



ST'ÁT'IMC LAND & RESOURCE AUTHORITY

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BACKGROUND

Nxekmenlhkálha Iti Tmícwa, Part I: The St'át'imc “Preliminary Draft Land Use Plan”

The Nxekmenlhkálha Iti Tmícwa, Part I (St'át'imc Preliminary Draft Land Use Plan) has been developed by the St'át'imc Land and Resource Authority (SLRA), using information handed down through the generations since time immemorial. The SLRA is made up of representatives appointed by the St'át'imc communities and is accountable to the St'át'imc Chiefs Council, the St'át'imc and future generations.

The methodology used by the SLRA in the development of the preliminary draft land use plan was designed to give life to the St'át'imc Vision and Principles through a St'át'imc ecosystem-based planning process. *In particular, focusing first on what to leave behind on the land to sustain ecology and culture, rather than on resource extraction and short-term economic benefit.* A map-based planning process was used, which integrated scientific and technical knowledge with St'át'imc knowledge to produce a set of St'át'imc land designations.

These St'át'imc land designations include an interlocking set of “protection areas” in which protection of the land and water for the purpose(s) identified by the designation is given top priority. This protection areas network is grounded first and foremost on St'át'imc knowledge, but integrates conservation biology principles (e.g., focal species and coarse filter ecosystem representation analysis).

The draft St'át'imc Land Designations are:

- **Water Protection Areas** – to ensure water quality, quantity and timing of flow to St'át'imc communities, domestic use watersheds and 50 metre no-logging buffers on all streams and water bodies are included in Water Protection Areas.
- **Cultural Protection Area** – all of St'át'imc territory is designated as a Cultural Protection Area, in which St'át'imc written authorization is required before land or resources are allocated, extracted or used.
- **Grizzly Protection Areas** – to ensure that grizzlies' food, shelter and security (safety) needs are met.
- **Deer Protection Areas** – to ensure that migration corridors and wintering and fawning areas are protected.

- **Fish Protection Areas** – to protect areas of high intensity St'át'imc use within one km of fish streams and to protect fish habitat through buffers along streams.
- **General Habitat Protection** – to protect remaining old growth forests, ecosystems that are naturally rare, and remnants of heavily impacted ecosystems in St'át'imc territory; by maintaining habitat we seek to meet the needs (e.g., food and medicines) for all species and present and future generations of humankind.
- **Environmentally Sensitive Areas** – to ensure that resource development and roadbuilding don't occur on steep slopes or in areas where soils are poor/forests will have problems regenerating.
- **Community Economic Development** – low impact St'át'imc economic activities (harvesting of traditional foods, low impact eco-tourism) are allowed in specified land designations; the location of other community economic development areas is the subject of an ongoing community process.
- **Restoration Areas** – areas of St'át'imc territory that have been damaged by past human activities and require restoration, including the effects of hydro dams.

The Supreme Court of Canada has affirmed that Aboriginal Title continues to exist in British Columbia, that Aboriginal Title is an inherent right to the land itself, and includes the right to choose the uses to which the land is put. Development of the Nxeckmenlhkálha Iti Tmícwa is an exercise of St'át'imc Title to protect cultural activity for future generations.

At a notification forum on July 30, 2004 the St'át'imc Chiefs Council advised all government agencies and resource users in St'át'imc territory that tenures, activities and plans, including the provincial Lillooet Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), which do not comply with the Nxeckmenlhkálha Iti Tmícwa will result in infringements of St'át'imc Title and Rights.

The BC courts have held that the Crown, and in some circumstances third party tenure holders have a duty to consult and accommodate Aboriginal Peoples when potential infringements of Aboriginal Title and/or Rights arise. A government-to-government protocol has recently been signed between the provincial Crown and the St'át'imc to, among other things, discuss reconciliation of the Nxeckmenlhkálha Iti Tmícwa and the provincial Lillooet LRMP. However, this process has just begun; consultation and accommodation on the Lillooet LRMP has not yet occurred.

For more information about the St'át'imc Chiefs Council, St'át'imc Land and Resource Authority or to download a copy of the Nxeckmenlhkálha Iti Tmícwa visit:

www.statimc.net