

JULY 2025

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - LAND USE PLANNING -



What is a BC Land Use Plan?

A British Columbia land use plan is a policy or guidance framework that outlines how lands and resources should be used and managed in a specific area addressing economic, environmental and socio-cultural objectives.

Land use plans are used by the public sector, private sector, First Nations and other resource managers to direct and/or guide land and resource management decisions.



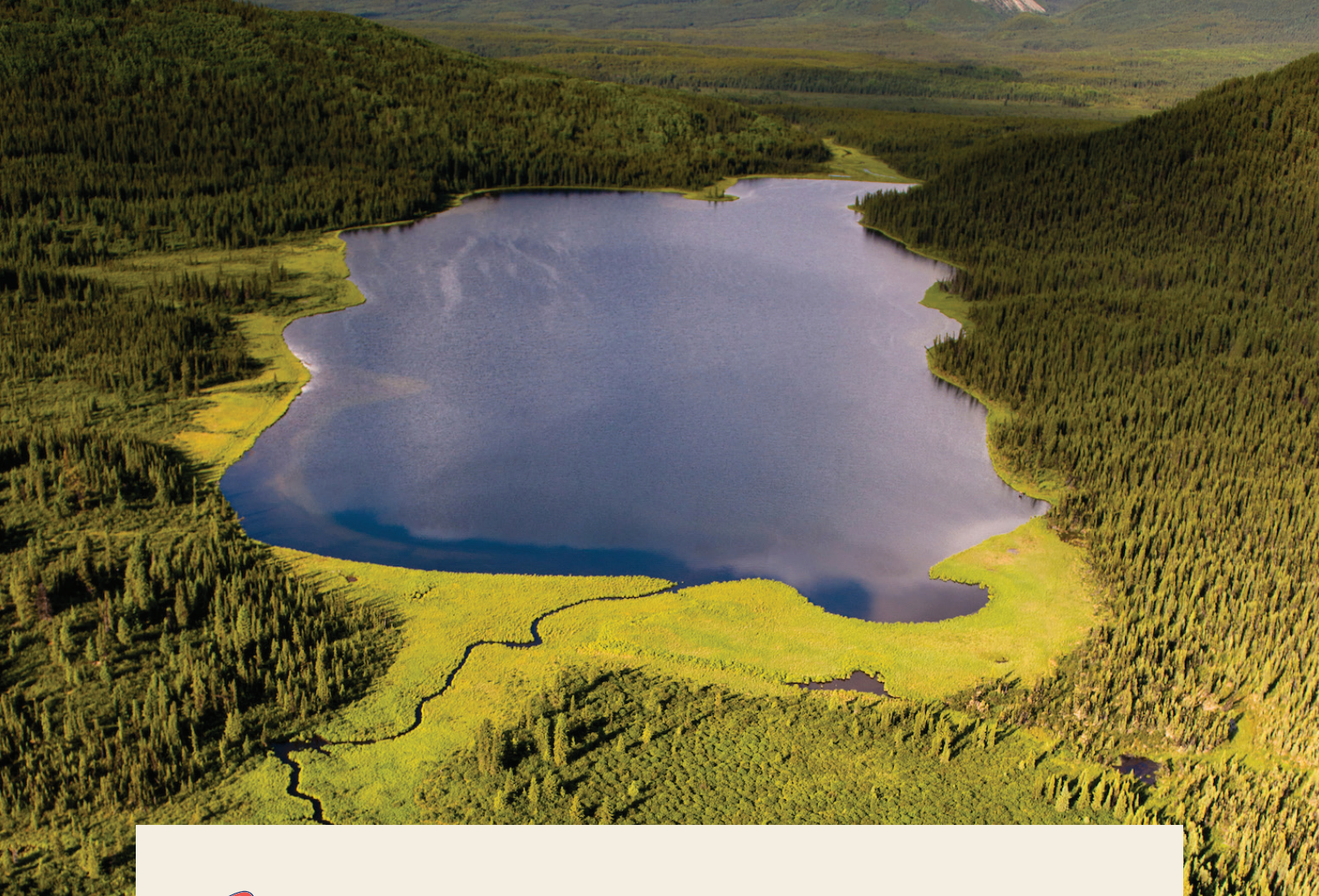
Why are Land Use Plans important?

Land use plans are important because they set direction to guide sustainable management and stewardship of lands in BC. The process includes zoning regulations, which dictate the type of activities that are permitted in specific areas.

Land use plans provide a tool for regulatory certainty regarding development, ensuring that socio-economic, cultural and environmental objectives are met.

Through the land use planning process, land use plans can help provincial and First Nation governments, stakeholders and communities reach consensus about land stewardship in a particular area.

Land use plans set the allowable land uses for the plan area and can set the strategic direction to guide sustainable resource stewardship for land use outcomes. If not captured in a legal document, it is still policy.



What is the history of Land Use Planning in BC Kaska ancestral territory?

Land use planning in British Columbia took place predominately in the 1990's and 2000's as a way to achieve consensus regarding land management particularly between major forest tenure holders, other industry tenure holders and environmental groups.

BC has 26 strategic land use plans covering 85% of the province, most of which were completed in the early 1990s and early 2000s. There is general agreement that these land use plans need to be updated for a number of reasons: First Nation rights, title and interests were not addressed in the process, the plans lack incorporation of Indigenous values and cumulative effects assessment and did not include climate change considerations.

Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMP) are regional plans, which outline objectives and strategies for resource management.

Two Land and Resource Management Plans were developed during this period in the Kaska ancestral territory in BC:

FORT NELSON LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LRMP)

First Nations did not participate in the Fort Nelson LRMP. The Fort Nelson LRMP was initiated in 1993 to provide direction for resource development while accommodating environmental values in the area. The plan was developed by a working group comprised of citizens and stakeholders (industry sectors and environmental groups). Approved by government in 1997, the plan area is 9,868,064 hectares, located in the Fort Nelson Natural Resource District and the Fort Nelson Timber Supply Area.

The working group recommended that a portion of the planning area be designated as the Muskwa Kechika Special Management Area, leading to the legal establishment of the Muskwa Kechika Management Area in 1997. BC Kaska negotiated a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with the province prior to the establishment of the Muskwa Kechika Management Area, setting out the relationship between the province and Kaska Dena with respect to the planning and management of lands in the LOU Area.



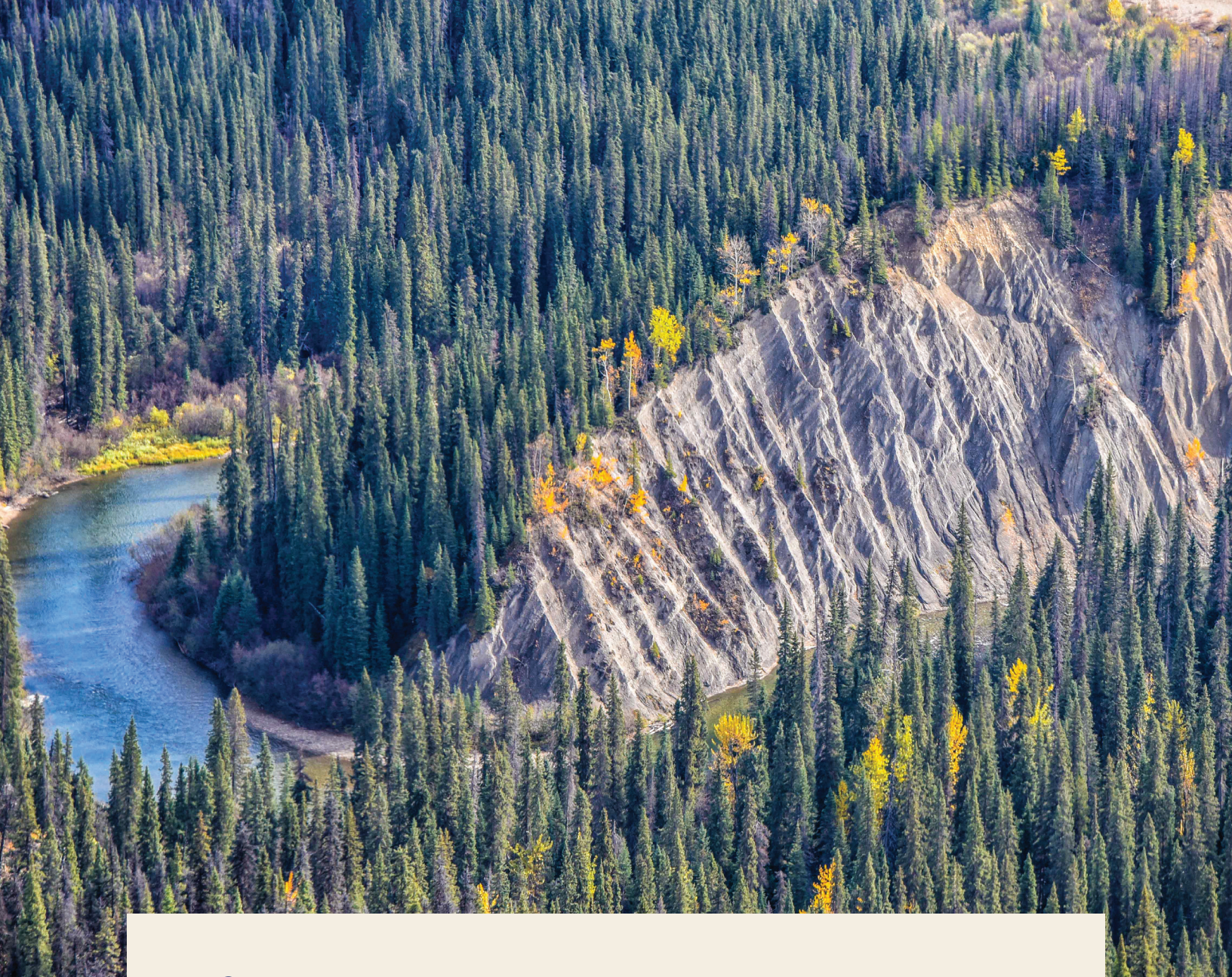
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MACKENZIE LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (LRMP)

The Mackenzie LRMP was approved in 2000 and covers an area of 6,410,665 hectares. Located in the Mackenzie Natural Resource District and Mackenzie Timber Supply Area, it provides land use objectives strategies in seven resource management zones: parks and protected areas, settlement/agriculture enhanced resource management, general resource management, special resource management, special resource management for wildlands and Muskwa-Kechika Management Area.

Kwadacha was represented at the land use planning table, which resulted in the selection of three new Protected Areas in the ancestral territory that were chosen by the community (Dune Za Keyih – 346,000 hectares, Findlay – Russel – 117,790 hectares and Kwadacha addition to the Kwadacha Park – 12,790 hectares). Also, eight Special Wildlife Resource Management Zones were created that do not allow forestry activities but do allow mining, and four Special Resource Management Zones that have restrictive constraints for any resource extraction activities.





What Land Use Plans do Kaska have?

Historically, First Nations managed their lands through their own laws and governance. In response to modern development pressures, Kaska Dena created land use plans to guide development and meet their Nations's needs now and into the future.

Capturing Kaska knowledge in the form of a land use plan allows Kaska Dena to communicate, as stewards of their lands, with others interested in their territory, while at the same time publicly presenting their cultural values and asserting jurisdiction. Sustainable Resource Management Plans (SRMP) are landscape-level plans, which legally bind objectives and strategies.

Kaska developed two land use plans independently and one land use plan in partnership with BC between 2004-2017.

THE DEASE-LIARD SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (SRMP) - 2012

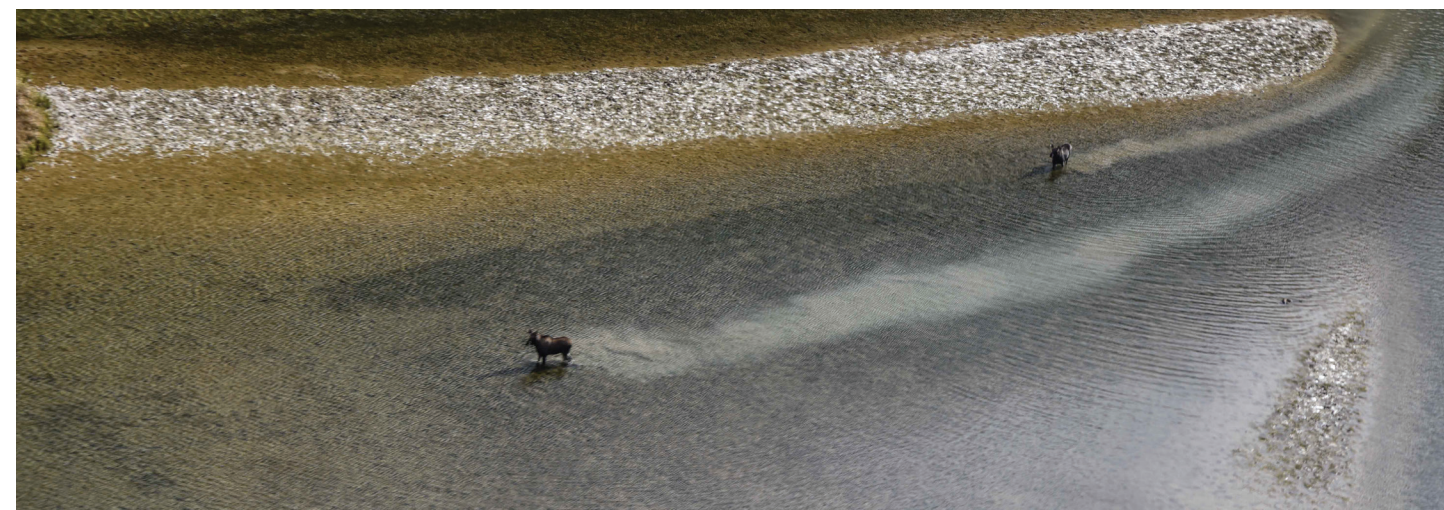
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The Dease Liard SRMP addresses the management of land and resources in the Dease and Liard River drainages in northern British Columbia. It has several legal objectives and policy objectives. There are two phases of the Dease Liard SRMP. The first phase was approved in 2004. It focused on timber, wildlife and biodiversity. The second phase was initiated in 2005. It adds chapters for minerals and aggregates; oil, gas and energy; access, tourism and recreation.

The direction from Phase 1 should be considered for all resource development. A final protected area, (Ne'āh), was also recommended, consistent with the Kaska Dena's interests. With these additions, management direction is set for the full spectrum of resource values in the Dease-Liard area. As in the first phase, the second phase of the Dease-Liard SRMP was developed to recognize the many unique and important environmental, social, cultural and economic values of the plan area and to manage these values in a sustainable manner. An important goal for the plan is to provide for a range of economic opportunities in the area while maintaining the integrity of natural resources.

Kaska Dena First Nations (Dease River First Nation and Daylu Dena Council) were partners in the development of the plan and all decisions were made by consensus. Both the Tahltan Central Council and Teslin Tlingit Council were invited to provide input in the planning process. The Tahltan provided input on the minerals and aggregates; oil, gas and energy; and tourism and recreation chapters. The Plan was approved in 2012.

Other Kaska SRMPs are policy documents and policy land use directions can be enforceable if used in a permit or legal decision.



THE NORTH LIARD SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (SRMP) – 2016

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The North Liard SRMP area covers approximately 1.6 million hectares within the Fort Nelson Timber Supply Area. The plan area is east of the Dease-Liard SRMP, north of the Muskwa Kechika Management Area, and east to the Kaska ancestral territory extent at Nelson Forks.

The Plan addresses the management of land and resources in the Dease and Liard River drainages in Northern British Columbia. The Plan Area has been divided into planning units to assist in developing specific management directions based on the social, cultural, environmental and resource values in each unit.

The North Liard SRMP was developed by the community of Lower Post with the assistance of the Dena Kayeh Institute.



THE KWADACHA NATION LAND USE PLAN – 2017

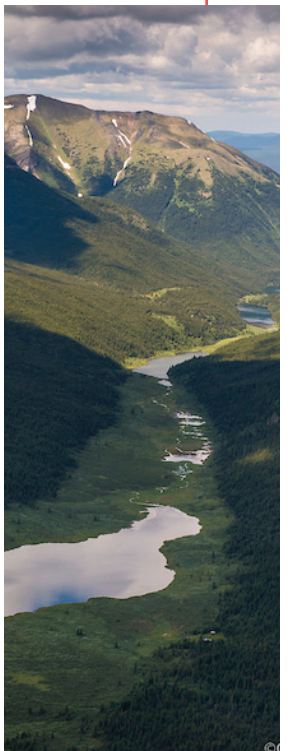
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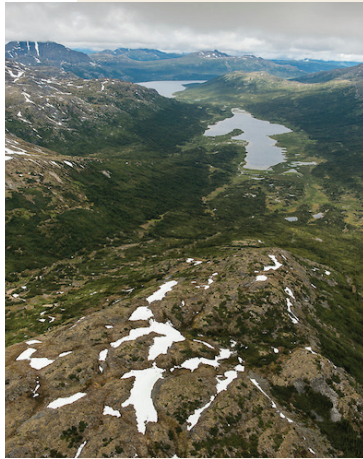
The Kwadacha Nation Land Use Plan area covers approximately 3.2 million hectares within the Kaska Dena Territory. It extends north-south from the confluence of the Kechika and Gataga Rivers to the confluence of the Akie River and McGraw Creek, and east-west from the Sikanni Chief Lake to the Headwaters of the Finlay River. There is an overlap with the traditional territory of the Takla First Nation in the southwest and a small overlap with the territory of the Tahltan Nation in the west.

The topography of the Kwadacha Management Area is mountainous area with steep canyon walls and terrain incised by lakes and major rivers into shallow valleys in highland/plain areas. Geography includes numerous features of glacial origin such as kettle lakes, drumlins, and esker formations. The rivers drain southwest to the Finlay River which flows into the Williston Lake Reservoir and into the Peace River then the Mackenzie River before finally emptying into the Arctic Ocean. The climate is continental (relatively dry and cold), with moderate snow depths.

Through interviews with community members, participants all agreed with the following statement to represent the overall approach to land use planning in this area: “We should use some of our traditional territory for its natural resources (such as timber harvesting, tourism, and mining) to better the economic conditions of our communities, as long as we protect some areas for our traditional uses.”

The Kwadacha Nation Land Use Plan was developed by the community of Kwadacha with assistance from the Dena Kayeh Institute.



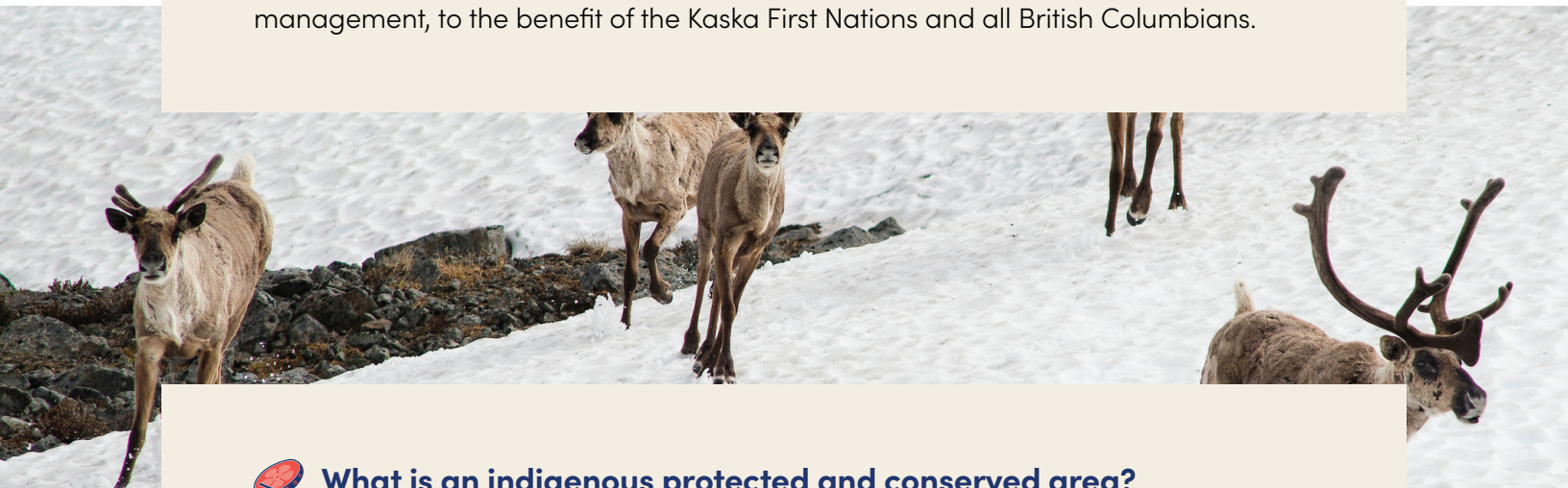


What is the future of modernized Land Use Plans in the Kaska ancestral territory in BC?

The Kaska First Nations and the Province have formed a partnership to undertake land use planning within the Kaska ancestral territory in British Columbia. The planning process will include the area known as Dene K'éh Kusān, Kaska's proposed Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA). The process embraces Indigenous values and knowledge systems, respects neighboring First Nations, and will engage communities, stakeholders, and the public.

This land use planning process seeks to update and tweak the existing 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.

The agreed upon collaborative process to engage in modernized land use planning, represents a significant opportunity to advance conservation, responsible land management, Indigenous reconciliation, and co-governance within British Columbia through engagement with local governments, stakeholders, and the public. It demonstrates a commitment to environmental stewardship, while addressing economic needs, preserving cultural heritage, and advancing collaborative land management, to the benefit of the Kaska First Nations and all British Columbians.



What is an indigenous protected and conserved area?

Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) are lands and waters where Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, Inuit) governments have the primary role in protecting and conserving ecosystems through Indigenous laws, governance and knowledge systems. IPCAs are modern expressions of the inherent rights, responsibilities and relationships to the lands and waters Indigenous Peoples have been exercising for millennia.

Where can I find the Land Use Plans that are in BC Kaska?

[Fort Nelson Land & Resource Management Plan](#) - Province of British Columbia

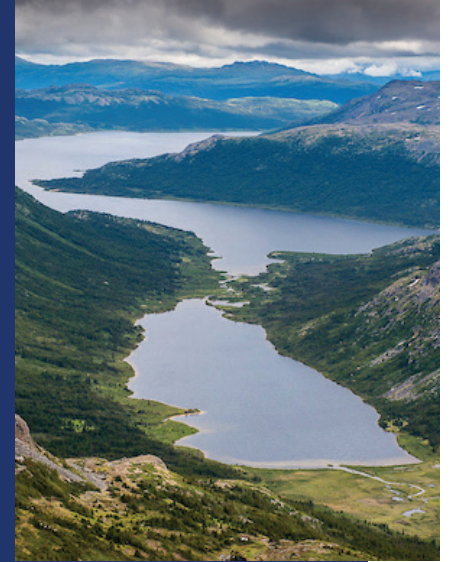
[Mackenzie Land & Resource Management Plan](#) - Province of British Columbia

[North Liard Sustainable Resource Management Plan](#)

[Dease Liard Sustainable Resource Management Plan\(s\)](#)

[Kwadacha Nation Land Use Plan 2017](#)

[BC/Kaska LUP Area with all existing plans](#)



Kaska-BC Land Use Planning Project Area, Featuring Dene K'éh Kusān (Proposed IPCA*):

~ LAND USE PLANS ~

