Living with the Land

A Manual for Documenting Cultural Landscapes in the Northwest Territories
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Cover photo: Tent camp near K’ëotsee, Peter Redvers/Crosscurrent Associates Ltd.
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Executive Summary

The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre administers the Northwest Territories Cultural Places Program, which addresses historic places of significance to the people of the NWT. Territorial historic sites are recognized under Section 2 of the Historical Resources Act (R.S.N.W.T. 1988, c.H-3). Sites of local rather than territorial significance are recognized by municipal bylaws under different community heritage programs.

“To protect our culture the land must also be protected because the places on the land where the stories are told give the stories their meaning. Without these places to give the stories their meaning, the value of the stories would be lost.”


In the Northwest Territories, northern cultures are at the centre of our human history, and historic places, or cultural places, hold special links to our past. Elders teach us that our stories and the land are like parts of the same map—the stories are mapped onto the land and the land helps us to remember the stories.

Cultural places are places where memorable events have happened, where people have lived and died. They are places where people traveled, worked, met and celebrated together. They are also places that are spiritually important.

This manual is meant to help you to understand why cultural landscapes are important to all of us. The first step in protecting an area with important traditional, cultural and religious significance and keeping its stories alive is to identify and describe it.
By learning what a cultural landscape is you will be better able to identify its characteristics, its boundaries, and what its heritage values are. This manual will also help you to understand how these historic places can be given official recognition through designation. Finally, the manual will help you to anticipate some of the questions people in your community will ask you about cultural landscapes.
Sommaire exécutif


Dans les Territoires du Nord-Ouest, les cultures nordiques sont au centre de notre histoire humaine, et les endroits historiques et culturels sont liés de façon spéciale à notre passé. Les aînés nous enseignent que nos histoires et la terre elle-même font partie d’un ensemble. Nos histoires sont tracées sur la terre, et pour sa part, la terre sert d’aide-mémoire, nous rappelant nos histoires.« Pour protéger notre culture, la terre doit aussi être protégée, parce que ce sont les endroits où on raconte les histoires qui donnent aux histoires leur signification. Sans les endroits qui donnent cette signification aux histoires, la valeur des histoires serait perdue. »


Les endroits culturels témoignent autant la vie quotidienne d’un peuple que des événements mémorables. Naissances, morts et passages, la colonisation, la guerre et la paix, les négociations, les célébrations, le profane et le sacré y sont représentés.

Ce manuel est conçu pour vous aider à comprendre pourquoi les paysages culturels sont importants pour tout le monde. La protection d’un lieu d’importance traditionnelle, culturelle et religieuse, et la préservation de son histoire commence avec son identification et sa description.
Une bonne compréhension de que c'est un paysage culturel vous aidera à identifier ses caractéristiques, ses limites, et ses valeurs patrimoniales. Ce manuel vous aidera également à comprendre comment ces endroits historiques sont constitués en site du patrimoine. En conclusion, le manuel vous préparera pour des questions que les gens dans votre communauté vous poseront au sujet des paysages culturels.
Map of
Northwest Territories Communities

The official languages of the NWT include: Dëne Súhne / Chipewyan, Nehiyaw / Cree, Tłı̨chǫ / Dogrib, Dinjii Zhuh K'yuú / Gwich'in, Sahtúot'înê Yatî / North Slavey, Deh Gah Goot'îjê Zhatê / South Slavey, Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, Inuvialuktun, English and French.
Section 1: Defining Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes

This part of the manual introduces Aboriginal cultural landscapes. It tells us what they are. It looks at what makes a place an Aboriginal cultural landscape by answering questions like:

* What do people mean when they talk about an Aboriginal cultural landscape?
* How do you know a place is an Aboriginal cultural landscape?

This part of the manual also looks at some of the more common ideas about ‘cultural landscapes’: how historic places are identified as cultural landscapes, and how the Northwest Territories identifies cultural landscapes, especially Aboriginal cultural landscapes. Examples of recognized Aboriginal cultural landscapes are used. Two booklets published on the Web by the NWT Cultural Places Program are used as references.¹

When we talk about ‘land’ and ‘landscapes’ in this manual, ‘land’ means the earth and its environments. It includes the waters that flow upon the earth, such as streams, creeks, rivers, lakes and seas, even when they flow underground. ‘Land’

GNWT Guide to the Preparation of Statements of Significance for Historic Sites:

Ts’u Dahtethop (Redknife River)
also means the air above the land. Plants, trees, animals, birds, fish and insects are also parts of the land. So, too, are rocks and landforms such as hills and caves. ‘Land’ includes the many ways in which all these natural resources work together in the environment. ‘Land’ also includes spirits that live in it and their effect on how people live with the land.

**What are Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes?**

In general terms, ‘cultural landscapes’ are about how people and places affect each other. Cultural landscapes are usually landscapes that are lived in. Those living in the landscapes, or traditionally associated with them, make the landscape a constant part of the cultural and economic life of their communities. They also bring attention to the way people within the landscape live, their traditions and everyday life. Just as important are the cultural and spiritual meanings that these places have for the people who live in the landscape.

The importance of Aboriginal cultural landscapes is shown by the way Aboriginal people live with the land. This includes social and economic activities such as camping, hunting, trapping, fishing, and harvesting plants. These activities may leave behind signs that can be seen on the land, such as tools and belongings, tent rings, fire pits, and paths or trails.

‘Living with the land’ also includes spiritual and cultural activities that do not leave much evidence to be seen on the land. These activities can give cultural meaning to natural features in the landscape, such as hills, rocks, caves, water, trees, animals and plants. Natural features remind people of stories about events in their history and of how important animals, plants and spirits have always been for the people of their community.

Places can be linked to spirits or the journeys of cultural heroes. They may be places where stories are told or have been told or where rituals and ceremonies are performed or have been performed. Such places are very important parts of bigger cultural landscapes.

The following quote from Elder George Blondin’s *Yamoria the Lawmaker: Stories of the Dene*, shows the extensive Aboriginal cultural landscape that we can learn about from the journeys of Yamoria, a well known spiritual and cultural hero: 

> “Yamoria started to travel and teach people when he was very young...he had powers of spirit travel. He could be standing in one place and then disappear, rematerializing hundreds of kilometres away a minute later. To do this he would transform himself into a spirit to move through space and time, and then transform back into a human being when he got to the place he wanted to go. He covered a huge area in his lifetime. People talk about him from what is now Fort St. John, British Columbia, to northern Alberta and all the way to the Dehcho Delta on the Beaufort Sea.”

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1. Blondin, George; 1997; *Yamoria The Lawmaker: Stories of the Dene* (p.82); NeWest Publishers, Edmonton, AB
What Makes Up an Aboriginal Cultural Landscape?

Traditional Knowledge

Aboriginal cultural landscapes are about how people live with the land. Because of this, Traditional Knowledge (TK), developed over time by people living with the land, is the best source of information about Aboriginal cultural landscapes.

‘Traditional Knowledge’ is a very broad term that means all the knowledge, skills, wisdom, practices, and beliefs of a group of Aboriginal people.

DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA

In this manual, Traditional Knowledge means:

“...knowledge that derives from, or is rooted in the traditional way of life of Aboriginal people. Traditional Knowledge is the accumulated knowledge and understanding of the human place in relation to the universe. This encompasses spiritual relationships, relationships with the natural environment and the use of natural resources, relationships between people, and is reflected in language, social organizations, values, institutions, and laws.”

Other English language terms that are sometimes used to describe this type of knowledge are indigenous knowledge and traditional environmental knowledge. These terms refer to knowledge that has been handed down from elders to youth within a group that lives in a particular area.

Aboriginal cultural landscapes hold traditional stories that explain the relationship people have with the land and its places. For example, in the Gwichya Gwich’in cultural landscape called Nagwichoonjik, the people have stories about Raven that tell how features in the landscape on Vik’ooyendik (Church Hill) at Tsiigehtchic were created.

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1 GNWT; 1991; Report of the Traditional Knowledge Working Group; Dept. of Culture & Communications, Yellowknife, NT.

Stories of traditional activities like camping, hunting, fishing, trapping, gatherings and ceremonies tell us a lot about how people lived with the land. Stories also teach people how to behave towards each other. Extended families shaped the way people treated each other, how they traded among themselves and how they lived on the land and used it to support themselves. Crafts, songs and dances, games and other traditions are often part of the Traditional Knowledge found in cultural landscapes.

The traditional ways that people have used, and often still use the land, including rocks, streams, forests, plants, animals, and insects, are everyday signs of this knowledge. All of these things are parts of the cultural landscape. The book *Gwich'in Ethnobotany* illustrates Gwich'in knowledge and skills in using the plants in their environment for food, medicine, shelter and tools. In the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Traditional Knowledge of the use of plants, including information from visits to traditional plant harvesting areas, has also been recorded.5

An important part of Traditional Knowledge is place names. Traditional Aboriginal place names identify places that people remember because of things that happened there, resources they gathered there, or lessons they learned. Traditional place names help people to remember events that happened long ago. Many of these places are connected to stories. These stories tell why it is important to remember these places, and traditional place names help people to remember these stories.

Place names also show a deep knowledge of the natural world as a result of living close to the land.

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5 Andre, Alestine & Alan Fehr, 2002; *Gwich'in Ethnobotany, Plants used by the Gwich'in for Food, Medicine, Shelter and Tools* (Inuvik: Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute & Aurora Research Institute) http://www.gwichin.com/LeftNavPages/publicationsSubmenu.asp?Type=Plants
The Inuvialuit Place Name Virtual Exhibit http://www.pwnhc.ca/inuvialuit shows the richness of place names as a way of helping us remember history in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. Felix Nuyaviak told this story about the meaning of Tuktoyaktuk in Inuvialuktun in the 1970s:

“The name Tuktuuyaqtuuq comes from a legend about a girl who was forbidden to look at some caribou that were swimming across the harbour. She disobeyed and the caribou turned to rock. Several large rocks can still be seen from the point at the north end of the town when the water is low.” 6

SELECTED EXAMPLES

In the Tłı̨chǫ territory water is particularly important to traditional life. Place names for waterways not only show the relationship between people, wildlife, land, and water, they also tell about watersheds, water flow, and water conditions.

Of the 980 Tłı̨chǫ place names documented in a 2002 study, nearly 500 refer to still water and close to 300 refer to flowing water.7


Patterns, Networks and Layers

Cultural landscapes are areas of land rather than points within the landscape. These areas reflect the ways people have lived with the land. Activities such as hunting, camping and ceremonies leave patterns on the land. One of the important things about Aboriginal cultural landscapes in northern Canada is that people were not settled in one place. When people live on the land, they move around. Movement in and through the landscape is therefore an important part of what a cultural landscape is.

SELECTED EXAMPLES

Among 40 places most important to their history, the Sahtu Dene and Metis identified four trails and seven rivers as well as places such as Tł̨̨̨̨̨̨̨̨ Dehdele Dįdį (Red Dog Mountain) with stories about the river. In many areas organized walking and snowmobile trips with both youth and Elders keep people aware of traditional trails and their heritage value.8

People’s movements and activities change with the seasons as the animals, fish and plants they use also move and change. Their movements also change because of changes in activities such as trapping and trading or because of changes in extended families. Understanding the relationships between named places that tell about how people moved around the land increases our understanding of the cultural landscape.

Metis history often means family history, so kinship relationships are an important part of Metis cultural landscapes. Catherine Beaulieu Bouvier Lamoureux,

8 Places We Take Care Of – Report of the Sahtu Heritage Places and Sites Joint Working Group, Table 1; http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/places/index.html
Metis matriarch of Fort Providence, was known by her Slavey name, Ehtsu Naats’i ("Grandmother of the Winds”, “Fast like the Wind”), which meant speed and courage with her dog-team. The extensive dogsled routes she traveled to visit her family show how important travel and movement were in her cultural landscape.

Cultural landscapes can be seen as webs of connected places. It is important to see the connections within a cultural landscape, rather than just a series of parts or places. Traditional stories show how cultural landscapes are made up of many places connected together because events in the stories usually take place in many locations.

The Sahtu Dene story about Yamoria chasing the giant beavers from Great Bear Lake all the way down the Great Bear River to Kwetŋ̱erah (Bear Rock) tells about six different sites that together make up a cultural landscape. (See a map of Yamoria Eht’ene on page 20.)

Because cultural landscapes show activities that took place over long periods of time, there are often many layers in the landscape showing different time periods. These show how the same place was used by different people at different times. The layers may be physical layers in archaeological sites—the remains of old camp sites—or they may be different stories told about a single place.

Layered cultural landscapes: Kwetŋ̱erah (Bear Rock), a stunning backdrop for the community of Tulita, is sacred throughout Denendeh. The old Fort Norman Hudson’s Bay Co. buildings can be seen on the point in the foreground; Tulita, NT.

9 payment, Diane P.; Catherine Beaulieu Bouvier Lamoureux of Fort Providence, Northwest Territories; Unpub. MS; Parks Canada, Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada 2002-51.

10 MacKay, Glen; 2005; Sambaa K’e Archaeological Project Interim Report; PWNHC, Yellowknife, NT.

The Sambaa K’e archaeology project made a record of 19 sites where archaeologists looked at sacred sites, burial sites, historic cabins and camps, traditional trails and pre-contact sites. Some of the oral histories and traditions connected to these sites were also documented by working closely with Sambaa K’e Elders.

The project showed how a cultural landscape takes knowledge from different times and puts it together to show an entire culture. Such knowledge came as much from stories of long ago such as those about Aząlídaa, a man who shaped stone tools for people in pre-contact times, as from stories of historic people and their lives, like Charles Tetcho’s gravesite and camp.12

### The Whole Landscape

For Aboriginal people, cultural, natural and spiritual aspects are all part of a single landscape. This has led researchers to also look at the landscape as a whole rather than a series of separate parts.

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12 MacKay, Glen; 2005; Sambaa K’e Archaeological Project Interim Report; PWNHC, Yellowknife, NT
Values in Cultural Landscapes

In this manual, the term Aboriginal cultural landscape ‘values’ means what is special about the culture and conditions of a particular landscape. This kind of information helps to define that landscape. Where there is a clear relationship or interaction between people and the land, a cultural landscape value can be identified and documented.

For example, an elder might tell where birch stands are and then add that a particular birch stand is harvested for making tools. Although it can be said that the birch stands all have ecological value (they are important to the environment itself), the stand that is harvested also has cultural landscape value (it is useful to the people who live in this landscape). This clearly shows a real relationship between the people and the land.

As another example, a geographic feature such as a hill may remind people of a story about a giant beaver. The hill has cultural value because the story is very
important to people. The hill may also be said to have psychological and spiritual values because of the story’s meaning and its lessons for the people for whom the hill is part of the story.

In Aboriginal cultural landscapes research, collecting and writing down this kind of information—what people value—is essential.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

*Cultural landscapes are living landscapes that have:*

- cultural, social, economic, psychological, spiritual and historical values, as well as ecological values.

*These values tell us what people value most about being part of the land.*

**HISTORY/LEGENDS**

Through oral histories and stories, the Dëne Súłine (Chipewyan) in the Kache Tué region on the East Arm of Great Slave Lake emphasize how important to them is their long association with this land and how deep their knowledge of it is. When they were developing a plan, based on Traditional Knowledge, to keep track of environmental change, they described their relationship with all things in the land and the idea of respect for the land and all living beings on the land as basic to their way of life. Through stories about their long presence in the Kakinêne region, the Rich Land, to the northeast of Great Slave Lake, the Dëne Súłine identified the cultural landscape values that were part of their traditional territory.¹⁴

**People and Places**

We can take for granted that people living in a landscape will actively take part in identifying and caring for what is important about the landscape. Understanding the cultural landscape and its values is necessary for deciding how the land will be managed. All decisions about the land and how the land will be managed should be based on these values.

An historic site is often seen as a place where an historic event—a single short, but intensive moment in time—made the place important. However, what is most important about an historic site is how well the place can tell its own story. Cultural landscapes exist and they need to be able to tell the stories of entire periods of time.

Landscapes are constantly changing; change is something we should always expect. Continual and unpredictable changes happen because of the social, economic, environmental and political changes that are going on in any cultural landscape. These changes and events create patterns that help us understand what has been going on and why.

¹⁴ Łutsël K’é Dene First Nation, West Kitikmeot / Slave Study Society (WKSS); 2003; Traditional Knowledge in the Kache Tué Study Region; Yellowknife, NT. (section 5.1.1) http://www.wkss.nt.ca/HTML/08_ProjectsReports/PDF/TradEcoKacheTueFinal2002.pdf
People have continuing relationships with places. Questions about access, continuing traditional uses, respect for sacred sites, and disturbances are important cultural landscape issues. Disturbances like human activities, forest fires, or floods cause major changes within a landscape.

Managing large cultural landscapes often includes identifying what needs to be changed and ensuring that necessary changes are made and that too much change is avoided. Water quality must be protected, natural plant cover has to be maintained, and the animal population must be kept healthy. Because of conflicting uses, interests and values some cultural landscapes sometimes become areas of dispute.

Defining Cultural Landscapes

Experts in Canada and around the world have long debated the question, “what is a cultural landscape?” One way of answering this question is to group landscapes together into categories or classes that share important common characteristics. United Nations World Heritage Committee experts identified three basic groups of cultural landscapes based on how much “design” or “building” can be seen in each landscape.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

- **Landscaped gardens, designed and built for a purpose, would be called defined cultural landscapes.**
- **Settlements and other cultural landscapes that have developed over time, would be examples of evolved cultural landscapes.**
- **Spiritual and cultural sites, like Yamor a Eht’e ne, the route followed by Yamoria in his travels, are important for what they mean more than for the physical signs that people have left. Experts call these associative cultural landscapes.**

This approach is certainly of value to experts, but for practical purposes, NWT Aboriginal cultural landscapes do not need to be divided up this way. The physical signs left by past generations before the arrival of the European newcomers may not be obvious to eyes that expect to see buildings, gardens, roads and railways, but trails and portages, hearths, campsites and birch trees stripped of bark all tell their stories to Northerners.

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International and National Definitions

Here in Canada, Parks Canada and the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBBC) have developed federal definitions and the Ontario Ministry of Culture has developed provincial definitions of cultural landscapes. The 1994 Parks Canada Guiding Principles and Operational Policies is online at http://www.pc.gc.ca/docs/pc/poli/princip/index_E.asp. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada guidelines are also available online-visit http://www.pc.gc.ca/clmhc-hsmbc/crit/crit3_e.asp. The publication Cultural Landscapes in Ontario can be obtained at: http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/culdiv/heritage/landscap.htm.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

In the case of Aboriginal cultural landscapes, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada sees nature, tradition, and long attachment to the land as the most important elements in deciding on national historic significance.

In 1999 the HSMBBC developed guidelines for Aboriginal cultural landscapes. The guidelines help to judge places that represent a cultural tradition or way of life. The Board works with nationally significant examples of Canadian human history, and it recognizes the history of Aboriginal peoples as a nationally significant part of Canada's history. These guidelines set federal rules for designating Aboriginal cultural landscapes.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

**HSMBBC Guidelines on Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes**

1. The people who live in the area need to be involved in identifying places they consider important and why. They must also show they agree with having the place designated as a national historic site.

2. These people have lived with this land over a long time. Their extended families and friendships have been formed here. They are completely familiar with the place and it has a deep spiritual meaning to them; they do not separate its natural and its spiritual values.

3. Traditional Knowledge has to be the main basis for deciding the significance of the landscape. The knowledge of experts in history, archaeology, ethnography, and anthropology plays a supporting role when deciding how important a site is to the history of Canada.

In some parts of Canada, Aboriginal cultural landscapes have been well studied. Several aboriginal cultural landscapes have been designated as national historic sites of Canada. They show how important traditional life is to people. Many of these landscapes include cultural places such as harvesting areas, campsites, gravesites, and archaeological sites.
Oral traditions show the long connections between people and the areas they live in—their stories, social laws, customs and rituals. In all of these designated Aboriginal cultural landscapes, cultural traditions give the places their most important meanings, through beliefs, stories, rituals, continuing use, and relationships with Aboriginal peoples that continue today.

Keeping in mind the traditional life styles of many people in the NWT, and the close relationship between people and the land, the NWT definition of cultural landscapes is meant to fit our needs.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

The Northwest Territories Definition of Cultural Landscapes

Any geographic area that has been changed, influenced, or given special meaning by people, or

A geographic area that shows characteristics or values of a society as a result of people living with the land.

A type of historic resource (and therefore a type of historic site).

**What does this definition tell us about cultural landscapes?**

- They are physical places.
- They have special cultural meaning.
- They have values and identities that are part of their history. We call these values ‘intangible’ values—you can’t physically touch them. (example: oral tradition)
- They have physical resources, which we describe as cultural resources. We call these ‘tangible’ values—they can be physically touched.
- These two qualities—tangible and intangible—work together in cultural landscapes.
- Cultural landscapes are about how people live with the land.
- They show how people have lived with the land over Sometimes very long periods of time.
- They show that people and the natural world are always affecting each other.

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16 Guide to the Preparation of Statements of Significance for Historic Sites
The Northwest Territories definition is based on years of practical experience working with cultural landscapes as part of our heritage. The new procedures for designating territorial historic sites include cultural landscapes among the types of places that may be suggested as territorial historic sites.

For over 30 years we have seen cultural landscapes as an important part of the heritage of the Northwest Territories. A large number of projects to map land use and occupancy, beginning with the Dene and Inuit mapping projects of the 1970s, have gathered information from elders about traditional land use and the way people live with the land.

Place names and stories have been collected, and traditional crafts have been recorded. These projects show the importance of the people’s relationship with the land as a core part of their identity. Land claim settlements make this significance clear and many groups have used land claim agreements to recognize and protect cultural landscapes within their areas.

Imilligyaq – “lots of water”. The Inuvialuit name refers to the pool of water on the top of this pingo. Imilligyaq is an important landmark to travelers along the coast, where fresh water is often scarce.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

- Communities must take part in identifying Aboriginal cultural landscapes.
- Human-land relationships are at the heart of Aboriginal cultural landscapes.
- Use Traditional Knowledge to judge the importance of a Aboriginal cultural landscape.
The Sahtu Dene and Metis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement named several heritage places that were highly significant to the Sahtu Dene and Metis. A clause in the agreement also provided for setting up a joint working group to advise government on how to protect important heritage places in the Settlement Area.

The working group used an inventory of heritage places developed by community people who did field work to identify sites closely tied to Sahtu Dene and Metis identity. The journeys of culture heroes like Yamoria, along with hills, trails and rivers, are prominent among the places identified.

Explaining that “...virtually all of Sahtu Dene and Metis history is written on the land”, the working group’s report, Rakekée Gok’ë Godi: Places We Take Care Of, makes recommendations for commemorating and protecting 40 places, nearly all of them cultural landscapes.

A set of general recommendations relates to Traditional Knowledge, traditional people’s names, traditional place names, inventory and mapping to identify a future research and protection program.17

[Map: prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre]

17 Places We Take Care Of: http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/places/index.html
“Lessons from the Land”¹⁸, a website developed by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, presents traditional Aboriginal trails, a type of cultural landscape, as a teaching aid to help people understand the importance of this type of cultural landscape to the people of the Northwest Territories.

The exhibit focuses on the Îdaà Tîlî, a traditional trail used by the Tłîchô people for centuries to travel from Great Slave Lake to Great Bear Lake. Based on work done over many years, it reflects the critical role of Traditional Knowledge in the Tłîchô elders’ direction of how the research should be done and making clear the cultural significance of the sites and traditional stories that are part of the trail’s history.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

By visiting different places including cabins, portages, grave sites and sacred sites along the trail, the Îdaà Tîlî exhibit shows the importance of language, place names, traditional skills, traditional stories, spiritual relationships, fishing, hunting and trading to the layers of the cultural landscape.

Canoe-making place, Îdaà Tîlî (the Idaa Trail)

The Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute (GSCI) has led the way in recording place names and oral histories from the elders, through community-based research. Their purpose is to “document, preserve and promote the practice of Gwich’in culture, language, Traditional Knowledge and values”. The GSCI has developed a wide range of projects around Traditional Knowledge about the land.

¹⁸ http://www.lessonsfromtheland.ca/
The successful nomination of Nagwichoonjik, the Thunder River-to-Point Separation part of the Mackenzie River, as a national historic site, was based on Traditional Knowledge.

The wide-ranging project to publish oral history includes Gwichya Gwich’in Googwandak. The History and Stories of the Gwichya Gwich’in, As Told by the Elders of Tsiigehtchic (Heine et al 2001).

A web-based place name map makes place name information easily available. The GSCI website tells of other steps taken, many of which have to do with cultural landscapes.19

SELECTED EXAMPLES

A Northern Aboriginal Cultural Landscape 20

Nagwichoonjik National Historic Site of Canada Gwich’in Settlement Area, NWT

Nagwichoonjik is a National Historic Site of Canada. This cultural landscape in the heart of Gwichya Gwich’in traditional territory is culturally, socially, and spiritually important to the Gwichya Gwich’in. It embodies their way of looking at their traditional lands, with people, culture and land closely interconnected.

Rich in natural resources and family relationships, the cultural landscape is filled with place names that help people remember Gwichya Gwich’in oral tradition. It tells the history of Gwichya Gwich’in life along the river.

From tales of long ago heroes creating the landscape and making laws to stories about relationships with neighbours and newcomers, the oral tradition connects the people to the land. Landscape features also help people recall the important place of the river within the land and within Gwichya Gwich’in culture.

Nagwichoonjik (Mackenzie River) National Historic Site of Canada is the 175-kilometre section of Nagwichoonjik-the Mackenzie River and its valley-from Viht’’ı’ı tshikiq (Thunder River) to Srehtadhadla’aq (Point Separation).

The cultural landscape includes the river itself, and the land extending inland for five kilometres along each side of the river. A Gwich’in community, a trading post, a mission station, fish camps, a quarry, graveyards and archaeological sites along the riverbanks show the long relationship the Gwich’in have had with the area.

Trailheads lead to networks of trails and paths that the Gwich’in have used for hundreds of years, and confluences lead to creeks and streams where Gwich’in families still fish and harvest plants. Nagwichoonjik (Mackenzie River) National Historic Site of Canada is managed by the Gwich’in Tribal Council, along with federal and territorial land management agencies.

A draft commemorative integrity statement, describing the condition, use and values of the landscape, is a management guide for protecting the cultural landscape and helping others learn about its importance.

19 http://www.gwichin.ca/AboutGSCI/aboutGSCI.html
20 References for two territorial case studies are found in Appendices B & C of this manual.
Guudeedist'inzihitch', Nagwichoonjik (Mackenzie River) NHS
Designating a place as a Territorial Historic Site is one way to recognize and remember how important a place is because of what it tells us about the past. In May 2004, the Cultural Places Program of the Government of the Northwest Territories approved a formal process for nominating, evaluating and designating historic sites. Before territorial historic sites can be designated they must be nominated, evaluated and reviewed by members of the public; and there must be a legislative order. The Designation Process for Territorial Historic Sites can be downloaded from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre programs web page: http://www.pwnhc.ca/programs.21

Other programs and procedures of the territorial government, as well as those of other levels of government, including Aboriginal, municipal, and federal governments may be used to commemorate and protect cultural landscapes. These other methods are also described here.

Archaeological team explores Fort Franklin, 1986-87

The First Steps in the NWT Designation of Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes

Designating a territorial historic site begins with some important questions. What place do you want to designate? Why do you want to designate it? Do others in the community also want to designate this place? What information will you need? What help will you need? How do you get started? Research and nomination are the first two steps.

Step 1: Research

The first step in the designation process is research. Research is the process of finding, putting together, and studying information and making conclusions about the subject. Researching an Aboriginal cultural landscape means gathering and documenting a lot of different cultural and ecological information about a particular land area. This includes information about the people who traditionally use the land, as well as looking at how people affect the land, and how the land, in turn, affects the people. Most of what you can learn about an Aboriginal cultural landscape is Traditional Knowledge that comes from Aboriginal elders, harvesters, and other land users. These are the people who best understand how people relate to the land. Because of this, Traditional Knowledge research and Aboriginal cultural landscapes research are very much alike. Researching Aboriginal cultural landscapes usually means doing some archaeological, historical, anthropological or other scientific research as well.

Because so much of the local information about places in the Northwest Territories has never been collected, you will have to do the collecting yourself. You should work with people in your community to gather this information. This means interviewing people who have knowledge about places important to the community, especially those who know about the place you want to nominate. You may also need to look in archives and archaeological reports. You will need help from people with special skills.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

Some questions you will need to explore:

A. What is the place to be designated? What type of place is it? What would you identify about this place if you were describing it to someone?

B. Why is it important? What are its place names? What are its stories?

C. What do you already know about the place? You might look for research already done such as recorded interviews, oral histories, maps, books, diaries, church or government records, photographs or archaeologists’ reports.
There are ethical rules that you will need to follow for doing research in the North. 22 We look at research methods and procedures in Section 3 of this manual.

**Inventory:** Aboriginal cultural landscape research results in an ‘inventory’, or list, of what is important in the landscape. An inventory has two purposes. First it helps you to understand the size of an individual cultural landscape and all the different parts that make up its whole. Second it is a catalogue or list of the different parts making up the cultural landscape.

Making an inventory focuses on gathering information about all the parts of a landscape through research, interviews, on-the-land visits, photo documentation, and other methods and using these activities to reach an understanding of the entire physical and cultural landscape. Inventory provides information which leads to understanding.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

The Nagwichoonjik inventory focused on collecting and mapping the names of places along the river and on the land alongside it. Stories that tell the meaning of the names were also recorded.

Starting with a Traditional Knowledge study with community elders, the inventory described land use 23, mapped traditional trails and campsites, and collected stories and legends about the long presence of the Gwichya Gwich’in on the river.

Archival research added to the detail. These sources give an understanding of the meaning of the river in Gwichya Gwich’in history and culture. For example, landscape features tell about the cultural heroes in Gwichya Gwich’in history and also about Gwich’in traditional beliefs. 24

For Nagwichoonjik, the inventory includes a 175 kilometre stretch of the river itself, a community, a trading post, fish camps, graveyards, trailheads and trails, hunting and gathering areas, remains of an old stone quarry, ruins of a Roman Catholic missionary site, and undisturbed views, as well as natural resources such as creeks, cliffs, bluffs, plant life, and wildlife.

Place names and their stories reveal the importance of these places in the landscape. 25

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22 Ethical guidelines written by the Association of Universities for Northern Studies are found in: Hart, Elisa; 1995; Getting Started in Oral Traditions Research; Occasional Papers No. 4; Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Yellowknife, NT http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/otm/otman.htm


SELECTED EXAMPLES

Parts of a cultural landscape: The Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute web site describes many important places in Nagwichoonjik.

The virtual tour includes where each place is, its official name and meaning and how to pronounce it, as well as why the place is important. This inventory also includes a picture of each place.

http://www.gwichin.com/Research/placeNameMap.html
In this case, the word ‘inventory’ means a record of the landscape that lists its different parts and that shows in detail the name of each part, its extent, description and significance.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

**Inventories:** The term “inventory can also mean a list of places such as the NWT Historic Places Database.”

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

**Natural Boundaries:**

*Grizzly Bear Mountain & Scented Grass Hills National Historic Site of Canada/ Saoyúé and Péhdacho. Great Bear Lake, NT*
**Boundaries:** One of the biggest and most complicated issues when doing research into Aboriginal cultural landscapes is setting area boundaries.

Identifying boundaries means defining an outline for the area that shows what is important about the place. Sometimes, geographical features such as rivers, lakes or mountains separate areas, just as Sahtú, Great Bear Lake, separates the peninsulas of Saoyúé and Ðehdacho.

Topographic features may limit where people can live on the land or how they can use it. These limits are natural boundaries that may show where the edges of the cultural landscape could be.

Other clearly understood boundaries have been defined by cultural places and uses. Traditional territories and traditional stories may show the limits of movement or other restrictions within the landscape. Traditional uses may show where long-established edges of historic use exist. Sometimes major changes in plant life and habitat mark the lines between different harvesting areas. These kinds of things help decide where boundaries could be drawn. Boundary decisions should not interfere with other people's reasonable use of a landscape and should avoid creating conflicts with other users.

Legal boundaries that are already recognized may affect the choice of cultural landscape boundaries, but they should not make the decision automatic. Boundaries might be defined by current uses, by well-known dangers or by development plans, but for designating a landscape as an historic site, the decision must strongly consider what is important and what best reflects that importance.

Defining boundaries comes down to specific questions:

- How much of the area is needed to show what is important about the place (its heritage value)?
- What parts of the area are needed to show its heritage value?
- Is all of it really needed to show this?
- Are there parts that should not be included in the boundaries? Why?
- What different uses need to be taken into account?

The boundaries that are chosen should include the important parts of the area and should in that way demonstrate the importance and the character of the cultural landscape.
Step 2: Nomination

Once the research has identified why the place is important and what makes it important, the next step is preparing the nomination. Any citizen, Aboriginal government, organization or municipality can nominate a place to be designated as a territorial historic site.

The nomination form needs the name and location of the place and a description of what the site looks like to identify the area being nominated. The form also asks what parts of the site need to be protected to keep its heritage value, what type of site it is, how it is currently used and what condition it is in.

SELECTED EXAMPLES

The decision about what area of Nagwichoonjik to designate as a national historic site shows how an area can represent a larger whole. The 175 kilometre section between Thunder River and Point Separation was chosen.

There were long conversations about such questions as how one part could be considered more important than other parts. Participants considered why the river was to be designated and what qualities had to be understood so that they could express those reasons. They considered where the most important stories and uses took place along the river.

The second decision they had to make when defining boundaries for Nagwichoonjik was which lands along the river’s edge were to be included in the designated site. Here, discussion began with an understanding that the river and the land were inseparable in traditional Gwichya Gwich’in life. It continued with an explanation of why the relationship between the river and the land along it were so important to the Gwichya Gwich’in. Traditional use and possession of the land, places referred to in traditional stories, and the presence of archaeological remains led to agreement on boundaries for an area reaching five kilometres inland on each shore from the high water mark of the river at Point Separation to one kilometre upstream from where the Mackenzie River and the Thunder River meet.

BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES

Territorial Historic Sites are designated because of their heritage value. Nomination forms ask for the reasons for nominating the place—why it is important to the Northwest Territories.

The form requires at least one photograph and a map of the place and list of where more information can be found. The nomination form will help you to arrange the information you collect about the place you want to be nominated. The completed form is given to the NWT Cultural Places Officer at the Cultural Places Program at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

How to complete a nomination form is described in Section 4. The nomination forms are found in Appendix B.

**Step 3: Pre-Assessment**

When a nomination is received, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre looks at the place described in the nomination to see if it meets the formal requirements for designation, as listed in the ‘What are Territorial Historic Sites?’ segment above. If the place meets these requirements, it is listed on the NWT Historic Place Inventory.

**Step 4: Inventory Listing**

The NWT Historic Place Inventory is a computerized listing of places that either are designated, or meet the requirements to be designated, as territorial historic sites. It also lists places designated as territorial historic parks or municipal historic sites. It does not include national historic sites of Canada within the NWT.

Information about officially designated sites on the Inventory is available to the public through the Canadian Register of Historic Places. The NWT Historic Place Inventory is managed by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre. The Inventory Form can be found in the Designation Process manual.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

After it is put on the Inventory a site must be thoroughly studied before it can be designated. The three key steps are: assessment, evaluation, and preparation of a Statement of Significance.

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29 http://www.historicalplaces.ca/
Step 5: Assessment

Assessment is the process of identifying the heritage value of a nominated place. Heritage value is central to designating heritage sites. The Government of the Northwest Territories Cultural Places Program defines heritage value as “the quality, meaning or knowledge from the past that an historic place is intended to communicate to present and future generations”.

Heritage values in NWT Aboriginal cultural landscapes will center on the things that describe the historical, cultural, social, and spiritual meanings that make a place important to the community. These values often connect with each other.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

*Historical values include events and activities that happened in the past.*

*Cultural values include cultural traditions, beliefs, language and behaviour.*

*Social values include family and community relationships.*

*Spiritual values include how people see the world and the spiritual relationship between the people and the land.*

*Physical values include built structures and archaeological sites, and also the natural landscape and the environment.*

Physical values include the importance to people of water, minerals, trees, plants, animals and habitat in a place.

Aboriginal cultural landscapes often include old, accepted, traditional ways of managing different values. The old ways can make the heritage character of living, lived-in landscapes sustainable.

**Territorial Historic Sites: Heritage Values**

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

*The NWT divides the heritage value of a territorial historic site into 4 categories: human associations; composition values; geographic or site values; and community interest.*

The human associations of a place are the reasons why the place is important for understanding the past and for remembering it in the future. Human associations include how people view the world, topics that keep coming up, events, stories, beliefs, ways of life, and ways in which the place is important to history.

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Compositional values are the important connections that have to do with the physical characteristics of the place.

They are connections between organization and patterns (e.g. “There is a network of trails leading in all directions”), between features and materials (e.g., “That cliff was the site of a quarry where they found rock for tools”), use and movement.

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32 Nagwichoonjik National Historic Site of Canada, Gwichin Settlement Area, Commemorative Integrity Statement, Draft, April 2004
(e.g., “People went there in the spring to gather berries”), technology and integrity (e.g. “People used ochre and it was the closest place where there was a deposit”), and cultural meaning and cultural use (e.g. “There are stories about these places...along the trail”). Some of the key words underlined below help to show these connections:

**HISTORY/LEGENDS**

*Shuht’a Got’ne Eht’ene*, the Trail to the Mountains, in the Sahtu Dene Settlement Area, begins at Tulita, crosses the Mackenzie Lowlands and the Keele drainage area, to reach Drum Lake in the Mackenzie Mountains. There it joins a network of trails reaching into the mountains and the Yukon. Used for centuries as a walking route in the fall and a dog team track in winter, the trail was a central part of the seasonal routines of the Mountain Dene. They hunted in the mountains in winter, came down in moosehide boats to trade in spring, fished and visited in summer, and took this trail back to the mountains every fall. Many places along the trail have important cultural meaning to the Mountain Dene.33

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33 Places We Take Care Of, p.34. [http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/places/denetrail.htm](http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/places/denetrail.htm)
Some Compositional Values are also geographic or site values. They include natural features, how the area is organized, its use and its changes over time, its views and vistas, and how the place is linked to nearby features and travel routes. They help to answer the question, “where is it in relation to other important features?” The underlined words below are ways of expressing this relationship:

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

One of the highest points in traditional Dehcho territory, Edézhie (Horn Plateau) rises from the Mackenzie valley west of Great Slave Lake. An important gathering place for four First Nations for centuries, it has strong spiritual and cultural meaning to the Dehcho, including stories of Yamoria. A traditional hunting, fishing and trapping area in the Dehcho and the Tłı̨chǫ regions, mainly used when harvesting in the valley below was poor, Edézhie has harvesting areas for waterfowl and woodland caribou and also supplies fresh water from headwater lakes and muskeg. Traditional trails show movements within the area and are important cultural features.34

34  http://www.greatcanadianlakes.com/northwest/slave/cul_page5.htm  
http://www.nwtwildlife.com/pas/edehzhie.htm  
http://www.nwtwildlife.com/pas/pdf/sp_march01.pdf
Community interest identifies the people and the communities who have an interest in the heritage represented in the place. It also identifies those who have already declared an interest in the values the place represents and it explains why they are interested.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

In moving Edéhzhie towards protection through the NWT Protected Areas Strategy, the Aboriginal organizations in the communities of Zhatie Koe (Fort Providence), Liídli'í Kújé (Fort Simpson), Tthets'éhk’e Delį (Jean Marie River) and Pehdzeh Kí (Wrigley) held workshops, did mapping and research, developed a statement describing their vision, and agreed to make a formal request to the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) to act as the sponsor for the area during the Protected Areas Strategy process.35

Assessment of Heritage Value36

For the assessment, a heritage assessment report is required. The report looks at what is known about the cultural values of the place as well as the condition of the site. The report provides written evidence of the case for accepting or rejecting a nominated place as a territorial historic site. This report is usually written

35 http://www.nwtwildlife.com/pas/pdf/LOW%20res%20Edhezhie_IS.pdf see also:

with the help of a heritage professional, such as an anthropologist, archaeologist, cultural historian or geographer who is working along with the community.

The heritage assessment study may be part of the nomination report, as with the Mouth of the Peel nomination found in Appendix B of this manual. The community can, however, submit a nomination form without the heritage assessment. The assessment would then take place after the nomination had gone through the Pre-Assessment step and, if enough information is available, the Inventory Listing step.

The NWT Historic Place Inventory form is normally filled out using information from the heritage assessment.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

*Heritage value is discussed in more detail in Section 4 of this manual.*

**Step 6: Evaluating Nominated Sites**

Evaluation is the process that decides the heritage significance of a place. Using the completed nomination form and the heritage assessment report, a group of individuals chosen by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre discuss the nomination and reach an agreement on the significance of the place as a territorial historic site. They use a set of guidelines and a scoring system to decide if the place is significant enough to be designated a territorial historic site.

The scoring system also shows where the most important values lie. These values, and the parts of the landscape they represent, should guide future managers of the area. They will help keep what is important to the landscape, the reasons the landscape was designated in the first place.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

*Evaluating Territorial Historic Sites*

*Do the values of this place matter to the heritage of the Northwest Territories? How important are the values that are associated with this site? How important is this site to the representation of its value? How well does this property represent its value? How important is this site to ensuring evidence of its value survives?*

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Step 7: Statements of Significance

A Statement of Significance (SOS) uses a standard format to briefly explain why a place was designated as a territorial historic site. It is usually written by a heritage professional with the help of the community. The SOS is a useful management tool that guides conservation work as well as decisions that need to be made about the site. It can be used for planning and administration and for preparing legislation and can be attached to documents that deal with these procedures.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

The SOS is a document that explains the values of a designated territorial historic site. An SOS has three parts:

- Description of the Historic Place
- Statement of Heritage Value
- List of Character-Defining Elements

The Description of the Historic Place gives the name under which the place is designated as a territorial historic site and any other commonly used names. It then describes the general geographic location of the place.

For Aboriginal cultural landscapes, the location should indicate the Settlement Area if there is one. It should also include the type of designation - in this case, Territorial Historic Site. This part identifies the general character of the place, how big an area it covers, the main resources that characterize the site, and how the site relates to the larger landscape.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

“Sahyoue-Edacho” National Historic Site of Canada is a large cultural landscape made up of two peninsulas, Sahyoue and Edacho, approximately 2500 and 3400 square miles respectively, which reach into Great Bear Lake from the west and south.

“The Délįne Fishery is that part of Great Bear Lake that is located at the foot of Keith Arm where the current quickens as it enters the Great Bear River. It includes certain places on the adjacent shoreline traditionally used for catching landing and processing fish.”

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39 No territorial cultural landscapes have yet been designated, so NWT Aboriginal cultural landscapes that have been designated as National Historic Sites of Canada are used here as examples.

40 Traditional names are ‘Saoyúé’ and ‘Æehdacho’, in English, ‘Grizzly Bear Mountain’ and ‘Scented Grass Hills’.

41 Guide to the Preparation of Statements of Significance for Historic Sites (p. 33)

Heritage Value describes why the site is important and why it should be officially recognized. This part focuses on the main reasons for designating the place and gives a couple of sentences about its importance. For Aboriginal cultural landscapes, this information will often have to do with such things as continuing associations, continued use, and its association with a cultural hero or with a legendary or historic event.

This information comes from written reports that give information about where and when the site was designated. For territorial historic sites, the source would be the NWT Commissioner's approval of the recommendation for designation. Information showing why the site was designated would come from the evaluation report that gives reasons for the designation.

SELECTED EXAMPLES

“Sahyoue-Edacho was designated a National Historic Site because the cultural values, expressed through the interrelationship between the landscape, oral histories, graves and cultural resources, such as trails and cabins, help to explain and contribute to the understanding of the origin, spiritual values, lifestyle and land use of the Sahtu Dene.

The heritage value of Sahyoue-Edacho lies in the cultural landscape as a whole, its environmental quality which allows traditional lifestyle and land use activities, and the cultural values of the Sahtu Dene and Metis expressed through the inter-relationship between landscape, oral history, graves and cultural resources.

Source: HSMBC Minute, November 1996; Commemorative Integrity Statement.”

Character-Defining Elements are the physical features, uses and associations that give a place its heritage value. They must be kept so that the heritage value of the historic site will be there for future generations.

Character-Defining Elements must directly show the heritage value for which the site was designated. They include materials, forms, location and how the land is laid out and used, along with the uses, and cultural associations or meanings that give the place its heritage value.

Guide to the Preparation of Statements of Significance for Historic Sites, p.33.
Here are two examples of how the Character-Defining Elements of a site can be described:

**Common Character-Defining Elements in Aboriginal cultural landscapes**

**Overview:** How the natural, cultural and spiritual aspects of the place work together and give it wholeness.

**Landscape:** Unspoiled and healthy natural environment, a central feature such as a hill or lake, special features such as campgrounds or views, how the features relate to each other and affect the larger landscape such as the banks of a river and the river itself, and archaeological remains.

**Traditional Use:** How long traditional activities and uses have been going on.

**Associations:** Continuing knowledge of place names and stories associated with the site, passing on and recording of Traditional Knowledge, connections to larger landscape through sacred sites, stories and place names.

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**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

**“The heritage character of Sahyoue-Edacho is defined by:”**

**Overview:**
- the completeness of the cultural landscape as an integrated whole over all time, and in particular:

**Landscape**
- the high standard of environmental quality and biodiversity evident in the natural landforms, flora and fauna;
- specific sacred sites and places of power everywhere and, in particular, the list of such places currently maintained and supplemented by the Sahtu Dene;
- places at which specific stories are told, including traditional hunting, trapping, fishing, plant harvesting and camping sites, portages and trails;
- tent rings, teepee poles, cabin sites in their found forms, materials and locations;
- implements and tools including ruined fish traps in their found forms, materials and locations;
- gravesites associated with specific places in their found forms and materials;
- portages and trails in their found forms and locations;
- archaeological sites in their found forms, materials and locations, including evidence of the cultural practices of the Sahtu Dene and the relationship with Edacho-Sahyoue.”

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*Guide to the Preparation of Statements of Significance for Historic Sites*, p.33.
SELECTED EXAMPLES

“The heritage character of Nagwichoonjik is defined by: 45

Overview
• the Mackenzie River and the land along its banks between Thunder River and Point Separation in its location and as a dramatic river valley consisting of a wide variety of waterway, beaches, high cliffs in some places and gentle slopes in others, cut with many creeks and displaying human impacts from pre-contact to modern times.

Landscape
• archaeological evidence of Gwich’in use, including camps, settlements, fisheries, quarries, connecting trails and trail heads, burial places, ritual and sacred places;
• the health and wholeness of the riparian ecosystem: its water quality, quantity, rates of flow, sandbars and siltation, fish quality, health of species such as inconnu and moose, and the traditional stories fostering their preservation;
• the undisturbed and unimpeded views, vistas and view-planes available along the valley from the river;
• sacred sites along the river (currently being identified by the Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute);
• ritual sites along the river (currently being identified by the Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute);
• Gwich’in knowledge of traditional place names along the river;
• Gwich’in knowledge of the relationship between oral histories and the cultural landscape.”

45 Guide to the Preparation of Statements of Significance for Historic Sites, p.32.
Steps 8-12: Designation

When the evaluation concludes that the place has significant values and should become a territorial historic site, the following steps still need to be done before it is designated.

Step 8: Public Review
The NWT Cultural Places Program gives notice that a place has been recommended for designation as a territorial historic site on the PWNHC website and in the newspapers or community post office. The Program also sends letters to anyone who manages or owns all or part of the site telling them that they plan to designate it. The Program notes public reactions and any objections to designation are discussed so that everyone can agree on the heritage value of the site.

Step 9: Recommendation
The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories must approve designation of a territorial historic site. The NWT Cultural Places Program makes the recommendation and sends it to the Commissioner for approval.

Step 10: Legislation
The Historical Resources Act gives the Commissioner authority to sign a simple Order, which is drafted by the Legislature and registered as a Regulation. The Regulation is then passed by the Legislature as part of a consolidated Declaration/Regulation.

Step 11: Posting Designations
Designated territorial historic sites are listed on the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre website as well as on the Canadian Register of Historic Places website where the public, in Canada and around the world, can read them.

Step 12: De-Listing
If a territorial historic site loses its heritage value, it may be de-listed. The steps for de-listing a site are like those for listing.

Why Designate Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes?
Designating an Aboriginal cultural landscape as a territorial historic site formally recognizes how important that landscape is and explains why it is important.

BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES
• It can help people understand the characteristics and importance of a landscape.
• The process can help protect traditional languages within a community.
• It can be useful in land use planning, to decide where development can take place.
• The values and components identified can be used to guide the landscape's longterm management, to control access, and to protect its integrity.

Preparing to nominate and formally recognize the importance of a place can help to make the community and others aware of important events, experiences, ways of life, and cultural traditions among a people. It can also make people more aware of these events, experiences, ways of life, and traditions.

BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES
The documentation prepared for nomination can be useful for education and tourism, to build awareness and understanding of the cultural landscape.
If the community agrees, Traditional Knowledge can be shared through publications and websites.

Cultural landscapes are often a means to help remember the Traditional Knowledge of a people or a community. They are physical reminders of the stories that have guided the life of a people. It has been said that a cultural landscape is like a book. Protecting the cultural landscape may therefore be the only way to protect the stories. Protecting the stories and the landscapes they tell about, also helps protect a people’s identity.

BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES
Designation as a territorial historic site does not give a landscape legal protection, but formal recognition of how important a place is may affect planning decisions.
Some planning procedures require that designated places be protected. Therefore, designation can be a useful tool when planning is taking place in a cultural landscape. It can guide how an area can be used and where development can take place within it.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

*Cultural landscapes are areas, not points on a map.*

Cultural landscapes show how important movement is to traditional ways of life, both through an area and between areas. They also help people to understand the connections between different activities and places within an area. Understanding how this works is important if cultural heritage is to be dealt with properly during the land use planning processes. The role of land use planning in the protection of cultural landscapes is discussed later in this part of the manual.

Designation can and should be just the first step in managing a cultural landscape to be sure of the long-term survival of the thing that makes it important, its heritage value. Recognizing the heritage values of a place by designating it can also be a way to give or limit access to it so as to protect those values in the long-term. Protecting the place may be seen as protecting its values.
Other Ways to Commemorate NWT Cultural Landscapes

There are many ways to designate or protect cultural landscapes in the Northwest Territories. Communities need to decide what level of protection or recognition they need for a particular cultural landscape and then act accordingly.

BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES

Territorial Historic Site designation is only one way to protect and recognize an Aboriginal cultural landscape in the NWT:

Municipal designation is the simplest way to protect historic places in your community. The amount of protection given depends on the bylaw.

Regional land use plans can be used to give protection to cultural landscapes.

The NWT Protected Areas Strategy (NWT PAS) might also be used.

National Historic Site designation applies to sites of Canada-wide importance.

A combined approach is described in the case-study on page 56.

Local and Community Heritage

Designated Authorities and Settlements

Designated Authorities (Detah, Jean Marie River, Kakisa, Łutselk’e, Nahanni Butte, Trout Lake, Wrigley) have powers a little like municipalities to pass resolutions to designate heritage places inside their boundaries. The same powers to make resolutions exist for settlement corporations under the Settlements Act (Colville Lake, Enterprise, Fort Resolution).

Municipal Authorities

Under the territorial Cities, Towns and Villages Act (Yellowknife, Fort Smith, Hay River, Inuvik, Norman Wells, Fort Simpson), municipal corporations have the authority to establish heritage by-laws and under them to designate municipal sites for their heritage values. Municipal corporations established under the Charter Communities Act (Délı̨nę, Fort Good Hope, Tsiigehtchic) and the Hamlets Act (Ak-lavik, Fort Liard, Fort McPherson, Fort Providence, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Tuktoyaktuk, Tulita, Ulukhaktok), have powers to create by-laws, which could include a heritage by-law. Tłı̨chǫ Community Governments (Behchokǫ, Gamètì, Wekweètì, Whatì), established under the Tłı̨chǫ Community Government Act, have powers to create by-laws, which could also include a heritage by-law.

As of 2006, the City of Yellowknife and the Village of Fort Simpson have created heritage by-laws.

Under Yellowknife’s heritage by-law, City Council can designate municipal heritage sites. The city also has a heritage committee, created under a by-law, to manage its heritage interests. The committee’s unofficial guidelines on heritage assessment can help those people who own, live in or use a property to have it designated. The heritage by-law is currently being studied, and a new heritage designation policy that includes designation requirements as well as long-term preservation planning, is being worked on.
Although cultural landscapes are not identified by name in the existing Yellowknife bylaw, Back Bay Cemetery in Yellowknife is a City of Yellowknife Heritage Site that is also a cultural landscape. A Statement of Significance explains the heritage value of the cemetery and identifies the character-defining elements.

Community Heritage Inventories
First Nations and municipalities both have powers to designate heritage places that are important to the community. To encourage recognition of local heritage places, the NWT Cultural Places Program has funded several community heritage place inventories. These inventories are a planning tool to help communities make heritage conservation part of land use planning.

DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA

A Community Heritage Place Inventory is an official list of historic places for a specific community. The local government determines that these places have heritage value.

The identification of heritage values and Statement of Significance are prepared much like for territorial historic sites. The community identifies local heritage values and the types of places that may be listed, guides the work, and does the research. A local council resolution can make the inventory official. If the official community inventory meets the documentation requirements, the places can be listed on the Canadian Register of Heritage Places.

47 http://www.yellowknife.ca/City_Hall/Committees/Heritage_Committee.html

48 Guide to the Preparation of Statements of Significance for Historic Sites, p.35. See also the Canadian Register of Historic Places: http://www.historicplaces.ca/rep-reg/affichage-display_e.aspx?print=true&id=1280
Regional Heritage

First Nations Authorities through Land Claim Agreements

Regional Aboriginal governments may identify heritage resources as part of their land claim agreements. These resources may include cultural landscapes. One example is the Sahtu Dene and Metis Final Agreement, which made 40 specific site recommendations for heritage places that Sahtu people value within the Sahtu settlement areas. 49 Many of the sites are cultural landscapes, based on the Sahtu belief that “the land is our history”.

Some Land Claims Agreements include chapters or clauses on heritage resources. The Tłı̨chǫ Land Claims and Self-Government Agreement, for example, has a chapter on heritage resources. It includes principles for heritage resources and guidelines regarding the effect of land use activities on heritage resources, archaeological permits, burial sites, and place names. All of these are helpful for managing cultural landscapes. It also identifies and describes Edéhzhìé, a cultural landscape, as an important historical and cultural resource. 50

Land Use Planning Authorities

Regional Aboriginal governments may designate and protect cultural landscapes through land use planning.

The Gwich’in Land Use Plan, Nành’ Geenjit Gwitr’it T’igwa’an creates land-use areas that include Heritage Conservation Zones. So far, thirteen areas have been designated. Heritage Conservation Zones are based on Gwich’in land use, using both traditional and scientific knowledge. In these areas, “uses related to oil and gas development, mineral and aggregate extraction, transportation, waste disposal, communication, power development and commercial renewable resource activities are not permitted”. 51

Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy

The Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy is a community-run way of identifying, establishing and protecting significant natural and cultural areas in the territory. Aboriginal groups worked with mining, oil and gas, and environmental organizations, as well as with the territorial and federal governments to develop the Strategy. All are still involved in making it work. While it is mainly concerned with ecological matters, the Strategy recognizes how important the connections are between natural, cultural and spiritual values in NWT lands.

49 Places We Take Care Of; Table 1. http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/places/index.html
51 Gwich’in Land Use Planning Board; 2003; Nành’ Geenjit Gwitr’it T’igwa’an (Working for the Land); Inuvik, NT. http://www.gwichinplanning.nt.ca/landUsePlan.html
The eight-steps for making decisions about the resources, uses and future of an identified area are based on balancing natural, cultural and economic values. Guidelines have recently been approved for documenting cultural values in areas at Step 5 of being considered for protection. These guidelines take a cultural landscape approach (see Appendix E).

Several communities are using this strategy to get long-term protection for significant cultural landscapes in their territories, often along with other methods of designation or protection.
Using the NWT Protected Areas Strategy reflects the trend in Canada’s North to identify new protected areas which will protect cultural values, harvesting areas, and traditional travel routes.

Territorial Government

In addition to territorial historic sites, the Government of the Northwest Territories has authority under the Territorial Parks Act (R.S.N.W.T. 1988 c. T-4, as amended) to designate cultural conservation areas and territorial heritage parks. The NWT Archaeological Sites Regulations (2001-219) of the federal Northwest Territories Act, provides protection for archaeological resources.

Territorial Heritage Park

A Territorial Heritage Park is a territorial park established to preserve and protect significant cultural or historical natural areas, physical features, or built environments. The only developments allowed are for interpretation, recreation or activities that fit with the park’s purpose. Fort Smith Mission Territorial Heritage Park is the only current example of a Territorial Heritage Park. A Statement of Significance for the park identifies the heritage value and character-defining elements of the park as a cultural landscape with mainly built features. 53

Cultural Conservation Area

A cultural conservation area is a territorial park established to protect a culturally significant site or landscape. Industrial activity may not be allowed in a cultural conservation area. Cultural conservation areas are a new classification and none have been created yet.

52  Protected Areas Secretariat; 2006; NWT Protected Areas Strategy. http://www.enr.gov.nt.ca/pas/index.htm
Archaeological Site Protection

Archaeological sites in the NWT are protected under a number of legislative authorities. These laws and regulations include permit requirements, land use regulations, investigation orders, and restrictions on anything that affects the social and cultural environment and heritage resources. They regulate the use of archaeological permits, and allow only permit holders to search and disturb sites, require that development work be stopped to study any archaeological site that is discovered during any type of land use operation, and they restrict knowledge of archaeological site locations.
Some of these legislative authorities apply to other heritage resources including burial sites, historical sites and historic objects. A list of possible protective measures is available from the NWT Cultural Places Program. 54

**Federal Government**

*National Historic Site of Canada*

The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) advises the Parks Canada Minister on whether a site should be named a National Historic Site of Canada based on the importance of the place, person or event to all Canadians. 55

Requests for designation are made to the Secretary of the HSMBC at Parks Canada. Any citizen or group can apply to have a place designated as a national historic site. Designation as a national historic site does not give a place legal protection.

A commemorative plaque marks the national historic site and tells why it was designated.
Case Study: A Multi-layered Approach to Designation & Land Protection

The Sambaa K’e Dene Band of Sambaa K’e (Trout Lake) has used a multi-layered approach in its attempt to have a large part of its traditional land use area recognized and protected as an eco-cultural landscape. An eco-cultural landscape contains all the characteristics of a cultural landscape; but it also protects and promotes the special characteristics of the natural environment and eco-system. For example, the Sambaa K’e area is of special value to woodland caribou, a species-at-risk that is threatened with disappearing.

Based on land use and occupancy information gathered by the Dehcho First Nations (DFN) in the late 1990s, approximately 9,500 square kilometres of land were temporarily protected from development of non-renewable resources because of the DFN Interim Measures Agreement. Through a community research process, based on Traditional Knowledge, this area was refined and expanded to include about 10,500 square kilometres which have now been designated as a “Conservation Zone” in the 5-year Dehcho Land Use Plan. At the same time, the Sambaa K’e Dene Band (SKDB) has been trying to get more permanent protection for this land through the NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS). Reports on PAS Steps 1 and 2 have been completed based on a combination of scientific and traditional information. Further steps are planned.

To support this designation, the SKDB has worked with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources on a woodland caribou collaring and monitoring program, even though some elders have been uncomfortable about interfering, in any way, with animals. The community concluded that the combination of Traditional Knowledge and the information from collaring would help them understand the animals’ movements and strengthen

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56 At the time of writing this manual, the phrase “eco-cultural landscape” does not have formal recognition under existing legislation or established policies.

57 http://www.nwtwildlife.com/Publications/speciesatriskweb/woodlandcaribou.htm
the call to protect them. Sambaa K’e Dene Band has also worked with Ducks Unlimited on migratory bird research, using both western scientific knowledge and Traditional Knowledge.

The NWT Cultural Places Program has contributed to both designation and protection by funding a Sambaa K’e cultural inventory project. A preliminary archaeological study of some important cultural sites has led to 19 sites being protected under the NWT Archaeological Sites Regulations.

While all of this work was being done, the SKDB carried out Traditional Knowledge studies on two sets of non-renewable resource projects intended for lands outside the Conservation Zone. One study looked at the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project while the other looked at a proposed “2-dimensional” seismic program.

Documenting cultural and ecological values in areas that could be affected by these activities has led, among other things, to:

- relocating approximately 20 kilometres of pipeline corridor 2.5 kilometres further east to protect K’ëotsee, a lake formed by the giant Godëhlé and home to a wide variety of sensitive cultural and ecological values;
- dropping a proposed borrow-pit site because of its nearness to Shihndáakaá Tselaa, a ridgeway with spiritual characteristics attached to it; and
- withdrawing the application for the 2D seismic program while studies are done on the effects of the repeated impacts.

Negotiations on the proposed Mackenzie Gas Project are continuing and there may be further restrictions to land use to ensure that the Sambaa K’e eco-cultural landscape is protected.

Finally, the Sambaa K’e Dene Band has recommended that the Conservation Zone be identified, recognized and designated as a Territorial Historic Site, under a cultural landscape definition. All of the Traditional Knowledge gathered to date would be used to support recognition. Although this designation would not provide legal protection from resource development, it would further strengthen the move toward permanent designation and protection through the Protected Areas Strategy.
Section 3: Documenting Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes

This section of the manual is an outline of how Aboriginal cultural landscape research (and Traditional Knowledge research generally) can be done effectively in the Northwest Territories. Although this section takes a broad approach, there are particular references to the requirements for designating cultural landscapes in the NWT. This section is divided into subsections. Each subsection deals with an important research topic.

Setting a Foundation for Community-Based Research

Aboriginal cultural landscape research needs to take place at the community level with those people who live and work in a particular area, even if the research is managed at a regional level.

BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES

The most effective community-based research:
• seeks community support and involvement;
• takes a team approach; and
• respects and makes use of local language and cultural values.

Community Support

Aboriginal cultural landscape research must be based in and supported by the community (or communities) whose land is being researched. The most important step is meeting with the community before there are any research activities (especially permit applications) to explain the nature, scope, and purpose of a particular research project. Even when the community has begun research for its own purposes, it is respectful to meet in advance with elders, and others who have important information.

In some cases, communities will have certain types of policies for researching Traditional Knowledge. The procedures described in these policies must be followed.

Gathering cultural landscape information should be done openly. Community members should be welcome to sit in on any group sessions. However elders, and others with important information, need to be the centre of attention. Where possible, young people should be encouraged to listen in, so that information is shared through the research process itself. Where field work is taking place,
getting community members involved can be both productive and fun, but the information-gathering must focus on the key providers.

Inviting community members to bring in photographs of historical and present-day land use can get everybody more involved. If there is a scanner available, photos can be scanned as people bring them in and, in return for the use of the photos, extra copies can be printed for personal and family use.

Printing and displaying maps of cultural values in a central, but secure, office area as they are produced can also help engage the community. Looking at maps gives people an opportunity to reflect and comment. Maps can provide immediate visual evidence of the work being done.

If the community is to get involved and provide support, its members must understand the value of Aboriginal cultural landscape research to identify and protect sensitive areas, as well as to preserve and maintain cultural identity and integrity. Using modern methods to gather, preserve and share this information ensures that it will not be completely lost. As one elder said recently before a TK interview, “I should be sharing these stories with my grandchildren, but they don’t visit me anymore, so I can share them with you [the interviewer] and you can pass them on. It’s not the best, but it will do”. 58

Cultural landscapes research must be done in a way that meets both internal standards set by the community and external standards (set by an agency funding the work, for example).
Groups such as cultural institutes may exist in your region or a neighbouring one. They have trained staff who may be able to assist and advise you, or even lead the project.

**Information Sharing**

Because Aboriginal cultural landscape research is based to a great extent on Traditional Knowledge, little of which has been written down yet, the success of a research project depends completely on finding informants who are willing to share their knowledge with the research team.

For Aboriginal cultural landscape research, these are usually Elders who may have information to pass on from their parents or grandparents, or other active harvesters. It is important that both men and women take part in the research because they sometimes have different information, or different ways of looking at similar topics.

The type of information you are seeking from Elders is information about the culture and ecology of the area, or landscape, being researched. Information gathering focuses on identifying and documenting Aboriginal cultural landscape values, in both story and data form, that will help to define the special characteristics of the cultural landscape. However, some information, and some of the values in the area, might be considered sensitive. While it is important to make the Elders comfortable so that they will want to share as much information as possible, they have the right (and, in some cases, they have the cultural duty) to withhold information that they consider too sensitive to share.

Elders can often provide photographs of traditional sites and land use activities. These types of photos are a valuable resource for Aboriginal cultural landscape research.
In some regions, videos have been taken of the land, edited for showing, and presented to groups of Elders and harvesters as a way of promoting memories and discussion. In this case, resource people with video cameras and editing skills were needed. Photographs of places can be as effective.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

**Team Summary**

Aboriginal cultural landscape research is complex and many different skills are needed. Take advantage of resource people with more than one skill, who can do more than one job. 

As well, not all of the jobs require full-time personnel; part-time or contract workers can also be used.

Research can be limited to fit into existing budgets, or it can be done in phases over a longer time. Where a small area of land is being researched for designation, the research project will be smaller in scale.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

For the Sambaa K’e cultural landscape research, all references to places or land features within the traditional Sambaa K’e area use Dene terms because the English place names usually have no history or meaning for the community and refer to only a small fraction of those features that have traditional names. Most references to birds, animals and plants are in Dene Yati, but a list of English equivalents is provided for reference.

Ndu Tah Deh (Island River), Dehcho, NT
Documenting Traditional Place Names

When conducting Aboriginal cultural landscape research, the gathering of traditional place names is one of the most important and early steps to take. This is because the names traditionally given to the land often describe the geography or ecology of an area and give information about its use or an associated story. Place names carry huge amounts of cultural information.

Furthermore, most of the cultural stories that elders, and other informants, share are attached to the land. You must be able to find the sites or areas being described in the story to make the story's meaning completely clear. Finally, the number of place names found in an area gives some idea of how much land use there has been in that area.

If proper records of traditional place names are made, significant cultural landscape information can be obtained and a reference map can be created for many other cultural stories.

It is important to say that when a community wants traditional place names considered for formal recognition or designation by the Government of the Northwest Territories, the area that each place name refers to must be identified on a topographical map. It is not good enough to use a point to mark a lake, for example. Rather, it is important to mark the area the name refers to as in the example below.
Place name mapping with polygons outlining features near Ulukhaktok, Victoria Island.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

For further guidance in submitting names for official recognition, please contact the NWT Cultural Places Program:

NWT Cultural Places Program
Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9
ph: 867-873-7368  fax: 867-873-0205
http://www.pwnhc.ca/programs/nwthpp.html

Research Tools and Methods

When gathering Aboriginal cultural landscape information, different methods and tools are available. This part of the manual lists what basic equipment is needed for cultural landscapes research and discusses the main research methods used in the NWT today.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

The NWT Cultural Places Program manual Getting Started in Oral Traditions Research\(^5^9\) has more information: http://pwnhc.ca/research/otm/otrman.htm

\(^5^9\) Hart, Elisa. Getting Started in Oral Traditions Research; 1995; Occasional Papers No. 4; Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre; Yellowknife, NT. http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/otm/otrman.htm
**Research Tools**

A basic Aboriginal cultural landscape research kit could include the following things:

- A document that briefly describes the research project taking place, a consent form ⁶⁰ and guidelines for appropriate questions or topics. This document is read to each person being interviewed, in his or her own language, before the interview starts.

- A hand-held audio tape recorder with a good quality table or clip-on microphone. Although digital technology is being used more, ordinary recorders are still quite practical and are often better quality. The cassettes can be kept or converted to a CD for editing and storage. Storing information in two different ways reduces the risk of loss.

- A set of topographical maps for the area at 1:250,000 and 1:50,000 scale. The 1:50,000 maps are particularly useful for place name research where cultural landscape values are grouped closely together.

- A good quality note pad, pencils, sticky notes, and set of coloured high lighters for marking on the maps. Thin point permanent markers for plastic map overlays ⁶¹.

- A digital camera for photographing people and places.

- A computer with word processing software and Aboriginal language fonts. Dene language fonts are available at http://members.tripod.com/~DeneFont.

A more advanced research kit might also have the following items.

- A GPS (Global Positioning System).

- A GIS (Geographical Information System), or computer mapping tool.

- A digital camcorder to interview people.

- A projector to project video or photo images during group sessions.

- A multi-microphone mixer and a tape recorder to record group sessions.

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⁶⁰ See Appendix D — Edéhzhíe Interview Guide.

⁶¹ High quality clear plastic sheets laid over a topographical map for marking purposes.
Research Methods

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

There are four common ways of gathering Aboriginal cultural landscape information:

- BACKGROUND RESEARCH
- INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS
- GROUP INTERVIEWS
- FIELD WORK

When interviewing Elders and other TK information holders, questionnaires or interview guides are used for reference, but once an Elder has been asked to provide certain information and clearly understands the type of information needed, the Elder should be allowed to talk about what he or she finds important. The interviewer must listen carefully for both direct and indirect messages in what is being shared. Answers can be looked at later and then organized to fit the report. Interrupting while Elders are speaking must be avoided.

**Background Research**

Background research is essential to Aboriginal cultural landscape research. You need to know what information is already available. There have been varying degrees of Traditional Knowledge research carried out over the past few decades in all Aboriginal communities in the NWT. Finding and protecting these materials is very important.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

- NWT Archives [http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/index.htm](http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/index.htm): many resources, including a database of 30,000 photos, and records of territorial organizations.
- NWT Archival Network [http://aabc.bc.ca/WWW.nwt.archnw/access](http://aabc.bc.ca/WWW.nwt.archnw/access)
- National Archives of Canada [http://www.archivescanada.ca/car/menu.html](http://www.archivescanada.ca/car/menu.html): linked to other archives, including the Dene Cultural Institute, the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre and the NWT Archival Network.
- Regional / community cultural / historical organizations
**Individual Interviews**

One of the best ways to do Aboriginal cultural landscape research (and TK research generally) is to talk to elders, harvesters, and others with important information about how people related to the land as individuals, and as part of a group. Usually, there is some form of interview guideline and, besides the actual recordings, information about the interview session itself is documented. Getting Started in Oral Traditions Research provides detailed information about setting up and carrying out individual interviews. A sample interview guide used for cultural research for the Edéhzhie Protected Area project in the NWT, is presented in Appendix C.

**Group Interviews**

Because Traditional Knowledge is basic to Aboriginal cultural landscape research it is often seen as belonging to the community as a whole. In this case information gathering should include some form of group interview to check the information. Group discussion often stimulates the memories of elders and other informants. It is more fun to discuss and share old memories and stories with like minded people.

**Field Work**

Field work simply means getting out onto the land to visit, study, photograph, use a GPS position finder, and perhaps record stories about specific cultural sites or areas. Field work can involve snowmobiling, canoeing, hiking and camping for anywhere from one day to many weeks, depending on the size of the project. Going out on the land is probably the best way to do Aboriginal cultural landscape research because it immediately connects you to the places and allows informants to share information in a more traditional and natural setting. It also allows members of the research team to experience the landscape under study more fully.

**Gathering Map Data**

Gathering data for mapping is a very important part of Aboriginal cultural landscape research, and of TK research in general. It is not, however, a separate part, because ‘data’ gathering and ‘story’ gathering should be part of every individual and group interview. The manual *Chief Kerry’s Moose* 62, published by the B.C. Union of Indian Chiefs, can be referred to. It is a very good introduction to how to do effective TK mapping research.

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62 Tobias, Terry N.; 2000; Chief Kerry’s Moose; Union of BC Indian Chiefs, Vancouver, BC. 
http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/files/PDF/Tobias_intro.pdf
When marking maps, use a coding system so the maps don't become too cluttered and difficult to read. There can be a large amount of information for individual sites and using reference codes allows details to be put in a notebook instead of on the map itself.

**Checking**

Once the gathered map data has been put together, a group session is required to review the maps and ensure that everyone agrees on what is being shown. This is how the data is checked and approved. The date and names of the people who took part in the checking must be documented. Finally, whether individual maps or

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**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

After it is put on the Inventory a site must be thoroughly studied before it. Your map may show cabin sites where people have regularly lived for part of the year. These maps need to have data tables containing:

- the name of the cabin owner (or family);
- the dates when the cabin was built and used;
- the name of the person who identified the cabin site;
- the date of the interview at which the cabin site was identified.

More advanced information could also be noted:

- What were the seasonal uses of the cabin?
- How did people live there?
- What was the cabin’s relationship to other cabins and camp sites?
- How did life change from temporary camps to permanent cabins? can be designated. The three key steps are: assessment, evaluation, and preparation of a Statement of Significance.
collective maps are prepared, all paper topographic maps or plastic overlays that people marked on should be dated and stored safely, along with the original interview tapes. If the information on the maps should ever be questioned, the original maps and interviews can provide back-up for the data presented.

**Translating and Transcribing**

The job of translating and transcribing needs to capture what the informant shared as accurately as possible. It should not be a summary of what was said, but rather an accurate detailed report of the informant’s words. Translating and transcribing is long, hard work. It takes up to 8 hours to translate and transcribe a 1-hour interview.

### SELECTED EXAMPLES

Part of a Traditional Knowledge interview, translated and transcribed for the Sambaa K’e Cultural Inventory report:

**Violet** - K’ai Shíh, across here—it was said people lived underground there long ago? Was it endá that lived there?

**Edward** - They were people called Nahʔaqnę. They were called Nahʔaqnę.

**Violet** - What kind of people were Nahʔaqnę?

**Edward** - It was said they were people from up the Nahanni river. Those are the ones called Nahʔaqnę. They were from the mountains from around Yukon. They would live under ground the way they did around Yukon. They were playing the role of bushman and went out here. Winter came when they were still here so they found the area beside a creek on the other side of the ridge. It was said they made a shelter there and lived there.

**Violet** - Did they live there all winter?

**Edward** - Yes, they lived there all winter.

**Violet** - How did they get food?

**Edward** - They must have hunted. They must have stored food there in order to live there.

### Preserving Information

Cultural landscape research can involve the use of audiotapes, video tapes, topographical maps or transparent overlays, field work notes, photographs, and computer text and map files. These must all be stored and kept safe from loss or damage after the research project is finished. This is why basic storage and preservation procedures should be followed:

* Do not use original copies of anything for later research. Make working copies.

* Make back up copies of all files on good quality CDs or DVDs; and

* Use a proper storage place or cabinet to lock up important cultural landscapes research materials.
Where possible, communities can enter into simple agreements with the NWT Archives (Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre) to have original copies of very important materials stored at the Archives with working copies kept by the community.

The Archives can also provide advice and training on proper storage of some materials, such as audiotapes. Should you have any questions about preserving materials, contact the NWT Archives directly.

Materials gathered through Aboriginal cultural landscapes research should be available to the community and to researchers for many generations to come.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

Contact the NWT Archives for more information

Telephone: (867) 873-7698 Fax: (867) 873-0660
Email: nwtarchives@ece.learnnet.nt.ca
http://www.pwnhc.ca/programs/archive.htm
Section 4: Presenting A Landscape For Nomination

This section of the manual is about nominating an Aboriginal cultural landscape as a territorial historic site. It looks at the nomination form and how to apply it to Aboriginal cultural landscapes. Examples come from a completed nomination form for Mouth of the Peel Village or Nagwichoo tshik. It was prepared by the Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute for the Teetå’it Gwich’in. Other examples of the concepts discussed are also used.

A completed nomination presenting Mouth of the Peel Village or Nagwichoo tshik as a cultural landscape is included in the manual as Appendix C. It shows how information for the nomination of a cultural landscape can be organized to meet nomination requirements.

The main headings in this section come from the Territorial Historic Sites nomination form and each part of the form is discussed in turn as they apply to Aboriginal cultural landscapes.

What is the name of the site you are nominating?

The name of the site given here will be the name by which the cultural landscape is known throughout the nomination process. It should be the name you would want the cultural landscape to have if it is designated as a territorial historic site.

Because place names are so important for remembering stories in the cultural landscape, the cultural landscape being nominated probably has at least one name already.

Sometimes the cultural landscape to be nominated is part of a larger area and is known by the name of the larger area. In the case of Nagwichoonjik National Historic Site of Canada, the Gwich’in name for the Mackenzie River was given to the nominated section (the part between Thunder River and Point Separation). If using the name of the large area for the nominated cultural landscape might be confusing, the words ‘cultural landscape’ could be added to the name it already has. Sometimes, many places within the cultural landscape do have names, but the area that is actually being nominated does not have a name. Consider giving the cultural landscape the name of one of those places. Consider giving the cultural landscape a name that shows, in other ways, why it is important, why it has heritage value.

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63 Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute; 2005; Territorial Historic Site Nomination for Mouth of the Peel Village or Nagwichoo tshik
If the cultural landscape does not have either a common or an official name, you will need to discuss possible names with people who know about the place, as well as with the community. The community will have to confirm the name selected for the cultural landscape being nominated.

**Why are you nominating this site?**

This part of the nomination form should be a brief (8-15 lines) and clear statement of why you are nominating this Aboriginal cultural landscape as a territorial historic site. The reasons you give here, should be backed up by the rest of the nomination. In particular, the next part of the form, should explain those reasons in detail.

The reasons why you are nominating this cultural landscape as a territorial historic site should be relevant to the defined reasons for designating territorial historic sites.

**DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA**

“A territorial historic site reflects a phenomenon, a pathway, person, event or theme that is representative of, or experienced in common by, or of importance to one or more specified groups or themes in the Northwest Territories”. 64

This definition has two parts:

(1) the nature of the site, and

(2) who it represents.

**What does the site represent?**

Territorial historic sites can be identified according to these categories: phenomenon, pathway, person, event or theme.

**A Phenomenon**

A phenomenon could be a long and continuing relationship between a people and the land they have occupied. Traditional place names and stories might show this relationship. Traditional uses leave signs of camping, hunting, trapping, fishing, gathering plants, obtaining special materials for rituals or ceremonies, and trading. The relationship might also be with a sacred site, a place with burial or grave sites, or a place used for rituals or ceremonies. Archaeological sites may also contain signs of continuous occupation or use.

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DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA

Nature of the Site: Phenomenon - “a long and continuing relationship...”

In its Phase 1 Protected Areas Strategy report, the Sambaa K’e Dene Band stressed the continuing relationship that people have had with the land, along with the special characteristics of the landscape itself:

“... the geo-environmental features of the Northern Alberta Uplands eco-region have helped shape the Sambaa K’e Got’ine way of life and continue to sustain a wide variety of traditional cultural activities, particularly harvesting activities such as hunting, fishing, and trapping. Protection of this land, therefore, must be viewed holistically, although there are sites and areas that are worthy of protection based on their own intrinsic value, this land is being put forward for protection based on the totality and deep integration of all the historical, cultural, and environmental values it contains, represents, and, importantly, sustains.”

Kedilja’h (Upper Kakisa River)

A Pathway

A pathway could be a route, a trail, a river, a creek, or any other direct route that allowed people to move over land or water. For example, Sihonine Òehtene, the Loon River-to-Fort Anderson Trail, was one of the main routes used for centuries by different local groups of Sahtu Dene to reach the barren-lands where they hunted caribou. It was also the route used by the Hudson’s Bay Company trader who chose the location for Fort Anderson. 

65 Sambaa K’e Dene Band; May 2004; Final Report on Phase 1 of the Sambaa K’e Protected Areas Strategy Project: Identifying Areas of Interest.
66 Places We Take Care Of, (#40) http://www.pwnhc.ca/research/places/loonriver.html
A pathway could also be the trail of a culture hero leaving his imprint in the landscape.

For example, Ts’okwe, the hill where Yamòzhah slept and dreamed, became a dreaming place. ⁶⁷

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A Person

Oral and written sources often document the lives of important people, as in following examples:

SELECTED EXAMPLES

NWT Examples:

- A person could be a culture hero such as Thanadelthur. Thanadelthur, a young Dene Súhne (Chipewyan) woman, was taken from her family in a raid by Cree in 1713. She escaped and arrived starving at York Factory. She is referred to as Slave Woman in fort journals, and as courageous, strong and determined. Thanadelthur is given credit for the success of a peace mission undertaken for the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) in 1715-16.

- A founding father of the Metis in the NWT, François Beaulieu was head of the Beaulieu family. An influential Metis-Chipewyan trading chief he established Metis leadership and economic independence in the Mackenzie Basin. The Beaulieu homestead at Salt River, directly related to Beaulieu’s trading empire, is a cultural landscape associated with François Beaulieu.

- Chief Monfwi (Mqwhi), the Rae Tłı̨chǫ leader who signed Treaty 11 for the Tłı̨chǫ of the North Slave region, is another example of a person associated with a cultural landscape. During treaty discussions he spoke up for the rights of the Tłı̨chǫ to keep their traditional lands and to live in peace with others who used the land. The area he described during the signing of Treaty 11 is now recognized as the traditional area of the Tłı̨chǫ Nation. The cultural landscape associated with this person would be the Monfwi Trail.

An Event

An event could be understood as signing a treaty, a battle, peace making, etc. The abandonment of H.M.S. Investigator on Mercy Bay in 1853 led to the migration of the Inuinnait from Victoria Island to northern Banks Island. There, materials saved from the ship and its large cache of food and supplies, attracted and helped to sustain the Inuit occupation of the area around 1860-1890. The cultural landscape would be the identified area of Banks Island.

Events could also include the activities of culture heroes in traditional narratives, such as the stories of Chipewyan trading chief Matonabbee. Matonabbee is mainly remembered for two events: he helped warring Cree and Chipewyan groups stop
fighting and reach a settlement in the 1750s, and he guided Samuel Hearne's third expedition. It was thanks to Matonabbee's skills as an ambassador and guide that Hearne reached the Coppermine River in 1770-72. 71

A Theme

There are many themes in the history of the Northwest Territories. These themes vary greatly and can include such topics as early tribal wars, the whaling era, the different treaties, disease, colonization, the transition to Aboriginal 'homesteads', and the fur trade, to name a few.

SELECTED EXAMPLES

The Délı̨ne Traditional Fishery and Old Fort Franklin National Historic Site of Canada are examples of cooperation between Aboriginal peoples and between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal peoples. “The traditional Dene fishery at Délı̨ne ... its use over time and its long history of sharing its resources, as well as the remains of Fort Franklin, the wintering quarters of Sir John Franklin's second expedition ... speak eloquently about the relationship which developed in the19th century between Aboriginal people in the north and those European-Canadians who were determined to explore the north.... For the Sahtu Dene, the fishery at Délı̨ne is especially important to their life and culture in this region.” 72


72 Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, Minutes, November 1996
Who does the site represent?

When you answer a question about why this cultural landscape is important to the Northwest Territories, you should point out which group or groups of people are associated with the cultural landscape and what their relationship to it is. To be important to the NWT, the cultural landscape must represent, or be important to, the story of one or more of the following groups. Aboriginal cultural landscape nominations may fit one or more of these categories.

All peoples of the NWT

This term refers to a place that is significant to people everywhere in the NWT. For example, Ehdaa or Koe Gocho, the flats near where the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers in Fort Simpson, join forces, was an important spiritual site and traditional gathering place for the Dene for a very long time before the Papal Grounds were added for Pope John Paul II’s visit to the NWT in 1987.

The 372 kilometre Canol Road from Norman Wells to Whitehorse, crosses the Mackenzie Valley and the Mackenzie Mountains by way of MacMillan Pass. Built from 1942-1945, the Canol Road led to the oil fields at Norman Wells. Local Dene and Metis were among the thirty thousand people who helped to build it. Abandoned in 1945, when World War II ended, it affected how transportation developed in the region. Now the Canol Heritage Trail, it is designated a National Historic Event and forms part of the new Doi T’oh Territorial Park.

http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/library/pdf/2007%20Jan%2020%20Dei%20T’oh%20Park%
http://www.normanwells.com/visit/canol_trail.html
One of the NWT’s composite populations

The NWT’s composite populations (roughly equivalent to language, or dialect groups) are simply the different groups of people who taken together make up the population of the NWT.

DEFINITIONS / CRITERIA

The main Aboriginal language populations in the NWT are:

- Inuvialuit / Inuinnaqtut
- Gwich’in
- Sahtu Dene
- Tłı̨chǫ
- South Slavey
- Dene Sų́hne (Chipewyan)
- Cree
- Metis

The other composite population consists of all the non-Aboriginal populations of the NWT. This category treats all of these groups as composite populations but will look at other ways of identifying groups.

One population group spread over more than one region

Examples of a geographic region might be one of the many government administrative ‘regions’ such as the North Slave or South Slave regions. Or it might be an Aboriginal land claim region such as the Inuvialuit Settlement Region or Akaitcho...
Territory. A geographic region might also be an ecological region, where plant and animal life and soil share some distinctive characteristics due to similar climate, like the barrenlands. It could also be a physiographic region in which the rocks, minerals and other earth structures are similar, like the Mackenzie Valley.

There are also ethno-geographic regions, where members of a particular population live, like one of the Tłı̨chǫ landscape parts such as Nə́dį meaning ‘plateau’, referring to the area around Whatì. The term locality may have many different interpretations, from a cemetery in Fort Providence to the abandoned community of Rocher River, or a range of mountains sacred to the Shúhtáot’ine (Mountain Dene). At this point, region and locality begin to blur, which is okay.

Two or more communities

The term community can be understood in many ways. Examples are the 32 municipalities in the NWT. They include hamlets, villages, cities, charter communities and unincorporated areas. Communities might also be groups based on history (like Aboriginal veterans or ‘Bay Boys’), language (French, Gwich’in, Michif speakers...), occupation (log cutters, miners, trappers...), etc. There are many ways to think of community.

Two or more population groups

Sites in this category are places that are important because of the history of two or more Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal groups. Natainla (Eight Miles) is a good example of a place which is important to the NWT because of the activities of more than one group. Part of its importance has to do with historic battles between the Teet’ł Gwich’in and Siglit (Inuvialuit). It is also important because, during the 19th century, it was peacefully shared between the Gwich’in, the Siglit, and the European traders at Fort McPherson.

Other categories

There is another way for a cultural landscape to be important to the NWT and be nominated as a territorial historic site. The cultural landscape may represent, or be important to, the story of the Northwest Territories. For example, the NWT in a wider world; the NWT as a northern identity; the NWT as a Canadian identity; and NWT government, its history, administration and accommodation; are themes that show this relationship.

Does the site have a story? If so, what is it?

Nomination of the Aboriginal cultural landscape as a territorial historic site, requires the landscape’s story. The story gives evidence of the heritage value of the nominated cultural landscape. In other words, it shows why the place is important, to whom it is important, and what is important about the cultural landscape. You should clearly identify the people who the cultural landscape being nominated, represents, and how they are related to it. To see an example, look at the opening paragraphs telling the story of the Mouth of the Peel in the nomination document attached as Appendix B. There, you will learn about the historic relationship that both the Teet’ł Gwich’in and the Siglit had with the area. The rest of this part of the nomination form goes into more detail about the story of their long relationship to the area.
When you prepare the nomination, it is important to identify the story (or stories) that are part of this cultural landscape and that are important to the Northwest Territories' history. Because cultural landscapes are areas that were occupied or used for a very long time, they usually have many stories. Often these stories belong to different times in the history of the place. In some cases, stories can be grouped according to the period they occurred.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

For its nomination as a National Historic Site the stories of Nagwichoonjik were grouped into five different periods. The five periods were: the earliest days of the land, when animals and humans were equal; the days of the great travelers and heroes; the friendly and unfriendly dealings with the Inuvialuit; the stories from the recent past; and life along the river. Telling the stories of these different times showed both how the river has been important to the Gwichya Gwich’in for a very long time, and the different ways that Gwichya Gwich’in life depended on the river. 74

As was pointed out in Section 3, you will likely collect many stories about your own cultural landscape. When you look at these stories, you should try to see which stories go together. First of all, you might ask which stories are about the same event. Which ones are about the same use? Which ones are about the same person or same family? Which ones are about the same place in the landscape? Looking at the stories in this way will help you to put the ones that are most alike, together. This way of looking at the stories about the cultural landscape helps you to organize them by theme. As pointed out in Section 3, a summary chart can be used to organize information around themes.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

In telling the story of Nataiinlaii (Eight Miles) on the Territorial Historic Site nomination form, the stories are organized under three themes: Nataiinlaii as a battle site; Nataiinlaii as a fishing village; and Eight Miles as a continuing tradition. Stories related to one of these three themes are grouped within that particular theme.

Another important way to look at the stories is to ask which stories are connected to each other and how they are connected. Are they related only because they all have something to do with one particular place? Are they about the same groups of people, but at different times or for different reasons? Are different places within the landscape related to each other by their connection to different parts of a story? This is another way of grouping stories together.

Because there are many stories, you will not be able to tell all the stories that you have collected for the nomination. You will have to choose which stories to

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74 Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute; 1997; That river it’s like a highway for us: The Mackenzie River through Gwichya Gwich’in history and culture. Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada Agenda Paper
tell. You should choose the ones that give the best reasons for nominating the cultural landscape as a territorial historic site.

You will also have to decide what order to tell your stories in. Putting the stories from long ago first and the recent stories last is a common way of making this decision. This order works best when there are many events over a long period of time. This approach can be seen in the Nagwichoonjik National Historic Site nomination and in the Mouth of the Peel nomination document in Appendix B.

If the landscape is large and the different stories that make it important are closely related to different parts of the landscape, then you should consider organizing according to the different landscape areas. Doing this will ensure that all the stories are included. If you take this approach, you will need to clearly show how all the parts come together to make up the cultural landscape you are nominating.

When you present the stories, you must show where you got most of your information. Most often it will come from interviews that you have held yourself, or that others have collected. If you have mainly told the story, the way it was told by one or two people, you should indicate who the storytellers are in the nomination papers. Some of the information will have come from what you or others have noticed about the land itself.

Some of the information may well have come from books or records from the archives. This information is normally within the nomination, as a list of references. This list should include the names of the people, along with the dates they were interviewed about particular stories or parts of stories.75

Another way that you may present your documentation is by giving a short description of the research you did when you gathered the information, and where the records of that research are held.

The stories in this part of the nomination form will be used during the evaluation that will decide the heritage value of the cultural landscape. In particular, the stories will be used to look at the cultural landscape's human associations. They may also be used to evaluate compositional values and geographic/site values. Compositional values are basically the physical characteristics of the landscape. Geographic/site values are values that come from the physical location of the site in the landscape and the natural environment around it. See Section 2 of the manual for a discussion of heritage value and evaluation.

**Name of the Site**

*Present name(s)*
- means the names by which the cultural landscape is commonly known today. A cultural landscape may have more than one name. If they are both used, but by different groups, give both names.

*Traditional name(s)*
- means the names used by groups associated with the landscape. Different

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75 See the list of references in the Mouth of the Peel nomination in Appendix B
groups who have occupied or used the landscape may have different names for it. For example, the Mackenzie River has four traditional names, all meaning ‘great river’ or ‘grand river’: Kuukpak (Inuvialuktun), Nagwichoonjik (Gwich’in), Dehcho (South Slavey), and Grande Rivière (Michif). All the known traditional names should be listed. If it is known, the language should be given too. The meaning of the name in English should be given if it is known.

**Original name**

- means the name by which the landscape was first known. If it is the same name as the present name, you should still put it in here. Aboriginal languages will sometimes have a very traditional name for a place, along with a newer name.

**Other historic name(s)**

- means other names used for the place in the past. Often these names were only used for short periods of time. State the time of use if this is known. For example, Fort McPherson was known in the mid-1800s as “Peel’s River Post”.

**Official name**

- means a formally registered name. Many places in the NWT have official names. You should find out whether the cultural landscape to be nominated already has an official name. There are particular procedures for naming places in the NWT. For example, the form and spelling of Aboriginal names must be checked with an expert in the language to make sure that GNWT spelling standards are followed. Please contact the NWT Cultural Places Program for information regarding official names.

**Other names**

- means any other names by which the place has been known. For example, Wrigley Lake, located in the front ranges of the Mackenzie Mountains west of Tulita, is known throughout the Northwest Territories as Drum Lake, a translation of its traditional Mountain Dene name.

The NWT Cultural Places Program collects and makes available information about traditional, current and historic names for geographic features and populated places throughout the territory. The Program also provides a map of community place names, a list of official and traditional community names, and a database of NWT geographic names.

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For example, the online NWT community names list gives the following information for Łutselk’è:

**HISTORY/LEGENDS**

The traditional Dëne Súłine / Chipewyan name for this community is Łutselk’è, which means “place of the łutsël” a type of small fish. The name was officially changed from Snowdrift to Łutselk’è on July 1, 1992.

Snowdrift (Łutselk’è), 1955

Łutselk’è from the air.

**HISTORY/LEGENDS**

The NWT Geographic Names Database records the following different origin information for “Tuktoyaktuk”:

1). An Inuit idiom meaning ‘rock caribou place’ (from the legend of the shaman). Pronounced Took-too-yak-tuk. Legend: There were no fish; the people were very hungry. The shaman went hunting and saw two caribou; they escaped into the sea so he turned them to stone. There are two huge protruding rocks at the place.

Source: RCMP, June 3, 1948.

2). Inuit word, meaning ‘caribou crossing.’

3). Derived from tuktu, ‘caribou’ and yaktuk ‘looks like’ and means ‘reindeer that looks like caribou.’ (Information from Keith Crowe of Northern Development).

4). In 1928 (?) Capt. Smellie (Hudson’s Bay Co. ship Nascopie) conducted a survey of the Mackenzie Delta to locate a suitable deep water harbour for H. B. Company supply vessels in the western Arctic. “... the Eskimo informed me of a large bay about twenty miles along the coast. We proceeded there taking soundings and discovered a large bay with sufficient depth of water. This bay had the name Tuk-Tuaktok.” p.127 (Wild, Roland; Arctic Command: The Story of the Nascopie; Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1955.)

The NWT Language Bureau indicated that the traditional Inuvialuktun (Inuktitut) name for this community is Tuktuujaqrtuuq, which means ‘looks like a caribou.’

In addition, information on official place names can be found through the Canadian Geographical Names Service database at http://gnss.nrcan.gc.ca/index3_e.html. If you have other information about the use of any of the names, include it here.
Such information might include why a place was given this name, the name of the group who used this name, when the name was used, etc.

**Geographical Location of the Site**

*Where is the site? Please describe its location as clearly as you can.*

This part of the form gives information about where the site is. Its purpose is to show where the cultural landscape can be found within the NWT. The information should be very accurate. It should show exactly where the nominated cultural landscape is, in relation to rivers, creeks, settlements, and other features that are special to the landscape, as well as to protected areas like parks.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

Natainlai is “eight miles (13 km) upriver from Fort McPherson, on the east bank of the Peel River. It includes the area located on the south side of Natainlai creek, and the area to the north between the creek and the Peel River ferry crossing, where the main concentration of cabins is found ....”

78 Territorial Historic Site Nomination for Natainlai (Eight Miles).
You must provide one or more maps to show the geography of the cultural landscape. On the map, mark the exact boundaries of the cultural landscape being nominated. See the location map in the nomination document for Mouth of the Peel in Appendix B.

**Other types of information**

More detailed information will be helpful. Most cultural landscapes will not have a street address because they are areas rather than individual properties. If the cultural landscape is somebody's property it may have a legal address. Information about latitude, longitude, can be found in the NWT Geographical Names database for official names. National Topographic System (NTS) maps can also show features in the landscape.

Other information that might help find the site could include descriptions from recorded oral interviews, or legal or planning surveys.

**Description of the Site**

*Please clearly describe what the site looks like.*

The description of the cultural landscape should give a word picture. Someone reading it should be able to ‘see’ the cultural landscape you are nominating. Your words should describe the overall character of the place.

**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

*In the description part of the Mouth of the Peel nomination document, the character of the cultural landscape is made clear by explaining the cabins that are still there. They are the first things to be presented in the description and they are also shown on the accompanying map.*

If you don't have a map, describe the pattern of the landscape, including the natural and built features. You should describe the direction that the landscape faces and how the parts of the landscape are arranged in the space (for example, “in a line along the ridge, surrounded by willows, extending inland from the creek”). You should also describe how people or animals move around the landscape (roads and trails, for example). The main materials and technologies of the cultural landscape should be identified, and anything original or one of a kind should be explained.

The description includes anything else that might give a picture of the cultural landscape. A description of a cultural landscape often includes information about landscape features like hills and flats, water features like creeks and ponds, plants and wildlife, trails and paths, important views, campsites, built structures, ruins, and known archaeological sites. In describing the site, it is helpful to identify how these features of the landscape affect each other, as well as to explain their cultural meanings, and how they relate to each other. On this part of the form, it is a good idea to mention photos that show different parts of the cultural landscape you are describing. A drawing of the cultural landscape, showing its layout, is helpful if one is available.
The description should show what areas are part of the nominated area, and what nearby areas are not, and explain why.

On this part of the form you should also describe any disturbances of the landscape and their effects on the heritage value of the cultural landscape. Disturbances can cause major changes in a landscape, for example, a forest fire or a flood. Highways, logging or mining roads, seismic survey lines, gravel pits, woodcutting, development work, and settlements are also examples of disturbances.

Example of a description of the cultural landscape of Nataiinlaii (nominated as a territorial historic site): 79

This description will be used to judge the compositional values (what is important about the site) and geographic/site values (what land and water features are important) of the cultural landscape. The information provided about the geographic location may also be used in this part of the evaluation. For discussion of evaluation, see Section 2 of the manual.

Add further information to describe parts of the site (if appropriate).

If there are parts of the site that are particularly important or distinctive, they should be described. Such parts might include places where particular plants grow or culturally restricted areas.

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79 Territorial Historic Site Nomination for Nataiinlaii (Eight Miles) p. 12.
What parts of the site must be preserved for it to keep its heritage value?

Examples are: particular features of a building, views, how the space is arranged, how the site is used, materials the site is made of, stories that go with the site etc.

This part of the form is very important. It tells what things about the place must stay as they are so that people will continue to value this site. The parts identified here must help to make your case for nominating this Aboriginal cultural landscape as a territorial historic site. For a cultural landscape, they might include protecting the character of the landscape. This includes water quality, plants and wildlife and traditional uses, such as hunting, fishing and camping. Continued traditional landscape uses could include, using traditional travel routes, using certain materials and practicing crafts that are traditional to this site. They could also include respecting sacred sites and keeping them available for the practice of ceremonies and rituals.

Continuing knowledge (telling the stories of the places in the landscape) could be a very important aspect of preservation. Preserving the relationship between oral tradition and the land may be extremely important. Recording Traditional Knowledge held by Elders, mapping the landscape using a GIS (Geographic Information System), knowing what can be found in records about the site that are stored at the archives, and doing archaeological investigation, are ways of reaching this goal.

It may be important to preserve a trail for the sake of continued usage, along with its place names, history, and stories. Where there are buildings or structures, it may be important to preserve them because of their history. Views and relationships, such as an undisturbed view of the river or the existence of nearby woods, may be important for preserving heritage value.
In addition to identifying what it is important to preserve about the cultural landscape, this part of the form should explain why preserving these aspects of the landscape is important. The example above shows what really needs to be preserved, as well as why.

**Please estimate the approximate size of the site.**

The estimate should include the whole cultural landscape being nominated. The length and width should be stated in metres and kilometres, with directions (north/south, east/west). The surface area can be stated in hectares or square kilometres. The section on boundaries has more details.

**Please include photos of the site if you can.**

Photos are a very effective way to show the character of an Aboriginal cultural landscape. They can show many things about a place that it would take a lot of writing to describe. The purpose of the photos is to show the overall character of the cultural landscape, including its dominant features. A photo taken from outside the landscape that captures what is central to its character is desirable. Where possible, photos should be taken at different places in the landscape to show the character and defining features of the cultural landscape. If there are other important features in a landscape, you may want to include photos of them. From six to ten photos is appropriate, but the number may vary with the nature of the landscape and the availability of photos. High quality digital images (300 dpi; 2400 x 3000 pixels) or large format (8”x10”) photographs would be best.

For each photo you should give the name of the cultural landscape, and identify what the photo shows about the cultural landscape. You should also say when it was taken (the exact date is not required) and who took it. A global positioning system (GPS) location for the photo is also useful. If there are people in the photo who can be identified, they should be named. If a photo from a book or article is used, you should give the name of the author, the title of the book, the place and date of publication, and the page number where the photo occurs. If a photo from a library, archives or website is used, you should give the name of the source and the source identification information such as title, photographer, date and catalogue number. There are examples in the Mouth of the Peel nomination in Appendix B.

Which of the following best describes the type of historic place you are nominating?

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80 Territorial Historic Site Nomination for Natainlaii (Eight Miles) p. 12.
This manual is mainly intended for documenting Aboriginal cultural landscapes, which are one kind of place that can be designated as territorial historic sites. A cultural landscape often contains one or more other types of eligible sites. As well as being a cultural landscape, Sahyoue-Edacho is where two of the Sahtu people’s most sacred places are located. The landscape is where much of the traditional wisdom of the Sahtú Got'íne comes from, in stories from long ago times that continue to be told today. Within the boundaries of this cultural landscape and sacred site, are trails, ruins, sacred sites, burial sites, sites traditionally used for specific activities, special places and special features in the natural landscape, and structures such as cabins. They all contribute to the character of the cultural landscape as a whole. In the case of Sahyoue-Edacho the whole cultural landscape is more important than it is for any of the other types, to define the importance of the place.  

Many of the other specific types of historic places that can be nominated as territorial historic sites, may also be cultural landscapes.

**SELECTED EXAMPLES**

**Example 1: Kitigaaryuit NHS**

Kitigaaryuit National Historic Site of Canada, an archaeological site, is also a cultural landscape. Lived in for at least 500 years, Kitigaaryuit was one of the largest Inuvialuit villages on the Arctic coast. An important traditional gathering place in winter during the annual disappearance of the sun, it was especially used in summer as a base camp for the beluga whale hunt. The site has extensive archaeological remains including a village, an HBC post, an Anglican mission, and about 250 gravesites in its landscape.  

81 Commemorative Integrity Statement [for] Sahyoue (Grizzly Bear Mountain) and Edacho (Scented Grass Hills) National Historic Site of Canada, 2004  
**Example 2: Ɂdaà Tîli**

The Ɂdaà Trail between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, long used by the Tîchî, is an example of a trail that is also a cultural landscape. Hundreds of archaeological sites along the route show how for many generations the trail was used as a main travel route. Historically, it was also used by traders, miners, and government administrators, to travel between the two great lakes. Cabins, traplines, sacred sites, and communities show its continued importance.

**Example 3: Vik’ooyendik (Church Hill)**

A good example of a cultural landscape that is part natural and part man-made, is Vik’ooyendik (Church Hill). Where the Arctic Red River and the Mackenzie River join, the flats alongside the rivers surround a hill. Events that occur in traditional narratives are associated with the river, the flats and the hill. The river brings people together here. The hill was Raven’s lookout when he met with the grebes. People settled on the flats in the 1860s, building structures. A Roman Catholic church has stood on the hill for about 80 years. The church, which is the visual center of the landscape, gives the hill its English name.

**Example 4: Nataînlaì (Eight Miles)**

Nataînlaì (Eight Miles) is a good example of a place where historic patterns of life on the land can be seen. It is also a cultural landscape. A Teetå’t Gwich’in family established the first known camp, in the last quarter of the 19th century. In the next decades, others followed, mainly summer fish camps. In the early 20th century the fishing village extended towards Fort McPherson, with cabins being built along the river. Because Teetå’t Gwich’in families spent more time at Fort McPherson, cabins and some warehouses were built on both sides of Nataînlaì creek. Life in Nataînlaì is recorded through place names, oral interviews, archaeology, and documentary research in anthropological studies and historical journals.
Use and Condition of the Site

*How is this site used today?*

A cultural landscape may have many different uses today. You should state which uses are historic and/or traditional, and what changes in land use have taken place within the cultural landscape.

*Is this site currently under threat? If so, please describe the threat.*

Threats to a cultural landscape can be of many kinds. They could include development, such as proposed industrial activity, or subdividing to build homes. There could be risks to the water quality of a river or creek, or to wildlife or fish. There could be risks of erosion or earth slides.

*How would you describe the current condition of this place?*

Sites being put forward for nomination should be described using the following terms:

**Who currently owns the site? Do they know about this nomination and do they support it?**

An Aboriginal cultural landscape will often be owned by the regional Aboriginal government or some other type of corporation within the Settlement Area.

You should say how the owners have been informed and how they have indicated their support. A council resolution or a letter, participation in the nomination process, etc. are some of the ways they may have shown their support.

**Always provide a copy of the council resolution, or the owner’s letter of support, with the nomination.**

**Please tell us who you are and where we can reach you.**

You must complete the contact information.
Additional Information

The final section of the nomination form asks you to add important information to speed up the decision on the nomination. Some questions do not directly relate to Aboriginal cultural landscape nominations.

1. Do you have a personal attachment to this site? If so, please tell us about it.
If you are preparing the nomination for an Aboriginal group, you should state what their attachment is to the cultural landscape. A community's long attachment to an area shows the area's historical importance to the group.

2. Can you provide information to precisely identify the boundaries of the site?
Boundaries are a complex issue for cultural landscapes. The cultural landscape may already have defined boundaries, as is the case with Mouth of the Peel, where the boundaries of the nominated cultural landscape have already been decided through the Gwich'in land use planning process. Some of the ways boundaries are worked out are by looking at limits in terms of geographical features, land uses, traditional stories and current uses.

3. Has this site already been recognized as an historic place by another government or agency? If so, by whom, and as what type of site?
An Aboriginal cultural landscape can be officially recognized in more than one way.

4. Is this site currently occupied by someone who is not the owner?

5. Has this site been maintained by someone who is not the owner or occupant?

6. Do you know of a person, group or organization that has stories, papers or historic photographs of the site?

7. Do you know where we can obtain more information about the site?
These questions help to identify people who have close attachments to a site; they may not apply to a large cultural landscape.

8. Have parts of this historic place been removed and taken somewhere else?
This question is mainly about buildings. However, if important parts of the cultural landscape have been legally separated from the rest of the landscape and that part has deteriorated or been disturbed as a result, the information can be given here.

9. Is this place a building or other structure that has been moved to its present location from an earlier site? If so, please tell us what you know about when it was moved and where it came from.
This question may apply to a feature in a cultural landscape but it does not apply to the cultural landscape itself.

10. Does your community support designation of this site? (yes / no / uncertain)
If the nomination of this Aboriginal cultural landscape is not made by or for a community, please attach letters from community organizations and members of the community supporting the nomination. If such letters are not currently available, please send them separately, using the file number that the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre provides when it responds to the nomination.
**BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES**

*Remember, if you need assistance or advice to complete a territorial historic site nomination form for an Aboriginal cultural landscape, you can contact the NWT Cultural Places Officer:*

NWT Cultural Places Program  
Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre  
Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9  
ph: 867-873-7368  fax: 867-873-0205

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Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Yellowknife, NT.
Appendix A: Nomination Form for Territorial Historic Sites

Information Needed on the Nomination Form for Territorial Historic Sites

This nomination form is divided into two sections. The first section must be filled out before we can consider any historic place nomination. The second section asks for information that we will eventually need to evaluate your proposed historic site. If you can provide any of this information now, please do so, since it will speed up the evaluation.

Nomination Form for Territorial Historic Sites

If you have any questions about this form, or the Territorial Historic Site designation process, please contact the Cultural Places Officer at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (867) 873-7368; email: culturalplaces@gov.nt.ca

The first section must be filled out before we can consider any historic place nomination.

If there is not enough space provided to answer a question, please write on the back of the page, or attach any extra information you may have.

BEST PRACTICES / PROCEDURES

The first section, which must be filled out, asks for:

1. The name(s) of the site: A place may have more than one name. We need the commonly used name(s), as well as any other names that have been used in the past, and any names in other languages.
2. The reasons for nominating the site.
3. A photograph (or several photos that show the site from different angles).
4. The location of the site.
5. A map showing where the site is located.
   (And showing its boundaries if possible).
6. A description of the site, and its condition.
7. The name of the site owner.
8. Your own name and contact information.
A. Name(s) of the Site

What is the name of the site you are nominating? Enter at least one name for this site. If you know more than one name, please put it next to the type of name that best describes it below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present Name(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Name(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Original Name(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Historic Name(s)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official Name(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Name(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. Reasons for Nominating the Site

Why are you nominating this site? Why is it important to the Northwest Territories? Does the site have a story? If so, what is it?

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

C. Geographical Location of the Site.

Where is the site? Address? Please describe its location as clearly as you can. Do you know the site boundaries? (Draw a map, attach a map, or use words)

If you can, please draw a map here or attach a map to this Nomination Form

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
If you can, you please draw a map here or attach a map to this Nomination Form.

D. Description of the Site

Please clearly describe what the site looks like.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Add further information to describe parts of the site (if appropriate).

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Please attach photos of the site if you can.

How many photos have you included?  ______________________________________________________

When were they taken? (approximate date)  ____________________________________________________

Who took them?  _______________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
E. Use and Condition of the Site

How is this site used today?


Is this site currently under threat? If so, please describe the threat.


How would you describe the present condition of this place? (Choose the answer that best describes the site.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Healthy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Whole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Okay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Overgrown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Falling Apart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Being Destroyed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. Ownership of the Site

Who currently owns the site?


Do they know about and support this nomination?

If you have a letter from the owner(s) indicating their support of this nomination, please attach it.
Thank you for completing this nomination form.

Please tell us who you are, and where we can reach you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mailing Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Mail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This nomination form can be submitted:

**By Mail**
Cultural Places Officer
Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT XIA 2L9

**By Fax**
Cultural Places Officer
Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
867-873-0205

Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre staff will be in touch with you to confirm they have received it. A file number for further correspondence about the historic place will be attached to the reply.

Please take a look at the following pages before you submit your nomination.

**ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) INFORMATION**

Answers to the following questions are not required at first when you nominate a Territorial Historic Site. Once we have evaluated your nomination we will then ask you to provide the information. If, however, you can provide any of the following information now, we will be able to process your nomination faster.

1) What kind of historic place you are nominating? Please pick one or more of the following types that best describe the site. (Check one or more).

- a ruin (archaeological remnant)
- a sacred site
- a burial or grave site
- a trail, river route, road route or pathway
- e site traditionally used for a specific purpose or activity
- f cultural landscape
- g special place in the natural landscape (that can't be touched or seen)
- i man-made feature in the natural landscape
- j landscape that is part natural, part man-made
- k building without its property
- l building and its property
- m structure that is not a building
- n complex of buildings & structures (one property)
- o streetscape
- p historic district (streets and properties with buildings or structures)
- q man-made landscape that includes many features
- r place where early land occupation patterns can still be seen
- s another type of place (describe)
There are several ways of pinpointing a location. If you can provide an address or geographic coordinates from a GPS receiver, please do so.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Address (#, Street)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Address (Lot #)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latitude / Longitude (from GPS)</td>
<td>Latitude:  Longitude: Datum:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Method</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please add any other information that would help us to find the site:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

(3) Please estimate (roughly) the size of the site. If you can, please identify the boundaries of the site

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

(4) If you are nominating a building or structure, has it been moved to its present location from an earlier site? If so, please tell us what you know about when it was moved and where it came from.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

(5) Have parts or features of this historic place been removed and taken elsewhere? If so, what parts, and how can we find them?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

(6) What parts of the site must be preserved for it to keep its historical importance? For example, particular features of a building, views and scenery, the layout of the site how people use the site, the materials the site is made of, the stories that go with the site.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
(7) Do you have a personal attachment to this site? If so, please tell us about it.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

(8) Has this site already been recognized as an historic place by another government or agency? If so, by whom and as what type of site?

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

(9) Does someone who is not the owner occupy this site? Please give the name (if it is known).

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

(10) Does this occupant know the site has been nominated as a Territorial Historic Site?  

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don’t know ☐

(11) Has anyone (other than the owner or occupant) maintained this site over the years? Please name the person and give contact information (if known).

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

(12) Does this caretaker know the site has been nominated as a Territorial Historic Site?  

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don’t know ☐

(13) Do you know of a person, group or organization that has stories, papers or historic photographs of the site? If so, please tell us who they are, and how we can contact them.

_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

(14) Do you know where we can obtain additional information about the site? (Please list the names of any books, articles, tapes, videos, or similar materials.)

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don’t know ☐

(15) Does your community support designation of this site?  

Yes ☐ No ☐ I don’t know ☐

If available, please attach letters of community support to this nomination.
Appendix B: Nomination Nagwichoo tshik

MOUTH OF THE PEEL VILLAGE or NAGWICHOO TSHIK

Why are you nominating this site? Why is it important to the Northwest Territories?

Mouth of the Peel Village is of great heritage value because it is associated with events that have shaped the history of the Northwest Territories. These are related to the fur trade and most particularly, the growth of muskrat trapping during the early twentieth century. In fact, both the Gwich'in and the Siglit considered the lower 80 kilometres of the Peel drainage and the head of the Mackenzie Delta a No Man's Land, because of the potential for conflict when they met. The Siglit inhabited villages located along the Arctic coast and they mostly relied on the sea for their subsistence. The Teet T'it Gwich'in occupied the upper Peel River area, hunting in the Selwyn, Ogilvie and Richardson Mountains in the winter and fishing along the Peel River and its tributaries in the summer. Both groups made occasional incursions within the “neutral ground” in the summer for raiding (Slobodin 1962:18).

With the establishment of a HBC trading post near the present location of Fort McPherson in 1840, the Teet T'it Gwich'in and the Siglit started to visit the lower Peel and Delta area more frequently. The year Peel River’s Post was established, for instance, the Teet T'it Gwich'in went to Mouth of the Peel in order to escort John Bell, Alexander Isbister and their crew to the location where the trading post was to be erected:

On the 3rd of June we left Fort Good Hope in two boats, and by rapid travelling arrived at the mouth of Peel river about noon on the 6th. Here we found a party of the Indians belonging to the river, who, aware of our intention to settle among them, had waited for us at this place with the view of acting as an escort to our party in the event of a collision with the Esquimaux, whose uniform hostility to the whites rendered a meeting with them anything but desirable. (Isbister 1845:335-336).

Encounters between the Gwich'in and the Siglit in the area were also problematic. Seven major fights on the lower Peel River were reported by Europeans between 1840 and 1856 (Slobodin 1960:89). One of these took place at Mouth of the Peel in 1844 or 1845, when the Siglit killed three Gwich'in men, their wives and four children (Hoop 1853, as cited in Slobodin 1960:24). The last reported incident of this sort took place in 1856 (Slobodin 1962:25). Relationships between the Gwich'in and the Siglit gradually improved afterwards, and both groups started to occupy the lower Peel and Delta area more intensely.

Slobodin commented that during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, several Teet T'it Gwich'in families used to fish on the Peel River below Fort McPherson. They started to hunt for beaver in the spring in the lower Peel and Mackenzie Delta areas (1962:29). The Siglit, for their part, were seen at Mouth of the Peel on different occasions during this period:

Reached the mouth of Red River this morning. A few families of Indians there. Peter Simple and others there to meet the boats. A few Eskimo there also. Came to the mouth of Peel River after sunset, and found our progress closed up by the river being fast with ice. A large number of Eskimo encamped on the banks of the river crowded around us. We turned back a little way on the Mackenzie [sic] and encamped. Evening Prayers with the Indians [MacDonald 1867].

...we carried on again [with the steamer] and at one o'clock the entrance to Peel River was reached where we found a large band of Esquimaux encamped. They had been up to the fort to trade and having heard that we were expected shortly, had delayed their return to the coast until our arrival [Robertson’s journal 1887, republished in 1985].

Archdeacon MacDonald, an Anglican missionary who resided in Fort McPherson between the years of 1868 and 1904, entered several references in his journal about Gwich'in individuals and families who stayed at Mouth of the Peel around the turn of the century (see table p.3). It appears that by this time, Mouth of the Peel had already become an important hunting and fishing location for the Teet T’it Gwich’in. The place was used in both summer and winter.

During the Gold Rush (1898-1917), Fort McPherson became one of the minor routes taken by the miners to reach the Klondike and the relationship of the Teet T’it Gwich’in with Euro-Canadians intensified significantly. In 1899, some Gwich’in were hired by the Klondikers to guide them over the mountains, and the Gwich’in learned about the existence of Dawson City. A rapid shift towards Dawson took place starting in 1901. During the years that followed, most Teet T’it Gwich’in families spent the winter hunting in the Yukon and travelled to Dawson and Moosehide for trading during the summer. Only a few of them visited Fort McPherson between 1905 and 1910 although some of the beaver hunters remained on the lower Peel River. It is not until 1914 that a large number of Teet T’it Gwich’in began to revisit Fort McPherson in the summer, and until “the middle of World War I that most of them returned to the Peel to live” (Slobodin 1962).

This return coincided with a drastic rise in the price of fur. The value of muskrat increased from 40 cents in 1914, to 75 cents in 1917 and to $1.50 in 1920. As the lower Peel and the Mackenzie Delta were the most productive places for muskrat in the lower Mackenzie Valley, the Teet T’it Gwich’in started to travel to the Delta on the ice in early spring (ibid.). It is during this period that Mouth of the Peel developed into an important village. The place was not only used as a base for muskrat trapping in the spring but also as a fishing camp during the summer. Some people even
stayed at Mouth of the Peel year round, fishing, trapping and hunting for moose in the area (Kritsch and Andre 1994: No.41). Some of those who fished at the village sold their catch to the HBC in Fort McPherson:

I remember living at the Mouth of the Peel as a very young child, along with my mom, dad and younger brother, Peter. My father was fishing all summer and then again after freeze-up. After we had a huge pile of fish, the men from the Hudson Bay Company in Fort McPherson came and took most of it. My father had sold it to them (extract from *When I was a Boy*, by Abraham Alexie Sr.).

Elder Neil Colin remembers that the first man who built a cabin at the village was Jim Firth. This was around 1920 (Interview for the Fort McPherson National Historic Project, 2002). Firth had a store at Mouth of the Peel:

Where we stayed at Mouth of the Peel, Jim Firth and his family stayed there, too. He had left the Hudson Bay Company. An outfit was given to him and he had a small store. Jim Firth was the son of a trader (Excerpt from *"A Long Time Ago - Part 1"*, by Jim Koe*).

MacDonald’s Journal Entries about Mouth of the Peel

20/9/99 Finished putting windows outside. Wm. Vit. mudding. Fanny Greenland arrived with her three sons from where she has spent the summer fishing near the mouth of Peel River. North wind and rain this evening. Henry Vikjiniit arrived yesterday from Lapierre’s House: he brought news of the death of Mary Sibbettson, and of corpses of two miners discovered on Porcupine River. Indians in the party from which he came are well: no deer seen, but a few moose have been killed. Visited a little sick girl, whose days seem almost numberless.

25/1/00 Wm. Njootli hauled for me the last three days two loads wood daily. Peter Ross and family decamped to proceed to mouth of Peel River, there to hunt and fish. Wm. Smith also went off to set two nets for fish. Andrew Thomson went off on Monday to set nets at Esqui Lake. Joseph and family went off yesterday to join his father. Taught in school, also students with another. 14_-.

5/1/01 Visited Maggie Ssyinuggun who is ill and gave her medicine etc.; also James Sibbettson’s house, and gave a few things to Ellen Tshttok. Cut wood for stoves. Wood hauled 1 load each by Wm. Njootli and Edward Sittechinli. Half a dozen men, the same number of women and three children left today for mouth of Peel River to seek for means of subsistence there, on rabbits, jackfish and possible moose. Weather moderate. Daily Evening Prayers conducted throughout this week. Students and Colin Vittshikk taught daily, excepting New Year’s Day.

28/11/01 Julia with Neil set out for the place last named. 14 in school yesterday, 13 today. Joseph Thomson hauled 2 loads wood and cleared his debt. Another he hauled of wood cut for me by Colin. Weather moderate. Gave tea and tobacco to old Emma who with daughter Rachel is going to Kwissitya at mouth of Peel River. Prayers in Indian.

More cabins were erected at the village over the years. Some people also used to stay on the north bank of the Peel River. In the 1930s, for instance, Chief Julius had a cabin on the opposite side of the village and other people had tents nearby. The main part of the village was composed of a few cabins and several tents. The residents crossed the river on Sunday to attend services outside the chief’s cabin (Slobodin 1962:63-64).

The village at Mouth of the Peel continued to develop after this period, as more people built cabins on the south bank of the Peel River. At one point, more than forty families lived in the village for part of the year and Mouth of the Peel had become an important gathering location for the Teet’it Gwich’in. Different people also had stores there over the years. The steamboats used to stop at the village on their way to Fort McPherson from Fort Good Hope. Old Christopher Colin was a Minister at the village and he held church services on Sundays for the residents. He rang a church bell to announce the beginning of the service (Kritsch and Andre 1994:No.41). Several present-day elders from Fort McPherson spent part of their life around Mouth of the Peel, trapping and fishing with their families in the area. Even through there was a decline in the fur trade starting in the 1930s, the Mackenzie Delta remained an important trapping area in the following decades and the Teet’it Gwich’in continued to occupy the village at Mouth of the Peel. Shepard Krech (III) lived in Fort McPherson from 1971-1972. He noted that despite the fact that many people started participating in the wage economy in the 1950s and were based in the community, the tempo of life was regulated by the seasons and land based activities - including muskrat trapping - were still very important:

From mid-March to mid-June the Fort McPherson trappers turn their attention to trapping and shooting muskrats. There is a general exodus from town just before breakup: children are taken out of school for a month and often longer, as entire families move to the bush for this time of year. Muskrat prices, as fine fur prices, fluctuate from year to year: in the spring of 1971 over 25,000 muskrat were traded into the Fort McPherson stores at an average price of $1.20; the average price in the spring of 1972 was close to $2.00. The Mackenzie Delta country is dotted with tens of thousands of lakes, and muskrat thrive on most of them. There are three distinct parts to the muskrat season: the first begins in early March and ends in mid-May, when the rats are trapped in their pushup runs. By this time,

* This story is part of the Committee for the Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE) files, which are housed at the Gwich’in Language Centre in Fort McPherson.
the increasing sunlight melts the grassy areas around the pushups and they collapse. The muskrat then come onto the lake ice to feed, and they are shot with .22's. The third period begins with breakup: the ice breaks up on the creeks, then on the rivers, and finally on the lakes, and the rats are shot from scows and canoes. The best hunts are made when the sun is low on the horizon at night, as the rats are most active during this time [Krech 1973:18-19].

Throughout the 1970s the number of muskrats in the Delta dropped significantly and many Teet'ı Gwich'in had to look for other sources of income (GRRB 1997:82-83). Life on the land did not allow them to sustain themselves and their families and many had to find work in Fort McPherson or with the oil and gas industry. The village at Mouth of the Peel was gradually abandoned. Neil Colin (Old Colin’s son) is the only person who still camps at Mouth of the Peel nowadays. Mr. Colin is affectionately known as the “mouth of the Peel” because he is never at a loss for words (Kritsch and Andre 1994:No.4).

Extract from The Life Story of Mary Kendi*

I was born at Aklavik. Right at Pokiak Creek on March 4th, 1915. Everybody was going to go hunt for muskrat, during this month I was born. In those years there was nobody staying in the Delta. They just go there to hunt muskrat. My father spent his time at the Mouth of the Peel. There was variety of fish, a lot of fish and fur, many ducks, a variety of ducks. Not every one have to leave mouth of Peel to fish because there was a lot of fish. They fished there during the summer. ... I was born in Aklavik at Pokiak Creek, but I went back to Fort McPherson and Mouth of the Peel and grew up there.

Extract from “Life Story”, by Sarah Ann Gardlund*

It was in 1931 when my dad and mom came down to Aklavik in the summer time from the Mouth of the Peel River. My dad had a big boat, about thirty feet long - that's what they came down here [Aklavik] with. We lived there [Mouth of the Peel] for about thirty years before he moved. He used to trade there too. They had a good, big house, a big fish house, and a big stage with a tent on it (that's where he kept everything).

They used to fish all summer, making lots of dry fish for the winter. Then, in the fall, they put up fish on sticks and hung them up and kept them there till it was time to haul them into camp. Sometimes they had to stay away from the camp to do this so it was a lot of work. Sometimes there were about thirty families there at the camp called Mouth of Peel.

Extract from "Fort McPherson Loucheux Indians in the 1940s", by Roddy Peters

This is another story about Fort McPherson people - how they made their living in the early 1940s. People used to move out in the bush all summer long. Every family had fish camps in different places - wherever there was a good eddy for nets. Sometimes four or five families stayed together and fished all summer. The people would fish all summer and then make all kinds of dry fish. People got enough dry fish to last them all winter long. This went on until the next spring. All the fish were put ahead for the next winter. People stayed around Snare River - they called it the mouth of Snare River; that's Peel River. They used to call it Knute Lang's place. Some people used to fish there all summer and at Creek (that's Andrew Kunniize's place). People used to stay and fish all summer. Also, Mouth of the Peel was the main fishing place. Lots of people used to live around there on both sides of the river and do their fishing all summer. At the Peel cutoff (they called it), that was where the people made dry fish all summer. People lived there, too, all the way up the Peel. Here and there, people stayed, during the summer putting up dry fish and then, finally, in the fall at freeze-up - about the middle of November - people started getting loads of it to Fort McPherson. All their fish and everything was taken up before Christmas. Before the end of November, they took a load ahead because people were going to start moving during the winter looking for caribou. A few families moved up Rat River, through the Rat River mountains, for the winter. Some people moved through Stoney Creek (they called it) and the shot right into the Yukon. They moved through towards Big Leager. Then they moved wherever there were caribou. They moved there and killed lots of caribou and stayed there to work with the meat. Some people moved up the Peel, up Vittrekwa River. They moved ahead and southwest along the mountains. There were rivers here and there and they put up camp here and there. They kept moving wherever they killed caribou. They stayed there maybe two weeks or one week and then they kept moving. They did that all winter. During the time they were moving, sometimes they stayed in one place where they killed lots of caribou and it got close to Christmas, so the group of people would travel together. They had Christmas and made a feast. They played all kinds of games, and that was the way they celebrated Christmas. They did that for New Years, too.

References Cited


MacDonald, Robert; --; Journal between 1862-1902, as re-transcribed by the Yukon Archives, Whitehorse.

Robertson, Arthur; 1985 [1887]; Journey to the Far North, Summer 1887; The Beaver, summer issue.


Stephenson, Wendy; 2001; Itsiilaii Oozri Hah: The Bell With a Name; Pub. Eva & Hugh Colin, Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute & GNWT (Department of Municipal and Community Affairs).

* The stories from Roddy Peters and Sarah Ann Gardlund are part of the Committee for the Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE) files, which are housed at the Gwich’in Language Centre in Fort McPherson.
A. Name of the Site

Enter at least one name for this site. If you know more than one name, please put it next to the type of name that best describes it below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Information on use of name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present name(s)</td>
<td>Mouth of the Peel</td>
<td>This is the most common name now used to refer to the village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional name(s)</td>
<td>Nagwichoo tshik (translates as &quot;at the mouth of the big country river&quot;)</td>
<td>This name refers to the Mackenzie River, which the Peel River enters just below the village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original name</td>
<td>Nagwichoo tshik</td>
<td>This is the original Gwich'in name for this location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other historic name(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official name</td>
<td>Indian village</td>
<td>Mouth of the Peel is often marked as such on topographic maps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other names</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please include any information about the name i.e. what language it is in, the period when it was used...

B. Geographical Location of the Site.

*Where is the site? Please describe its location in as clearly as you can.* *(Draw a map, use words, or attach a map)*

Mouth of the Peel Village is located in the Mackenzie Delta near the confluence of the Peel and Mackenzie Rivers about 50 kilometres below Fort McPherson. It is located on the right (south) bank of the Peel River. Please refer to the map on page 107.

*Other types of information will also help to locate the site. If you can identify it using any of the geographic description tools below, please do so.*

Street address
N/A

Legal address
N/A

Latitude / Longitude
Latitude is 67° 41' 13"
Longitude is 134° 34' 6"
Datum is NAD 1983

Map showing the location of the fishing village at the Mouth of the Peel (reprinted from the children’s book *Iitsiilaii Oozri Hah: The Bell with a Name*, by Wendy Stephenson (2001) Illustration by John Allerton).
C. Description of the Site

Please clearly describe what the site looks like.

There are still many buildings standing at Mouth of the Peel, on the south side of the river (figures 1-7). They consist of 18 log cabins, raised and ground level warehouses, smoke houses and outhouses. The village located on a hill that overlooks the Peel River. Between the village and the river is a flat of willows that follows the riverbank. There is a path that leads from the river through the willows and up to the village. There is also a small pond on the south side of the village.

Please refer to [next page] for a detailed map of the village. The riverbank on the opposite side of the village has eroded and there are no remains of Chief Julius’ cabin. This area is not a part of the site nominated for NWT historic site designation.

Add further information to describe parts of the site (if appropriate).

N/A

What parts of the site must be preserved for it to keep its heritage value?

For example, particular features of a building, views and vistas, space configurations, how the site is used, materials the site is made of, stories that go with the site...

The buildings at Mouth of the Peel are definitely an important component of the site and highly contribute to its heritage value. They are tangible remains of the past and stand in the landscape as witnesses of the history that has unfolded there. Even though most of the structures at Mouth of the Peel are not used and some are partly collapsed, it would be important to stabilize or even restore the buildings to preserve them as long as possible.

The village at Mouth of the Peel is situated in a beautiful area, and the natural landscape around the site contributes to its heritage value. From the village, there is a beautiful view of the Peel River. There is also a small lake on the south side of the village, which is also a significant part of its setting. If possible, the general area around the village should be maintained as it is.

The oral history associated with Mouth of the Peel area is a very important part of its heritage value. Some of this history has been recorded, but there is much more information that could be collected from the elders about the history and life at the village. Many of the elders in Fort McPherson have lived near or at Mouth of the Peel during their life and have taken part in muskrat trapping and fishing activities in the area. They have a direct experience with this place, in addition to all the stories that were told to them by their parents and grandparents.

The GSCI had the village mapped in 1996 but since the buildings are gradually deteriorating it would be very important to do a good photographic and perhaps video survey of Mouth of the Peel to complement the oral information provided by the elders and have a good record about the place. Research could also be carried out at the PWNHC and the HBC archives to find historic references and photographs of Mouth of the Peel. Finally, archaeology would also contribute to document and preserve the history of the place.

Please estimate (roughly) the size of the site

The area where the buildings are located at the village is approximately 200 meters long (east-west direction) by 50 meters wide (north-south direction). The area nominated, however, is the area delimited by the Heritage Conservation Zone H09 in the Gwich’in Land Use Plan. Its size is approximately 98.6 hectares or 0.986 square kilometres. Please refer to the section on the boundaries of the site for more details.

Please attach photos of the site if you can.

How many photos have you included?

7

When were they taken? (rough date)

1996 and 2003

Who took them?

Mélanie Fafard, Ingrid Kritsch
Map of the village at Mouth of the Peel drawn by archaeologist Eric Damkjar in 1996.

1. Thomas Koe’s house
2. Thomas Koe’s fish house
4. Neil Colin’s old house
5. Neil Colin’s fish house
6. Neil Colin’s cache
7. Alfred Bonnetplume’s house
8. Alfred Bonnetplume’s warehouse
9. Abe and Effie Thomas’ house
10. Abe and Effie Thomas’ fish house
11. Abe and Effie Thomas’ outhouse
12. Peter Thompson’s house
13. Peter Thompson’s fish house
14. Peter Thompson’s warehouse
15. Jimmy Thompson’s warehouse
16. Jimmy Thompson’s outhouse
17. Jimmy Thompson’s house
18. Jimmy–Thompson’s fish house
Which of the following best describes the type of historic place you are nominating?

(Choose one or more)

- a  a ruin (archaeological remnant)
- b  a sacred site
- c  a burial or grave site
- d  a trail, river route, road route or pathway
- e  a site traditionally used for a specific purpose or activity
- f  a cultural landscape
- g  a special place in the natural landscape (intangible)
- h  a special feature in the natural landscape (tangible)
- i  a man-made feature in the natural landscape
- j  a landscape that is part natural, part man-made
- k  a building
- l  a building and its property
- m  a structure (that is not a building)
- n  a complex of buildings & structures (one property)
- o  a streetscape
- p  a historic district (streets and properties with buildings or structures)
- q  a man-made landscape that includes many features
- r  a place where early land occupation patterns can still be seen

How is this site used today?

Mouth of the Peel has been largely abandoned as a settlement and a fishing location. There is only one elder, Neil Colin, who still spends some time there every year. In 1996, the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute held one of its science camps at the village. There was also a wedding that was celebrated there in 1999, and many people traveled to Mouth of the Peel for this event. The Teet'ł Gwich'in are interested in expanding tourism activities within their area. The Mouth of the Peel Village offers good potential for this. The village could be a point of interest for tourists who embark on an outfitters tour with local residents.

Is this site currently under threat? If so, please describe the threat.

The Community Steering Committee expressed concerns about the fact that the structures at Mouth of the Peel Village are falling apart. They also mentioned that willows are overgrowing the area. It was suggested that some of the buildings could be restored. The Committee also emphasized the importance of documenting (through maps, photographs, video) the village and all its features so that there is a good record of the place and its history.

How would you describe the present condition of this place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>The village is still in relatively good condition at this point, but many of the buildings are deteriorating and will eventually collapse if nothing is done to prevent it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling Apart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being Destroyed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Neil Colin apparently used some of the logs from one of the structures at the village as firewood. There is therefore an urgent need to raise people's awareness about the importance of preserving the village.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who currently owns the site?
The Gwich’in Tribal Council owns surface title over lands in this area (parcel No. 12).

Are they aware and supportive of this nomination?
The GSCI is the cultural arm of the Gwich’in Tribal Council and acts on its behalf. It will request a letter of support from the Council and forward to the PWNHC as soon as possible.

Thank you for completing this nomination form.
Please tell us who you are, and where we can reach you.
Name   Ingrid Kritsch, Research Director
Organization  Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute
Mailing Address  Suite 202B, 4912-49 Street, Yellowknife, NT X1A 1P3
Telephone  (867) 669-9743
Fax    (867) 669-7733
E-Mail   Ingrid_Kritsch@learnnet.nt.ca
Comment  GSCI is applying on behalf of the Teet’ł Gwich’in Community Steering Committee

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Answers to the following questions are not required to nominate a Territorial historic site. However, it will help us to process your nomination more quickly if you can provide any of the following information.

1)  Do you have a personal attachment to this site?  
If so, please tell us about it.
All of the Teet’ł Gwich’in have a strong attachment for the village at Mouth of the Peel. This place and its history are among the most celebrated as part of their heritage. The importance of the village throughout the twentieth century has directly affected the life of many elders and their children. Although not everyone used the village as a camp, most have spent some time there throughout their life and have therefore a strong attachment for the place. The fact that the village - which is really a unique feature in the landscape - is still standing also contributes to maintain the close connection the Teet’ł Gwich’in feel for this place and its history.

2)  Can you provide information to precisely identify the boundaries of the site?
The boundaries of the site have already been determined as part of the Gwich’in land use planning process. The village at Mouth of the Peel was designated as a Heritage Conservation Zone in the Gwich’in Land Use Plan (2003). Information about the boundaries of the site was published in the Canada Gazette in 2003 (Vol. 137, No. 12, pp. 1474-75). They are described as follows (see also map, p. 14):

TRACTS OF LAND WITHDRAWN FROM DISPOSAL (HERITAGE CONSERVATION ZONE - H09)
In the Northwest Territories;
In the District of Mackenzie;
All that parcel of land more particularly described as follows, all geographic coordinates hereinafter referred to being North American Datum 1983, and all topographic features hereinafter referred to being according to:
Commencing at the point of intersection of the west bank of an unnamed creek with the west bank of an unnamed lake, at approximate latitude 67˚ 41’ 26” N and approximate longitude 134˚ 32’ 25” W;
thence southerly along said bank to its intersection with latitude 67˚ 41’ 15” N, at approximate longitude 134˚ 32’ 13” W;
thence southwesterly in a straight line to the intersection of latitude 67˚ 41’ 03” N with the west bank of an unnamed lake, at approximate longitude 134˚ 33’ 25” W;
thence westerly in a straight line to the intersection of latitude 67˚ 41’ 05” N with the east bank of Peel River, at approximate longitude 134˚ 35’ 05” W;
thence northwesterly and easterly along said bank to its intersection with the west bank of an unnamed creek, at approximate latitude 67˚ 42’ 28” N and approximate longitude 134˚ 32’ 28” W;
thence southerly along said bank to the point of commencement.
Said parcel containing 98.600 hectares, more or less.

Map showing the boundaries of the Mouth of the Peel Heritage Conservation Zone.
3) **Has this site already been recognized as an historic place by another government or agency? If so, by whom and as what type of site?**

Mouth of the Peel is designated as a Gwich’in Heritage Conservation Zone (H09) in the Gwich’in Land Use Plan. As a result, there is a range of development activities that are not permitted there. These include oil and gas exploration and development, mineral exploration and development requiring a permit; sand, gravel and rock extraction, transportation, waste disposal, communication, power development and commercial renewable resource activities (GLUP 2003:39).

4) **Is this site presently occupied by someone who is not the owner? Please name (if known).**

Neil Colin is the only person who still spends part of the year at Mouth of the Peel. The land in this area is owned communally by all the Gwich’in of the NWT. The Gwich’in Tribal Council is the land manager.

**Does the present occupant know the site has been nominated as a Territorial historic site?**

Yes. Neil Colin was a member of the Community Steering Committee who selected Mouth of the Peel for nomination as a NWT historic place.

5) **Has this site been maintained over the years by someone (who is not the owner or occupant)? Please name person and contact information (if known).**

No

**Does this caretaker know the site has been nominated as a Territorial historic site?**

N/A

6) **Do you know of a person, group or organization that has stories, papers or historic photographs of the site? If so, please tell us who they are, and how we can contact them.**

The GSCI and the Gwich’in Language Centre in Fort McPherson are two agencies that could have more documentation about the site. They have a large bank of interviews and videos that have been carried out with elders. Some additional information could also possibly be found in the COPE files and the HBC and PWNHC archives.

7) **Do you know where we can obtain additional information about the site? (Please list the names of any books, articles, tapes, videos, or similar materials.)**

None other than those in the references cited.

8) **Have parts of this historic place been removed and relocated elsewhere? If so, what parts are they and how can we find them?**

N/A

9) **Is this historic place a building or structure that has been moved to its present location from an earlier site?**

N/A

10) **Does your community support designation of this site?**

Yes. The Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute is nominating this site for designation on behalf of the Teet’ł Gwich’in. The village at Mouth of the Peel was selected by a Community Steering Committee composed of elders and younger individuals from Fort McPherson. The GSCI will request a formal letter of support from the Teet’ł Gwich’in Council and forward it to the PWNHC as soon as possible.

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Figure 1: Mouth of the Peel Village

Figure 2: Cabins at Mouth of the Peel Village
Figure 3: Cabin at Mouth of the Peel, with a washing machine in the fireweed.

Figure 4: Cabins at Mouth of the Peel Village (looking west)

Figure 5: Neil Colin in front of his cabin at Mouth of the Peel Village

Figure 6: Cabin at Mouth of the Peel Village (looking north)

Figure 7: Interior of a cabin at Mouth of the Peel Village
Appendix C: Nomination Nataiinlaii

NOMINATION FORM FOR TERRITORIAL HISTORIC SITES

Mandatory Information

What is the name of the site you are nominating?

NATAIINLAI or EIGHT MILES

Why are you nominating this site? Why is it important to the Northwest Territories?

Nataiinlaii is a place that illustrates an important part of the Teet’t Gwich’in way of life and tradition. It was the scene of several battles between the Teet’t Gwich’in and the Siglit during the early historic period. Over the years, the place developed into an important fishing village. Its existence is closely related to the establishment of Fort McPherson and the presence of the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) in the area. Today, the village is ‘home’ to many Teet’t Gwich’in elders who have established cabins and fish houses there and continue to live their traditional lifestyle. Nataiinlaii therefore remains a perfect and unique example of an enduring tradition, which represents an important aspect of aboriginal life in the Northwest Territories.

Does the site have a story? If so, what is it?

NATAIINLAI AS A BATTLE SITE

Nataiinlaii, which translates as ‘water flowing out from all directions’, refers to an area located eight miles (13 km) downriver from Fort McPherson. It includes the area around the ferry crossing on the Peel River where a small creek is located upriver from the River in 1839, he first met with the Teet’t Gwich’in at Ok chi’ (“Eddy rock”)*, one of their traditional fishing camps located near the mouth of Trail River in the Yukon Territory. Bell informed the Teet’t Gwich’in about the intention of the HBC to establish a trading post in the area, and their chief suggested that it be erected at Ok chi’. The HBC, however, also wanted to develop commercial relationships with the Siglit and other Gwich’in groups and decided to build the post lower on the Peel River. Peel River’s Post was established near the present site of Fort McPherson in 1840. It was moved to its current location just a few years later and was renamed in honour of Murdoch McPherson, chief trader for the HBC (Slobodin 1962; see also Kritsch et al. 2000: TGPN#150).

The establishment of Fort McPherson within the buffer area between the Teet’t Gwich’in and the Siglit brought more interactions between the two groups, as travelling to Fort McPherson in the summer was necessary for them to trade with the HBC. Relationships were often tense, and conflicts arose on different occasions. Seven major fights on the lower Peel River were reported by Europeans between 1840 and 1856 (Slobodin 1960:89). One of these, mentioned by Hooper, occurred in the summer of 1844 or 1845 “several miles below Fort McPherson” (Hooper 1853, as cited in Slobodin 1962:24). In fact, it seems that several battles between the two groups took place around Nataiinlaii:

At that time the people [Teet’t Gwich’in] didn’t get along with the Eskimos. The Eskimos used to travel up the river and around the Delta. The people used to live further up the river. They lived further up river and they used to always fight over Nataiinlaii (Sarah Simon, as cited in Kritsch et al. 2000: TGPN#260).

Some of these battles are well remembered as part of the Teet’t Gwich’in oral tradition. In the summer, the Teet’t Gwich’In used to camp up Nataiinlaii creek to avoid meeting with the Siglit who travelled south on the Peel River from the coast. They hunted for muskrats and also used a fish trap to get whitefish, jackfish, pike and loche from the creek (ibid.). The Siglit sometimes camped on a big sandbar located near the mouth of Nataiinlaii. Most stories - some of which some are presented in the next pages - relate how the Teet’t Gwich’In surprised and killed the Siglit at their camp, leaving only a few alive so they could tell their people about what happened. On some occasions, however, it was the Siglit who attacked the Teet’t Gwich’In:

The Eskimo and the Gwich’In fought there [at Nataiinlaii]. They [the Eskimo] walked around the foothills when it was dark and when they saw the light they attacked. They killed a lot of people at that time [Annie Vaneltsi, as cited in Kritsch et al. 2000: TGPN#260].

Traditionally, the Siglit inhabited villages located along the Arctic coast and they mostly relied on the sea for their subsistence. The Teet’t Gwich’in occupied the upper Peel River area, hunting in the Selwyn, Ogilvie and Richardson Mountains in the winter and fishing along the Peel River and its tributaries in the summer. When John Bell was sent by the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) to explore the Peel River in 1839, he first met with the Teet’t Gwich’in at Ok chi’ (“Eddy rock”)*, one of their traditional fishing camps located near the mouth of Trail River in the Yukon Territory.

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* Richard Slobodin (1962) recorded this historic meeting place as “Fish-Trap Head” which the elders from Fort McPherson believe is the same as Ok chi'.
In the early 1900s, William Husky built a cabin at the mouth of the creek, on the north side. When he cleared and levelled an area to erect the structure, he discovered arrowheads (Kritsch et al. 2000: TGPN#260). The last reported incident between the eastern Gwich’in and the Siglit took place in 1856, when the latter killed four Gwich’in individuals. Since then, however, relationships between the Teet’it Gwich’in the Siglit gradually improved and until the end of World War I both groups camped in Fort McPherson during the summer (Slobodin 1962:25). The Teet’it Gwich’in attribute the cessation of hostilities to the missionaries, although they arrived in the region some years after the last conflict. Krech suggested that the growing importance of the muskrat trade contributed to pacify relationships, as both Teet’it Gwich’in and Siglit moved to the Mackenzie Delta in the spring to take advantage of the abundance of muskrats. He also noted that the decimation of the Gwich’in population by epidemic diseases might have produced an imbalance of power, which contributed to put an end to the conflicts between the two groups (Krech 1979:110-111).

The Eneekaii (Siglit) and the Gwich’in Fighting at Nataiinlaii, By Eunice Mitchell *

I’m going to tell a story of long ago. This story was told to me by my grandmother. My grandmother died a long time ago. She told me many stories of what took place long ago. We thought more of spirituality, I only lived by that and never really thought about old time stories.

A long time ago when the Eneekaii (Siglit) and Gwich’in people fought each other in wars, it was said that it happened around Nataiinlaii. At that time the Eneekaii and the Gwich’in people didn’t get along with each other. The Eneekaii would go up the river towards Fort McPherson looking for the Gwich’in people. At that time it was said that our people stayed back through Nataiinlaii, because they expected the Eneekaii. I know Nataiinlaii very well.

The Fort McPherson people stayed at a place far back among the lakes, along Nataiinlaii. They expected the Eneekaii to come so they stayed at this place far out of reach of the Eneekaii. They hunted muskrats for eating and they also had lots of meat which was prepared during the winter. They had lots of good food to eat.

It was said that there was a wide sandbar at the mouth of Nataiinlaii in those days. The Gwich’in people would send one of the men down the creek, to the river to check if the Eneekaii were coming. At that time they were hunting for muskrats and after the muskrat hunt everyone was cooking muskrats.

Meanwhile they sent one man down the creek. He landed on the way, pulled his canoe up on to the shore and hid it away in the bushes. He sat and watched for a while and saw two Eneekaii men paddling up the creek. After they passed by he walked over the hill to the riverbank and looked out. From the hill looking over the river he could see that there were many round houses on the sandbar and that there was a large group of Eneekaii people there. They came to have war with the Gwich’in people.

After seeing this, he quickly walked back to the place where he had hidden his canoe. He quickly pulled his canoe down to the creek and paddled back to tell the people what he had seen. He paddled up the creek and landed at the Gwich’in camp.

At the Gwich’in camp there was man named Dzhiivah’inh’. In a previous war the Eneekaii killed his pregnant wife. After killing her they removed the baby. Holding the baby up, they shouted, “Dzhiivah’inh’, look at your baby!” All winter Dzhiivah’inh’ sat wrapped in a rabbit skin blanket grieving.

When the man returned to the camp the people were still cooking muskrats. As soon as the man arrived at the Gwich’in camp he went to Dzhiivah’inh’. Pointing an arrow at him, the man said, “Dzhiivah’inh’, those that took your wife have landed down below.” Dzhiivah’inh’ said, “are you going to put an arrowhead on the end of the arrow for me? You brought one with nothing on it.” The man put an arrowhead on the arrow and shot towards Dzhiivah’inh’. Dzhiivah’inh’ jumped out of the way. The man shot at him many times but Dzhiivah’inh’ continued to jump out of the way and he was never hit.

The people in the camp discovered what was happening and even though the muskrats were not fully cooked they quickly ate and started down the creek. All the men left and the women stayed behind. There was one more man left to be brought across and the boat floated away down the creek. They said that there was a medicine man there that kept the boat from floating away. He commanded the boat to land and it landed back on the shore and they brought the last man across.

The lookout man quickly paddled down as the other men walked along the creek in the bushes. The lookout man landed at the place that he had landed before and once more hid his boat in the bushes. He sat there in the bush, waiting. As the man paddled down he saw some bubbles on the water, he knew that this was from others paddling down ahead of him. He saw two men paddling up toward him. He sat and watched as they paddled by. As they passed he broke a small stick and put one stick down for each man that passed. By doing this he knew how many men passed. He sat there until all the men paddled by him. A short while later all the men came back down and passed by him again.

The Gwich’in men arrived a short distance from the Eneekaii camp and gathered there. On the shore there was a large tree with large branches that spread out all the way down the tree. A large Eneekaii man stood at one end of the tree making an arrow. As he worked on the arrow he looked around and watched for the Gwich’in people. While this was going on Dzhiivah’inh’ and another man were talking. The man said, “I will kill him.” Dzhiivah’inh’ said, “I will do it, leave him for me.” He crawled down along side the tree, shot the Eneekaii man and killed him.

Dzhiivah’inh’ then ran to the round houses ahead of the other men. He said, “I want to do this first, you wait for me.” He ran down and went through two of the houses before the others and killed everyone in these two houses. The rest of the Gwich’in men went through the camp and killed all the Eneekaii in the camp. As all this was happening one of the Eneekaii men was checking the fish net. A Gwich’in man ran towards him. As he ran towards the Eneekaii man he fell and turned to a big animal. He jumped onto the boat and tipped it. This may have been the man that killed Dzhiivah’inh’’s wife. Dzhiivah’inh’ said, “I want to kill him.” Dzhiivah’inh’ went into the water and shaved.

This story was recorded as part of the Teet’it Gwich’in Place Names Project in 2001.
him under the water. The Eneekaii man pleaded, “leave me alone, leave me alone!” He continued shoving him under the water eventually drowning him and the large Eneekaii man drifted down the river. They killed all the Eneekaii in the camp but there were still the two men left. These were the men that went up the creek to check for Gwich’in people earlier. As they paddled back down the creek they saw that everyone was killed in their camp and they began to cry. The Gwich’in men let them go so they could tell their people what had happened. They continued paddling down the river crying.

This is the story of what happened. Dzhivah’inh’ always fought with Eneekaii because they killed his wife. He was a very smart man. He killed many Eneekaii men with the help of other Gwich’in men.

In the early days the Eneekaii and Indians didn’t like each other. Today I have an Eneekaii son-in-law. My grandchildren are half Gwich’in and half Eneekaii. Today we know about God and everyone gets along with each other. A minister came into this town and taught the people and the people also taught the minister.

Another time everyone gathered in town and the Eneekaii also came. At that time there was almost a fight. One of the Eneekaii was a troublemaker, he was so bad that they gave him a name. They named him Navigan. I can remember some of these stories and some I can’t remember. Some of the other elders might remember these stories.

When the Eneekaii landed down below the Hudson Bay they set their tents below the bank on the sandbar. It was said that there was almost another war between the Gwich’in and the Eneekaii. The ministers came and taught our people about God and every-thing was peaceful and there were no more wars. Everyone got along good and now we work together.

This is a story from long ago, the last war between the Eneekaii and the Gwich’in. This happened at my place called Nataiinlaii. I have a place down from where my fore-fathers and the Eneekaii fought. Today many people stay at Nataiinlaii. I haven’t lived there for a long time but I will go back there in the future.

This is a story from long ago about Dzhivah’inh’. I don’t remember where they killed his wife but they said that he was a very smart man. There is a street in Fort McPherson named Dzhivah’inh’. This was named after him. This is the end of this story.

The War, By Lucy Vaneltsi*

Many longs years ago, even before my time I would say, about one hundred years back the Eskimos were bad friends with these Indians.

Every spring, right after break-up, thousands of Eskimos would paddle their kayaks from the area of Tuk all the way down to here (McPherson). They would start war. The Indians, of course, were always ready-well... they had all winter to decide anyways. Some families even tried to hide away in the bush but the Eskimos always found them. All these Indians lived back through this creek (now called Eight Mile Creek) and were all ready for these Eskimos. Everyday people would look out for any sign of them but no sign yet. Finally, two young boys decided to go hunting (besides they were running short of meat and fish to eat). As soon as they reached a river, they paddled curiously down towards the Peel River and forgot all about going hunting. Soon they found, on a big sandbar, was a big camp. They knew right away these were Eskimos. Quickly and quietly, the two boys rushed back to their Indian camp where they brought the news. The news spread quickly through the camp. Then all the people decided to make plans.

Late that night, while the Eskimos were all asleep, the Indians surrounded the large camp. A watchman was killed first - then later all the Eskimos were killed (everyone was killed but two women and one man). Back north they drifted again towards Aklavik watching and checking for more Eskimos. Finally someone sighted four kayaks coming down the same river with Eskimos joyfully singing songs. These Indians knew they were happy because they must have killed some Indians along the way. Suddenly, the Eskimos noticed no movement around their camp. So right there the Indians and Eskimos made a deal that they would never have another war.

Eskimo War, By Christie Thompson

A long time ago the people used to live along the Peel River. The Eskimo people used to come up from the coast and camp at Eight Mile Creek. They used to send two of their men up the river to check for people and they always sang when they paddled their canoe up. Once the Peel River people were moving up to Eight Mile Creek. It was the time in the summer when the sun was up all night. The people used to go to sleep only towards morning. It was the Eskimo children who saw something coming up the river around the point. They told their parents but these didn’t see anything and told the children not to be afraid. When they all went to sleep an army of Peel River Indians landed just below their camp. They were watching their camp from two tall trees and trying to find a way to attack the camp without giving them any warning. Then they saw an Eskimo man coming towards and he stopped close to them. He was killed before he could find out that his enemy was close. Then the Fort McPherson Indians attacked the camp, killing all the people. While there were still in the camp two men (Eskimo) came down the river and saw that the camp had been attacked. The Peel River Indians shouted to them that everyone was dead and to tell their people about it when they go back to their home.

Nataiinlaii as a Fishing Village

Nataiinlaii is the location where the first Teet’it Gwich’In family that spent most of the year around Fort McPherson established their camp. This was during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. During this period, several Teet’it Gwich’In families spent the spring trapping for marten in the upper Peel River area. They also made large moose skin boats that allowed them to travel downriver to the post in the summer. These families usually spent a day or two at Nataiinlaii on their way to Fort McPherson to celebrate and prepare for their arrival at the post.

By 1880s, the sojourn at “Fish-Trap head” (Ok chi’) was only

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* The stories from Lucy Vaneltsi and Christie Thompson are part of the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement (COPE) files, which are housed at the Gwich’in Language Centre in Fort McPherson.
for rendezvous. Two days' fair travel saw the boats "out of the mountains" to where the valley of the Peel broadens to almost fifteen miles. At "The Mouth of Flowing-Out," [Natainlai] 5 miles above the fort, the boats pulled in. Here during the last quarter of the century lived a family, the first Peel River Kutchin to spend most of the year on the lower Peel. Men of the party were sent ahead to the trading post in birchbark canoes to obtain "tea and gunpowder." There was a modest celebration upon their return that evening. A day or two later, after painting their boats and oars with red and blue mineral pigment, and donning their best clothing, the party proceeded to Fort McPherson [Slobodin 1962:27-29].

Archdeacon Robert MacDonald, an Anglican missionary who resided in Fort McPherson between 1868 and 1904, entered many references in his journal about a man called Vikeithithlya (see table, page 7). Apparently, Vikeithithlya fished and performed other chores for him between 1878 and 1895. He had a fish camp at Natainlai.

During the last decades of the nineteenth century, an increasing number of people established camps at Natainlai. Slobodin, for instance, mentioned that the Teet'l Gwich'In started to spend more time around Fort McPherson in the 1870s, and that by the end of the nineteenth century, "most Peel River families remained at or near Fort McPherson from three to five weeks in the summer" (1962:28, emphasis added). Fort McPherson became the main summer gathering location of the Teet'l Gwich'In. The activities that were generally carried out at Ok chi' (i.e., fishing, feasting, dancing and playing games) were transferred to the post, and trading and church activities were added to the summer schedule. MacDonald's journal contains several references to people moving between Fort McPherson and Natainlai in the 1890s (see table on page 8). Apparently, quite a few people used to camp there during those years.

In the first part of the twentieth century, the fishing village at Natainlai expanded towards Fort McPherson, as cabins were built along the river, just south of the ferry crossing. Rachel Stewart remembers that in the 1930s, many elders who were unable to travel on the land with their families lived there. They remained at Natainlai for most of the year, hunting, trapping and fishing in the area. The elders visited Fort McPherson over Christmas and Easter, the times when most people who were out on the land sojourned at the trading post (Interview for the Fort McPherson National Historic Site Project, June 2001). Robert Alexie remembers staying at Natainlai with his grandfather old Nell in the 1940s:

I remember back in '42 or '43, we stayed there one summer, while my father was out at Tshii Veenjik [Chi vee njik], at the head of Bell River with some miners. We stayed there about two or three weeks with my grandfather old Nell. I remember old Nell, my grandmother and old William Husky, they stayed there at their summer fish camp. Around the corner where Eight Mile is now, that ferry, that's where they had their fish camps they old peoples. Around the corner at the mouth they got their houses, log cabins. That's where they stayed all winter too [Kritsch et al. 2000: TGP#260].

The elders interviewed during the Teet'l Gwich'In Place Names Project 1996 mentioned the names of several peoples who stayed on both sides of Natainlai creek over the years. They either had cabins or tents set up in the area and some also had a warehouse in proximity. Old Nell built a ninkahn (sod mud house) at Natainlai in the early 1940s. Its location was recorded by the GSCI in 1996 (Kritsch et al. 2000: TGP#260). The area standing on the north bank of Natainlai creek was also identified as an archaeological site by Morrison in 1983 (site MTU-2). He recorded four cabin foundations and identified the place as a fish camp on the basis of the faunal evidence. More testing was carried out at this location in the summers of 2000 and 2002 (Fafard 2001, 2003). All the artefacts encountered were Euro-Canadian items.

Some of MacDonald's Journal Entries about Vikeithithlya

24/7/1878 Vikeithithlya [Vikeithithlya] brought 17 white fish, one sucker and 3 small inconnus. Vitrekwa brought me 60 herring from Vitrekwa; for which I paid 4 plags tobacco and 1 MB bill; he also brought me 48 herring from Vitshik. Rain continued failing this morning till 10 o'clock. Swelled a little of the ground about the house. There remains a good deal to be done.

16/9/1879 I paid Vikeithithlya for berries and firewood. I took on credit fr. the Fort an MB Blanket and 2 MB of beads, also 2 gal esqui oil.

9/11/1880 Vikeithithlya brought 10 rabbits and 7 white fish for which he was paid.

9/1/1882 I was a little better. Vikeithithlya and son cut firewood at the door for me.


24/6/1889 Equipped my hunter Edward Sittechinli. Bought seven moose skins from Lapiere's House Indians, also a few deer skins. A good many of the Indians took their departure for the mountains. A few ascended Peel River. Furnished my fishermen George Sintenithyi and Henry Vikeithithlya with nets: the former six the latter five. Paul working at mudding and laying a platform.

17/6/1890 Visits from Indians and esquimaux. Vikeithithlya brought a few fish. Gave medicine to esquimaux and others. Equipped Vikeithithlya for fishing; 4 nets 1 before, twine for one net. Gave him one pot tea and one lb tobacco. Windows of church being prepared since yesterday. Finished translating Book of Deuteronomy. George Sintenilhyin sent by his son William 15 inconnus.

4/12/1890 Walter Spooney came to the Fort. He is in camp at Nutteieli [sic], Vikeithithlya's fishing ground.

13/8/1895 Mr. Hodgson set out on an excursion among the mountains. Vikeithithlya brought 4 fresh fish. Gave him a net on credit 7 MB also tob. 2 pl. tea 2 dis. 2 matches. Still poorly. Have a bad cold. Was translating. George Sintenilhyin came with fish etc to the Fort. Mary Nitte came, also Rose. Cloudy still this evening.
MacDonald’s Journal Entries about Natainlai

15/11/1892 Only 5 in school. A few indians came from Nuttelie to hunt deer tomorrow. Mr. Stringer is preparing to accompany them. Sickness spreading among the indians gave out medicines. Visited the sick; some improving. Weather about the same as yesterday. Very little wind. Eliza Hope made bed ticking for me.

15/5/1893 Francis Sintolutshi and family, A. Khutsuu [Khutsuu] and wife, Spoooney & wife left for Nuttelie. Fort people away hunting. Removing cases & kegs to the store from loft. A fine warm day.


22/6/1900 Taught Bible Class in Takudh. Syllabary Class was taught by Simon Tintsik. A fine day, bright sunshine. A few families of indians arrived this afternoon from Nuttelie. Took a bag 4 x flour from the Fort to be returned. At Evg Prayers I gave an address on the Lord’s Supper. A few of the people around have caught a cold. The miners Fraser and Allck McLean went away this morning early. The river has risen greatly since yesterday.

25/5/1900 At ten this morning Mr. Whittaker with family embarked in boat to cross the mountains via Rat River. Gave out some articles of clothing to Julia and the children. Rachel took her daughter Oontsyoo home with her to Nuttelie.

11/7/1901 Annie does not improve. Was letter writing. Very warm today. Indians came from Nuttelie, men only. They have received secret information that the Esqx led by Kuglik meditate attacking them with fire arms.

9/11/1901 Visited the sick. Effie Thomson poorly. Emma Smith as usual. Julia returned from Nuttelie with another fox (red) and 7 loche. 20°- today. Daily Evg Prayers throughout this week. This evg gave an address again at Holy Communion, 30 rabbits from Yulkoyka. Visited the sick. Emma Smith and Effie Thomson. 14°- at 9 tonight. My daughter Effie’s birthday. Had in honor of it a plum cake for supper. May her heart and mind be opened to truly receive Xt as her saviour. Wood and ice hauled. Daily Evg Prayers conducted in Takudh. Opened a keg (rather a case) of sugar.

References Cited


Krech, Shepard, III; 1979; Interethnic Relations in the Lower Mackenzie River Region, Arctic Anthropology 16(2):102-122.


MacDonald, Robert; –; Journal between 1862-1902, as re-transcribed by the Yukon Archives, Whitehorse.


EIGHT MILES AS A CONTINUING TRADITION

Natainlai, which is most commonly referred to as Eight Miles nowadays, remains a very important location for the Teetå’it Gwich’in. The village continued to grow in size throughout the twentieth century, as Fort McPherson developed into a community. Cabins are now found on both sides of the river, but the main concentration is located on the eastern shore, south of the ferry crossing. The village includes several wooden cabins and fish houses that do not have electricity or running water. The great majority of the people who reside at Eight Miles are elders who have lived on the land for the better part of their life. For many of them, it is now difficult to travel up or down the river and stay out on the land on their own. Most do not have boats or snowmobiles and in some cases, age or health problems also represent an important obstacle. Eight Miles is a place where they can live out on the land and carry out many activities associated with this lifestyle, while being at a safe distance from town. Their place at Eight Miles is what they really consider ‘home’.

In recent years, younger people have also started to build camps at Eight Miles. The proximity of the village to Fort McPherson allows those who are engaged in the wage economy to spend some time out on the land despite their obligations. The village at Eight Miles is therefore a vibrant example of an enduring tradition, which it contributes to maintain.
A. Name of the Site

Enter at least one name for this site. If you know more than one name, please put it next to the type of name that best describes it below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Information on use of name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present name(s)</td>
<td>Eight Miles</td>
<td>The area around the ferry crossing was given this name because it is located eight miles upriver from Fort McPherson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional name(s)</td>
<td>Natainlaii</td>
<td>This place name refers to a creek which flows into the Peel River. The creek is located about one kilometre upriver from the ferry crossing. The general area around the creek is commonly referred to as Natainlaii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Original name</td>
<td>Natainlaii</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other historic name(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official name</td>
<td>Nitainlaii</td>
<td>On official maps, the wayside park at Eight Miles is referred to as ‘Nitainlaii Wayside Park’. The park does not include the fishing village and Natainlaii creek within its boundaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other names</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please include any information about the name i.e. what language it is in, the period when it was used...

B. Geographical Location of the Site.

Where is the site? Please describe its location in as clearly as you can.

(Draw a map, use words, or attach a map)

The site is located eight miles (13 km) upriver from Fort McPherson, on the east bank of the Peel River. It includes the area located on the south side of Natainlaii creek, and the area to the north, between the creek and the Peel River ferry crossing, where the main concentration of cabins is found. There are also cabins located on the north side of the ferry. It is not clear at this point if they should be included within the boundaries of the site.

Please refer to the map to see the general area of the site.

Other types of information will also help to locate the site. If you can identify it using any of the geographic description tools below, please do so.

Street address N/A
Legal address N/A
Latitude / Longitude Latitude is 67°19'59"N  Longitude is 134°51'48"N Datum: 1983
This is the location of the archaeological site MhTu-2
Latitude is 67°20'16"N  Longitude is 134°52'15"N Datum: 1983
This is the location of Ernest and Alice Vittrekwa's camp near the ferry crossing.
Other Method N/A

Map showing the location and the general area of the area nominated as a NWT historic site at Natainlaii or Eight Miles.
C. Description of the Site

Please clearly describe what the site looks like.

The site follows the edge of the riverbank and extends a few hundred meters inland. Part of the site is located around Natainlaa creek (Figure 1). Mary and William Teya have a fish camp located on the south side of Natainlaa creek (Figure 2). On the north side of the stream there is a clearing (Figure 3). Different people lived in this area over the years but there is no camp there at the present. This area is where Morrison recorded cabin foundations in the 1983 and archaeological testing was carried in 2000 and 2002. The outline of a ninkahn was located there in 1996. There is still a log warehouse standing east of the clearing (Figure 4). It belonged to old Jarvis Mitchell, who built it in 1945 (Kritsch et al. 2000: TGPN#260).

North of the clearing is a hill which extends towards the north (Figure 3). The main concentration of cabins is located on the other side of the hill (see Figure 5). The village starts at the riverbank and extends a few hundred meters inland (Figure 7). Dirt roads provide access to the camps. The buildings mostly include cabins and fish houses built with logs or planks (e.g., Figure 5). Woodpiles are found everywhere, as the village is not equipped with electricity. Several people from Fort McPherson also have their boats moored along the shore. People usually set nets in the Peel River during the summer and in the fall, under the ice (Figure 6).

Add further information to describe parts of the site (if appropriate).

N/A

What parts of the site must be preserved for it to keep its heritage value?

What is most important is that the village at Eight Miles continues to be used. This is so because the main heritage value of this place is that it did and still does illustrates an important part of the Teet’lt Gwich’in way of life.

In order for the village to retain its integrity, the quality of the environment around the site must be preserved, as people fish and snare rabbits in the area. The ferry crossing is located right beside Eight Miles village, but the quality of the water and the health of the fish populations are controlled so this has not been a problem so far.

The general area of the fishing village must be also maintained, even though the architectural components may change. This means that there should not be any development or other activity in the area that could prevent people from staying at Eight Miles and/or conducting their daily activities around there. Since the area is identified as a Gwich’in Heritage Conservation Zone in the Gwich’in Land Use Plan (GLUP), there is a range of development activities that are not permitted around Eight Miles. These include oil and gas exploration and development, mineral exploration and development requiring a permit; sand, gravel and rock extraction, transportation, waste disposal, communication, power development and commercial renewable resource activities (GLUP 2003:39).

The stories associated with Natainlaa are a very important part of the Teet’lt Gwich’in oral tradition. Some stories have already been recorded, but other or different versions of the stories concerning the battles that took place between the Teet’lt Gwich’in and the Siglit at Natainlaa could be recorded. More oral information could also be collected on the history of the fishing village and the people who lived there throughout the years.

Finally, it would be important to map the cabins and do a good photographic survey of the village at Eight Miles, in order to complement the oral information provided by the elders. Some research could also be carried out in the PWNHC and the HBC archives to find historic references and photographs about Natainlaa. This would contribute to documenting and preserving the history of the place.

Please estimate (roughly) the size of the site

The site measures approximately two km in length and one km in width.

Please attach photos of the site if you can.

How many photos have you included? 7

When were they taken? (rough date) 1984, 1996, 2000 and 2002

Who took them?

Mélanie Fafard, Ingrid Kritsch, GNWT Department of Transportation
Which of the following best describes the type of historic place you are nominating?

- a. a ruin (archaeological remnant)
- b. a sacred site
- c. a burial or grave site

Comment: Jacques Cinq-Mars recorded an early historic platform burial near the ferry crossing in the early 1970s. It was apparently destroyed during the construction of the Dempster Highway.

- d. a trail, river route, road route or pathway
- e. a site traditionally used for a specific purpose or activity
- f. a cultural landscape
- g. a special place in the natural landscape (intangible)
- h. a special feature in the natural landscape (tangible)
- i. a man-made feature in the natural landscape
- j. a landscape that is part natural, part man-made
- k. a building
- l. a building and its property
- m. a structure (that is not a building)
- n. a complex of buildings & structures (one property)
- o. a streetscape
- p. a historic district (streets and properties with buildings or structures)
- q. a man-made landscape that includes many features
- r. a place where early land occupation patterns can still be seen

Condition | Yes/No | Comments
--- | --- | ---
Healthy | yes | The fact that the village is still used contributes to maintain it and to preserve its history.
Whole | yes | The village has not been disturbed significantly over the years, even though the Dempster Highway was constructed nearby in the late 1970s.
Good | | |
Okay | | |
Poor | | |
Falling Apart | no | |
Being Destroyed | no | |
Who currently owns the site?
The Gwich’in Land Use Planning Board provided the following information about the ownership situation around Nataiinlai:

The Gwich’in Tribal Council (GTC) owns surface rights for the area located on the south side of Nataiinlai creek (land parcel No. 25).

The area located immediately on the north side of the creek is also Gwich’in lands. GTC owns surface rights in this area (land parcel No. 25).

The area north of Parcel No. 25 up to the ferry landing is Crown property.

The land at the ferry landing is managed by the GNWT. It is unclear at this point what the extent of this area is.

Are they aware and supportive of this nomination?

Once the GSCI has clearly determined the boundaries of the area the Teet’lt Gwich’in wish to nominate, it will work with GTC, GNWT and DIAND in order to identify the landowners who should be informed about the project. Letters of support will be requested and forwarded to the PWNHC as soon as possible.

Thank you for completing this nomination form.

Please tell us who you are, and where we can reach you.

Name          Ingrid Kritsch, Research Director
Organization  Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute
Mailing Address Suite 202B, 4912-49 Street,
                Yellowknife, NT X1A 1P3
Telephone       (867) 669-9743
Fax             (867) 669-7733
E-Mail          Ingrid_Kritsch@learnnet.nt.ca
Comment  The GSCI is applying on behalf of the Teet’lt Gwich’in Community Steering Committee

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Answers to the following questions are not required to nominate a Territorial historic site. However, it will help us to process your nomination more quickly if you can provide any of the following information.

1) Do you have a personal attachment to this site? If so, please tell us about it.

   The Teet’lt Gwich’in do have a strong attachment to Nataiinlai. This place is closely associated with the life of many of their ancestors and it allows them to walk in their footsteps and maintain their traditional way of life. For many of the elders, the fishing village is what they consider their real home. The Teet’lt Gwich’in also have a rich oral tradition that is associated with Nataiinlai. The stories of the battles that took place there between the Teet’lt Gwich’in and the Siglit are some of the most celebrated among their people.

2) Can you provide information to precisely identify the boundaries of the site?

   The exact boundaries of the site remain to be determined.

3) Has this site already been recognized as a historic place by another government or agency? If so, by whom and as what type of site?

   The Nataiinlai Territorial Park was established by the Government of the Northwest Territories in 1983. It contains a campground and a visitor information centre, which provides a glimpse of Gwich’in culture. The village at Eight Miles is not included within the boundaries of the park. The designation of the village as a NWT historic site would be a nice complement to the park and could provide tourists with a more genuine experience of Gwich’in culture and traditions.

   Nataiinlai is designated as a Gwich’in Heritage Conservation Zone (H10) in the Gwich’in Land Use Plan.

4) Is this site presently occupied by someone who is not the owner? Please name (if known).

   The site is presently occupied by the Teet’lt Gwich’in. It is not clear at this point how much of the site is located on Gwich’in lands.

   Does the present occupant know the site has been nominated as a Territorial Historic Site?

   Not all the people who have camps at Eight Miles know about this nomination. The site was selected by a Teet’lt Gwich’in Community Steering Committee during a meeting held by the GSCI in last December. The remainder of the community and the occupants of Eight Miles will be informed about the nomination of the site through a notice that will be printed in the Teet’lt Gwich’in monthly newsletter.

5) Has this site been maintained over the years by someone (who is not the owner or occupant)? Please name person and contact information (if known).

   Apparently, the Teet’lt Gwich’In Council has arranged with the man who is responsible for transportation at the ferry crossing to do some maintenance work for the elders at Eight Miles Village. This is how the water tanks that were installed at the village get refilled, garbage is removed from the site and roads are maintained. For more information on this topic, please contact William Koe, Community Coordinator in Fort McPherson, at Will_Koe@gov.nt territorials.ca or (867) 952-2205.

   Does this caretaker know the site has been nominated as a Territorial historic site?

   (yes / no / uncertain)  uncertain

6) Do you know of a person, group or organization that has stories, papers or historic photographs of the site? If so, please tell us who they are, and how we can contact them.

   The GSCI and the Gwich’in Language Centre in Fort McPherson are two agencies that could have more documentation about the site. They have a large bank of interviews and videos that have been carried out with elders. Some additional information could also possibly be found in the COPE files and the HBC and PWNHC archives.

7) Do you know where we can obtain additional information about the site?

   (Please list the names of any books, articles, tapes, videos, or similar materials.)

   Not beside the information contained in the references cited.
8) **Have parts of this historic place been removed and relocated elsewhere. If so, what parts are they and how can we find them?**

Some archaeological testing was carried out on both sides of Natainlaii creek in 2000 and 2002. Some artefacts and faunal remains were collected on the north side of the stream in 2000. This material is now housed at the PWNHC. Morrison did not collect any material when he tested the site in 1983.

9) **Is this historic place a building or structure that has been moved to its present location from an earlier site? If so, please tell us what you know about when it was moved and where it came from.**

N/A

10) **Does your community support designation of this site?**

   **yes** (yes/no/uncertain)

The Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute is nominating this site for designation on behalf of the Teetł Gwich’in. This site was selected by a Community Steering Committee composed of elders and younger individuals from Fort McPherson. The GSCI will request a formal letter of support from the Teetł Gwich’in Council and forward it to the PWNHC as soon as possible.
Figure 7: Aerial photo of the ferry crossing at Eight Miles. Nataɪnlái creek does not show on the photo.
**APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**Introduction**

The Dehcho First Nations has been contracted by the NWT Protected Areas Strategy Secretariat to gather important cultural information about the Edéhzhíe Candidate Protected Area. This work was approved by the Edéhzhíe Working Group, of which your community is a member, and is being coordinated by Crosscurrent Associates Ltd. of Hay River.

The area shown on the map is the Edéhzhíe Candidate Protected Area. As part of the process of land protection, it is important to identify and document the history and cultural strength of the land. You are being asked some questions regarding your community’s historical and cultural relationship with the land in this area.

Your answers to these questions will be recorded and will be used in a report that will be shared among the Edéhzhíe Working Group. However, before the report is shared with the Working Group, the information from your community will be reviewed and approved by your community to ensure it is not confidential or incomplete. Your information can only be used to support the protection of the Edéhzhíe area and not for any other purpose.

Are you willing to answer these questions as best you can? If so, please sign the form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Make sure each question is clearly asked and that the examples provided are read out. You can also ask other questions to jog the elder’s memory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you know any of the Dene names for places in the Edéhzhíe area that have a story attached to them? (This might include names associated with legends, medicine powers, historical events, big trout, special land use activities such as fish traps, camping areas, etc.) If so, could you please tell us the names, mark them on the map, and tell us the story that goes with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What other stories or legends have you heard about the Edéhzhíe area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you know of any spiritual sites in that area? If so, what is the story that goes with them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did people from your community, including your ancestors, ever live in the Edéhzhíe area? If so, who lived there? When and where would they have lived there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Did you or other people from your community travel into Edéhzhíe at certain times of the year? If so, who traveled there, what seasons of the year would they have traveled, where did they go, and what route would they have taken? (Mark all travel routes on the map) Also, why did they travel into Edéhzhíe? (Fishing, hunting, trapping, trading, spiritual reasons?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. How long have people been using the Edéhzhíe area for traditional purposes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What animal, bird, and fish species were harvested in the Edéhzhíe area? Are there any unusual animals, birds, or fish in that area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. There were different tribes or nations that traveled into the Edéhzhíe area, including the Slavey, Tłı̨chǫ, and possibly the Cree. Have you heard any stories about how these tribes got along together? Have you heard any stories about any wars that took place? Have you heard whether people traded fur or other goods among themselves? Have you heard whether men or women married into different tribes? What other stories have you heard about relationships among the different tribes / nations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you know of any old cabins, campsites, or meat caches in the area? If so, could you please mark them on the map.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Do you know of any birth sites or burial sites in the Edéhzhíe area? If so, please mark them on the map.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Why is the Edéhzhíe area so important to your community? What makes it special?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Name of Elder** ____________________________

__________________________________________

**Signature**

__________________________________________

**Date and Time of Interview**

__________________________________________

**Interviewer’s Name** ____________________________

__________________________________________
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NORTHWEST TERRITORIES RESOURCES

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