

OUR WAY: YUKON FIRST NATIONS HERITAGE LAW



"Anything and everything you do, the way you live is your heritage. I walk it, that's who I am."

Angie Joseph-Rear, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Elder

(about storytelling) In our way, we tell stories to



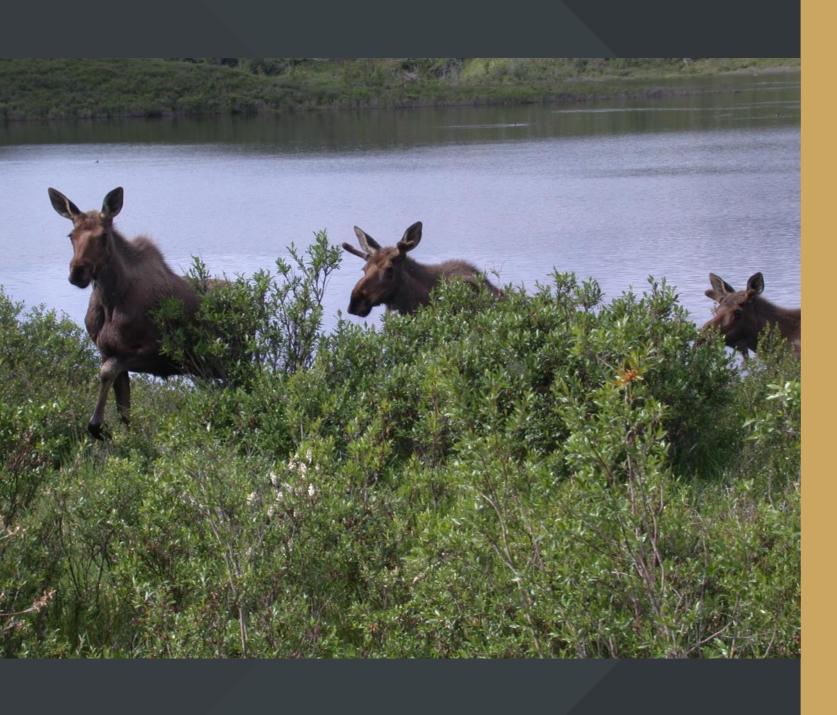


(about living "in a good way") Heritage is our respect, that's when Doolj [traditional law]

(about being part of the land) Heritage is our knowledge of and connection to the land. We are part of the land. When we are out there on that land, we are part of it, but we are not the be-all and end-all. Every rock, plant tree and animal are part of the land and the water is part of it. Everything has a spirit. Our connection to the land is a spiritual connection.

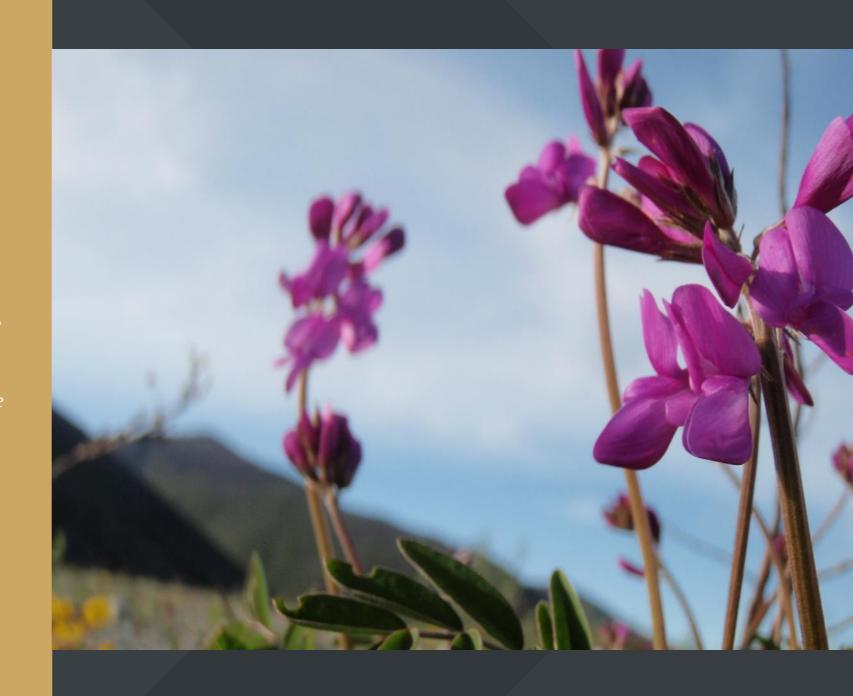
(about place and identity) The land is very much a part of our culture. People connect themselves to place. Place is very critical for us. In the past, we had no maps but there were lots of sacred areas — and landmarks that always provided for us. The land is who we are.





(about responsibility and survival) The land insures our survival. You have to look after the land, you have to look after the animals. The land is heritage because we use it, because it's everything, everything comes from the land. Keep your land clean, keep your animal, that's your friend. You look after them, they look after you. You look after your water, land, trees, you look after it, respect it. That's our spirituality.

(about relatedness and ownership) My don't own the land.

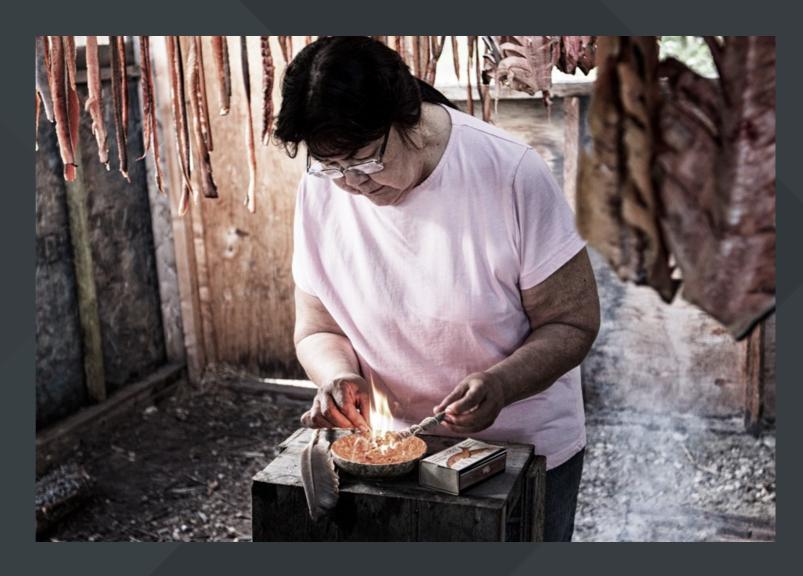




(about living heritage) Our culture is our inheritance. When we live our culture we are keeping it alive, we are sustaining it. You don't know traditional knowledge, you have to live it. You have to be a First Nations person to understand — the way we grow up, the way we hunt, the way we live on the land. The land is our university and our church. I went to school out on the land. That's my university.

THEY WERE TOLD WHAT TO DO BY TSÀ' WËZHÈ. - PERCY HENRY

The territory of the Athapaskans is created, understood, described, explained and owned by these stories of travel and interaction. The stories instil and reinforce a sense of cultural identity and morality, they remind the participants of their responsibility in maintaining the balance of the world and, through their detailed ecological knowledge, the power to envision and control their future. The stories are also potent statements of ownership and the guides to proper behavior, instructions in the exercise of land skills to build a desired future and the cultural foundation of the Athapaskan civilization.



TOGETHER TODAY FOR OUR CHILDREN TOMORROW AND THE UMBRELLA FINAL AGREEMENT



"WITH A RESPECT FOR YUKON INDIAN VALUES AND CULTURE"

OUR WAY

Where do you begin telling someone that their world is not the only one? - Lee Maracle



THE YUKON FIRST NATIONS HERITAGE FRAMEWORK









OUR LAND

Keep your land clean, keep your animal. That's your friend. You look after them, they look after you. You look after your water, land, trees, you look after it. Respect it. That's our spirituality. — Elder Percy Henry

OUR RELATIONS

The measure of wealth is perceived explicitly to be the strength of the social relationships between people.

That is the currency of the society because without that bond and without that collective commitment to the well-being of all, everybody can die.

- Wade Davis

OUR LAWS

The interchange between humans and environment is based on an elaborate code of respect and morality, without which survival would be jeopardized. The intimacy of their relationship to nature is far beyond our experience. This close daily interaction provides a theme upon which their cultural lives converge. – Richard Nelson

OUR HERITAGE

Our culture is our inheritance. When we live our culture we are keeping it alive, we are sustaining it. You don't know traditional knowledge, you have to live it. -- YFN Elders

YUKON FIRST NATIONS MODEL HERITAGE LEGISLATION

Living heritage is about relationships and responsibilities that bring people together to sustain a common future

Indigenous Law still exists and forms the foundation

"Law is for the Lawless": the Heritage Act is, in many ways, a bridging tool for co-governance

Community engagement and guidance were key



OUR LAWS: GOING THROUGH THE WORLD IN A GOOD WAY



RESPECT

To demonstrate respect one must carefully control one's own actions and most importantly determine how to behave in a manner that will be perceived by others as an authentic expression of respect in all of those domains. That is the way in which the tapestry of respect is built.

- Stephen Langdor



HUMILITY

"We're not even animals yet.'

- Percy Henry



RECIPROCITY

"If people do not fish for King Salmon, the King Salmon spirit will be offended, and it will not return to the river."

- Jim Davis



RESPONSIVENESS

The basic principles enunciated in the mythic charter is the responsibility of the person to continuously return to the teachings for guidance and application to current conditions.

- Stephen Langdor

THE YUKON FIRST NATIONS HERITAGE ACT

An Act that:

- recognizes and affirms the inherent
 right of the First Nation to manage its
 heritage and culture.
- recognizes and affirms the First Nation's
 Self-Government Agreement Section 13
 powers over heritage and culture;
- recognizes the uniqueness of Yukon
 First Nations concepts of heritage; and
- fulfils the Final Agreement Chapter 13
 provisions to respect and foster the
 culture, history and values of Yukon
 First Nations People.





HERITAGE DEFINED

Yukon First Nations Heritage refers to the way of life and worldview inherited from previous generations and is evident in both tangible and intangible elements of Yukon First Nations heritage. Our heritage lives in the complex and dynamic relationships of interdependence between land, spirit and living things, transmitted from generation to generation, interweaving land, places, names, stories, families and events. Heritage resources include everything of heritage value - whether found in or on the land or water, whether animal or human or any other product of the land, that at any time was or is related to the culture and history of Yukon First Nations People.



TANGIBLE HERITAGE

Tangible heritage refers to those heritage values that are physical in form and allow us to live our heritage.

INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

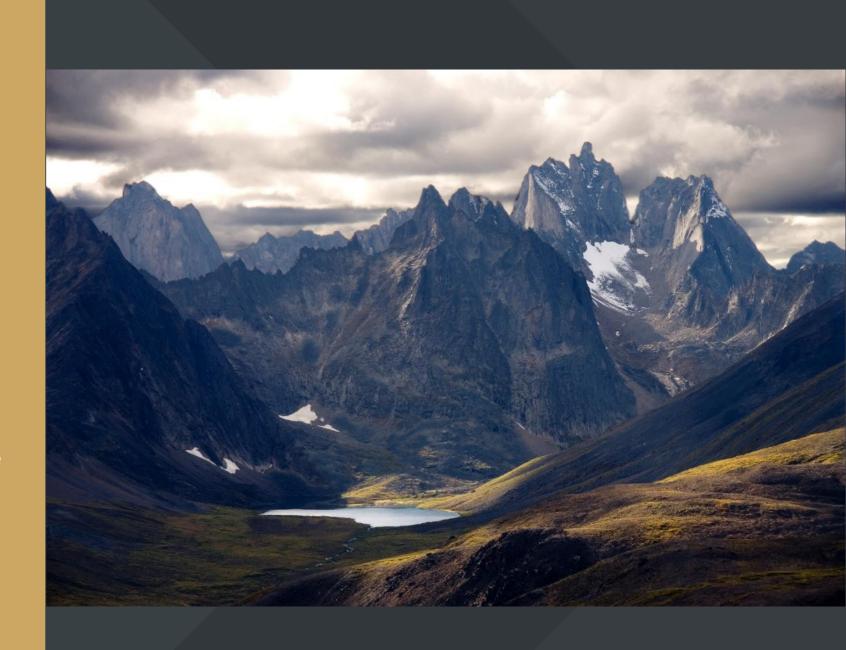
Intangible heritage refers to those values that are central to our cultural identity and that are impacted by land disconnection or dispossession.

STEWARDSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

Our law requires us to respect and honour our heritage, practices and protocols, including respect for the land and acceptance of our stewardship responsibilities towards it.

Our law is founded on the principles of respect, humility, and balance that beget a code of conduct based on reciprocity; a concept of moderation and self-control, of taking and giving back.

These principles guide the interplay of values like gratitude, adaptability, openness, responsibility, honour, truthfulness, and self-reliance that are reflected in expected behaviors that people demonstrate between each other and the land.





CULTURAL IDENTITY

Our cultural identity derives from the land.

Upholding our responsibilities to the land is central to our identity. This reciprocal relationship has been sustained by our ancestors. It is our responsibility and legacy to pass this heritage on to our children and grandchildren.

Any activities that may impact our lands and/or our connections and responsibilities to our lands or that have the potential to alienate us from our lands, physically, culturally, or spiritually, also have the potential to impact our cultural identity and our human rights as indigenous people.



NEXT STEPS

Regulations

Education

Heritage Stewardship Guide

Learning as we go

ENACTING HERITAGE LAW

TR'ONDËK HWËCH'IN AUGUST 28, 2016

VUNTUT GWITCHIN GOVERNMENT OCTOBER 19, 2016

FIRST NATION OF NA-CHO NYAK DUN 2016





HERITAGE AND
MINERAL
DEVELOPMENT

RECONCILING OUR LIVING
HERITAGE AND OUR
STEWARDSHIP
RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE
LAND WITH MINERAL
DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES
UPHOLDING THE
PRINCIPLES AND VALUES
EMBEDDED IN "OUR WAY".

"COSMOLOGY IS A LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN." - Wade Davis

APPROACHES TO LAND USE BASED ON "OUR WAY":

- Built upon the vision captured in Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow.
- Respects the values and culture of "Yukon Indian People"
- Focuses on how we conduct ourselves and make decisions about a shared future
- Emphasizes taking responsibility and being accountable for our decisions
- Centres on reciprocity, on giving back
- Respects treaty and aboriginal rights and considers impacts on cultural identity
- Leaves a legacy for future generations



YFN-YG COLLABORATIVE HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

There is the First Nations' understanding of a dynamic living heritage – rooted in the land, in the places and names and stories and families, in traditional ways of knowing, speaking, and experiencing the spiritual. Heritage is what we live; it is our understanding of our relatedness to our environment and each other; and it involves respecting the traditions that have helped us survive.

The Western science-based practise of heritage resource management, sometimes called "cultural resource management," has been focused on a fixed past that is separate and distinct from present day reality. Heritage objects serve as a memorial of an event or period. Disciplinary practices, conservation methodologies, determinations of relatedness, and so on are governed by the western scientific tradition.



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