



**STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF  
T̂SILHQOT'IN CULTURAL HERITAGE**





2022 Tsilhqot'in National Government

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# OPENING

Our history is known through the stories and the physical evidence left behind by our people. Given that our history is an oral history, the physical evidence of something like a cultural site must be treated like our library. Our land tells us what was there — it tells us part of our history. So much of the evidence of what our past looked like has been wiped out by resource extraction, such as logging. To be able to connect a physical piece of land or an artifact to a story of ours is priceless. To protect our cultural sites is to protect our history and our ability to connect with that history in a physical way. This connection can draw in the youth and public to the rich cultural and spiritual past that we have as the T̓silhqot'in people. Protection of our history is one of the ways that our identity as a people will carry on into future generations. In many ways our story of who we are is just beginning to be told to the rest of the Canada. Maintaining this library of our history will be increasingly important as time passes.

— Chief Joe Alphonse, Tl'etinqox  
TNG Tribal Chair



# PURPOSE

This book is intended to serve as a guide for addressing the priorities of the T̓silhqot'in Nation as they relate to the control, interpretation, protection and practice of all forms of T̓silhqot'in heritage. It seeks to:

- › Outline the context of T̓silhqot'in heritage management.
- › Present a holistic framework for T̓silhqot'in heritage management rooted in T̓silhqot'in laws, values, and perspectives.
- › Organise the Nation's priorities for heritage management into clearly defined outcomes by setting achievable goals along effective timelines.



# CONTEXT

The ancestors are continuously present today on the landscapes. They have left us ancient names, hand tools, and trails. We bring them to life in singing their songs and telling their stories. We continue to use their language and we are acquainted with their cherished places. The past and the present merge together into the future.<sup>1</sup>

— Linda Smith, Yunešit'in

# OVERVIEW

Ancestral spaces, structures, and belongings, as well as place names, stories, songs, and teachings are at the heart of T̓silhqot'in heritage. From time immemorial, we have protected and cared for that which has been handed down by our *ʔesggidam* (ancestors). They walked these lands long before us. They fished, hunted, gathered plants, practiced their traditions, followed their laws, and lived their lives in harmony with other beings.<sup>ii</sup> The *ʔesggidam* made the places of their lives sacred, leaving behind physical and spiritual traces in their footprints. Their presence on the landscape remains strong today as it will continue into the future.<sup>ii</sup>

It is our responsibility to care for T̓silhqot'in heritage. We do this by learning and following *dechen ts'edilhtan* (T̓silhqot'in law), singing our songs and telling our stories, and by standing united against forces that would damage our sacred places and our ways of life. We are guided through this important work by the voices of our people, our elders, youth, women and leaders, as well as our *ʔesggidam* and the land itself.

From the Chilcotin War of 1864 to the 2014 Supreme Court of Canada victory for Aboriginal title, the T̓silhqot'in Nation has remained strong, united, and determined to care for ancestral places, to honour our *ʔesggidam*, and to protect our lands, resources, knowledge, and traditions for future generations. We continue to assert our inherent jurisdiction and authority to control, interpret, protect, and practice our cultural heritage in all its forms.

The United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2007) and BC's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (2019) are examples of a growing recognition for indigenous rights, authority and jurisdiction here and around the world. For T̓silhqot'in, these shifting attitudes — along with milestone agreements like the *Nenqay Deni Accord* (2016) and the *Gwets'en Nilt'i Pathway Agreement* (2019) — are opening new opportunities to improve the management of T̓silhqot'in heritage for generations to come. Yet as far as we have come there is still much work to do.

## ONGOING CHALLENGES

The T̓silhqot̓in Nation has faced significant adversity as a result of colonisation. Disease epidemics, war, appropriated land, the imposition of the *Indian Act*, Indian residential and day schools, and ongoing racism have all contributed to a disruption in the cultural knowledge systems essential for the practice of T̓silhqot̓in heritage.

Industrial activities including logging and range grazing have and continue to damage, desecrate, and destroy T̓silhqot̓in heritage. These activities also disrupt our connections to our ancestral lands.

The appropriation of T̓silhqot̓in ancestral places as ‘private’ and ‘crown’ lands presents significant obstacles to our stewardship of these places. Private lands remain the largest barrier for accessing, monitoring, caring for, and celebrating some of our most sacred places.

British Columbia (BC) does not recognise the authority and jurisdiction of the T̓silhqot̓in Nation to manage our own heritage. Yet existing Provincial heritage protection mechanisms, including the *Heritage Conservation Act* (HCA), have proven ineffective to safeguard T̓silhqot̓in heritage interests.

T̓silhqot̓in ancestral sites and belongings have long been identified, collected, defined, interpreted and managed by non-T̓silhqot̓in actors. Countless ancestral belongings are held in distant repositories and there continues to be minimal engagement with T̓silhqot̓in perspectives for archaeological work conducted within our territory.

A long and ongoing history of site desecration, broken promises, and a systematic lack of engagement/consent for activities on the land have contributed to a lack of trust between the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and Provincial authorities, private land owners, and other industrial and corporate actors. This lack of trust stands a major barrier to future collaboration between the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and other parties.

## OUR RESOLVE

In spite of the ongoing challenges we face, our Nation remains united and determined as ever to assert our inherent rights and jurisdiction to improve the way our heritage is understood, protected, practiced, and celebrated.



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

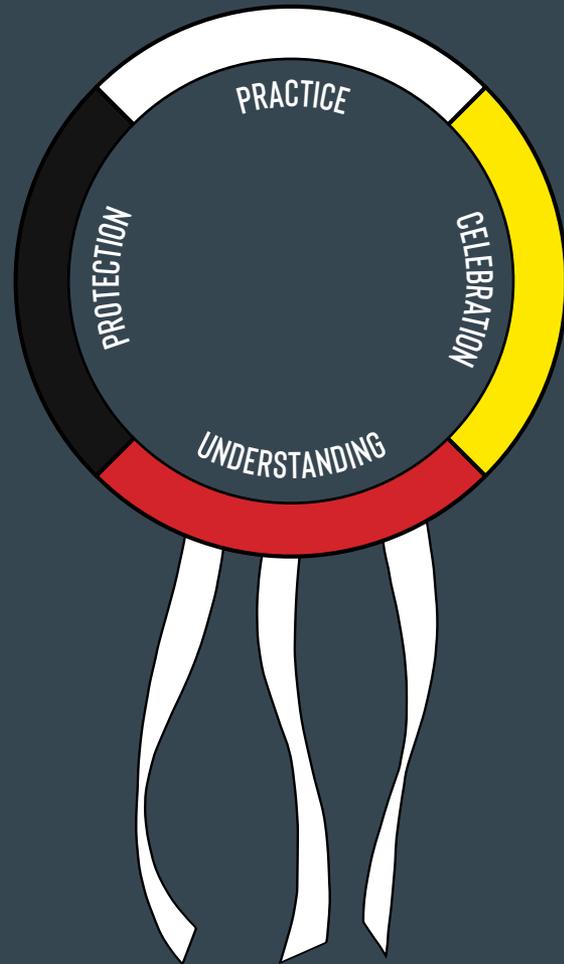


- **RESPECT** We hold great respect for all that our Creator and our *ʔesggidam* have handed down to us, including ancestral places, trails and objects, traditional laws and protocols, and our sacred stories and songs. We also respect the deep interconnectedness of the physical, natural, spiritual, and social worlds. Through our respect for the diversity of knowledge and experience from all T̓silhqot̓in voices, we also acknowledge with respect the important roles that T̓silhqot̓in families and communities have to safeguard T̓silhqot̓in heritage in the areas of T̓silhqot̓in territory that they care for.
  
- **COLLABORATION** The development of effective heritage management tools involves a commitment to working collaboratively with a variety of organisations. These are both internal (T̓silhqot̓in communities, committees, organisations, and councils, as well as various TNG departments) and external (various levels of government, academic institutions, museums, private industry, land owners, and other First Nations). Collaboration helps us ensure that T̓silhqot̓in heritage is properly respected and managed now and in the future.
  
- **RESPONSIBILITY** As T̓silhqot̓in, we have responsibilities to protect and care for our heritage in all its forms, to preserve and share traditional knowledge for future generations, and to honour our Creator, our *ʔesggidam*, and each other. We also have a responsibility to ensure the physical and spiritual safety of those who interact with our ancestral spaces. Through this work it is our responsibility to learn and apply *dechen ts'edilhtan* in a meaningful way.

# APPROACH

T̓silhqot̓'in heritage is an interconnected set of physical, spiritual, and natural processes that link people, objects, and places through past, present, and future. T̓silhqot̓'in heritage is alive, distinct, and rich. It is also under threat. As we work towards achieving the Nation's priorities for heritage management, our approach should acknowledge each of these complex and interconnected dimensions.

This is our holistic approach for heritage management. It places the celebration, understanding, protection, and practice of T̓silhqot̓'in heritage along the four sacred directions — *gudah* (east), *gunêš* (south), *gunish* (west), and *guʔen* (north). Hanging from the four directions are three ribbons that represent the above guiding principles of respect, collaboration, and responsibility. The ribbons also represent the past, present, and future.





**T̂silhqot'in heritage is distinct.** We honour our *ʔesgidam*, the land, and each other when we celebrate our unique culture, language, territory, and history. Sharing our T̂silhqot'in perspectives also helps visitors to our territory to understand the importance of following *dechen ts'edilhtan*, caring for ancestral places, and acknowledging the deep connections between all things, past, present, and future.



**T̂silhqot'in heritage is rich, complex, and dynamic.** By developing a deeper understanding of T̂silhqot'in heritage, we will be more effective in our work to protect, practice, and celebrate all of its forms. We do this through traditional means by spending time on the land with elders, and listening to and reflecting on stories, place names, and teachings. We also learn about T̂silhqot'in heritage through studies and research projects.



**T̂silhqot'in heritage is under threat.** Remaining strong, organised, and united to protect our ancestral heritage from damage, desecration, and destruction is vital. This means not only caring for our sacred places and ancestral belongings, but also traditional knowledge, oral histories, songs, place names, laws, and other living forms of heritage.



**T̂silhqot'in heritage is alive.** It is essential that we not only preserve our heritage, but that we continue to practice our ancestral traditions today and into the future. As we work towards important heritage goals we must keep ceremony, language, traditional knowledge, *dechen ts'edilhtan*, song, and oral history at the very centre of our work.





# PRIORITIES



The Tsilhqot'in Nation's goals for heritage management are diverse, complex, and interconnected. Tsilhqot'in voices have been clear for many years about the need to centre our cultural perspectives in heritage management, to expand the application of research studies, to improve heritage stewardship, and to improve the way people connect with Tsilhqot'in heritage.

## JURISDICTION & MANAGEMENT

Centring T̓silhqot̓'in roles and perspectives in heritage management

- A) Negotiating Jurisdiction
- B) Policy Development
- C) Improving Archaeology Practices
- D) Strengthening Relationships

## RESEARCH

Advancing the scope and application of T̓silhqot̓'in heritage research initiatives

- A) Research Program
- B) Teaching & Learning
- C) Library & Archives
- D) TUS Management



## STEWARDSHIP

Improving the overall management and care of T̓silhqot̓'in heritage sites and objects

- A) Heritage Site Protection
- B) Heritage Site Inventory
- C) Heritage Object Repatriation
- D) Healing

## COMMEMORATION & OUTREACH

Expanding and improving the way we connect with T̓silhqot̓'in heritage

- A) Place Name Adoptions
- B) Public Outreach
- C) Improve Signage
- D) Cultural Centre

# JURISDICTION & MANAGEMENT

“ Our legends are directly tied to the land and areas we so often use. Anything that threatens those areas is, in a lot of ways, a threat to our legends and stories. The strength of our past is known by the strength of our stories and gathering sites. The jurisdiction of our land has to be fully recognized in order to protect our identity as a people.

— Chief Francis Lacey, Tl'esqox



Advance the recognition of T̓silhqot̓in jurisdiction and authority to control, interpret, protect, and practice our cultural heritage.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Work with counterparts at BC to establish a pathway towards a comprehensive agreement, or other arrangement, that would acknowledge T̓silhqot̓in jurisdiction, authority, and ownership of heritage sites and objects.
- ii. Develop a Private Lands Action Plan to address issues of access, protection, monitoring and maintenance of heritage sites on, or accessed through, private parcels.
  - a. Further establish a set of feasible legal routes for the repatriation of private lands surrounding key heritage sites.

#### MEDIUM TERM (4-6 YEARS)

- i. Negotiate an interim role for T̓silhqot̓in Rangers to monitor a schedule of heritage sites, check permits, issue stop-work orders, and exercise other appropriate powers.
- ii. Identify and begin addressing preliminary requirements for a comprehensive heritage agreement with BC.
- iii. Reach an agreement with BC that acknowledges T̓silhqot̓in jurisdiction and authority to manage heritage resources on T̓silhqot̓in terms.

#### ONGOING

- i. Extensive engagement with T̓silhqot̓in communities, leadership, Women's Council, and Governance Committee to ensure appropriate and meaningful direction for negotiations.

Develop a comprehensive T̓silhqot̓in Heritage Policy grounded in traditional T̓silhqot̓in laws, teachings, and protocols.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Conduct initial engagement and research for policy development.
  - a. Define important concepts in the T̓silhqot̓in language and worldview.
  - b. Establish protocols for the appropriate handling of human remains.
  - c. Define types of material and living forms of heritage.
  - d. Establish parameters for heritage site management.
  - e. Establish artifact collection processes and curation protocols.
- ii. Develop and implement T̓silhqot̓in heritage policy.
- iii. Consider the development of a T̓silhqot̓in heritage law.

#### MEDIUM TERM (4-6 YEARS)

- i. Following the completion of a comprehensive heritage agreement with BC, review and amend T̓silhqot̓in heritage policy where required.



Amplify T̓silhqot̓in perspectives and involvement in all aspects of archaeological work on T̓silhqot̓in territories.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Strengthen relationships with archaeologists in both the private sector and universities.
- ii. Establish a T̓silhqot̓in-led archaeology enterprise.
- iii. Expand education and training opportunities for T̓silhqot̓in interested in archaeology.
- iv. Develop, implement, and enforce a set of archaeological standards for respectful archaeological work in T̓silhqot̓in territory, including a permitting system or other consent-based mechanism, requirements for T̓silhqot̓in participation on crews, and appropriate handling of artifacts and human remains.

#### MEDIUM TERM (4-6 YEARS)

- i. Develop and implement a T̓silhqot̓in predictive model for archaeological potential.
- ii. Support and guide 1-2 T̓silhqot̓in members to become permitted archaeologists.



Establish and strengthen relationships with key governmental and non-governmental organisations for the protection and promotion of T̓silhqot̓in heritage.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### ONGOING

- i. Continue engaging with BC Archaeology Branch to advance several projects and negotiations regarding T̓silhqot̓in heritage protection, management, and ownership.
- ii. Continue engaging with BC Parks to:
  - a. improve the inclusion of T̓silhqot̓in culture, history, and language within BC Parks programming, promotions, signage, etc.;
  - b. rename select BC Parks to include T̓silhqot̓in place names; and
  - c. improve the protection and management of T̓silhqot̓in heritage sites and objects located within BC Parks, Ecological Reserves, and Protected Areas.
- iii. Engage with Indigenous Tourism BC, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism, and other organisations to promote T̓silhqot̓in culture and history through tourism.
- iv. Engage with neighbouring First Nations to advance the protection and maintenance of shared heritage sites (such as *Deni Dažt̓san*, Graveyard Valley).
- v. Invest in establishing and improving relationships with other organisations as required to advance the heritage priorities of the T̓silhqot̓in Nation.





We have to be mindful of our next generation and make sure that they are taken on this journey with us. Our Elders pass down knowledge about the lands and how they were used in the past. It will be up to the next generation to carry on these traditions and pass down the values that we have held as T̓silhqot̓'in.

— Chief Troy Baptiste, ̓Esdilagh

## STEWARDSHIP



Identify and address immediate concerns for a list of priority heritage sites.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### IMMEDIATELY & ONGOING:

- i. Continue engaging with T̓silhqot̓'in communities to identify priority sites, outline historic and ongoing issues at each site, and establish desired protection plans accordingly.
- ii. Secure interim access/use rights at priority sites in advance of recognised site ownership and/or a comprehensive agreement with BC.
- iii. Where required, or requested as part of individual site protection plan(s):
  - a. install site protection structures, including fencing and gates;
  - b. improve site accessibility;
  - c. coordinate healing ceremonies;
  - d. install interpretive/commemorative signage; and
  - e. Confirm site location(s) by legal survey.
- iv. Organise celebration events at select sites to acknowledge ongoing protection work.

Develop a working inventory of T̓silhqot̓in heritage sites as a basis for site management.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Establish access and security protocols.
- ii. Analyse existing site information (BC archaeology data and TNG traditional use data) to create a preliminary list of sites.
- iii. Review and add to list of known sites through community engagement and interviews with knowledge keepers.
- iv. Categorise sites by type (i.e. village site, grave site, etc.) and establish management protocols for each.
- v. Working directly with knowledge keepers, ground-truth sites to confirm their exact location and extents, as well as current status (damaged, in-tact, etc.).

#### ONGOING

- i. Confirm and update site inventory through community engagement and research.
- ii. Periodically update site inventory with Provincial archaeology data.



Establish pathways for the repatriation of T̓silhqot̓in heritage objects held in distant repositories or in private collections.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Develop a repatriation action plan outlining options, pathways, and requirements for the repatriation of T̓silhqot̓in heritage objects, photographs, and recordings currently held outside the T̓silhqot̓in territory.
- ii. Build a detailed working database of T̓silhqot̓in cultural objects in museum collections, repositories and archives around the world.
- iii. Identify a ‘preferred repository’ for T̓silhqot̓in heritage objects collected under a BC HCA permit.

#### MEDIUM TO LONG TERM (4+ YEARS)

- i. Establish a T̓silhqot̓in-run repository for safely storing and curating T̓silhqot̓in heritage objects — both those collected under relevant archaeology permits as well as those repatriated from other collections.
- ii. Initiate the repatriation of T̓silhqot̓in heritage objects held abroad according to the repatriation plan and relevant policies.



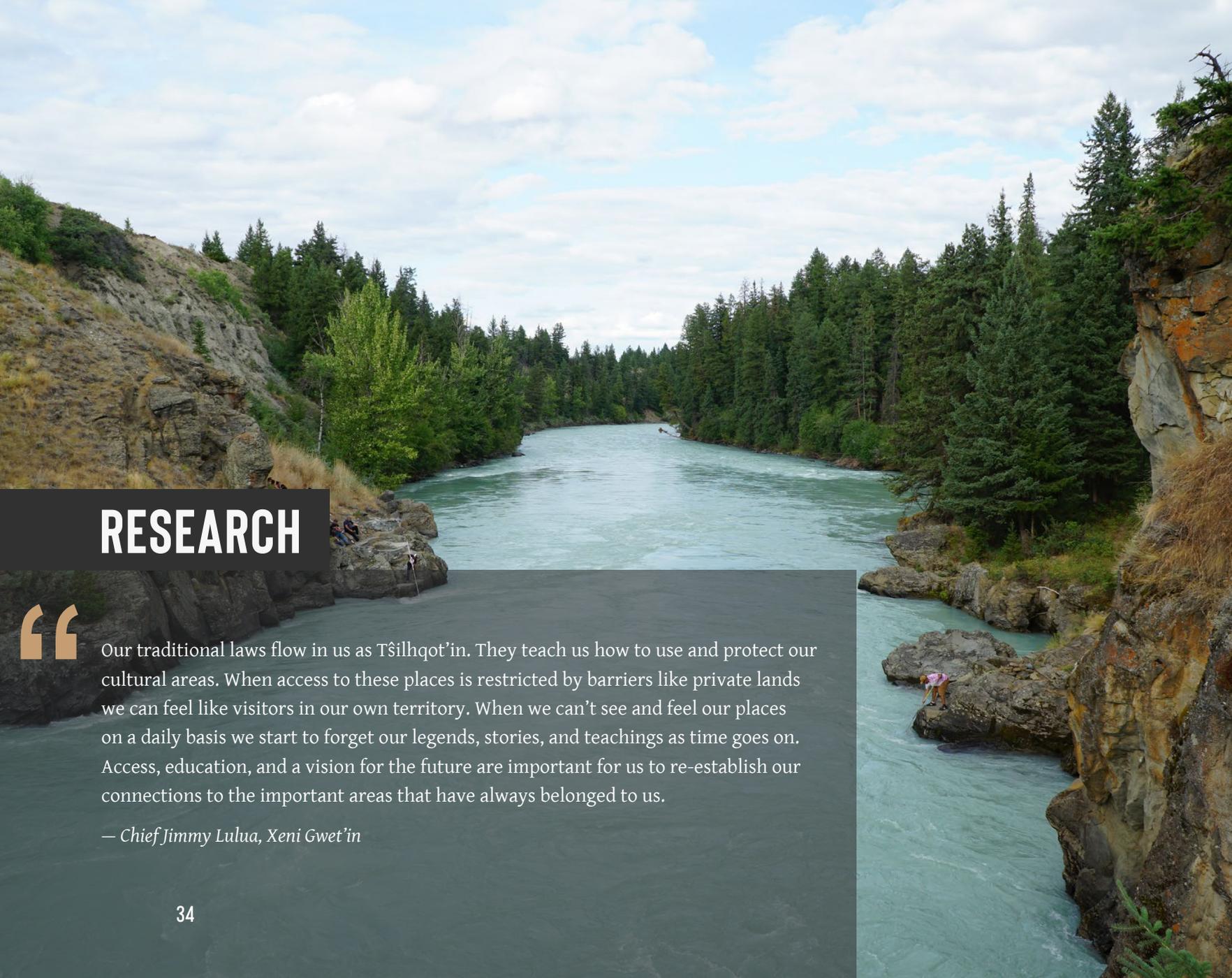
Identify and address past damage, desecration, and destruction of T̓silhqot̓in heritage sites through ceremony, compensation, and/or other means.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Work with T̓silhqot̓in communities to identify a list of T̓silhqot̓in heritage sites that have been damaged, desecrated or destroyed – sites in need of healing.
- ii. Coordinate resources for T̓silhqot̓in spiritual leaders to perform appropriate ceremony.
- iii. Engage communities on options for addressing past damage.
- iv. Working with various partners, implement actions to address past damages.





## RESEARCH



Our traditional laws flow in us as T̓silhqot̓'in. They teach us how to use and protect our cultural areas. When access to these places is restricted by barriers like private lands we can feel like visitors in our own territory. When we can't see and feel our places on a daily basis we start to forget our legends, stories, and teachings as time goes on. Access, education, and a vision for the future are important for us to re-establish our connections to the important areas that have always belonged to us.

— Chief Jimmy Lulua, Xeni Gwet'in

Develop and implement a T̓silhqot̓in heritage research program that identifies, organises, and guides a number of research initiatives as they relate to T̓silhqot̓in heritage.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS) & ONGOING

- i. Identify priority areas for research as they relate to the implementation of the T̓silhqot̓in Cultural Heritage Strategy, including:
  - a. heritage site inventory analyses;
  - b. protocols for the handling of human remains;
  - c. site-specific rituals and teachings;
  - d. place names documentation;
  - e. content for cultural interpretation signage; and
  - f. T̓silhqot̓in predictive model for archaeology potential.
- ii. Identify broader priority research areas, including:
  - a. use and occupancy studies;
  - b. ethnohistorical research to support land claims;
  - c. archaeology;
  - d. mapping analyses;
  - e. ethnography;
  - f. ethnobotany; and
  - g. linguistics.
- iii. Identify preferred research partners (academic institutions, researchers, private consultants, etc).
- iv. Develop a strategic plan for the roll-out of specific research projects.

#### ONGOING

- i. Support a variety of T̓silhqot̓in heritage related research projects (undertaken by TNG, T̓silhqot̓in citizens, partners, and community initiatives), from design to completion.

Support the teaching and learning of topics relating to T̓silhqot̓in heritage including history, culture, language, laws and protocols, archaeology, and so on.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### ONGOING

- i. Collaborate with educators, curriculum developers, researchers and students to promote T̓silhqot̓in heritage topics, values, and perspectives within and beyond T̓silhqot̓in communities.
- ii. Facilitate access to T̓silhqot̓in heritage related research materials for researchers, students and teachers at elementary, high school, and post-secondary levels, using appropriate access protocols to maintain security and confidentiality of sensitive materials.
- iii. Support the development and expansion of online spaces for educators, curriculum developers, researchers and students to connect, network, and engage with a variety of materials and projects relating to T̓silhqot̓in heritage.
- iv. Support and encourage hands-on and place-based learning for T̓silhqot̓in and non-T̓silhqot̓in students to directly engage with T̓silhqot̓in heritage in a good way.



Assemble a T̓silhqot̓in Nation library and archives to facilitate education and research for T̓silhqot̓in members, communities, and partners.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Identify and purchase a selection of key research materials (books, articles, audio-visual media, maps) regarding T̓silhqot̓in heritage on a variety of topics including history, culture, archaeology, land use, and so on.
- ii. Collaborate with other TNG departments for the creation of a TNG digital archive of research and other heritage resources information.

#### MEDIUM TO LONG TERM (4+ YEARS)

- i. Establish a research centre, possibly as part of a repository and/or cultural centre, to provide a secure space for researchers and T̓silhqot̓in members, communities, and partners, to access and engage with collected research materials.

Photograph No.: 13334

Group: Athabaskan (Chilcotin) Location: Anaham Reserve



Improve the management and application of traditional use/occupancy studies (TUS) and associated information.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

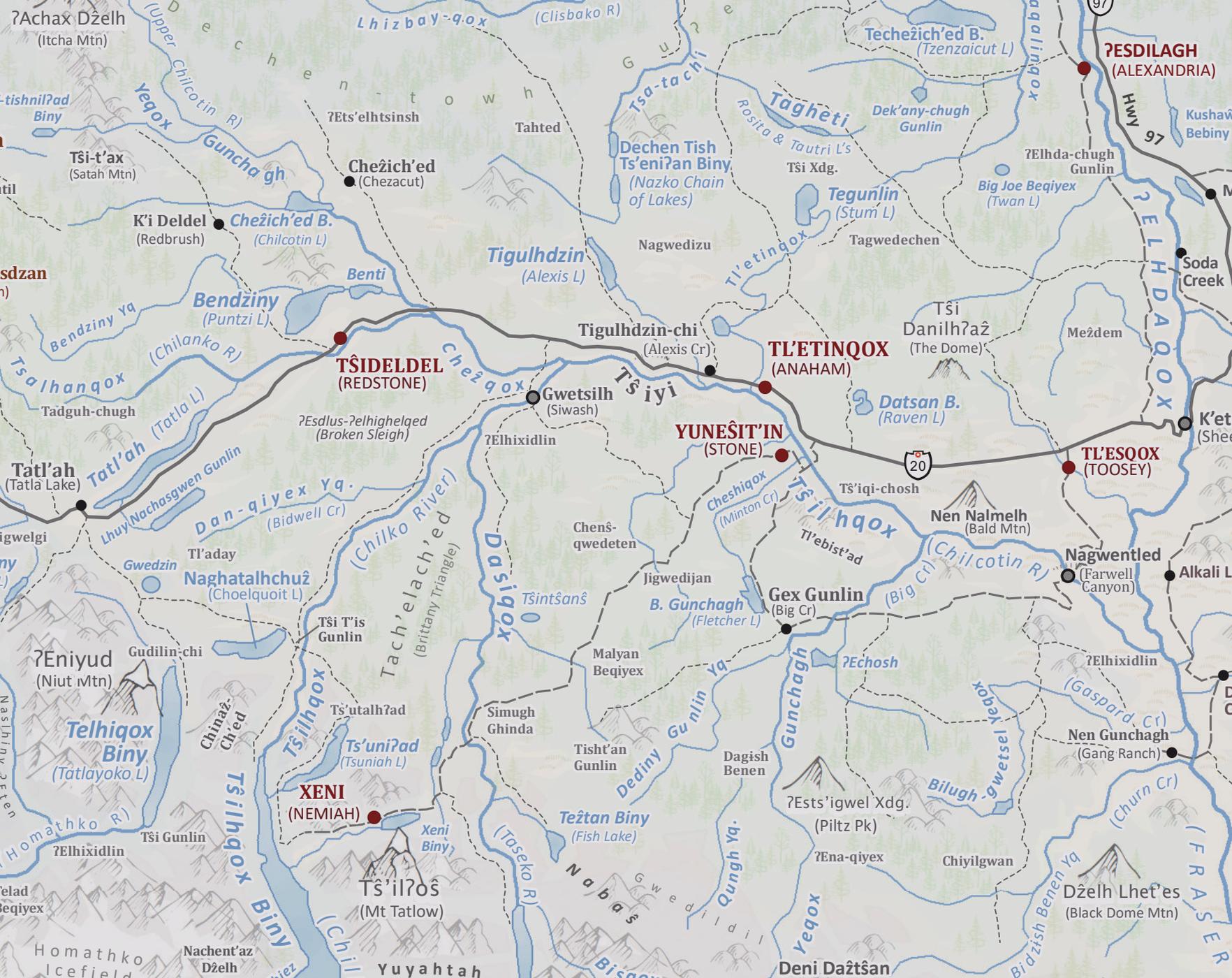
- i. Finish translating and transcribing existing TUS interviews.
- ii. Organise consent and confidentiality documents from past studies to confirm the legal status of existing information and its appropriate applications.
- iii. Develop appropriate release protocols for living and deceased participants from past studies, where possible.
- iv. Develop a TNG TUS handbook and training program.
- v. Acquire a set of TUS equipment kits for use by T̓silhqot'in communities, researchers, or consultants.

#### MEDIUM TERM (4-6 YEARS)

- i. Create a set of innovative products and applications of existing TUS information in ways that advance the interests and priorities of the T̓silhqot'in Nation and T̓silhqot'in communities while also safeguarding confidentiality.

#### ONGOING

- i. Hold semi-regular TUS research training sessions for interested T̓silhqot'in members.



ʔAchax Dželh  
(Itcha Mtn)

ʔEts'elhtsinsh  
Tahted

Tši-t'ax  
(Satah Mtn)

K'i Deldel  
(Redbrush)

ʔsdzan  
(n)

Tat'ah  
(Tatla Lake)

ʔEniyud  
(Niut Mtn)

ʔElhixidlin

ʔEts'igwel Xdg.  
(Piltz Pk)

ʔEna-qiyex

ʔEchosh

ʔEts'igwel Xdg.  
(Piltz Pk)

Lhizbaŷ-ŷox  
(Clisbako R)

Tsa-tachi

Dechen Tish  
Ts'eniʔan Biny  
(Nazko Chain  
of Lakes)

Tegunlin  
(Stum L)

Tigulhdzin  
(Alexis L)

Tigulhdzin-chi  
(Alexis Cr)

Tšiyi

Gwetsilh  
(Siwash)

ʔElhixidlin

Cheshiaqox  
(Minton Cr)

Tš'iqi-chosh

Tš'ebist'ad

Jigwedijan

Malyan  
Beqiyex

Tisht'an  
Gunlin

Dagish  
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ʔEts'igwel Xdg.  
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ʔEts'elhtsinsh

Chežich'ed  
(Chezacut)

Chežich'ed B.  
(Chilcotin L)

Benti

Bendziny  
(Puntzi L)

Tšideldeł  
(REDSTONE)

ʔEsdlus-ʔelhighelqed  
(Broken Sleigh)

ʔElhixidlin

Dan-qiyex ŷq.  
(Bidwell Cr)

Tšintšanš

Cheshiaqox  
(Minton Cr)

Tš'iqi-chosh

Tš'ebist'ad

Jigwedijan

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Beqiyex

Tisht'an  
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Bendziny  
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ʔEsdlus-ʔelhighelqed  
(Broken Sleigh)

ʔElhixidlin

Dan-qiyex ŷq.  
(Bidwell Cr)

Tšintšanš

Cheshiaqox  
(Minton Cr)

Tš'iqi-chosh

Tš'ebist'ad

Jigwedijan

Malyan  
Beqiyex

Tisht'an  
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Chežich'ed B.  
(Chilcotin L)

Benti

Bendziny  
(Puntzi L)

Tšideldeł  
(REDSTONE)

ʔEsdlus-ʔelhighelqed  
(Broken Sleigh)

ʔElhixidlin

Dan-qiyex ŷq.  
(Bidwell Cr)

Tšintšanš

Cheshiaqox  
(Minton Cr)

Tš'iqi-chosh

Tš'ebist'ad

Jigwedijan

Malyan  
Beqiyex

Tisht'an  
Gunlin

Dagish  
Benen

ʔEts'igwel Xdg.  
(Piltz Pk)

ʔEts'igwel Xdg.  
(Piltz Pk)

ʔEts'elhtsinsh

Chežich'ed  
(Chezacut)

Chežich'ed B.  
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Gunlin

ʔEsdlus

## COMMEMORATION & OUTREACH



The time is well overdue for our vision of heritage protection to be put to paper. We know our protocols and stories, and we know where our sacred sites are. By improving access to these sites and by spreading more awareness we can improve how all generations appreciate our important cultural places.

— Chief Lennon Solomon,  
Yunešit'in



Continue working with the BC Geographical Names Office (GNO) to have T̓silhqot̓in Place Names adopted as official Provincial place names.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Work with BC GNO to develop a showcase of T̓silhqot̓in place names on the BC GNO website.
- ii. Work with BC GNO to inform a multi-naming policy for place names with more than one indigenous place name.

#### ONGOING

- i. Continue submitting T̓silhqot̓in place names to the BC GNO for their recording and adoption at a rate of approximately 10 names per year.

Develop a variety of materials, programs and platforms to promote public engagement with T̓silhqot̓in heritage, and to support broader cross-cultural understandings.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Develop an interactive web-atlas of T̓silhqot̓in cultural landscapes.
- ii. Support the development/expansion of an online space (website) to serve as a hub for:
  - a. connecting students, educators, and the wider public with T̓silhqot̓in heritage to develop collaborative teaching and learning opportunities for youth; and
  - b. showcase a variety of projects that celebrate and display the richness of T̓silhqot̓in heritage across a variety of topics.

#### MEDIUM TERM (4-6 YEARS)

- i. Engage with a variety of tourism organisations to promote T̓silhqot̓in culture and history through tourism across the region.

#### ONGOING

- i. Support and facilitate youth outreach programs, curriculum development, and place-based education to help connect youth with T̓silhqot̓in cultural heritage.



Expand the visibility of T̓silhqot̓in language, history, and cultural perspectives on various forms of signage across T̓silhqot̓in territories.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Continue working with BC's Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) to install dual and multi-name (i.e. T̓silhqot̓in & colonial) road signs at all stream crossings on public roads across the territory.
- ii. Install dual and multi-name road signs at significant stream crossings on forestry, reserve, and other "non-status" roads.
- iii. Improve service information signage, in T̓silhqot̓in language, on and approaching T̓silhqot̓in communities and businesses.

- iv. Develop a T̓silhqot̓in cultural interpretation signage plan in collaboration with T̓silhqot̓in communities, relevant BC Ministries, and other organisations.
- v. Begin designing, creating and installing cultural interpretation signs across T̓silhqot̓in territory, according to the T̓silhqot̓in interpretation signage plan.

#### ONGOING

- i. Continued design and installation of kiosks and other cultural interpretation signs across the territory, according to the T̓silhqot̓in cultural interpretation signage plan.

T̂silhqox  
Chilko River

Establish a T̓silhqot̓'in cultural centre on T̓silhqot̓'in territory to serve as a space to practice traditional activities, to protect important ancestral belongings, and to teach, learn and celebrate T̓silhqot̓'in culture, history, and territory.

### KEY ACTIONS

#### SHORT TERM (1-3 YEARS)

- i. Community envisioning.
- ii. Initial assessment of scope.
- iii. Feasibility assessment.

#### MEDIUM TERM (4-6 YEARS)

- i. Secure funding for construction, staffing, and programming.
- ii. Develop strong cultural programming for activities at the centre.
- iii. Explore the integration of tourism opportunities.

#### LONG TERM (7-10 YEARS)

- i. Construction of new building, or renovations for existing building.
- ii. Expand and promote cultural programming.
- iii. Establish artifact repository for repatriated ancestral belongings.



# CLOSING



In closing, we have a lot of work to do. This work cannot be done without our elders and other knowledge keepers, but we also need to bring the younger generations along. By ensuring that our stories are told and spaces are protected, we are building the strength of our identity and culture through the generations. I hope for this heritage plan to also inform non-Tâilhqot'in of our ways and build up the local knowledge of our rich history in the territory. I hope for our journey forward to be as strong as our path has been to lead us to today.

— *Chief Otis Guichon, Tâideldel*  
*TNG Vice Chair*



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who have contributed to this document. To T̓s̓ilhqot'ín elders, leaders, and youth, to the *ʔesgidam* who guide us, and to our staff and supporters, *nexwechanalhyagh*. — TNG Nen Team

Prepared by: Shane Doddridge, TNG Cultural Heritage Coordinator

Graphic design: Nadene Rehnby

## Notes:

- i. Linda Smith, *Súwh-t̓s̓'égghèdúdính: the T̓s̓ilhqút'ín Nímính Spiritual Path* (2008, p. 15).
- ii. Linda Smith, *The ways of our esghaydam 'ancestors': Nenqayni laws of respect* (2020, 70-71).



