

JULY 2025

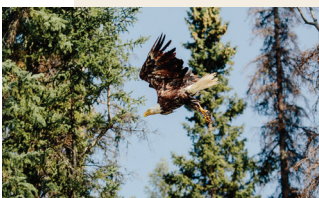
# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT DENE K'ÉH KUSĀN

## **What is Dene K'éh Kusān?**

Dene K'éh Kusān is a 4 million hectare Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) the Kaska Nation is working to establish in the heartland of their ancestral territory in British Columbia.

## **What's an IPCA, and how is it different than a park?**

IPCAs put Indigenous stewardship at the centre. They are primarily designed and managed by Indigenous people who have a long history of stewarding their ancestral lands in accordance with their own traditional laws. IPCAs focus on protecting and promoting Indigenous ways of life and relationships with the land, and allow for a much wider range of uses than parks.



## **Why do the Kaska want to protect Dene K'éh Kusān?**

Dene K'éh Kusān is a vast, intact landscape. It is home to important wildlife species and includes many of the areas that have supported the Kaska's traditional way of life for millennia. The Kaska want to protect their lands from the biodiversity losses being seen in other places, build resilience in the face of climate change, create a thriving economy, and safeguard the Kaska culture. Kaska understand that ensuring healthy lands will support healthy people and communities for generations to come.





## Who will be able to access Dene K'éh Kusān in the future?

The Kaska's vision for Dene K'éh Kusān is built around stewardship. This includes supporting and enhancing existing public access for recreation, fishing and hunting – world-class economic opportunities that welcome visitors from around the globe.

## What economic activities will be permitted in Dene K'éh Kusān?

The Kaska support economic activities in the Dene K'éh Kusān. In order to protect wildlife habitat, ecosystem functions, and the cultural activities and livelihoods they support, exploration, mining and oil and gas activity will not be permitted within Dene K'éh Kusān. Forest management for biodiversity protection, carbon and wildfire management will be an important part of the conservation economy in the Dene K'éh Kusān.



## Will there be an Economic Analysis?

Yes, a Socio-economic and Environmental Assessment for Kaska Ancestral Territory in BC is currently under-way. This analysis will look at the current economic and social picture in the area, as well as the benefits and impacts that can be expected once Dena K'éh Kusān is fully implemented.

## How will future management decisions be made in the Dene K'éh Kusān?

Kaska and the BC government are working in partnership to develop formal governance and management for DKK to enable them to respond to changing environmental conditions; strengthen Kaska culture; accommodate responsible public uses; support science and research; and pursue economic opportunities. This will be done with involvement from neighbouring nations who traditionally used the area.

## What about businesses that currently work in the area, such as guide outfitters?

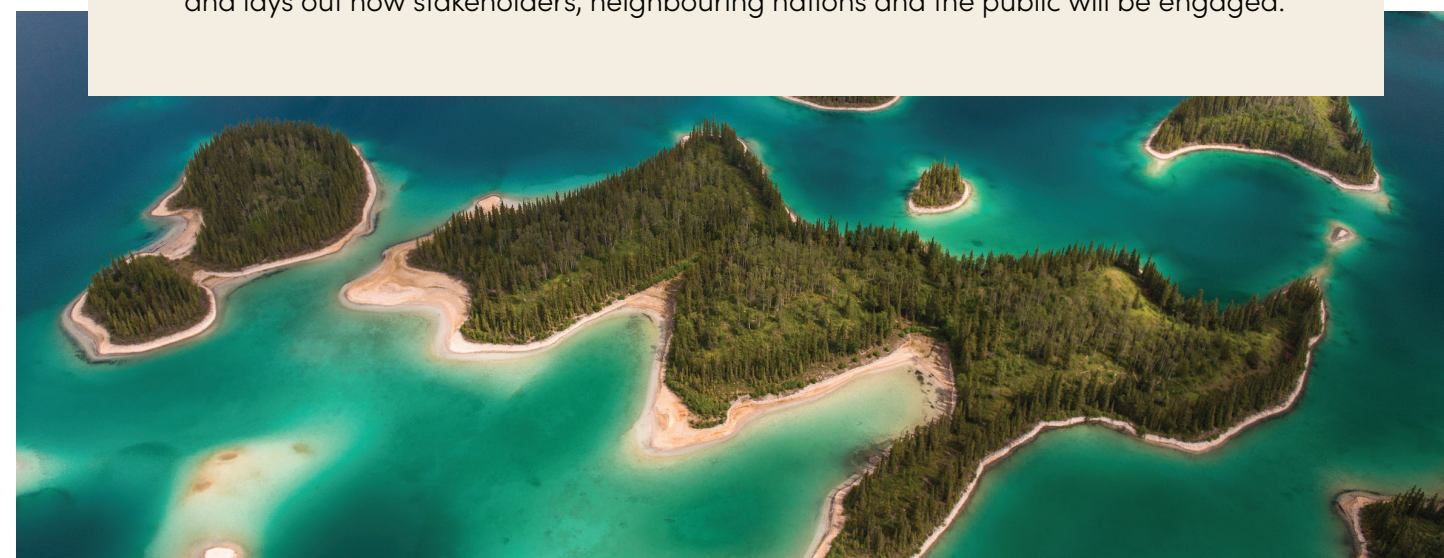
The Kaska continue to build strong relationships with existing guide outfitters in the Dene K'éh Kusān area, whose livelihood is tied to healthy ecosystems and wildlife. These tenures will continue into the future as part of the management of the IPCA.

## What does the process look like to establish Dene K'éh Kusān?

Kaska are currently working to formally establish Dena K'éh Kusān as an IPCA under Kaska Law, and with the BC government to determine how provincial legislative tools and policies can support long-term protection.

## What is the purpose of the process agreement?

The Process Agreement, signed by the BC government and the five Kaska First Nations, describes the path the two parties will walk together to recognize DKK in BC law, and update the land use plans in the rest of Kaska Ancestral Territory. It articulates the vision for Dene K'éh Kusān, describes the parties' shared objectives, and lays out how stakeholders, neighbouring nations and the public will be engaged.







### How is the current process different from previous land use planning?

Land use planning in BC in the 90s involved a roundtable approach that sought consensus among stakeholders. That process did not recognize the unique position of First Nations as rights and title holders. By contrast, the modern land use planning currently underway is centred on a government-to-government relationship between the Crown and First Nations, public stakeholders provide essential input to inform those discussions along the way.

### Will I have a seat at the table?

At the centre of the land use planning process is a government-to-government process involving the Kaska, which represents Kaska citizens, and the BC Government, which represents BC citizens. Stakeholders and members of the public are able to provide input to this process in a number of ways, including in-person meetings and online tools.

### How can my voice be part of the process?

Members of the public were recently invited to complete an engagement survey on the BC Government's website. As well, the Kaska and the Province are working with stakeholders on targeted engagement activities to receive information and understand various perspectives.

### What about the existing Land Use Plans that are already in place?

About 90 percent of Kaska Ancestral Territory in BC has already been subject to land use planning. The following plans are in place:

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| Fort Nelson LRMP (1997) <a href="#">🔗</a>           | Dease-Liard SRMP (2004 & 2012) <a href="#">🔗</a> |
| Mackenzie LRMP (2000) <a href="#">🔗</a>             | North Liard LUP (2016) <a href="#">🔗</a>         |
| Cassiar-Iskut-Stikine LRMP (2000) <a href="#">🔗</a> | Kwadacha Nation LUP (2017) <a href="#">🔗</a>     |

The current land use planning process seeks to update and tweak existing objectives and zones within the plans to ensure they reflect changes that have occurred since they were created – including new DRIPA (Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act) legislation, climate change and emergency preparedness. There is also an opportunity to ensure clarity by making the language of the different plans more consistent.



### When can we expect Dene K'éh Kusān to be created?

The Kaska and the BC government have committed to completing the land use planning process and Dena K'éh Kusān negotiations by June 2026, with the goal of making consensus recommendations to the provincial Cabinet and Kaska Leadership at that time. Necessary implementation measures will follow.