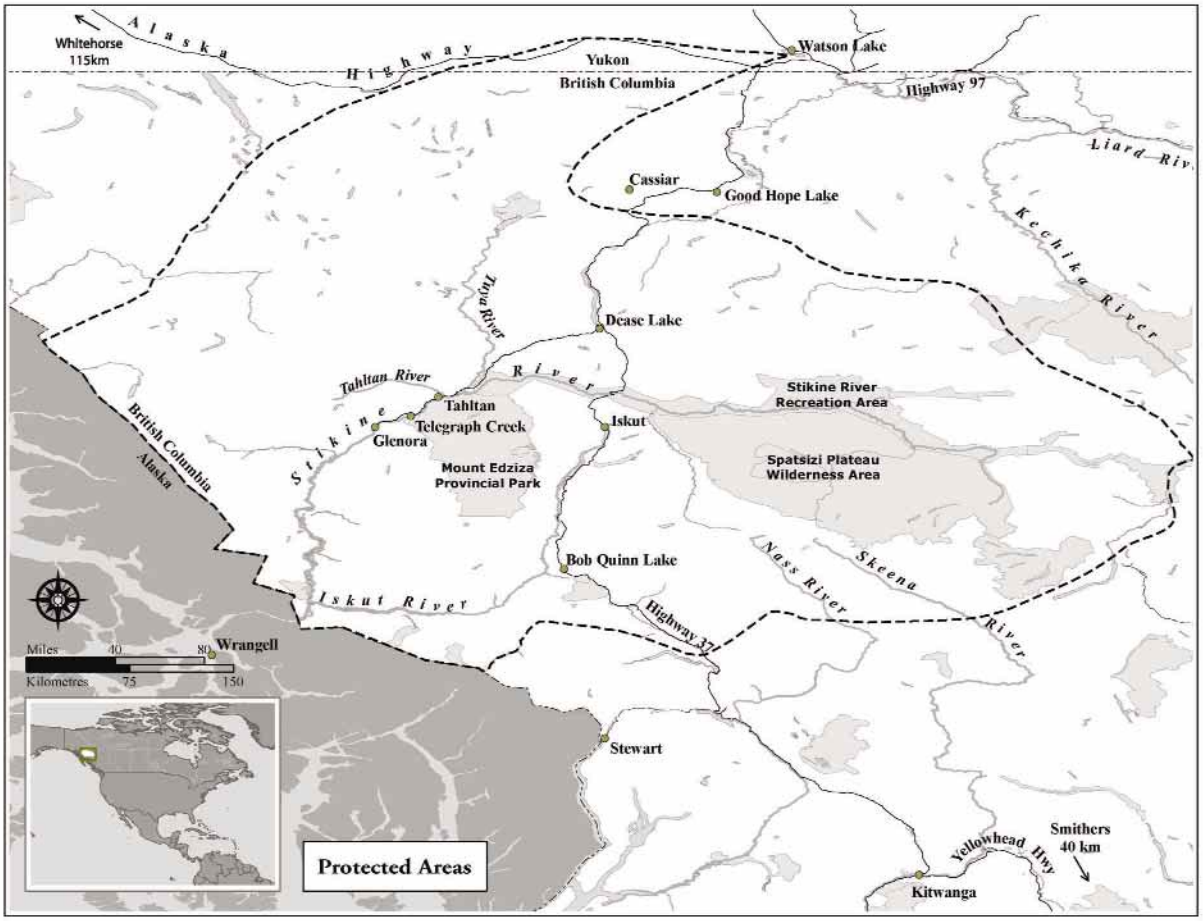
The closest deep-water ocean ports are at Stewart and Wrangell, Alaska. Prior to the construction of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway in the early 1970s, the region was accessed from the Pacific Ocean by the Stikine and Iskut rivers, with most boats travelling to the head of navigable waters on the Stikine at Telegraph Creek.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 2. Protected areas

Northwestern British Columbia has a number of protected areas, including some significant parks within the Tahltan traditional territory. Approximately 26 per cent of the Canadian portions of the Stikine and Iskut River Watersheds have been protected in parks, ecological reserves and other protected areas. All protected areas are off limits for mineral exploration and mining. In some cases protected areas limit road access to Crown Land bounding the protected area and in a few cases, this has led to specific provisions for allowing access to the Crown Land through the protected areas.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

The Tahltan People

The Tahltan have called the Stikine River area their home for thousands of years. Their traditional territory lies between the coastal country of the Tlingit and the inland homes of the Kaska to the east and northeast, the Nass to the south and the Atlin Tlingit to the north. For thousands of years they have been a trading people, exchanging coastal goods for those found inland and vice versa.

Russian explorers first touched the coast of what is now Alaska in 1741. Far to the south of Tahltan Country, the Spanish arrived in Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island in 1774 and the British followed in 1778. By the late 1700s, European-sourced goods found their way into the Tahltan trading system. In

1837–1838, explorer Robert Campbell pushed his way up the Stikine and established a trading post at what is now Dease Lake. Protective of their country, the Tahltan forced him to retreat and their way of life remained essentially unchanged until 1861—the year that gold was discovered on the Stikine River. The change that followed was dramatic.

During the 19th century, all across the Pacific Northwest, diseases brought by the Europeans—smallpox, measles, influenza, whooping cough, tuberculosis and scarlet fever—devastated the aboriginal people. By 1896, the Tahltan population which had numbered in the thousands when Robert Campbell passed through their country in 1838, had dropped to under 300.

Meanwhile, the overarching governmental decision-making structure was also changing dramatically for the Tahltan in a way that was well beyond their control.

In 1763, King George III had issued a Royal Proclamation asserting that aboriginal people of North America had existing rights and establishing a system of surrendering these rights by treaty. Following this principle, Sir James Douglas, as chief factor for the Hudson's Bay Company and governor of the Colony of Vancouver Island, completed 14 treaties on Vancouver Island between 1850 and 1854.[2]

Thereafter, the paternalistic and racist attitudes of many European settlers and the rapidly declining state of well-being of First Nations people combined to undermine any capacity for aboriginal self-determination. In 1869, the Indian Act was passed eliminating the system of hereditary First Nations governance, requiring elected band councils, forcing First Nation children into the government-controlled education system and dramatically changing First Nation cultural traditions.

Unknown to the Tahltan, and faced with concern for law and order associated with the large influx of American gold-seekers, James Douglas had claimed all the land north to the 60th parallel for inclusion in the colony of British Columbia in 1863. In 1866 the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were combined in a single "United Colony of British Columbia" and in 1871, British Columbia entered Confederation.

Faced with all of this, the Chief of the Tahltan issued a Declaration in 1910 that articulated their sovereign right to their land and urged the formalization of a treaty to address all matters regarding these rights (Appendix 1). No such treaty has ever been established.

The 1861–1862 Stikine River Gold Rush was short-lived and inconsequential from a gold perspective. But it marked the first major influx of non-Tahltan people into the Tahltan traditional territory. In 1862, the supply needs of the gold-seekers led to the advent of riverboat service from Wrangell, Alaska, to Telegraph Creek, effectively destroying the trader/middle-man role that the Tahltan had enjoyed for centuries.

The small Stikine River Gold Rush was followed a decade later by the more substantive Cassiar Gold Rush 1874–1876 and in 1898 by the stampede to the Yukon's Klondike. In both of these instances, Tahltan Country provided important transport routes for the influx of miners. However, from the perspective of the Tahltan, this period of time was characterized by the juxtaposition of: (1) waves of sickness and death; and (2) the introduction of the wage economy. Tahltan capacity to support themselves by traditional means was severely compromised and with the introduction of the wage economy, a new way of life began that has continued evolving to this day. Key events affecting the Tahltan during the period since 1861 are summarized in Table 1.

From their low point of about 300 in the late 1890s, the Tahltan population has recovered to about 5,000. Just under 1,000 live in their traditional territory spread across Telegraph Creek, Iskut and Dease Lake. The remainder is spread out across B.C. and the Yukon.

The Tahltan people are comprised of two bands, each with an elected council: the Tahltan Band (with headquarters in Telegraph Creek); and the Iskut Band (with headquarters in Iskut). An overarching Tahltan Central Council (with offices in Dease Lake)—comprised of Chief and Council of both bands—links the Tahltan and represents the bands on issues of joint concern.

Table 1. Key events affecting the Tahltan, 1861–present.

Date	Event/Comment
1861–1862	Stikine River Gold Rush, placer gold; first major influx of non-Tahltan into Tahltan Country.
1862	River boat service initiated from Wrangell to Telegraph Creek.
1863	Governor James Douglas claims all land north to the 60th parallel as part of British Columbia. The effect is to open up Tahltan Country to outsiders. Tahltan role as principal trader falls quickly.
1865–1866	Abortive attempt by Perry McDonough Collins to establish a transcontinental telegraph connection between North America and Russia. Telegraph Creek used as a staging area.
1871	British Columbia joins Confederation.
1874–1876	Cassiar Gold Rush, placer gold. Placer mining continues within the Tahltan traditional territory to modern day with activity levels that fluctuate with gold prices.
Around 1875	First horses introduced as a transport mode; Tahltan people quickly become adept handlers.
1898–1903	Klondike Gold Rush in the Yukon.
1901	Yukon Telegraph Line completed to Dawson City using route of the 1865–66 Collins initiative.
1910	1910 Tahltan Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe asks for resolution of land and rights issue through the development of a treaty among the Tahltan, the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia.
1928	The pack trail from Telegraph Creek to Dease Lake is upgraded to a road. The Stikine, Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake become essential transportation links between southern B.C. and the northern interior.
1930s	Bush planes provide new means of access to remote areas.
1941–1942	Stikine River used to transport heavy equipment and supplies for construction of the Alaska Highway.
1952	Production at the Cassiar Asbestos mine begins; continues until 1992.
1950s and 1960s	A number of Tahltan worked in mineral exploration industry.
1960s	Increasingly common use of fixed wing aircraft and the helicopter (which started in the 1950s) leads to the reduction in the use of Telegraph Creek as a staging point for exploration in Tahltan Country in favour of Smithers. Tahltan involvement in exploration activities declines as a result.
1970s	Population increase in the Iskut-Stikine area with homesteaders coming in from southern B.C. and the U.S.; focus is generally on subsistence living.
1972	Stewart-Cassiar Highway (37) completed; easy access to Tahltan Country established.
1972–1977	Road bed for the northern extension of B.C. Rail completed from Fort St. John to Dease Lake through Tahltan Country. Project abandoned in 1977 with the extension of the rail line never completed.
1982	Canadian constitution repatriated from England; aboriginal rights re-affirmed.
1990	Production at the Golden Bear Mine begins. It operates until 1994 and then again 1997–2001 (in 1997 becoming the first heap leach operation permitted in British Columbia).
1990s	Tahltan people became more directly involved with mining operations in their traditional territory by providing services such as road construction and maintenance and camp catering; interaction with mining companies increases.
1991	Production at the Snip Mine begins; operated until 1999.
1995	Production at Eskay Creek Mine begins; still operating, with 8–10 years of estimated mine life remaining.

Tahltan Country

By any standard, Tahltan traditional territory is vast, extremely variable (spanning coastal, mountainous and inland plateaus), spectacular, rugged and rich in natural resources.

At its heart lies the Stikine River which rises high in the Spatsizi Plateau—a large dry plateau ringed by mountains—some carved by glaciers and others of more recent volcanic origin. As the Stikine River flows toward the Pacific, if follows a wide, counterclockwise arc. In its mid-section soon after it crosses Highway 37, is the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, the deepest such canyon in Canada. In the lower reaches of the canyon and just before Telegraph Creek, the Tuya and Tahltan Rivers join. Below Telegraph Creek, the Stikine cuts through the Coast Mountains and just before crossing the Alaska border, it merges with its major tributary, the Iskut River which flows from the east side of the volcanic uplands of Mt. Edziza.[3]

Rainfall varies greatly from the dry Spatsizi Plateau which receives about 40 cm (16 inches) per year, to the Cassiar Mountains where precipitation of 300 cm (almost 10 feet) per year is common. In the south, in the Nass River valley, rainfall is heavier again. Similarly, temperatures vary dramatically. Inland, the heat in the summer can reach 35°C (100°F) with the same location experiencing –50°C (–60°F) in the winter.

Reflecting all of these variations, the ecosystem of the Stikine Watershed is rich and diverse. The fishery in the area has long been a centerpiece of Tahltan life. Sockeye and Chinook numbers have been increasing in recent years while cohoe stocks are declining, reflecting trends throughout coastal B.C. Dolly varden, whitefish and trout of many kinds are also important.

Wildlife species of note in the area include grizzly, black bear, woodland caribou (the Spatsizi herd of about 2,500 represents a quarter of the provincial population), mountain goat, Stone's sheep, moose, wolves, foxes (red, cross-fox, silver fox and black fox), wolverine, lynx, porcupine, rabbit, squirrel, many small rodents, trumpeter swans, grouse, ptarmigan and many migratory birds. The lower Iskut features the largest stands of cottonwood in the world.[4] The upper Stikine area is home to 25 different types of edible berries including soapberries, raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, saskatoons and highbush cranberries.

The Iskut-Stikine area is geologically diverse and one of the richest and most active for mineral exploration and development in British Columbia. Commodities of interest include precious metals (gold, silver and platinum); base metals (copper, lead, zinc and nickel); coal; oil and gas; industrial minerals (asbestos, wollastonite, sand and gravel); and precious stones (jade, agate and other gemstones).

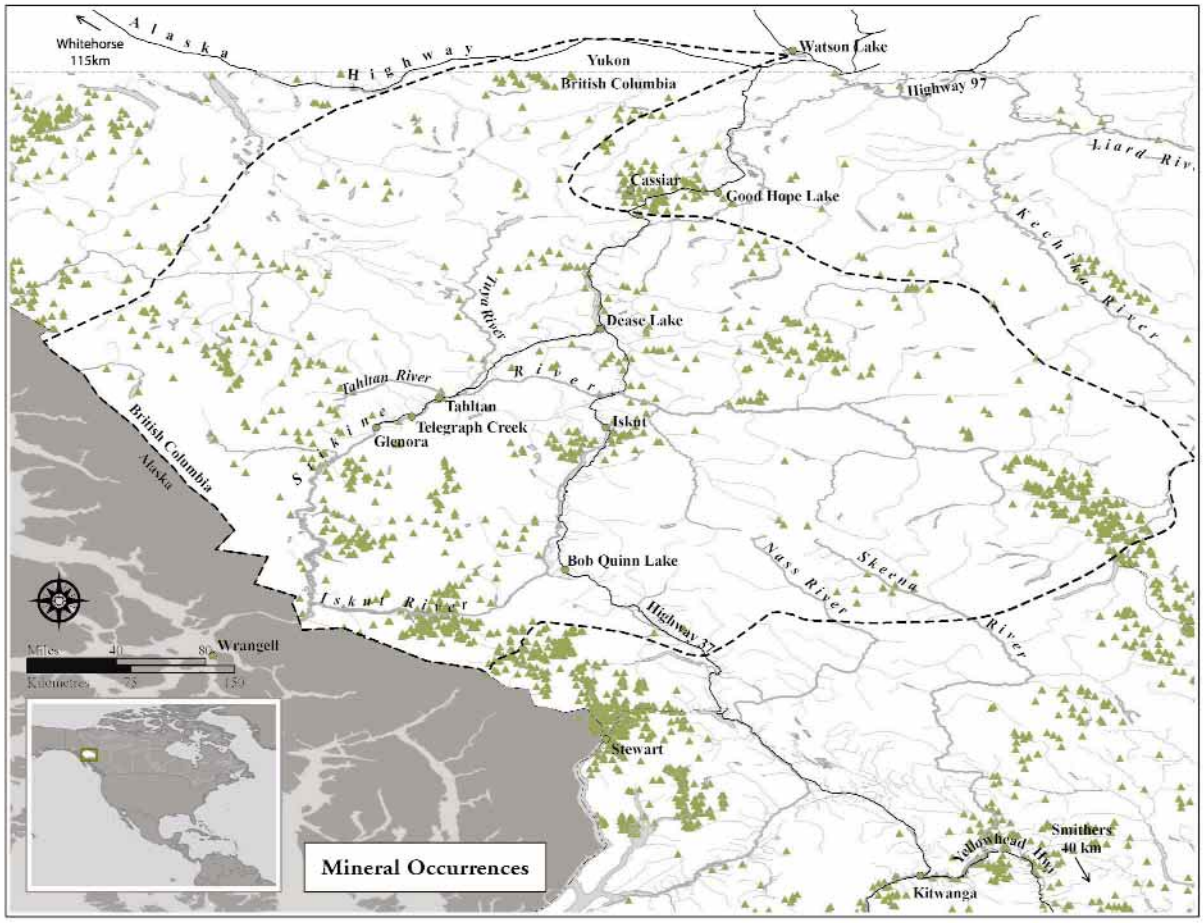
Maps 3–6 provide an overview of Tahltan traditional territory in terms of mineral occurrences (Map 3); mineral and coal claims (Map 4); active and historic mines (Map 5); and mineral potential (Map 6). Table 2 provides a summary of current mining activity in Tahltan traditional territory.

Map 3. Mineral and coal occurrences

Map 3 shows many of the mineral and coal occurrences discovered in the last 150 years. This pattern changes slightly virtually every year with new discoveries by prospectors, geologists and exploration companies. In some areas with attractive mineral potential, there are no known mineral occurrences because the area is covered by glaciers. Some other areas in northwestern British Columbia have only seen limited prospecting due to the extremely rugged terrain which is difficult and expensive to access. These occurrences vary from a minor "sniff" of metal-rich rock to large mineral deposits with drilled-off resources.

Some of these deposits came close to being developed as mines and may yet become mines in the future. In fact, several major metallic deposits in northwest British Columbia would have become mines if they had had easier access to a means of transportation and the power grid.

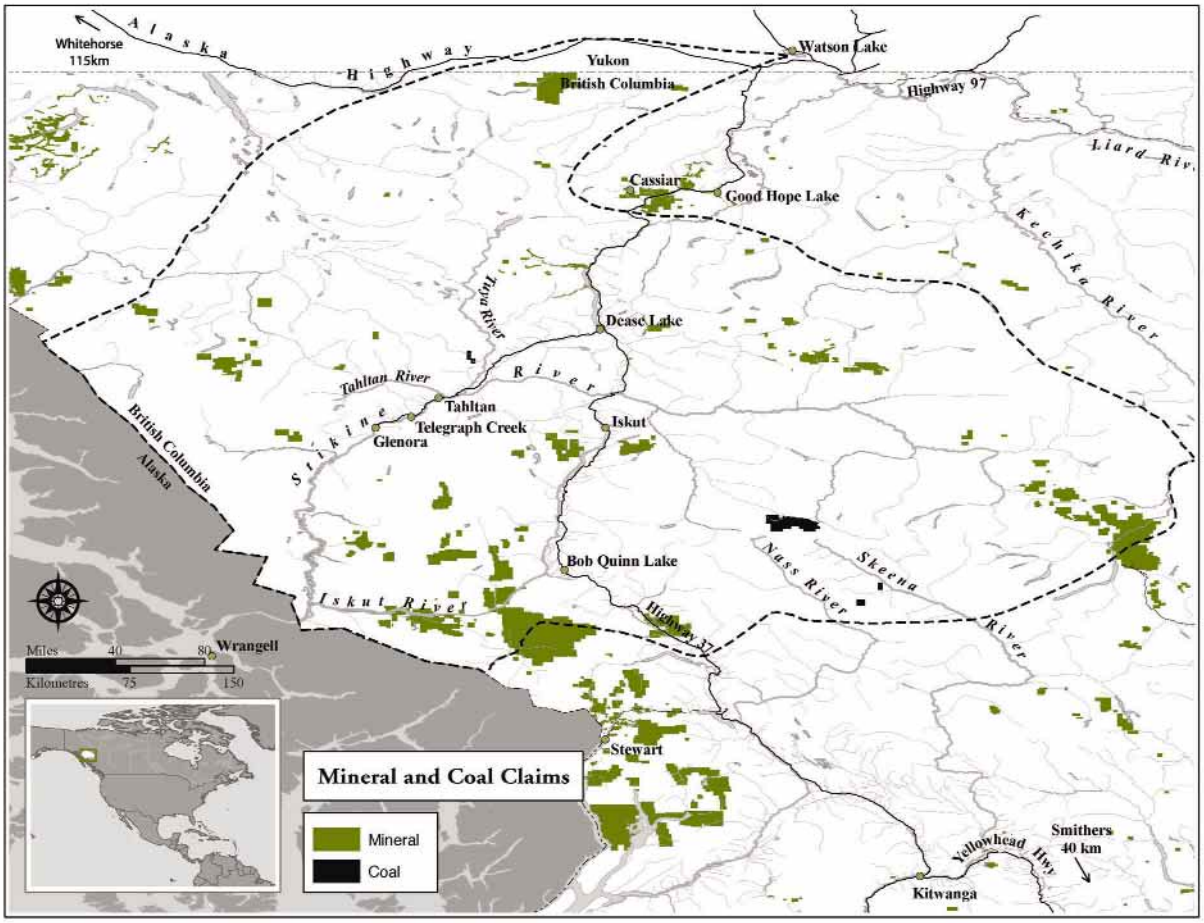
The known coal occurrences are found near the Skeena-Nass rivers and in the Tuya River area. While no coal has been mined to date, they do have potential for coal mining in the future. The coalfields in the Skeena-Nass rivers area include major resources of anthracite coal and are also considered prospective for oil and gas. The Tuya River coalfield is also prospective for coalbed methane. Potential coal areas have less potential for metallic mineral deposits and there are few metallic mineral occurrences in these areas.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 4. Mineral and coal claims as of February 2003

Mineral and coal claims change over time—sometimes quite significantly—depending on what commodity is of interest. Map 4 is a snapshot as of February 2003.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 5. Active and historic mines

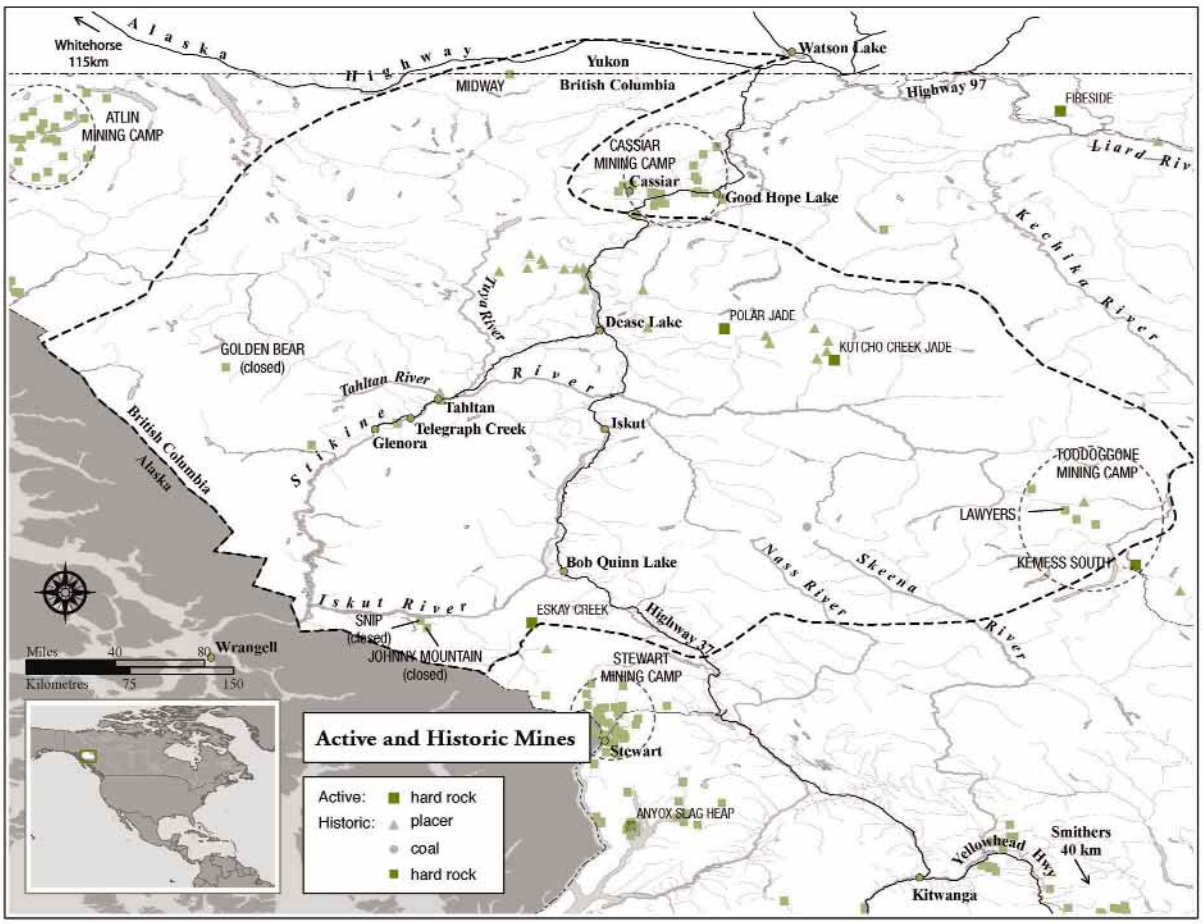
The Tahltan people have a long history of mining obsidian, jade and copper to trade with other First Nations. The Cassiar Mine was the first major mine in the region to employ significant numbers of Tahltan people. Today the active mines within the Tahltan traditional territory produce gold, silver, copper and jade. Today, active mines within Tahltan traditional territory produce gold, silver, and jade. The Eskay Creek underground gold and silver mine is the only active hard rock mine. Just outside Tahltan traditional territory to the southeast, the Kemess mine takes copper and gold from a large open pit. Both of these operate year round and together they employ hundreds of staff in a wide variety of jobs, including miners, cooks, engineers, truckers, carpenters and mill workers.

Placer gold is produced during the summer from gravels in several different rivers, most of which have been worked intermittently since the gold rushes in the 19th century. In recent years, placer mining operations have been located at the north end of

Dease Lake and south of Provincer Lake on Wheaton (Boulder) and Goldpan Creeks. The placer operations generally employ small crews and operate for the summer months. On Map 5, the Cassiar and Atlin Mining Camps include seasonal placer operations that are still active and are not apparent because of the map scale.

Some of the world's best jade is produced from the Provincer and Wolverine Lake area near Kutcho Creek; production is from one or two small quarries that only ship what the market will bear before the price starts to fall. There are also a number of gravel quarries operated by the Ministry of Transportation to supply materials for road building that are not shown in this figure.

Upon closure, mines are now required to reclaim the site. The Snip Gold Mine near the Iskut River has been reclaimed, while the Golden Bear Mine site is currently being reclaimed. International Skyline's Johnny Mountain Mine is in temporary closure.

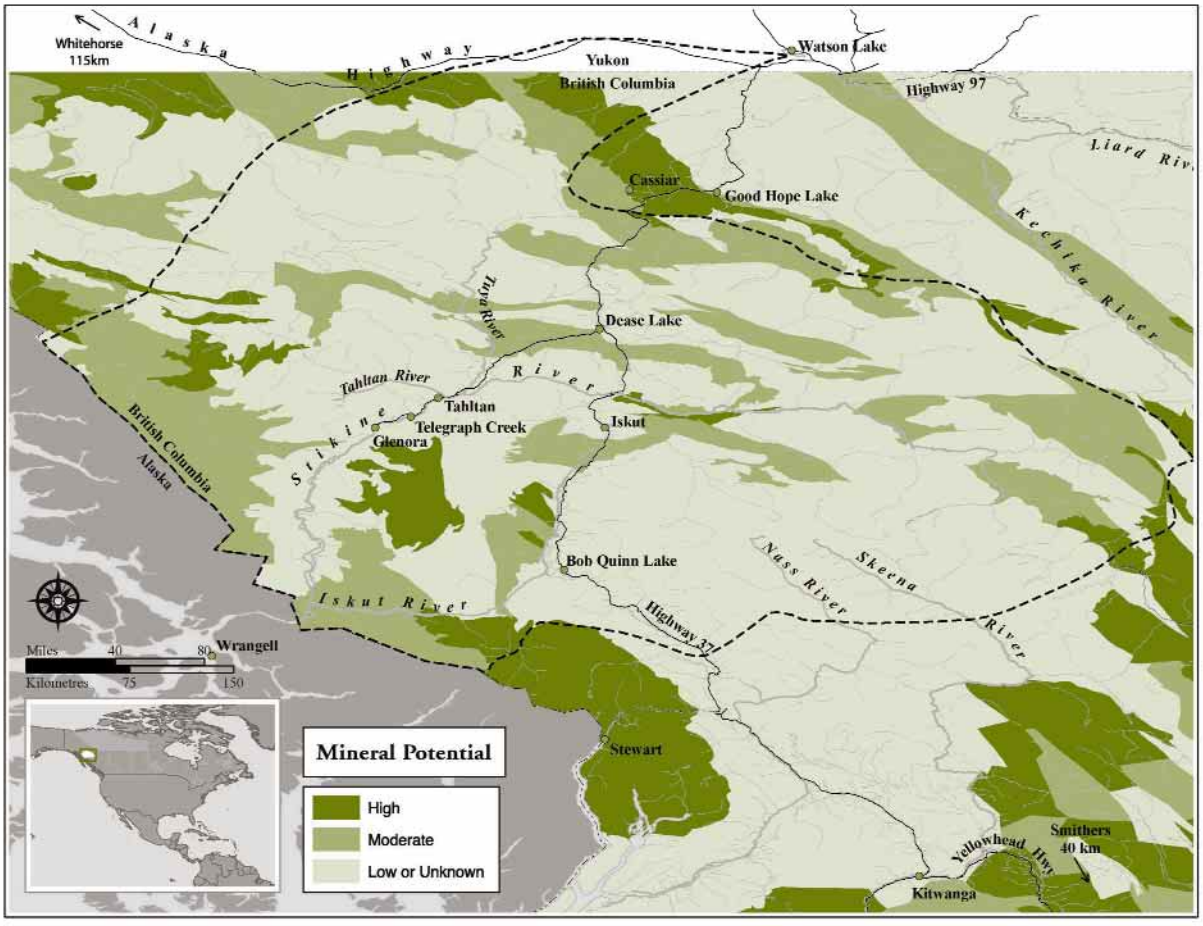


Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 6. Mineral potential

There are areas within Tahltan traditional territory that have very attractive potential for the discovery of new mines. During periods of high commodity prices, this potential has drawn prospectors and companies to invest their efforts and financial resources in the difficult search for these hidden resources. The attractive areas reflect a combination of favourable geology to host different types of mineral deposits and the limited extent of mineral exploration to date.

The British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines has used expert teams of industry geologists to estimate the probability of finding new mineral deposits in the different geological areas of the province. These estimates are strongly dependent on available knowledge for the area, current and past interest in specific commodities, and the overall understanding of the earth's crust. Therefore, mineral potential maps do indicate areas most likely to be attractive for mineral exploration at the present, but can change significantly as more geological mapping, new discoveries and exploration technology advances. There are frequent examples of new mines being found in the "wrong place." This latter caution is particularly applicable to Tahltan traditional territory because of the limit to geoscience knowledge that applies in this region.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Table 2. Current mineral exploration and mining activity in Tahltan traditional territory.[5]

Property	Owner	Location/Comment
Major Exploration Properties		
Red Chris (copper, gold)	bcMetals Corporation Ltd.	20 km south of Iskut, in pre-feasibility/feasibility
Bronson Slope (gold, copper)	International Skyline	Just east of Snip
Galore Creek (copper, gold)	Spectrumgold	Huge low-grade copper porphyry
Schaft Creek (copper)	955528 Alberta Ltd.	Huge low-grade copper porphyry
GJ (copper, gold)	International Curator Resources Ltd.	Porphyry copper west of Kinaskan Lake
Kerr-Sulphurets (copper, gold)	Noranda Inc.	Located near Eskay Creek
Isk (wollastonite)	Whitegold Natural Resource Corp.	Located in the area of the Snip Mine and Bronson Slope properties
Klappan (anthracite coal)	Fortune Minerals Ltd.	Near Klappan River 60 km southeast of Iskut
SIB, Bonsai (gold)	Heritage Explorations Ltd.	Large land holder in Eskay Creek district
Foremore (zinc, copper, gold, silver)	Roca Mines Inc.	Located 50 km north of Eskay Creek
Plus over 30 other prospects at varying stages of exploration.		
Operating Mines		
Eskay Creek (gold, silver)	Barrick Gold Corp.	Began commercial production in 1995; smelter reserves to 2005, mill reserves to 2008
Closed Mines		
Golden Bear (gold)	Wheaton River Minerals Ltd.	First heap leach operation permitted in B.C. in 1994 at site of previous operation owned by Chevron Oil and Homestake. Decommissioning and reclamation near completion
Snip (gold)	Barrick Gold Corp.	Reclamation completed
Johnny Mountain (gold)	International Skyline Gold Corp.	Temporary closure status

The Tahltan and Mining

Exploration and mining have long been significant activities for the Tahltan. Prior to European contact they dealt with obsidian, native copper, gold, jade, agate and precious stones in trade with other First Nations.

With the onset of the gold rushes in the later half of the 19th century, direct contact with European miners began and by the middle of the 20th century, Tahltan were being used as guides and trained by professional geologists as prospectors. The first significant foray of the Tahltan into active mining came with seasonal placer mining operations. The first full-time mining opportunities came in the 1950s with the Cassiar asbestos mine where Tahltan involvement spanned construction through mining and closure.

There has been cooperation as well as conflict in the Tahltan's relationship with mining companies operating on their territory.[6] In 1997, concern about potential impacts led the Tahltan to briefly blockade an access road to the Golden Bear property. Agreement was subsequently reached that resulted in re-routing the access road away from prime moose habitat. Through the Tahltan Nation Development Corporation, the Tahltan were sub-contracted to maintain the access road as well as provide other services at the mine. A number of Tahltan were also directly employed by the mine and camp rules were established to control alcohol use. Tahltan are now actively involved in closure activities.

At the Eskay Creek Mine (now owned by Barrick through their merger with Homestake), employment and training agreements with the Tahltan mean that almost a third of the workforce is Tahltan. In addition, road maintenance and catering contracts have been struck between the Tahltan and the mine.[7]

Mining companies, local suppliers and government also worked together to fund and construct a community hall in Telegraph Creek.

From another perspective, Tahltan leaders have expressed concern that large disposable incomes from mining may be a significant contributor to drug and alcohol problems. This concern is part of a larger issue of effectively managing a community and culture in transition—in a way that maintains the best of past practices while taking on the best of new ways.

Endnotes

1 Holman, Gary and Terry Eliot, 1998. "Socio-Economic and Environmental Base Case Final Report, Cassiar Iskut-Stikine Land and Resource Management Plan." Victoria: B.C. Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

2 Forty-five years followed before the next treaty—"Treaty 8"—which was signed in 1899 with five bands in the Peace River area (well to the northeast of Tahltan country). Treaty 8 assured an overland route to the Yukon's Klondike gold-fields. A full century would then pass before the next signing—the Nisga'a Treaty ratified by the Parliament of Canada in May 2000.

3 Edziza means cinders or volcanic ash and sand mountain in the Tahltan language.

4 Environmental Mining Council of British Columbia. Stikine Regional Overview. http://www.embc.miningwatch.org/emcbc/publications/profiles/stikine

5 This table was kindly reviewed and amended by Paul Wodjak, Regional Geologist, Smithers. British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines.

6 Environmental Mining Council of British Columbia, 2002. Stikine Profile. http://emcbc.miningwatch.org/emcbc

7 "Homestake and the Tahltan," 1998. Mining Quarterly.

In the ideal, all of the elements of sustainability assessment lie in a field of continuous learning and contribute to adaptive management.

3. The Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS) Assessment Framework

Development of the Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS) Assessment Framework was motivated by a desire to apply the ideas of sustainability in a practical way on the ground—in a way that is meaningful to explorer, mine manager, mill superintendent, community leader or public interest group. To address this challenge, MMSD – North America convened a work group of 35 individuals representing a broad range of interests and charged them with developing a set of practical principles, criteria and/or indicators that could be used to guide or test mining/minerals activities in terms of their compatibility with concepts of sustainability.

Work on this front began with a review of 10 recent initiatives from government, the mining industry, non-government organizations, indigenous people and the financial services sector. Authors of seven of these contributions were at the table. After significant deliberation, seven topics were identified that were deemed essential for consideration. For each of these, a question was crafted to be applied to any given project or operation.

From the Seven Questions falls a hierarchy of objectives, indicators and specific metrics. Simultaneously, the starting point for assessing the degree of progress is provided by an "ideal answer" to the initial question. In this way a single, initial motivating question—is the net contribution to sustainability positive or negative over the long term?—cascades into progressively more detailed elements which can be tailored to the project or operation being assessed. The questions in summary format are shown in Figure 1 and listed in detail in Table 3.

In this exercise, the seven questions were used to guide an assessment of the relationship between the Tahltan people and the mineral exploration and mining industry—past, present and future. For these purposes, the full mining-project life cycle was considered (Figure 2). The overall template that was used in this assessment is provided in Figure 3. This template was used through three aspects of assessment: (1) how it was in the past; (2) as it is now; and (3) how it should/could be in the future. Insights from these assessments were then compiled into the *Tahltan Mining Strategy – 2003* that is included as Section 5 of this report.

Grizzly sow with three cubs near the Golden Bear Mine – R. Dennis Bergen.

Figure 1. The Seven Questions to Sustainability in summary form.

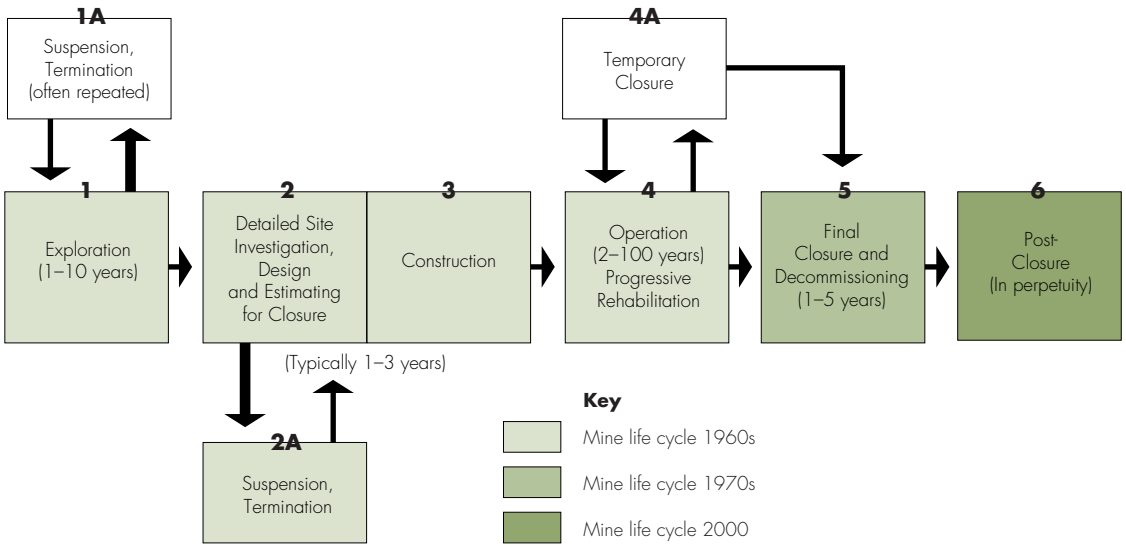
Human well-being (2) and environmental integrity (3) are the ultimate results to be achieved (and therefore to be assessed against for success). Mining, in particular, can be used as a catalyst in achieving these results. Activities of engagement (1); the market economy (4) (in this case mineral exploration and mining operations as well as the economy within Tahltan traditional territory); non-market activities (5) (which includes all of what we do that is not bought or sold in the market, including faith and cultural oriented activities, volunteer activities and housework); and governance (6) are all sets of activities that provide the means to achieve well-being. In the ideal, all of these elements lie in a field of continuous learning and contribute to adaptive management (7). To plan and act effectively, this larger picture needs to be considered as decisions are made about any particular resource development activity such as mineral exploration and mining.

Table 3. Detailed questions and sub-elements of the Seven Questions Assessment Framework

Question	Sub-elements
1. **Engagement:** Are processes of engagement committed to, designed and implemented that: • ensure all affected communities of interest (including vulnerable or disadvantaged sub-populations by reason of, for example, minority status, gender, ethnicity or economic status) have the opportunity to participate in the decisions that influence their own future; and • are understood, agreed upon by implicated communities of interest and are consistent with the legal, institutional and cultural characteristics of the community and country where the project is located?	1.1 Engagement processes 1.2 Dispute resolution mechanism 1.3 Reporting and verification 1.4 Adequate resources 1.5 Informed and voluntary consent

Question	Sub-elements
2. **People:** Will the project/operation lead directly or indirectly to maintenance of people's well-being (preferably an improvement): • during the life of the project or operation? • in post-closure?	2.1 Community organizational capacity 2.2 Social/cultural integrity 2.3 Worker and population health 2.4 Availability of basic infrastructure 2.5 Direct, indirect and induced effects 2.6 Full social/cultural costs, benefits and risks 2.7 Responsibilities and sureties 2.8 Distribution of costs, benefits and risks 2.9 Social/cultural stress and restoration
3. **Environment:** Will the project/operation lead directly or indirectly, to the maintenance or strengthening of the integrity of biophysical systems so that they can continue in post-closure to provide the needed support for the well-being of people and other life forms?	3.1 Ecosystem function, resilience and self-organizing capacity 3.2 Ecological entitlement 3.3 Full ecosystem costs, benefits and risks 3.4 Responsibilities and sureties 3.5 Environmental stress and action to ensure ecosystem integrity
4. **Economy:** Is the financial health of the project/operation assured and will the project or operation contribute (through planning, evaluation, decision-making and action) to the long-term viability of the local and regional economy in ways that will help ensure sufficiency for all and provide specific opportunities for the less advantaged?	4.1 Project or operation economics 4.2 Operational efficiencies 4.3 Economic contributions 4.4 Community/regional economies 4.5 Government and broader society economies
5. **Traditional and non-market activities:** Will the project/operation contribute to the long-term viability of traditional and non-market activities in the implicated community and region?	5.1 Activity/use levels 5.2 Traditional/cultural attributes
6. **Institutional arrangements and governance:** Are the institutional arrangements and systems of governance in place to provide a reasonable degree of confidence that the capacity to address project or operation consequences will continue to exist through the full life cycle including post-closure?	6.1 Efficiency and effectiveness in the mix of legislated rules, voluntary programs, market incentives and unspoken cultural norms 6.2 Capacity to address operational consequences 6.3 Bridging to post-closure conditions 6.4 Overall confidence that commitments made will be fulfilled
7. **Synthesis and continuous learning:** Has an overall evaluation been made and is a system in place for periodic evaluation based on: • consideration of all reasonable alternative configurations and designs at the project level (including the no-go option in the initial evaluation)?; • consideration of all reasonable alternatives at the overarching strategic level for supplying the commodity and the services it provides for meeting society's needs?; and • a synthesis of all the factors raised in this list of questions, leading to an overall judgment that the contribution to people and ecosystems will be net positive over the long term?	7.1 Project level alternatives 7.2 Strategic level alternatives 7.3 Overall synthesis 7.4 Continuous learning and improvement

Figure 2. The full mine-project life cycle (modified from John Gadsby, 2001).



Up until the 1960s, little thought was given to activities beyond the operational phase. In the 1970s, the need for decommissioning and surface reclamation was recognized. Only in the last few years has attention been given to the human and ecological implications of the post-closure period.

Figure 3. Contribution assessment template used to guide the Tahltan 7QS Assessment: past, present and future.

	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	**People** Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	**Environment** Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	**Economy** Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?	**Bush/ non-market** Are bush/ non-market activities better off as a result?	**Institutions & governance** Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?	**Synthesis; continuous learning** Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?	**Summary**
Exploration								
Operating mines (including construction)								
Closed mines								
Summary								

The template was used to guide the Tahltan 7QS Assessment for each of three assessments: past, present and future.

Two women met at Tahltan: one was from the south; and the other from the north. They saw bright flashes in the water. They went and looked and saw salmon swimming up the little river and they stayed there to fish. They called each other sisters and settled at Tahltan. This was our beginning.

– Story told by John Carlick

4. Assessment: Exploration, Operating Mines, Closure

A summary of the assessment completed by The 2003 Tahltan Mining Symposium for mineral exploration, operating mines and closure is provided below in Tables 4, 5 and 6. Conditions in the past, the current situation and the desired future are summarized in each table.

Eagle Rock looking down the Stikine River at Tahltan – David Rattray.

Table 4. Assessment summary: the Tahltan and mineral exploration – past, present and future.

Time Period	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	People Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	Environment Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	Economy Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?
PAST (1950 – early 1990s)	Tahltans not recognized as interest group; industry worked in isolation; local non-Indians did the hiring. No formal engagement process with prospectors, companies or government.	Wage economy brought income and for those few employed, job-skills and a chance to stay on the land; through the 1950s, labour and bush skills in demand; in 1960s with helicopter, Telegraph Creek lost role as staging point; thereafter, the Tahltan were marginalized; disruption of traditional ways; increase in substance abuse; overall, Tahltan not better off.	Minimal respect for the environment, traditional camps, trails, and sites; overall, and until recently, the environment has not been a concern, let alone a priority.	Individual projects viable; local economy subject to seasonal pulses from local purchases; some jobs and income for a few, particularly in the 1950s, much less since; sometimes these facilitated unemployment insurance claims during the winter which smoothed out the boom and bust for a few.
PRESENT	No engagement; secretive attitude of industry an impediment; no dispute resolution system; no reporting and verification; inadequate resources to participate; no informed and voluntary consent; no government involvement.	More local hiring; some feel that some training now taking place while others feel little capacity building is occurring; local medical facilities better but overall population health remains a real concern; limited knowledge of what exploration is going on—stressful for the Tahltan.	Exploration activities are now more respectful of the environment, however, the Tahltan have not been involved in the design of any of the rules therefore lack confidence that the integrity of the environment will be assured; little sense exists of the overall environmental costs, benefits and risks related to the cumulative effects of all exploration.	Individual projects viable; little currently flowing to the local economy; limited contribution to local business except perhaps helicopter time.
FUTURE (desired)	Actions required: · Engagement processes that reflect respect, equality and fairness. · Early and effective contact with the Tahltan. · Enhanced Tahltan (skills and resources) company, and government capacity to engage effectively.	Actions required: · Early and effective engagement with the Tahltan. · Joint Student Participation Program to be created. · Joint Career Opportunity Program to be created. · Companies to make Tahltan aware of opportunities and to provide training.	Actions required: · Fair participation by Tahltan and Tahltan traditional land will be better off as a result. · Tahltan involvement with inspection (could be single or multiple visits). · Notice to Tahltan of any improper activity. · Concrete steps taken to ensure that the Tahltan are aware of what is going on.	Actions required: · Fair participation by the Tahltan in exploration activities. · Tahltan to create an Exploration Services Co. · Tahltan to provide industry and government with an inventory of available skills and services.
Summary	Until recently, there has been little progress on achieving effective engagement in exploration. There are now signals that the exploration community wishes to change that situation.	Exploration activities have generally not been concerned with Tahltan well-being; often job income has translated to substance abuse and the overall well-being of the community has declined; in the future, the key to changing this is greater direct involvement of the Tahltan.	Until recently, most exploration activity has been unconcerned with the environment. There is some sense that this situation has changed but with little involvement by the Tahltan either in exploration or its regulation, there is little confidence yet that the future will be better.	Project viability taken care of by companies. Local economy has received pulses of jobs and income from exploration, particularly back in the 1950s, less so since early 1960s. Future presents opportunities for Tahltan business capacity in terms of exploration services support.

Bush/non-market Are bush/non-market activities better off as a result?	**Institutions and governance** Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?	**Synthesis; continuous learning** Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?	**Summary**
No respect for traditional way of life or camps, trails, and sites; no contribution.	Totally inadequate rules and institutions from a social, economic and environmental perspective; no incentives for enhancing local capacity in any way, especially education; system inadequate at all levels: corporate, local, provincial, federal; no confidence that people and environment will be better off or that capacities in place to address project consequences.	No synthesis undertaken; no system in place for continuous learning.	While a few benefits flowed to a small number of Tahltan—particularly before Telegraph Creek lost its role as a staging area—exploration in the past was not positive for either people or the environment.
Improved access helps the Tahltan get to country food and outsiders are exposed to local art and culture, however, more access can also increase hunting pressures; no requirements to report discovery of Tahltan-significant sites or for archeological assessment; overall impact on bush economy likely small, but could change.	Legislated rules and approvals process has improved but not yet adequate; no overall monitoring system in place; limited government capacity to monitor is a real concern; little local capacity to respond and participate in decision-making and enforcement process. Federal and provincial jurisdictional overlaps are confusing.	Companies may do overall assessment but do not involve Tahltan; cumulative impacts (social, cultural, economic, environmental) of all exploration activity a critical gap; no overall system is in place for synthesis and continuous learning.	There is little overall visible benefit to Tahltans. Ongoing concerns: · inadequate engagement; · lack of care to ensure that the contribution to people and the environment is positive; · lack of local capacity to be involved; and · absence of a broad overview of all activities in Tahltan territory.
Actions required: · Effort by companies put to not only minimize impacts, but also to strengthen non-market activities. · Sensitivity to guide, outfitting and trapping activities by companies. · Care to ensure that increased access is controlled from a hunting perspective. · Coordination of schedules between exploration and guide outfitters.	Actions required: · Confidence must be established that rules in place are leading to the right actions by all parties. · Effective reporting by all parties (companies, government, Tahltan, others). · Provision of resources to the Tahltan to ensure capacity to participate. · Direct dealing between Tahltan and companies on any infractions that arise.	Actions required: · Periodic synthesis and review of implications of exploration activities taking place in Tahltan territory. · Annual face-to-face meetings involving the Tahltan, government, companies and other interests. · Tahltan to survey other First Nations to learn how they are dealing with exploration activities.	In the future, the Tahltan wish to be partners in development from a business perspective; in compliance and enforcement activities; in an overall management role; and from a decision-making perspective.
Until recently, there has been little concern for the Tahltan and their bush economy on the part of companies and government. Enhanced sensitivity to this is critical for the future.	An inadequate past has given way to more effective institutional arrangements. However, the system is not yet in place that will give confidence in the future. That confidence will only come with greater Tahltan involvement in all aspects of governance.	Until this exercise, no thought has ever been put to generating an overall synthesis of the implications of exploration to the Tahltan people and land. Undertaking such a periodic assessment to facilitate continuous learning and adaptive management is an essential future step.	Improvements can be recognized over the past 50 years. However, the overall contribution of exploration to the well-being of the Tahltan people and land is likely far below what it could be. Keys to a better future include heightened sensitivity on the part of companies and government and enhanced Tahltan capacity and involvement.

Table 5. Assessment summary: the Tahltan and operating mines – past, present and future.

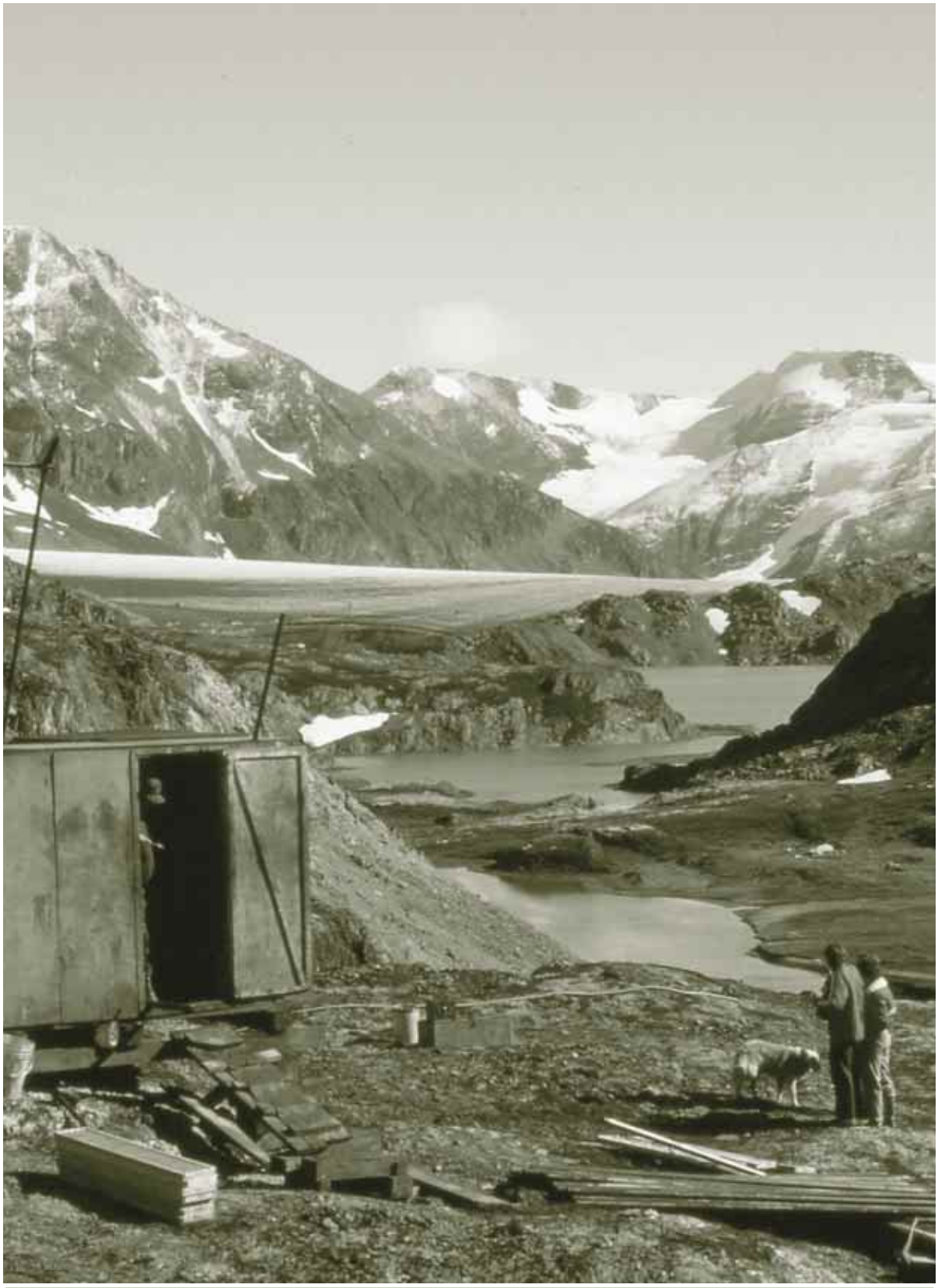
Time Period	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	People Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	Environment Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	Economy Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?
PAST (1950 – early 1990s)	No formal engagement processes in the past; little opportunity to participate with the exception of some at Golden Bear; little input from Tahltan on establishing mines; opportunity to participate in EIA process within last 20 years did exist but Tahltan did not have capacity or resources to effectively review environmental impact studies; companies did not have obligation to consult with Tahltan and Tahltan not considered part of development process at any level.	Concern about long-term health issues of workers from Cassiar; some employment from operating mines but many social problems related to substance abuse and cultural change; changes to hunting, influx of tourism and electricity in Telegraph Creek (1974) all had implications to the well-being of the Tahltan; change has brought improved services such as transportation and communication, but overall, Tahltan well-being remains depressed.	Varied with project; concerns remain regarding long-term contamination of wildlife, landscape scarring; increased hunting pressures from recreational hunting as a result of more access – 1950s - Cassiar, 1974 - Stuart-Cassiar Highway, 1970s - BC Rail access route; continuing concern about Cassiar tailings and the "temporary" closure of Johnny Mountain; earlier mines had little environmental concern; Snip and Golden Bear better; few fish/wildlife studies; lack of environmental bonding; overall integrity of the environment not assured.	Boom and bust; some work for locals during operation and purchases from local economy; Abrupt loss when mines shut down; "closed" local economy a problem—mines pay workers but then workers spend all their money in company store and pub; little Tahltan capacity to participate in the past; no spin-off businesses, little benefit to local economy; overall sense that money flows to federal and provincial coffers but not to the local First Nation government.
PRESENT	More informed communications between all parties; engagement processes are evolving as all sides learn about the other's needs and responsibilities; still a learning process for Tahltan, company and government.	Some Tahltan receive benefits from employment, training and apprenticeship programs; transferable skills are being learned, Thus the Tahltan are gaining both directly through wages and indirectly through the local purchase of goods and services; the negative social impact within the community, however, is escalating; serious substance abuse and related social problems remain that must be addressed; the net overall contribution is not positive.	Reclamation plans are mandated by government for all mines and exploration projects; for example, reclamation and closure plans are now in place for Eskay Creek which reflects a significant improvement over past practices.	Employment and local purchase of supplies and services enhance the local wage economy; opportunities to develop local businesses through direct contracts and joint ventures have strengthened the local economy; road access to mushroom harvesting areas has enhanced that business opportunity for the Tahltans.
FUTURE (desired)	Actions required: · Collaborative development of an MOU to govern the engagement process. · Improve communication on local issues and address them in a timely manner. · The idea of a more formalized arrangement governing impacts and benefits to the Tahltan should be carefully examined by both the Tahltan and the company; elements to consider include monetary compensation, Tahltan employment, training, dispute resolution, environmental monitoring, shift changes and hunting. · The idea of a Tahltan Sustainability Fund to ensure a long-term contribution to the Tahltan should be examined carefully by the Tahltan, company and government.	Actions required: · Improved communication, planning and action involving company, Tahltan and government to address social issues (critical). · Additional programs to address substance abuse and related social issues. · On-site mental health support for workers. · Life-skills training for workers related to money management and lifestyle choices. · Current training should emphasize skills that will be useable in post-closure. · The Tahltan need to be provided with information on various training opportunities so skills can be developed outside the work place in preparation for the future.	Actions required: · Tahltan skills and capacity related to environmental monitoring, enforcement and compliance should be enhanced so that the Tahltan can assume full responsibility. · Reports should be filed with the Tahltan government, companies, provincial and federal government and others. · There is an opportunity for the Tahltan to develop specialized skills in reclamation and restoration ecology.	Actions required: · Further enhancement of employment and business opportunities for the Tahltan.
Summary	Engagement processes have improved over time but much yet remains to be done as the various parties learn about each other's values and concern. Formalization of arrangements through either MOUs or signed agreements may be helpful. Alternative mechanisms like a Sustainability Fund should be considered.	Overall, Tahltan well-being remains a real concern and mining activity has not contributed as much as is possible. While mining is not the only factor, care needs to be exercised to ensure that its contribution is positive.	Old practices have given way to many improved ways. However, a number of serious concerns remain such as the endless temporary closure situation at Johnny Mountain. The Tahltan, among others, do not yet have confidence that environmental integrity will be strengthened. The Tahltan have a potentially significant role to play in reclamation and restoration work during mine operation.	The contribution to the local economy has improved significantly both in terms of jobs and local purchase of supplies and services. There are additional business opportunities for the Tahltan to pursue.

Bush/non-market Are bush/non-market activities better off as a result?	**Institutions and governance** Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?	**Synthesis; continuous learning** Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?	**Summary**
No contribution in the past, if anything, negative as the Tahltan shifted away from traditional lifestyle to wage economy; government conservation officers arrive and try to limit aboriginal hunt; neither companies nor government concerned with traditional culture of the Tahltan; no studies of traditional use of the land; no recognition of traditional knowledge and aboriginal rights and freedoms.	Not adequate—lenient laws, little monitoring and enforcement, lack of pre-planning for closure; no recognition of aboriginal rights; no requirement for consultation with the Tahltan on land use, environmental assessments or any other implication.	No synthesis undertaken; no re-assessment.	The Tahltan recognize that some factors (e.g., commodity prices) are well outside the control of companies and government. However, in the past, there was no net positive gain to people or the environment, a situation that is slowly changing for the better.
Negative impact on traplines; potential opportunity to enhance cultural activities through transfer of facilities and infrastructure to Tahltan after mining; road access has enhanced mushroom harvesting ability; work schedule allows the flexibility to enjoy fishing, hunting, etc., but the effect on family life still can be tough; company is supportive of local cultural activities including funerals, elections and school activities; more could be done with elders such as mine tours.	Comprehensive rules in place although the Tahltan are not signatories to these rules; mechanism for independent Tahltan review of policies and plans still missing as is a Tahltan monitoring process to ensure environmental protection standards are adhered to.	No overall review system in place, particularly to see if community needs are being addressed; mines and the Tahltan still very much in the learning stage.	Significant improvement has been achieved but much remains to be done by all interests.
Actions required: • Policies and actions to ensure that not only are impacts addressed, but that actions are taken to strengthen traditional cultural practices.	Actions required: • An independent Tahltan mine review process should be established. • Collaborative development of a co-management agreement between the Tahltan and the provincial government should be undertaken.	Actions required: • A company-Tahltan joint process should be developed to review project design alternatives throughout the various project phases. • An oversight or implementing team should be established to meet periodically (perhaps four times/year) to undertake a synthesis and review of the overall contribution that is being made by operating mine activities.	Over the long term, the Tahltan will work to build the skills and capacity that will allow them to participate directly and effectively in owning and operating mines. On the part of companies and government, more effort is needed to work with the Tahltan to address the substance abuse and related social problems that come with the wage economy.
Over time, companies and government had become more aware of and sensitive to traditional Tahltan activities. The learning continues on all sides and needs to be encouraged.	Institutional arrangements have been strengthened over time. Direct Tahltan involvement needs to be enhanced and the skills and capacity to do so effectively need building. Tahltan will develop their own policies and standards.	There is still a lack of capacity on all sides to generate a regular synthesis that provides an overview of the implications of mining on the Tahltan and provides the needed platform to learn and improve continuously.	Significant improvement has occurred since 1950 on most fronts. However, the issue of Tahltan health and well-being remains a critical concern to be addressed. Doing so is in the interests of all parties including companies and government. The solution is not simply economic; it must include enhancing skills and capacity as well as increasing Tahltan participation in decision-making.

Table 6. Assessment summary: the Tahltan and mines in closure – past, present and future

Time Period	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	People Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	Environment Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	Economy Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?
PAST (1950 – early 1990s)	Typically mines were just left; no information exchange occurred with the Tahltan so misconceptions arose; no formal engagement processes existed.	Little concern for Tahltan well-being in the past; when Tahltan participated, there were some benefits (e.g., with dismantling of Klappan Coal); generally, no participation and no benefits; no training programs; the negative social-cultural impacts outweighed gains.	Little or no consideration—just walked away (Johnny Mountain and Cassiar tailings are good examples); detrimental to the environment.	No economic benefit to community except through a small bit of local hiring and perhaps a bit of local rental.
PRESENT	Some sharing is starting but is still limited; Tahltan informed of closure.	Some consideration for employees (e.g., severance packages, some transfer of employment) but not much thought for the community; see slow change in including Tahltan for advancement, although few opportunities for Tahltan to transfer to other operating mines.	Improvement in reclamation and closure; Snip a good example; long-term site monitoring (10 years) but still limited or no critter monitoring; ongoing planning for closure during operations and reclamation.	Some employment and opportunities for reclamation and monitoring work, however, overall the contribution to the local economy is limited; possible benefits from facilities in post- closure, but need yet to be realized.
FUTURE (desired)	Actions required: · Full engagement in all aspects: assessment, permitting, bonding, ongoing and final reclamation, closure, post-closure and monitoring. · Tahltan skill and capacity enhancement to facilitate involvement. · Would likely be best to establish a kind of MOU involving Tahltan, company, government and others to cover all of this. · Tahltan to participate in "outside" mechanisms such as the NW Mine Development Review Committee. · Tahltan should lead the land-use planning process once mine is reclaimed. · Tahltan to establish own environmental office and internal review process to involve community.	Actions required: · Critical need to address long-term social and health issues. · Closure will not involve a large workforce but should involve some; key is to ensure a longer-term flow of benefits to the local community so that the ebb and flow of the mining activity is "smoothed." · Skills and capacity of Tahltan need to be enhanced (e.g., environment, reclamation, monitoring, special cat skinner skills required for road de-activation) to ensure that they play a central role in reclamation and post-closure. · Companies to provide opportunities for Tahltan to transfer to other mines. · Career mentoring for young people is needed.	Actions required: · Need to define what "temporary closure" means (say maximum five years). Situation at Johnny Mountain (indefinite temporary closure) is untenable. · Need to set a positive example for others and ensure that reclamation and monitoring covers site, access routes, stream crossings, etc. · Effort required to ensure that environmental restoration is best possible; perfection may not be achieved. · Monitoring of contamination and health of wildlife and fisheries at all stages, including periodic inventory. · Restoration should include habitat enhancement, re-introduction of species that were driven out, use of native vegetation, etc. · Tahltan participation in development of environmental regulations.	Actions required: · Need to break the boom-bust cycle. · Need fairer distribution of resource revenues with contribution from taxes and royalties back to the community. · Tahltan to explore business opportunities for application here and elsewhere: reclamation and restoration services; long-term monitoring; and alternative uses of mine infrastructure and assets (e.g., logging, tourism, healing, exploration, back country recreation, prospecting, trapping, hunting and winter recreation). · With capacity in place, Tahltan should get first right of refusal on reclamation and monitoring contracts. · Alternative mechanisms like a Sustainability Fund should be considered.
Summary	Improvement in engagement over time regarding closure and post-closure but situation still not adequate from the Tahltan perspective.	Concern for the well-being of the Tahltan and their community has increased over time, but there remains a critical need for all parties to more effectively address the health and social issues.	Environmental sensitivity has increased over time but long-term concerns remain. Tahltan capacity to participate over the long term needs to be enhanced.	Tahltan capacity and opportunities continue to increase. However, the mechanisms to smooth out the peaks and valleys of the boom-bust cycle are still not in place.

Bush/non-market Are bush/non-market activities better off as a result?	**Institutions and governance** Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?	**Synthesis; continuous learning** Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?	**Summary**
No concern for bush economy in the past—very disruptive and destructive; after closure, activities picked up as before if they could; mining activities increased access by recreational hunters to traditional Tahltan hunting areas.	Totally inadequate institutional arrangements.	Never done in the past.	Closure in the past was often problematic for both human and ecosystem well-being.
Overall improvement has been achieved; with closure, access remains to traditional areas which makes things easier for the Tahltan but without controls, can bring in too many recreational hunters; limited critter monitoring upon which the bush economy is dependent.	Institutional arrangements have been improved; provincial closure regulations are now in place and include a requirement for some level of financial surety; closure of Golden Bear is much better than in the past but final condition remains to be seen.	Some concern for learning from the past now exists; Golden Bear and Snip are hearing and addressing concerns as they move ahead, but still no collaborative overview is being generated and reported.	Current closure practices are improved. The issue of defining "temporary closure" is outstanding. No system exists to entrench concepts of continuous learning and improvement.
Actions required: · Tahltan to explore community development opportunities with mine assets such as: cultural camps; healing and treatment centre; and rehabilitation centre. · With mining activity gone, Tahltan have undisturbed access, however, access needs to be controlled and the Tahltan should play a central role in this.	Actions required: · Greater Tahltan participation in setting terms of closure (e.g., water quality, emergency clean-ups, etc.). · Need to address orphaned and abandoned sites and how to finance related restoration and emergencies. · Rules are in place but all interests need to learn how to use them more effectively. · Need to explore co-management arrangement with full Tahltan participation.	Actions required: · Need to design and implement a collaborative and ongoing system of monitoring and reporting that provides the needed synthesis and opportunity for continuous learning related to all aspects of this preliminary assessment.	
There is now greater sensitivity to traditional activities. Opportunities to use closed facilities for health and cultural centres need to be explored.	There has been an improvement over time. Addressing orphaned and abandoned sites remains an issue. All parties are still learning how to use the rules more effectively. Direct Tahltan involvement in designing and implementing the governance mechanisms needs to be enhanced.	Designing and implementing an ongoing collaborative system of monitoring and reporting on all aspects covered in this preliminary assessment remains a gap.	Addressing the long-term health and well-being of the Tahltan people remains a critical issue to address. Full Tahltan involvement in all aspects of closure is essential. There are business and community development opportunities for the Tahltan to take advantage of and to do so, Tahltan skill enhancement is needed. A collaborative and ongoing system of monitoring and reporting that covers all aspects of this preliminary assessment is required.



Drill rig on the West Zone, Sulphurets Property – Dani Alldrick, B.C. Geological Survey.

Each person had freedom of choice, but with that freedom comes responsibility. We often say that natives do not talk about rights, they talk about responsibility.

- Tahltan saying

5. Tahltan Mining Strategy – 2003

The Tahltan Mining Symposium set out to review the implications of mining and mineral activity from a Tahltan perspective. It did so to create a foundation for designing and implementing a strategy for ensuring that the contribution of mining and mineral exploration activity over the long term is positive to the Tahltan people and their traditional territory.

For many decades, the Tahltan people bore the brunt of the boom-bust cycle of mineral exploration and mining on their traditional territory. While a number of Tahltan have worked directly or indirectly for exploration and/or mining companies, until recently the Tahltan people as a whole could have little hope that benefits would outweigh the attendant costs and risks, let alone sum to an overall net long-term positive contribution.

Below is set out the strategy for action that emerged at the Tahltan Mining Symposium and as a result of subsequent review of symposium results by the Tahltan people. It aims to:

1. send a signal that Tahltan people are supportive of mining and mineral activity on their land under conditions that such activities are "done right" from a Tahltan perspective;
2. facilitate Tahltan participation in mining and mineral activity—not only through direct and indirect employment, but also in terms of overall management/co-management as well as the broad perspective of seeing a fair distribution (considering all participating interests) of all benefits, costs and risks; and
3. ensure that the broad range of concerns raised in the "Seven Questions to Sustainability" are addressed, in particular the health/social/cultural implications of mining/mineral activity that continue to receive inadequate attention.

Strategy:

i. a coherent set of approaches and interventions proposed or chosen to accomplish an objective or group of objectives. While objectives state what we want to accomplish, strategies indicate how to proceed. ii. an attempt to achieve a means of working smarter rather than harder by doing the right things at the right times for the right reasons.

Tahltan Mining Symposium – Romona Blackwell.

Potential Actions for the Tahltan

1. *Immediate Internal Communication*
   - Develop a short summary report of this initiative and distribute to all Tahltan people.
   - Convene (Chiefs and Council) meetings in each community to extend the discussion more broadly.
   - Convene an annual Tahltan Mining Forum including Tahltan people, other local residents, government and industry to update everyone on exploration and mining activity.
2. *Resource Development Policy*
   - Review the 1987 Resource Development Policy (Appendix 2); revise to include vision, goals and specific objectives related to the full mining-project life cycle (exploration through to post-closure) and covering the components of the Seven Questions Assessment Framework:
     (1) engagement;
     (2) human well-being;
     (3) ecosystem well-being;
     (4) the Tahltan market economy;
     (5) the Tahltan non-market economy;
     (6) governance and institutions; and
     (7) synthesis and continuous learning.
   - Get approval across the Tahltan leadership as necessary.
   - Develop a generic framework to use in negotiating agreements (could be a Memorandum of Understanding, an Impact Benefits Agreement or some other instrument) with others who wish to undertake some activity on Tahltan traditional territory; obtain approval (across leadership) as necessary.
   - Address in the policy, how best to ensure capacity development within the Tahltan community and when that capacity is in place, consider ways of ensuring that Tahltan people are given a preferential opportunity to participate.
   - The policy should include development of specific "to-do lists" for exploration and mine development companies.
3. *Tahltan Mining/Mineral Resource Committee*
   - Secure funding for a Tahltan Mining/Mineral Resource Committee and Secretariat to carry the current process ahead and to implement actions in the future; this should be established as a part of the Tahltan Central Organization.
   - Name a coordinator to assume responsibility for implementation.
4. *Mining/Mineral Resource Data Base and Inventory*
   - Establish a locally-based capacity to link to existing data bases in Smithers and Victoria that describe:
     - available mapping;
     - mineral claims and coal licences in Tahltan traditional territory;
     - geology and mineral occurrences; and
     - mineral potential.

5. *Tahltan Corporate Development*

   - Develop a business plan (including a review of the most appropriate delivery mechanism) and seek start-up funding for providing the following services to the mining/mineral industry:
     - exploration services;
     - reclamation and restoration services;
     - environmental monitoring;
     - social/cultural monitoring; and
     - recruiting and placement services.

6. *External Communication*

   - Communicate to industry (exploration and operating companies) and government:
     - the revised Resource Development Policy;
     - the generic Framework for Agreements;
     - the inventory of Tahltan capacity and interest in participating in mining and mineral activity; and
     - specific skill and services: (1) exploration services; (2) reclamation and restoration services; (3) environmental monitoring; (4) social/cultural monitoring.
   - Consider developing a comprehensive external communications program that might include:
     - Web site with links to other key mining Web sites (Infomine, PDAC, MAC, ICMM, etc.);
     - direct contact with companies and industry associations;
     - outreach including a booth, participation in others' booths and/or presentations at: the Cordilleran Roundup (Vancouver, January); Prospector and Developers Association of Canada Annual Convention (Toronto, March); and the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy Annual Convention (May, various locations).

7. *Progress Monitoring*

   - Establish a capacity for tracking progress on all of the recommendations of this action plan starting with one- and three-month assessments.
   - Establish a capacity for periodically (say on a five-year cycle) undertaking an overall assessment of whether the contribution of mining/mineral activity to Tahltan people and Tahltan traditional territory is positive over the long term; this capacity should include an integration of qualitative and quantitative insight, insights from story and indicators, and wisdom from traditional knowledge as well as contemporary "western" thinking.

8. *Mining, Minerals and Youth*

   - Establish scholarship funds for Tahltan students in areas of prospecting/mining/environment.
   - Contact the exploration industry through the B.C. & Yukon Chamber of Mines to encourage companies to engage young Tahltan in summer exploration programs.
   - Develop programs for young people through which they are made aware of potential careers in the mining and mineral industry.

9. *Tahltan Capacity Building*

   - Undertake a strength/capacity/gap review (collaborative with industry and government) in terms of Tahltan skills and services available to support the mining/minerals industry.
   - Seek appropriate support from industry and government to mount programs to enhance capacity in line with the results of the above analysis.

10. Mining, Minerals and Elders

- Develop a collaborative program with industry and government to tell elders about mining/mineral activity (the full life cycle) including mine tours and evening presentations in the communities.

11. Health/Social/Cultural Implications of Mining and Mineral Activity

- Make a concerted effort to address the health/social/cultural implications of the wage economy in general and exploration and mining activity in particular including:
  - creating the opportunity for all three Tahltan communities to work together to generate a strategy for addressing the health/social/cultural concerns;
  - ensuring that the entire Resource Policy is considered from the perspective of the health/social/cultural implications;
  - establishing means of tracking and reporting on the health/social/cultural implications of mining/mineral activity;
  - ensuring that health/social/cultural concerns are dealt with explicitly in any arrangement that is made between the Tahltan and exploration/mining companies; and
  - designing and implementing life-skills training courses for Tahltan workers and families to ensure that the income from the wage economy is used wisely; part of implementation will involve putting in place work-site and community counsellors;
- An immediate priority is to work with the Eskay Creek Mine to address health/social/cultural concerns arising from Tahltan participation there.
- Special effort should be put to working with government and industry to develop recreational facilities for youth and elders in each community.
- Special effort should also be put to working with government and industry to address cultural concerns including preservation of the Tahltan language and enrichment of Tahltan culture.

12. Resources to Support the Tahltan Mining/Minerals Action Plan

- Seek government and industry support for collaborative implementation of the Tahltan Mining/Minerals Action Plan.
- Examine innovative funding mechanisms that might include some kind of revenue-sharing mechanisms (from royalties, taxes, licences and fees).

Actions for Industry (Exploration and Mining Companies; Industry Associations)

1. Sensitivity to First Nations Society

- Take the needed steps to develop a sensitivity to First Nations society by:
  - becoming informed on First Nations rights from a legal perspective as expressed in recent court decisions;
  - establishing engagement processes that reflect a respect for Tahltan people and Tahltan traditional territory;
  - taking cross-cultural training to ensure that the company has the capacity to build the needed relationships with Tahltan people; and
  - committing to collaborative problem-solving approaches with the Tahltan people.

2. *Health/Social/Cultural Implications of Mineral Exploration and Mining Activity*
    - Ensure that the health/social/cultural implications of mining and mineral activity are explicitly addressed.
3. *Implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy*
    - Work collaboratively in support of implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy.
4. *Specific Actions for the Eskay Creek Mine*
    - Continue formalization of an arrangement to clarify specific impacts and benefits to ensure that the long-term contribution to the Tahltan people and traditional territory is positive.

Actions for Government (Regional, Provincial and Federal)

1. *Health/Social/Cultural Implications of Mining and Mineral Activity*
    - Ensure that the health/social/cultural implications of mining and mineral activity are explicitly addressed.
2. *Temporary Closure*
    - Address the problem of the seemingly indefinite "temporary closure" of the Johnny Mountain Mine.
3. *Implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy*
    - Work collaboratively in support of implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy.

Tahltan fish house – David Rattray.

Appendix 1. 1910 Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe

We, the undersigned members of the Tahltan tribe, speaking for ourselves, and our entire tribe, hereby make known to all whom it may concern, that we have heard of the Indian Rights movement among the Indian tribes of the Coast, and of the southern interior of British Columbia. Also, we have read the Declaration made by the chiefs of the southern interior tribes at Spences Bridge on the 16th July last, and we hereby declare our complete agreement with the demands of same, and with the position taken by the said chiefs, and their people on all the questions stated in the said Declaration, and we furthermore make known that it is our desire and intention to join with them in the fight for our mutual rights, and that we will assist in the furtherance of this object in every way we can, until such time as al these matters of moment to use are finally settled. We further declare as follows:

Firstly – We claim the sovereign right to all the country of our tribe—this country of ours which we have held intact from the encroachments of other tribes, from time immemorial, at the cost of our own blood. We have done this because our lives depended on our country. We have never treated with them, nor given them any such title. (We have only very lately learned the British Columbia government makes this claim and that it has for long considered as its property all the territories of the Indian tribes in B.C.)

Secondly – We desire that a part of our country, consisting of one or more large areas (to be erected by us), be retained for us for our own use, said lands and all thereon to be acknowledged by the government as our absolute property. The rest of our tribal land we are will to relinquish to the British Columbia government for adequate compensation.

Thirdly – We wish it known that a small portion of our lands at the mouth of the Tahltan river, was set apart a few years ago by Mr. Vowell as an Indian reservation. These few acres are the only reservation made for our tribe. We may state we never applied for the reservation of this piece of land, and we had no knowledge why the government set it apart for us, nor do we know exactly yet.

Fourthly – We desire that all questions regarding our lands, hunting, fishing, etc., and every matter concerning our welfare, be settled my treaty between us and the Dominion and British Columbia governments.

Fifthly – We are of the opinion it will be better for ourselves, also better for the governments and all concerned, if these treaties are made with us at a very early date, so all friction, and misunderstanding between us and the whites may be avoided, for we hear lately much talk of white settlements in the region and the building of railways, etc., in the near future.

Signed at Telegraph Creek, B.C., the eighteenth day of October, nineteen hundred and ten, by
Nanok, Chief of the Tahltans
Nastulta, alias Little Jackson
George Assadza, Kenetl, alias Big Jackson
And eighty other members of the tribe.

Appendix 2. Tahltan Tribal Council Resource Development Policy Statement, April 7, 1987

In history as well as in mythology, the Tahltan Indian people have always been acknowledged as the original inhabitants of the Stikine River Watershed in northern British Columbia. Archaeological evidence has determined that the Tahltan people have continuously occupied this area for thousands of years, perhaps as many as 10,000. This is what is often referred to in poetic terms as "since time immemorial."

The first white person to come into Tahltan country was Samuel Black who arrived in 1821 exploring for the Northwest Trading Company. Our people never met Black and so it wasn't until 1838 when the second white person, Robert Campbell of the Hudson Bay Company, entered our territory that European contact with our people was first made.

Tahltans had an elaborate trading economy already established when the Hudson Bay Company first encountered our tribe. Although the H.B. Co. was very interested in immediately setting up a competing trading operation in Tahltan country, our people blocked them for approximately forty years so as to protect our own established trading economy. At that time Tahltans had an active commercial network based on our position as a middleman between the coastal trade and the tribes living north and east of Stikine country. We also traded our own fish and furs and other natural resources such as obsidian to all peoples who came into our country.

Tahltan people are very proud of our tradition of commercial enterprise and equally proud that we were able to protect our interests against the mighty H.B. Co. empire for those many years. It wasn't until the 1870's Cassiar gold rush was in full swing that the H.B. Co. was able to open its first trading post in Tahltan traditional territory.

Even though our people have lost the monopoly position of business in our own country, we are still active on many business fronts. Our present tribal objective is to increase our participation in all business that develops within the borders of our tribal territory so that we can again enjoy a self-sustaining healthy and enterprising economy.

We wish to make it very clear that Tahltan people and the Tahltan Tribal Council are not inherently opposed to any specific type of business or resource development within our country. However, we do feel strongly that any development within our tribal territory must adhere to some basic principles that the Tahltan Tribal Council has developed.

We appreciated that most private developers "just want to conduct their business." They do not want to have any discussions or participate in any actions that have overtones of aboriginal rights or native politics. We in one sense sympathize with that wish of developers because we, as businessmen, also experience frustration when politics begin to directly affect our business endeavors. However, the reality is that if our tribal objective of achieving substantial participation in business development within our country is to be realized within a reasonable time, we must combine politics and business when dealing with developers wishing to establish themselves within Tahltan country. Developers will have to come to terms with this reality if they expect to function successfully within our territory.

Before a resource development project can commence within Tahltan tribal territory, it will be necessary for the developer and the Tahltan Tribal Council to enter into a project participation agreement that encompasses the following elements and basic principles:

1. assurance that the development will not pose a threat of irreparable environmental damage;
2. assurance that the development will not jeopardize, prejudice or otherwise compromise the outstanding Tahltan aboriginal rights claim;
3. assurance that the project will provide more positive than negative social impacts on Tahltan people;

4. provision for the widest possible opportunity for education and direct employment-related training for Tahltan people in connection with the project;
5. provision for the widest possible opportunity for employment opportunities for Tahltan people with respect to all phases of the development;
6. provision for substantial equity participation by Tahltans in the total project;
7. provision for the widest possible development of Tahltan business opportunities over which the developer may have control or influence;
8. provision of the developer to assist the Tahltans to accomplish the objectives stated above by providing financial and managerial assistance and advice where deemed necessary.

If resource developers and the Tahltan Tribal Council can reach agreement embracing the points noted above, then we believe that Tahltans, the developers and all other Canadians will enjoy equitable benefits from each resource development undertaken and there will be business harmony within Tahltan traditional tribal territory.

Signed: Vernon Marion, President
Tahltan Tribal Council

Date: April 7, 1987

Appendix 3. Tahltan Mining Symposium Agenda

Approximate Time	Friday, April 4, 2003 DAY 1	Saturday, April 5, 2003 DAY 2	Sunday, April 6, 2003 DAY 3
7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.		breakfast	breakfast
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.		**The Tahltan Today: Overview of Priorities and Concerns** Jerry Asp and Elders	**7QS Scan: Closed Mines Issues and Opportunities** (small groups)
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.			Small Groups Report Out to Plenary
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.		refreshment break	refreshment break
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.		**Overview of Mining and Mineral Activity in the Stikine** Dave Lefebure B.C. Geological Survey	**Phase 3 Strategy and Action Plan** (Small Groups)
12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m.		lunch	lunch
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.		**7QS Scan: Exploration Issues and Opportunities** (small groups)	Small Groups Report Out to Plenary Followed by Plenary Discussion
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.		Small Groups Report Out to Plenary	
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.		refreshment break	refreshment break
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.		**Overview of Mining Attitudes** R. Dennis Bergen, V.P. Wheaton River Minerals Ltd. **7QS Scan: Operating Mines Issues and Opportunities** (small groups)	**Final Round Table** (all)
4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.		Small Groups Report Out to Plenary	
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.		break	Early Dinner
6:30 pm., evening	**OPENING DINNER AND DISCUSSION** Welcome (Jerry Asp), Introductions, Workshop Overview, Round Table (all): **Mining and the Tahltan: The way it was, is, and could be tomorrow.**	**DINNER AND DISCUSSION** Continued Round Table (all) **Mining and the Tahltan: The way it was, is, and could be tomorrow.**	

The Tahltan Mining Symposium was convened in April 2003 to (1) review the relationship between the Tahltan people, their land and the mining industry; and (2) build a strategy to guide that relationship in the future. Seeking a win-win outcome, and guided by the Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS) Assessment Framework, the participants considered past, present and potential future conditions as a foundation for ensuring positive outcomes for the Tahltan people and their territory in the years to come. *Out of Respect* describes the process and documents the resulting strategy.

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