



# Northwest Transmission Line Project: Skiikm Lax Ha Traditional Use and Knowledge Report



**NORTHWEST TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT**  
**Skii Km Lax Ha Traditional Knowledge and Use Study**

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# **Executive Summary**

## Executive Summary

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The purpose of this report is to inventory and describe Skii km Lax Ha Traditional Use (TU) and Traditional Knowledge (TK) related to the proposed Northwest Transmission Line (NTL) Project (the Project). Skii km Lax Ha TU/TK was collected between February and November 2007. Work was then suspended when, on November 26, 2007, NovaGold Resources Inc. and Teck Cominco Limited announced a decision to suspend construction of the Galore Creek mine project. As a result of the loss of this main customer, the Province and British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC) suspended the Project for a year. In November 2008, the Province provided a mandate and additional funding to complete the Environmental Assessment. Work then recommenced and discussions about capacity funding and further data were collected between January and September 2009.

A mixed methods approach was used to collect TU/TK information from April to September 2009, including desk-based archival research, direct discussions, and two formal interview sessions and mapping sessions. The key findings are summarized in the report, which indicates that the Project study area was, and to a large extent continues to be, well-travelled and frequently used by the Skii km Lax Ha, whose traditional territories intersect the Project from Cranberry River to Ningunsaw Pass (Laxyiip). Skii km Lax Ha traditional activities involve hunting, trapping, and fishing; important areas include historic and berry/plant/mushroom harvesting sites. The members of the Skii km Lax Ha Nation place a high value on their history, as it relates to their understanding of land tenureship and pursuit of their land claim. Their matrilineal lineage and connection to the Gyetem Galdo lineage is also highly valued.

**Disclaimer:** This TU/TK report represents Rescan's understanding of the views expressed and information provided by the Skii km Lax Ha on the subject matter discussed.

# **Acknowledgements**

# Acknowledgements

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Kathy Scott (M.A.) and Kay Farquharson (B.A) of Rescan Environmental Services Ltd. (Rescan) summarized and organized the information provided by Skii km Lax Ha, who have significant archival sources and gave logistical and conceptual assistance. Skii km Lax Ha reviewed and provided feedback on several drafts of this report. Ken Favrholt also provided training and assistance in the collection of archival documentation.

Paul Mitchell-Banks (Ph.D.) and Rolf Schmitt (M.Sc.) of Rescan reviewed the report, and provided project coordination and logistical support. Rose Spicker (B.Sc., Dip. Tech.) and Luke Powell (M.Sc., Dip. Tech.) of Rescan produced the maps. Lorraine Gevatkoff of Rescan was responsible for report production.

Special thanks to the Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders who shared their experiences and expertise of the region and their passionate desire to record their history. Rescan appreciates your patience and dedication to explaining your culture and connection to the land.

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**9^æSck aXFV\_eS` V 3Tbreviations**

# Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

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<b>Adaawk</b>	Oral history
<b>BC EAO</b>	British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office
<b>BCH ARN</b>	BC Hydro Aboriginal Relations and Negotiation Department
<b>BCGNIS</b>	British Columbia Geographical Names Information System
<b>BCTC</b>	British Columbia Transmission Corporation
<b>EAC</b>	Environmental Assessment Certificate
<b>CEA Agency</b>	Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
<b>CCFA</b>	Comprehensive Capacity Funding Agreement
<b>NTL</b>	Proposed Northwest Transmission Line Project
<b>TK</b>	Traditional Knowledge
<b>TU</b>	Traditional Use

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# **1. Introduction**

# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 OVERVIEW

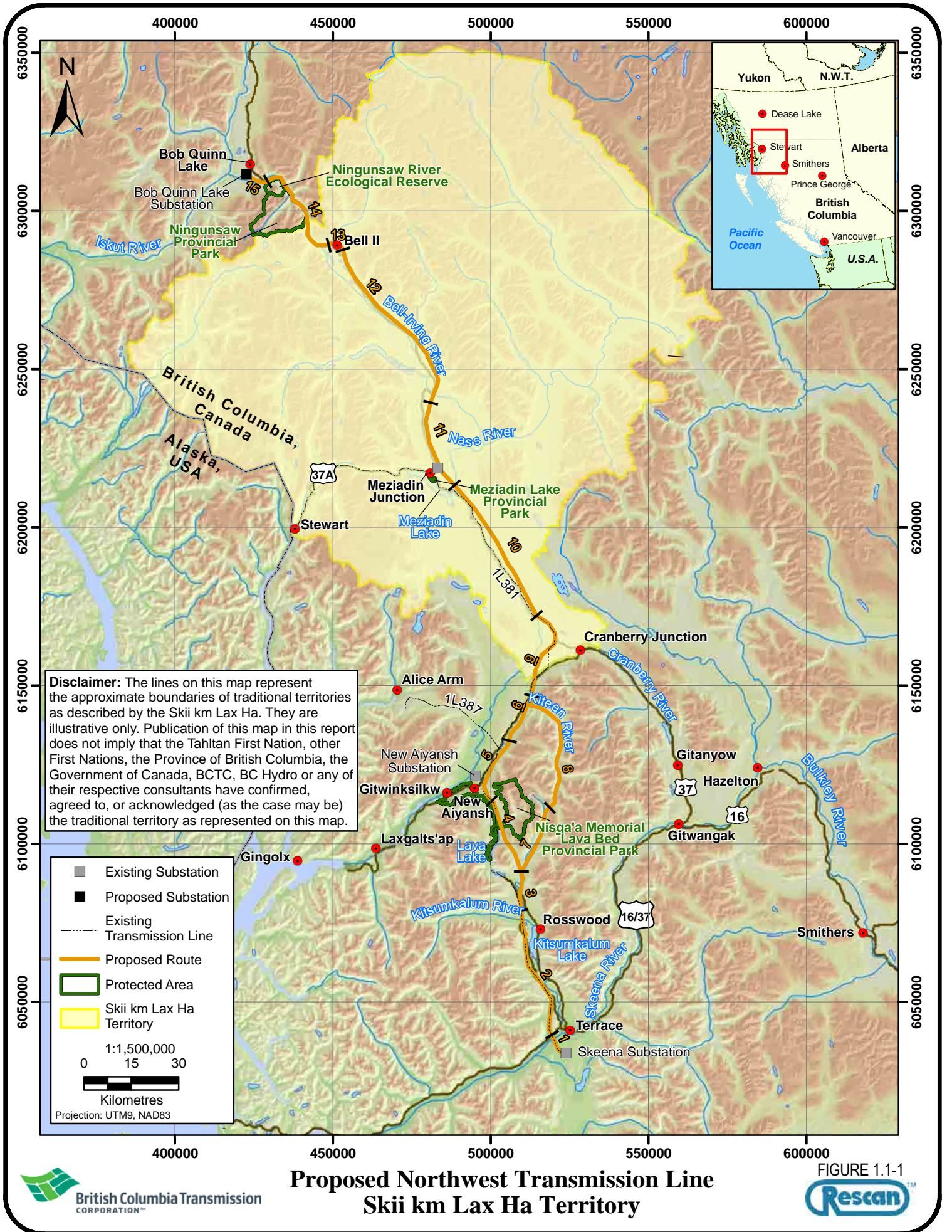
BCTC is a provincial Crown corporation responsible for planning, managing, operating, and maintaining the publicly owned electrical power transmission system in British Columbia and its interconnections with the North American grid. BCTC has proposed an expansion of the existing transmission system into the northwest region of British Columbia.

British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC) is proposing a project to expand the existing transmission system into the northwestern region of British Columbia. The Northwest Transmission Line Project (the Project) would consist of a new 335 km long 287-kilovolt (kV) AC overhead high voltage electric transmission line. The proposed Project would commence at the Skeena Substation south of Terrace and proceed north paralleling the existing 1L387 transmission line alignment, but in a new right-of-way (ROW), to the confluence of the Cedar and Nass rivers. From that point two alternative routes are proposed: a northeastern route through the Cedar-Kiteen River Valley, and the other route farther northwest through the Nass Valley and near the town of New Aiyansh, both alternative routes concluding close to Highway 37 at Cranberry Junction. Thereafter a single route is proposed paralleling Highway 37 to Bob Quinn Lake. The Skeena Substation would require upgrading within the existing physical area, whereas the Bob Quinn Substation would be a new facility at the northern terminus. A temporary tap into the 1L381 line at Meziadin Junction would be established, if necessary, to energize the northern section of the transmission line before the southern portion is completed.

The Project study area is on provincial Crown land within the Kitimat-Stikine Regional District, on private lands and within an area of overlapping asserted territories of the affected Aboriginal groups: Kitselas First Nation, Lax Kw'alaams First Nation; Metlakatla First Nation; Kitsumkalum Band; Gitksan Wilp Tenim Gyet, Wilp Wii Hllengwax, and Wilp Lelt; Gitanyow Wilp Wii'litsxw, Wilp Malii, Wilp Gamlakyeltwx, and Wilp Watakhayetswx; the Skii km Lax Ha Nation; and the Tahltan Nation. The Project also intersects the Nass Area and Nass Wildlife Area, and potentially the fee simple Nisga'a Lands of the Nisga'a Nation as represented by the Nisga'a Final Agreement. Figure 1.1-1 depicts the traditional territory of the Skii km Lax Ha and its overlap with the proposed Project. Table 1.1-1 provides the length of the Project overlap with the traditional territory of the Skii km Lax Ha per segment. The entire Skii km Lax Ha traditional territory is commonly referred to by their membership as Laxwiiyip.

**Table 1.1-1. Summary of Lengths of the Project Overlap with Skii km Lax Ha Nation**

Relevant Segment Number(s)	Length (in km)
9	23.0
10	49.0
11	29.1
11a	3.8
12	59.7
13	5.7
14	13.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>183.5</b>



**Disclaimer:** The lines on this map represent the approximate boundaries of traditional territories as described by the Skii km Lax Ha. They are illustrative only. Publication of this map in this report does not imply that the Tahltan First Nation, other First Nations, the Province of British Columbia, the Government of Canada, BCTC, BC Hydro or any of their respective consultants have confirmed, agreed to, or acknowledged (as the case may be) the traditional territory as represented on this map.

■ Existing Substation  
 ■ Proposed Substation  
 - - - Existing Transmission Line  
 — Proposed Route  
 ■ Protected Area  
 ■ Skii km Lax Ha Territory

1:1,500,000  
 0 15 30  
 Kilometres  
 Projection: UTM9, NAD83

# Proposed Northwest Transmission Line Skii km Lax Ha Territory

FIGURE 1.1-1

BCTC initiated a request for review of the NTL with the BC EAO in May, 2007. The Project was accepted for assessment June 1, 2007 and a Section 11 Order setting out the framework for review was issued on November 12, 2007. On November 26, 2007, NovaGold Resources Inc. and Teck Cominco Limited announced a decision to suspend construction of the Galore Creek mine project. As a result of the loss of this main customer to the NTL Project, the Province and BCTC suspended further development activity on the Project. In December 2008, the province provided a mandate and additional funding to complete the Project Environmental Assessment Application. On September 16, 2009, the federal government announced that it would provide funding for the NTL Project from its Green Infrastructure Fund to complement provincial funding of the Project.

This report provides an account of the purpose, methodology, and results of the Traditional Use and Knowledge (TU/TK) study with the Skii km Lax Ha Nation. The report presents a summary of desk-based historical and ethnographical research and site-specific information from interviews and mapping, related to the Project for inclusion in the Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) Application. Skii km Lax Ha was actively involved in the Traditional Use and Knowledge study. There was ongoing involvement and cooperation between the Skii Km Lax Ha Nation and Rescan Environmental Services, and as such, this report is a collaborative and cooperative effort.

## 1.2 INFORMATION OWNERSHIP AND SHARING

This report contains both publicly available historical documents and site-specific information provided by members of the Skii km Lax Ha Nation. The ethnographic and historical information was collected over a 10-year period by the members of the Skii km Lax Ha Nation and are available in the public domain. The site-specific information gathered and summarized in this report is proprietary and belongs to the Skii km Lax Ha Nation.

Through discussions with the Skii km Lax Ha Nation, the following information sharing agreements were established:

- Skii km Lax Ha agreed to release all ethnographic and site-specific information, including maps, databases, and qualitative summaries to BCTC, BC Hydro, and their consultants for consideration within the NTL EAC Application, within Project design, and to inform future consultation efforts.
- **Public:** Skii km Lax Ha agreed to release most ethnographic and site-specific information, including maps, databases, and qualitative summaries, to the public in the post-application EA process, with the exception of game hunting and trapping methods.

## 1.3 REPORT OUTLINE

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the methods and approaches to compiling, organizing, and summarizing Skii km Lax Ha TU/TK information. Research findings are addressed in Chapter 3 and are organized by era (1800s, 1900s, and contemporary). The research findings cover a range of topic areas, including burials, wildlife, fish, travel methods and routes, trade, occupancy, climate, terrain, and vegetation. Chapter 4 provides information on anticipated effects on the Skii km Lax Ha Nation due to Project development. A summary of key issues and findings is presented in Chapter 5.



## **2. Methodology**

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 OVERVIEW

This section provides a description of the study area, primary and secondary sources, the methods, and approach to conducting the Skii km Lax Ha TK/TU study, and limitations of the data collected to date. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, including desk-based historical and archival research, interviews, and mapping. Table 2.1-1 provides an overview of the discussions held in 2007 and 2009 regarding the set-up and implementation of the Skii km Lax Ha TU/TK study.

**Table 2.1-1. Details of Skii km Lax Ha TU/TK Engagement Chronology (2007 and 2009)**

Year	Date	Location	TU/TK Discussion Summary
2007	May 11	Terrace, BC	Introduction of TU/TK studies and their purpose within the context of the Environmental Assessment Application and process.
	August 3	Conference call	Discussed timelines and budget for TU/TK study. Skii km Lax Ha emphasized that the TU/TK would focus mostly on their historical evidence and documentation across their whole territory. BC Hydro clarified that Rescan would only consider 2 km study area. Rescan described incorporation approach. Skii km Lax Ha indicated that they wanted all their information released. No confidentiality concerns.
2009	December 18	Terrace, BC	Discussed Skii km Lax Ha conducting their own TU/TK study, and funding required to conduct the study. Expressed an interest in groundtruthing. Skii km Lax Ha priority is in the historical evidence of their land claim. Confirmed study area to be 1 km on either side of the NTL route alignment.
	April 15	Vancouver, BC	Expressed desire to publicly release all TU/TK information for purpose of openness and transparency. Their primary focus in the TU/TK is historical, archival, and ethnographic research. Concerned about Attorney General's assessment of their claim, including reliance on secondary source analysis and materials in Sterritt (1998). Inquired whether there was an evaluation of the information provided. Meeting follow-up: send changes to TU/TK work plan to Skii km Lax Ha.
	May 12	Terrace, BC	Discussed aspects of the historical events and sources that Skii km Lax Ha would like to reflect in their TU/TK study. Informed Rescan about significance of totem poles and crests. Described previous archival research efforts to date. Developed work plan, next steps, and timelines. Rescan provided a copy of the TU/TK Toolkit Binder to Skii km Lax Ha for their consideration and use.
	June 8	Conference Call	Reviewed and discussed historical information provided by Skii km Lax Ha.
	June 16	Conference Call	Reviewed and discussed historical and <i>adaawk</i> information provided by Skii km Lax Ha.
	July 2	Conference Call	Discussed historical and <i>adaawk</i> information. Agreed upon timelines and next steps.
	July 22-23	Vancouver, BC	Provided archival research training to Skii km Lax Ha. Conducted TU/TK interview and mapping. Discussed next steps and timelines.
	July 16	Terrace, BC	Requested that the Skii km Lax Ha TU/TK report include maps of their territorial extent. Discussed historical and <i>adaawk</i> information. Confirmed timelines and next steps. Rescan clarified that they will only report what George and Darlene want to reflect in their TU/TK report, Rescan will not compare information between First Nation groups and will not attempt to validate any of the information provided.
	August 22	Old Hazelton, BC	Verified TU/TK information from last interview. Reviewed and discussed genealogy. Conducted additional interview and mapping to complete the study.
	October 13	Vancouver, BC	Reviewed and revised draft TU/TK report to ensure accuracy and confirm information.

## 2.2 STUDY AREA

The TU/TK study area was developed based on input from the Skii km Lax Ha Nation and environmental information. The Project study area consists of 1 km on either side of the Project with the flexibility of considering human and wildlife movements, rare ecosystems, and natural landform barriers beyond a 5-km buffer zone.

As such, the study area for the Skii km Lax Ha TK/TU begins on the north shore of the Cranberry River (near Cranberry Junction) and extends along Highway 37 until Beaver Creek (close to Bob Quinn). This study area is the area of the Skii km Lax Ha territory that overlaps with the Project.

## 2.3 SOURCES

This report relies on primary ethnographic and historical documentation, which the Skii km Lax Ha have gathered to support their claim. It is noted that there are also several secondary sources that provide additional context and understanding to the TU/TK of Skii km Lax Ha. However, the Skii km Lax Ha are concerned with respect to the conclusions of these secondary sources, in particular to the chronology of major historical events.

Most of the information in this report was provided by the Skii km Lax Ha based on their personal research endeavours, including their requests for original ethnographic documentation from Victoria, Stewart, and the Museum of Civilization (Ottawa) archives. Skii km Lax Ha have focused their research efforts on obtaining original files of the Barbeau fond (French term for the records or papers of a particular individual or institution). They used Sterritt's (1998) bibliography as a starting point for their archival research. The documents were collected over eight years to support Skii km Lax Ha's various legal cases to defend their Aboriginal right to engage in traditional activities in a range of areas within their traditional territory.

Finally, the report also contains site-specific information provided by members of the Skii km Lax Ha Nation during two TK/TU interview and mapping sessions. While planned, there was insufficient time to conduct a site visit to groundtruth the sites identified in this report. This may be conducted at a future date during the NTL EAC Application review period. The following is a list of the sources used in this report:

### Primary

- Mortimer (1938)
- Simpson and Laetz (1934)
- Barbeau and Benyon (1915-1959)
- Cox Constance (1958) – *Authentic Story of Gunanoot*
- Gardiner (Hall 1994) - *Pioneer Goldseekers of the Omineca*
- Monkton 1930
- *Adaawk*: George Derrick (Barbeau and Benyon 1950a, d, e), Walter Derrick (1924 and 1958), Albert Williams(1924), Robert Pearl (Barbeau and Benyon 1950f), E.N. Mercer, Jack \Pete (1995),
- Arthur Wellington Clah (1877/80)
- Fred Johnson
- Tom Campbell

## Secondary

- Sterritt et al. (1998) – Tribal Boundaries in the Nass Watershed
- Daly (2005) – Our Box was full
- Duff (1959) – Histories, Territories and Laws of the Kitwancool
- Delgamuukw vs Queen; (McEachern 1991)
- Gitanyow History Project (1978)
- Gitxsan Boundary Discussion (1976)
- Reverend J.B. McCullagh (1906) – *Autumn Leaves*

## **2.4 METHODS AND APPROACH**

### **2.4.1 Overview**

There were many stages and steps involved in completing the Skii km Lax Ha TK/TU study. Five main stages in the TK/TU study were: TK/TU study set-up, data collection, data processing, data analysis, and data transfer. There were many steps taken within each stage. The following section provides details of the approach and methods to complete the study, including key involvement by BC Hydro and Ken Favrholt.

### **2.4.2 TK/TU Study Set-up**

BC Hydro negotiated a Capacity Funding Agreement (CFA) with Skii km Lax Ha (signed April 23, 2009) to assist them to engage in the EA process, including attending meetings and reviewing EA-related documents, such as the draft Terms of References and baseline reports. The CFA also provided financial resources to assist Skii km Lax Ha to undertake a TK/TU study. The CFA also provided for archival research capacity training for Skii km Lax Ha during a two-day workshop conducted by Ken Favrholt (M.A). From July 22 to 23, 2009 in Vancouver, Mr. Favrholt covered topics such as archival terms, Aboriginal-specific archives and their locations, access considerations, and how to set up and maintain archives.

### **2.4.3 Data Collection**

#### *2.4.3.1 Desk-based Research*

There were several steps to the desk-based research effort, including transferring historical documentation from the Skii km Lax Ha Nation, collecting additional archival research, and generating a genealogy based on prior legal and historical records. The historical documentation collected by Skii km Lax Ha Nation over the course of ten years was both faxed and sent via regular mail in several instalments during June and July, 2009. Information was stored in binders organized by tabs for each source type. Additional archival research was conducted by Ken Favrholt at the University of British Columbia Special Collections (July 24, 2009) and Victoria Archives (August 24 to 26, 2009). Mr. Favrholt searched the archival records focusing on several gaps identified by the Skii km Lax Ha. These gaps included:

- census record information
- Indian Agent diaries

## SKII KM LAX HA TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND USE STUDY

- trapline registries related to the areas in and around Bowser and Meziadin lakes
- any maps delineating boundaries and/or village sites

The Skii km Lax Ha also provided photocopies of the Skii km Lax Ha genealogy, which was generated by Neil Sterritt for the *Delgamuukw* case (Sterritt 1985a). Based on a review of historical documentation, the Skii km Lax Ha provided revisions to the genealogy to reflect their understanding of Skii km Lax Ha's matrilineal line. The individuals of Skii km Lax Ha ancestry were entered into the genealogy software *My Heritage* (2009), including details such as birth, death, marriage, children, and adoptions, where available. The software has the ability to generate a number of different report types and visual family representations, including a family tree (which is provided in Section 3.3).

### 2.4.3.2 Interview and Mapping

Two sets of interview and mapping sessions were conducted with two knowledge holders of the Skii km Lax Ha Nation. The identity of the two knowledge holders has been protected in this report by using ID numbers (K1 and K2). The first session was held in Vancouver on July 23, 2009. The second one was in Old Hazelton on August 22, 2009. The interviews were semi-structured and followed a standard set of questions and prompts that covered a range of topics related to land use, wildlife, fish, vegetation, water, and climate. The questions were developed with input from Aboriginal groups and Rescan discipline leads. The interview questions were combined with work on a series of five 1:50,000 scale maps. Interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder and a database with key information about each site. The information collected in the database included map number, map coordinates, site type, recording time, direct/indirect knowledge, time of last use, confidentiality, and confidence ratings. Informed consent forms (Appendix 1) were reviewed and signed. The following steps were taken during each interview:

- At the beginning of each interview, knowledge holders were assigned a unique ID number.
- Researchers explained the purpose and the components of the TU/TK study using a consistent prompt. Researchers also fielded any questions from knowledge holders.
- Researchers distributed and explained informed consent forms. Participants signed the forms.
- Materials present at the interview consisted of four differently coloured markers (e.g., red, blue, black, and green), a topographical map of the proposed Project area at a scale of 1:50,000, a digital voice recorder, and colour photos of local vegetation, wildlife, and fish.
- Using digital voice recorders, researchers identified themselves, the Project, their location, the date, the knowledge holder's name, and anyone else present in the room.
- Questions were developed to help guide the interview and act as prompts. It was recognized that knowledge holders may answer multiple questions with a single response.
- Maps were marked as researchers progressed through the interview questions.
- The interviews lasted a half day each. They were broken up into phases depending on the knowledge holder.
- Skii km Lax Ha place names were recorded and correct spelling ensured.
- Using wildlife, fish, and vegetation note cards throughout the interview, allowed knowledge holders to point to the flora or fauna they harvested to ensure accuracy and consistency.

## 2.4.4 Data Processing

### 2.4.4.1 Interview Transcription

After each session, audio files of the recorded interviews were transferred to a Vancouver-based court reporting company for transcription. Interview files were uploaded onto a secure website and a professional transcriber made electronic and hard copies of the interview. Any Aboriginal words were transcribed phonetically and the time of the audio file was noted for ease of translation and/or revision, if necessary. Completed transcriptions were delivered to Rescan for analysis.

Hard copies of the interview database were also transcribed by Rescan's in-house production specialists and entered into Microsoft Access.

### 2.4.4.2 Map Digitization

Rescan's in-house GIS specialists provided digitization services. Hard copy maps were placed on a digitizing table and each site was recorded with a puck (hand-held device used to enter data from a digitiser with several buttons and a transparent window with cross hairs). The resulting ArcView shapefiles were linked to the Microsoft Access database, providing details of each site.

## 2.4.5 Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was conducted on the information from the transcribed interviews with the use of a database. Interview responses were placed under relevant category headers, including place names, seasonal round, occupancy, language use, burial, trapping, hunting, fishing, berry picking, wildlife, fish, vegetation, climate, and water. Once organized in this manner, patterns, commonalities, and connections between the TK/TU information emerged.

In a similar manner, archival data were analyzed using a database with the following headers: geographic area, era, name of people, place names, migrations, transfer of land, boundary, land use, seasonal round, occupancy, language, last year of use, frequency of use, burial, trapline, wildlife, fish, vegetation, climate, and water. In this way, each archival document was analyzed for relevant context and contents for both the Project and for the Skii km Lax Ha's understanding of their territory.

## 2.4.6 Data Dissemination

Once the processing and analysis stages were completed, main findings and results were summarized in a PowerPoint presentation, which was presented to Rescan discipline leads, working on the EAC Application, during a ½-day TK/TU dissemination seminar at Rescan's Office in Vancouver on September 11, 2009. The seminar was attended by discipline leads involved in writing the baseline, environmental setting and assessments, mitigation and management plans for the Project. The disciplines represented at the seminar included archaeology, wildlife, meteorology, fisheries, aquatics, vegetation and ecosystems, hydrology, land use, and socio-economics. Discipline leads were given specific instruction on how, where, and when to incorporate TK/TU into the NTL EAC Application. Following the presentation, there was a general discussion regarding strategies to ensure the most culturally appropriate and meaningful incorporation of the information into the NTL EAC Application. Proper referencing was also discussed. Cross-disciplinary issues, interdependencies (i.e. overlaps between wildlife and hunting, fish and fishing), and trends (i.e. wildlife population trends, spawning areas) were discussed. After the seminar, TK/TU specialists followed up with each discipline lead to confirm incorporation methods, content, and citation.

## 2.5 DATA LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

There were several contextual and specific challenges and circumstances that did not allow for complete data collection, processing, and dissemination. As such, the information contained in this report is not comprehensive or conclusive. The TK/TU study was conducted in a brief timeline from May to September 2009.

Skii km Lax Ha leadership have expressed concern with some of the secondary source material, generated for and as a result of the *Delgamuukw v Queen* case [i.e. Sterritt et al.'s *Tribal Boundaries of the Nass Watershed* (1998)]. As well as the Attorney General's strength of claim assessment and its reliance on Sterritt (1998) and theories related to dates of major historical events.

The Skii km Lax Ha wish to point out that they began their research efforts ten years ago with their own funding. Before this current study, they had not conducted any TK/TU studies as many other First Nations groups have. The Skii km Lax Ha have noted that they do not have any pre-existing site-specific TU/TK information that would have reduced the research effort. If any additional Skii km Lax Ha TU/TK information becomes subsequently available, Skii km Lax Ha may submit it for consideration during the Application review period.

Generally, it is important to recognize that interviews are representative of information at one point in time. The context and nature of the study determines the level and types of information the knowledge holder is willing to disclose. Because of the current political climate and circumstances between the Skii km Lax Ha and Gitxsan/Gitanyow, some Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders declined to be involved in interviews, and as such represent potential missing knowledge.. It is difficult to piece together the past with an incomplete account; there are different names and groups provided by ethnographers with their own understanding, perspectives, and agendas. For this and other reasons, the information contained in this report cannot be considered conclusive.

### Skii km Lax Ha Concerns and Reservations regarding Sterritt (1998)

In an email to the author on October 23, 2009, Skii km Lax Ha summarized their more specific reservations and concerns about prior interpretation of key historical documentations, especially by Sterritt (1998) as follows (provided in whole):

*Despite the Attorney General being supplied with primary historical documents that contradict the interpretation of these same documents in Gitanyow's main body of evidence in the book Tribal Boundaries in the Nass Water Shed, the Attorney General allowed the book to go through the Wii'litswx v. British Columbia action uncontested. The Attorney General also allowed the inaccurate contents of it's "Skii km Lax Ha Preliminary Ethnohistorical Assessment" to stand uncorrected in the Wiilitswx action providing the Judge with a false impression of the strength of evidence and credibility of Sterritt et al, and their theories and interpretation of historical documents. During the Wii'litswx action the Attorney General also allowed Gitxsan Negotiator Bev Clifton to submit a affidavit, incorrectly describing Skii km Lax Ha's boundary; knowing Bev Percival has no authority to claim to represent Skii km Lax Ha's boundary.*

*The Skii km Lax Ha Nation believe the Provincial Crown has inappropriately influenced consultation through not allowing the Skii km Lax Ha Nation to participate in the development of tools the Crown uses to assess strength of claims and determine appropriate levels of consultation. Examples of this are: the exclusion on the Ski km Lax Ha Nation in the development of Land and Resource Management Plans, Strength of Claims Assessments, and court proceedings.*

All of the examples below [Table x.x-x] have been previously exhibited to a number of provincial statutory decision makers, as well as representatives of the Attorney general's Office and were the basis of entry of the Skii km Lax Ha Nation's map into the provinces consultative data base (CAD). (D. Simpson, pers. comm.)

As a means of demonstrating their concerns, the Skii km Lax Ha provided the following comparative analysis of historical documentation analysis in an email on October 23, 2009. Some of the events and people mentioned below will be discussed in more details in the sections to follow.

**Table x.x-x      Examples of Skii km Lax Ha Concerns with Sterritt 1998 (Simpson, pers. comm.)**

<b>Sterritt et al (1998) - interpretation of key historical document</b>	<b>The Ski km Lax Ha Nation – interpretation of key historical documents</b>
<p><b>George Derrick 1924</b> Tribal Boundaries and the Attorney General support based on information by Gitanyow Chief George Derrick in 1924 that the Gamlaxyeltxw and Luxhon dispute happened more than 400 years prior to European contact (c. 1446) based on the word Gitluusek used in the document. Sterritt et al claim, Gitluusek was a village on the Skeena River which was abandoned over 400 years prior to European contact (TB, page 35). Tribal Boundaries and the AG support that this event initiated generations of wars and massacres between the Gitanyow and Tsetsaut, eventually resulting in Gitanyow ownership of the Meziadin region in 1861.</p>	<p><b>George Derrick 1924</b> The Skii km Lax Ha Nation date the Gamlaxyeltxw/Luxhon dispute based on this document happening in c.1910 (primary source). A foot note at the bottom of a page in the document identified by English names the specific individuals involved in the Gamlaxyeltxw/Luxhon dispute. The individuals are identified as Samuel Douse and wife [Lilly nee White Douse] Gwasslam [Richard Douse] and the Williams brothers against Gamlaxyeltxw. Samuel and Lily Douse were married in the 1900s not 400 years prior to European contact and the names Richard, Samuel, Lilly, and Williams are not ancient Gitanyow names.</p>
<p><b>Sterritt et al: TB, page 29, Malli Joins Gitanyow</b> Tribal Boundaries in the Nass Water Shed claims Malli joined Gitanyow approximately 3,000 years prior to European contact. Tribal Boundaries claims Malli migrated from the ancient village Temlaxam prior to its deluge (c. 1,000BC) from the House of Spookw.</p>	<p><b>Malli Joins Gitanyow</b> The Skii km Lax Ha Nation claims Malli joined Gitanyow in the late 1800s, after an inter-clan marriage between a Malli from the Wolf House of Klyiimlaxha to a member of the Wolf clan from the House of Spookw (primary source) Sterritt et al claim in Tribal Boundaries on page 43 that the Athapaskan name Malee [Malli] was given to the Gitxsan House of Xhliimlaxha to Chief Xhliimlaxha in c. 1840 – “This was the Xhliimlaxha prior to Paul Xhliimlaxha” (TB, page 43).</p>
<p><b>The Name Saniik transferred to Gitxsan c.1840 (TB, page 42)</b> Tribal Boundaries claims the name Saniik was given to the Gitxsan in c.1840 as part of a peace settlement. After 1840 the Athapaskan Saniik no longer existed</p>	<p><b>The Name Saniik transferred to Gitxsan c.1840</b> It would be impossible for the Athapaskan Saniik to transfer the Meziadin to Gitanyow in 1861 as tribal Boundaries claims. Saniik the Athapaskan no longer existed after 1840.</p>
<p><b>Sterritt et al: H.A. Collison (c. 1912) TB page 239</b> “Thus [Edwin] Hayts’imsw was a child (c.1850-5) when peaceful relations between the Gitanyow and Eastern Tsetsaut ceased with the accidental killing of two Gitanyow chiefs ... a child at the time, and his father was one of the victims.”</p>	<p><b>H.A. Collison (c.1912)</b> Canada Census records (primary source)from 1921-28, confirm Edwin Haizumsk was born in 1876; twenty six years after Sterritt et al claim in Tribal Boundaries that Edwin Hayts’imsw father was killed in 1850 resulting in the Meziadin being given to the Gitanyow. It’s impossible for Edwin Haytsimsw’s father to have conceived him 26 years after his death.</p>



**SKII KM LAX HA TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND USE STUDY**

<b>Sterritt et al (1998) - interpretation of key historical document</b>	<b>The Ski km Lax Ha Nation – interpretation of key historical documents</b>
<p><b>Tribal Boundaries, page 57</b>  Reproduces part of a October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1934 declaration By Walter Latz and John Simpson. Sterritt et al change the name of one of the proponents from John Simpson to Tom Sampson and omit the last paragraph of the declaration which described the extent of Skii km Lax Ha’s hunting grounds. The Provincial Crown claims the description of the hunting ground and subsequent ruling on the ownership of it relate solely to a 1929 trapline registry. In 2009 the Provincial Crown penned the 40 miles south includes Meziadin Lake.</p>	<p><b>Tribal Boundaries, page 57</b>  The 1934 declaration was by Watler Latz and John Simpson (primary source). The hunting ground was described in the declaration as running forty miles north and south of Bowser Lake – ownership of the hunting ground in question was investigated for four years by the Department of Mines and resources which housed Indian Affairs. The investigation confirmed after careful investigation amongst the older Indians, that Daniel Skawill (Skii km Lax Ha) owned the hunting ground in question and inherited this hunting ground from his maternal brother Johnson Nagun upon his death in 1908 – 18 years prior to the inception of trapline registries. The description of the hunting ground running forty miles north and south of Bowser Lake includes Meziadin Lake. Sterritt penned (TB, page 262) he had extensive supportive evidence the Meziadin was owned by Skii km Lax Ha. None of that evidence was entered in the <i>Delgamuukxw action</i> or the book Tribal Boundaries in the Nass water Shed.</p>
<p><b>Sterritt et al in Tribal Boundaries, pages 70 - 72</b>  A modern rendition of Michael Inspring Bright’s 1939 maps moves the location of several places identified on the original maps, changes names, and omits other locations. Gwinkak is moved north, closer to the Cranberry River and the fishing site Anxhon identified as being south of the Cranberry is moved to the north side of the Cranberry River.</p>	<p><b>Sterritt et al Tribal Boundaries, pages 70 - 72</b>  Moving Anxhon the fishing site to the north side of the Cranberry River (primary source)significantly changes the boundary description Gardner received in 1875 TB pages (205-213) of Gitanyow’s northern boundary from various Gitanyow individuals. Gardiner’s Gitanyow informants informed him Gitanyow’s northern boundary was at a large stream north of Anxhon , the Cranberry River. Gardiner’s guide a Gitanyow person also informed him while on Mount Bell Irving that the Gitanyow do not own the Meziadin and Mount Madley areas.</p>
<p><b>Gunanoot Saga (1906 – 1933) TB pages 228 - 230</b>  Tribal Boundaries claims Constance Cox Documented Simon Gunanoot was taught the way of the woods at Awijiji – 70 km north of Meziadin Lake</p>	<p><b>Gunanoot Saga (1906 – 1933) TB pages 228 - 230</b>  Constance Cox (primary source) documented Simon Gunanoot was “taught the way of the woods at Meziadin Lake”.</p>
<p><b>Sterritt et al in Tribal Boundaries, pages 101-105 alter the historical evidence provided by John Brown</b>  The map produced in the book to represent John Brown’s statements is significantly different than the map provided by John Brown, and his statements associated with the map. Sterritt et al identify the Ksemguuneekxw territory over on Skii km Lax Ha`s Awijija territory – 70 kilometres West of where John Brown identified it.</p>	<p><b>Historical evidence provided by John Brown</b>  John Brown mapped the location of the territory associated with it, 70 kilometres to the east of where Sterritt et. al. identify it (primary source).</p>
<p><b>Sterritt et al in Tribal Boundaries identify one of Skii km Lax Ha’s historic village of Tsimanluskeexs on page 17</b>  Sterritt et al identify Tsimanluskeexs near Bowser Lake.</p>	<p><b>Location of Tsimanluskeexs</b>  Historical documents (primary sources) identify the location of this village 70 kilometres to the east, near the head waters of the Nass River.</p>

Source: (D. Simpson, pers. comm.)

Some of the events and people mentioned above are discussed in more detail in the sections to follow.

Language and spelling conventions

Skii km Lax Ha claim Tsetsaut ancestry. Tsetsaut spoke a dialect of the Athapaskan language group. Some of the language has been transliterated into the Roman alphabet. Because the language was unwritten, ethnographers, historians, and other observers were left to generate spellings as they saw fit, resulting in varying transliterations. In this report we have tried to use spellings most commonly used by the Skii km Lax Ha and where appropriate indicate in Appendix 2 other spellings commonly found in ethnographies and previously published and unpublished literature.

## **3. Research Findings**

## 3. Research Findings

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### 3.1 OVERVIEW

The Skii km Lax Ha understand their territory to extend from the north side of Cranberry River, along the Nass and Bell Irving rivers, past Bell I and II to Ningunsaw Pass. The Skii km Lax Ha indicate that the northern extent of their territory is Beaver Pond (in Ningunsaw Pass) with historical and current use extending as far northwest as the Iskut River. They refer to their entire territory as Laxwiiyip. The proposed Project overlaps with 183.5 km of their claimed territory.

Of particular value and importance to the Skii km Lax Ha Nation is their matrilineal family line and history. They also value reporting major events that led to their current land claim. The research results are a mixture of past and current use, subsistence activities, occupancy, migration, wars, and disputes. The Skii km Lax Ha claim a Tsetsaut ancestry, which, according to them and turn-of-the-century ethnographers, were part of the Athapaskan language group of Aboriginal peoples (see Section 3.5, Yinka Déné Language Institute 2006, and Duff 1981). The Skii km Lax Ha indicate that various ethnographers refer to the Tsetsaut by different terms, including Stikine, Laxwiiyip, and, on occasion, Tahltan. During the committee meeting of the 1996 Select Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Neil Sterritt noted that the terms Tsetsaut, Tahltan, and Stikine are synonymous (BCLA 1996). Sterritt (1998:9, 188, 262) uses the term Tsetsaut and Tahltan interchangeably when discussing the Tahltan/Tsetsaut Concession, which includes the Meziadin. From the mid-1920s, the Meziadin Lake area has been under heavy and consistent dispute between the Tsetsaut and Kitwancool because of contact, and specifically trapline registries.

Although Barbeau determined that the matrilineal lineage of Gyetem Galdo, Skawill, and Ksemqunqweek are extinct (B.F. 71.2-71.3), the Skii km Lax Ha provide evidence of its continued existence.

Skii km Lax Ha consider themselves a remnant of the Tsetsaut Raven clan, which is supported in the historical documentation collected by Barbeau (Simpson 2007:3-4):

*Barbeau documented the House<sup>1</sup> of Ksemqunqweek and the names Binix, Skawill, Skii km Lax Ha, Naguun and others; this Raven Clan listing is found in the Barbeau Files B.F. 84.10-11 there are also three other listings that include the name Skii km Lax Ha. Jessie Lumm put the name Skii km Lax Ha on my late uncle Johnny Wilson...and placed him at the head of the table known as the House of Skii km Lax Ha; a situation no different than that of other Houses which at times have had a rise or decline in the significance of certain names for what ever reason.*

*The Houses of Skawill and Ksemqunqweek sit at Skii km Lax Ha's table. They are amalgamated in the House of Skii km Lax Ha as Barbeau's note indicates. Our Matrilineage was practically extinct. That is the reason Daniel Skawill held the names Skii km Lax Ha, Skawill, Ksemqunqweek, Naguun and others. My grandmother Jessie Lumm was also responsible for many of our names, as I am today.*

*It was stated to Barbeau that Daniel Skawill [Skii km Lax Ha] owned the Gyetem Galdo totem pole carved c.1830 (B.F. 70.3). Skawill and Naguun, and Gyetem Galdo were brothers from the separate*

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<sup>1</sup> House in this direct quote refers Skii km Lax Ha understanding houses as the actual physical structure.

## SKII KM LAX HA TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND USE STUDY

*Houses of Skii km Lax Ha and Gyetem Galdo; although two separate Houses, both own the same totem pole with the top figure Gitaluc being exclusive to the House of Skii km Lax Ha for the killing of Skawill. The Gitaluc totem pole figure documents the exclusive ownership of the Meziadin and Mt. Madley areas of Skii km Lax Ha for the killing of Skawill.*

*The House of Gyetem Galdo has its own tables in the feast. Gyetem Galdo's land is in the Suskwa valley and is included in the Gitxsan claim. Gyetem Galdo is a member of the 61 Chief Gitsxan Gimlitwitx that entered the treaty process.*

*Previous Gyetem Galdo's occupied Skii km Lax Ha land. Although not accurate, Skii km Lax Ha's land was at times referred to as Gyetem Galdo's territory. As Skii km Lax Ha, I have had people reference the Suskwa territory of Gyetem Galdo, as my territory. The confusion arises because we are the same matrilineage. A previous Gyetem Galdo, Charles Clifford, gave the trapline registry for Gyetem Galdo's territory in the Suskwa to the late Johnny Wilson, Skii km Lax Ha. He in turn gave it to his paternal grandson Donald Mowatt from the Wolf Clan. After my predecessor Johnny Wilson died, I purchased this trapline from his paternal grandson Donny Mowatt and give it the new Gyetem Galdo, George Grey. Sterritt and the assessment, ignore the closeness of the two Houses of Skii km Lax Ha and Gyetem Galdo; intentionally, significantly reducing the available evidence for the Skii km Lax Ha claim.*

*Today the individuals that [have] the names Skii km Lax Ha, Gyetem Galdo, Skawill, Ksemgunqweek, Binix, Naguun, and Nox To are all descendants of Jessie Lum[m] Sterritt, the niece of a previous Nox To (B.F. 89.17). Our matrilineage is traced to pre 1846. We are not extinct and we are authentic.*

There are two major historical events that are summarized in several ethnographic interviews that inform the Skii km Lax Ha's understanding of the past use of their claimed territory.

- the killing of Skawill (aka Gamlakyetxw/Luuxhon dispute), estimated to have taken place in the early 1800s
- the killing of Taxwook and Ligigliwil, estimated to have taken place in the early 1900s

These two events are described in more detail in the following section. These sources provide an understanding of the history of this area and insight and information on the traditional activities and uses by the Skii km Lax Ha descendants of the area, which are also described in the following sections.

According to the account given by George Derrick to Barbeau and Benyon in 1924, the wars between Tsetsaut and Gitanyow happened after the Tsetsaut Raven Clans Gamlaxyeltxw, Luuxhon, Shindii, Hlamii, and Tsiwa<sup>2</sup> migrated to Kitwancool. These Raven Clans fled the Meziadin and upper Nass fearing retribution for the killing of Skawill and, according to Aboriginal law, they relinquished their rights to the land (Barbeau and Benyon 1950A).

The areas around Bowser, Awijii (Oweege), and Meziadin Lakes play an important role in the history of the Skii km Lax Ha. The Awijii territory covers an area from north at Beaver Pond to south along the Bell Irving valley to Meziadin Lake, and west to Unuk River.

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<sup>2</sup> Tsiwa is short for Gamtsiwa meaning white man, according to Sterritt et al 1998 (limited white cover edition).

### 3.2 PLACE NAMES

This section provides information on key Skii km Lax Ha place names and a brief overview and history of these areas. In 1929, Daniel Skawill applied and held the registration for a trapline in the **Bowser Lake/Todedada Creek** area and had a camp at Oweege Smokehouse. Because of his hunting and trapping rights in the area, a number of topographical features were named after Daniel Skawill, including **Mount Skowill** and **Skowill Creek** (Prov. BC 1929; BCILMB 2009a).

According to Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders, **Treaty Creek** use to be named Zoo Creek, which in their language means grizzly bear (K1, Interview).

The general location of **Ksemquqweek**, meaning groundhog hunting grounds (Simpson 2007), was described by John Brown in 1920 as being at the head of the Nass, 40 miles long by 20 miles wide (B.F. 79.2). Brown mapped the area, identifying the Groundhog Range on the east headwaters of the Nass River (Simpson 2007:5).

Peter Shanoss, whose wife was Nancy Skawill, daughter of Daniel Skawill, held the trapline along **Shanoss Creek**. The creek was named after him and was entered into the BCGNIS database in 1953 (BCILMB 2009c).

**Mount Gunanoot** was named after Simon Gunanoot, who used the area for hunting and trapping. The name for the mountain was entered into the BCGNIS in 1945 (BCILMB 2009d).

According to the Skii km Lax Ha and the Sterritt Files (1985b), the name **Anhahl'yee** (see Appendix 2 for spelling variations and Site #7031 in Figure 3.4-2) belongs to their matrilineage. The name has been passed down through several generations, including Esther (née Joseph) Lumm, Jessie (née Lumm) Sterritt, Cora (née Wright) Grey, and Valerie (née Fargey) Jack. The place name is identified in Sterritt (1998: 244) as site #130 and is at the foot of Mount Bell Irving between Meziadin Lake and Surveyors Creek, and area commonly known today as **Hanna Ridge** (see Section 3.6.2 Travel for additional information).

**Adam Creek**, located at the foot of Mount Madley, flowing east into Kwinageese River, east of Meziadin Lake, was named after Adii am, who lived in the area in the early 1920s. The name for the creek was adopted by the BCGNIS in 1953 (BCILMB 2009e, Darlene Simpson, unpublished data).

The Tsetsaut village at Meziadin was known as **Tsem'anlusraerhs**, meaning "very shallow water where the people could wade and leave their footprints" (Barbeau and Benyon 1950e).

**Lax-an-jok** is at the confluence of the Meziadin and Nass rivers and Tsesaut fishing village.

**Mount Madley** is mentioned in several oral histories. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, Mount Madley is where dirge songs were sung by the expelled members of the Raven clan for the killing of Skawill. Neil Sterritt notes this to be the southern boundary of the Awijii territory at the height of land in a letter dated November 5, 1986 (Sterritt 1998: 262).

**Mount Bell-Irving**, according to the Skii km Lax Ha, was another location of the singing of dirges of the departing Raven clan, who would eventually settle in Kitwancool.

**Hanna Creek** is an important land mark, according to the Skii km Lax Ha.

Skii km Lax Ha indicate that there are historical documents reporting Gyetem Galdo living at **Wolverine Creek** in the 1920s.

Duff (1959) indicates **Axnagalga** (Brown Bear Creek) as the area of boundary between the Kitwancool and the Tsetsaut.

### **3.3 TENURE SYSTEM**

The Skii km Lax Ha tenure system allows for exclusive resource use and territorial management and decision-making under the guidance of the hereditary chief. Managing resources on Skii km Lax Ha lands is critically linked to the continued existence, wealth, and status in the feasting system. Exclusivity of use by Skii km Lax Ha members is reinforced by Skii km Lax Ha law that requires permission from the hereditary chief by non-members and trespassers. In the past, trespassers were dealt with by a stern warning and expelled or punished by death. Governance was traditionally carried out in the feast hall.

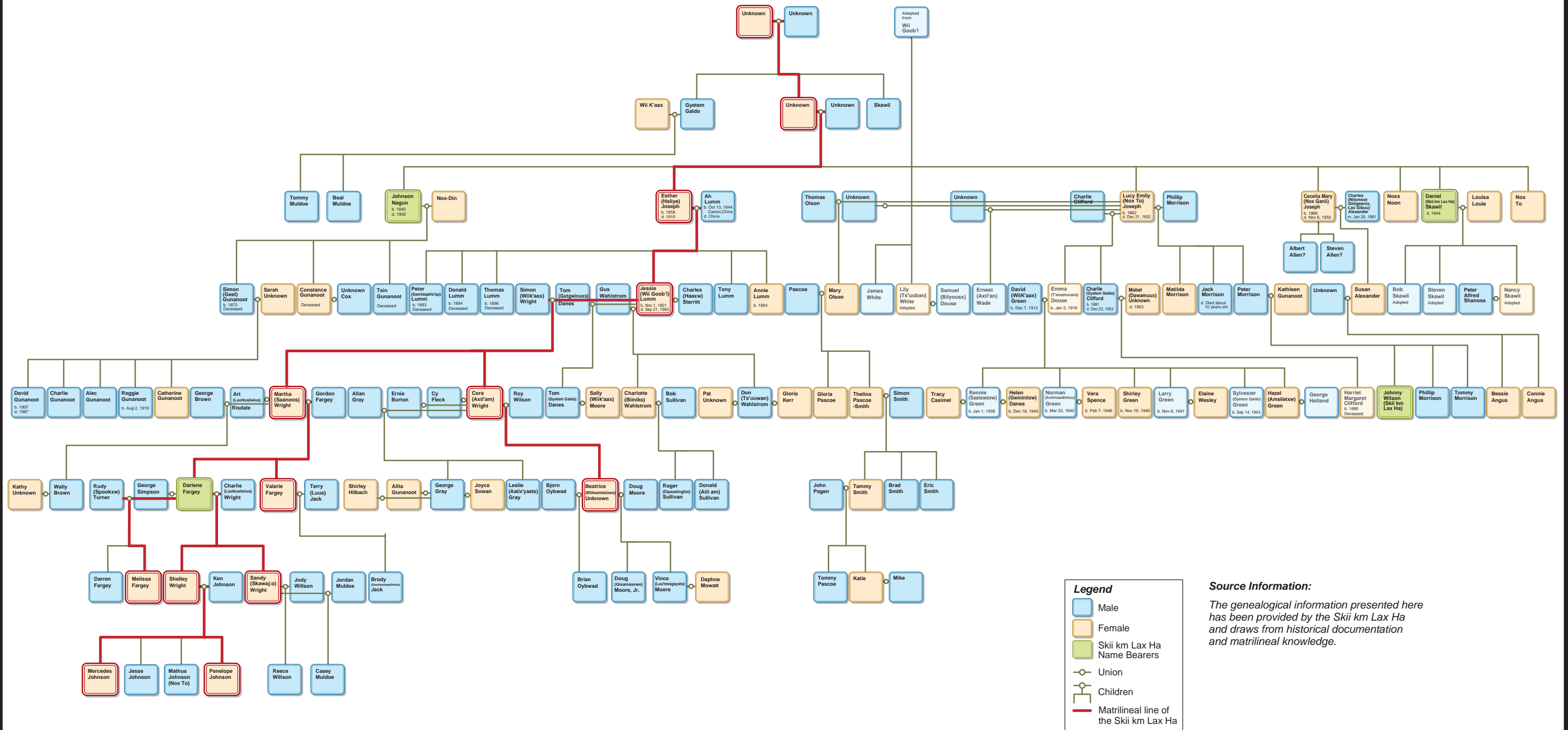
### **3.4 GENEALOGY**

Although the ethnographer Barbeau was informed that none of the Skii km Lax Ha matrilineage was left, several members did remain at the time of Barbeau's research, including Daniel Skawill and Jessie Lumm. The Skii km Lax Ha have noted that (Simpson 2007):

*Constance Cox documented Nox To's (meaning: the mother of Gyetem Galdo) niece was Jessie Lumm (part Chinese) (B.F. 89.17). Jessie Lumm's daughter, Martha (née Wright) Risdale was Daniel Skawill's granddaughter (Sterritt 1984). Martha (née Wright) Risdale is Darlene (née Fargey) Simpson's mother and Jessie Lumm was Darlene's grandmother. Skawill, Naguun (Johnson Naguun born c.1840), from the House of Skii km Lax Ha were brothers to Gyetem Galdo (B.F. 90.10; Mortimer 1938, Appendix 5).*

Matrilineal descent of the Skii km Lax Ha line is illustrated in Figure 3.4-1. Information represented in the figure draws off of a number of historical documents (*Delgamuukw v Queen*, Gerry Gunanoot 1988; Simpson 2007; Sterritt 1985a; Government of Canada 1891a, b; BC Place Names 2009a) as well as Skii km Lax Ha matrilineal knowledge. The generations in the figure date back as far as the early 1800s to Gyetem Galdo, Skowill, and their sister, through whom Skii km Lax Ha indicate that the matrilineal line descends. The women in the Skii km Lax Ha matrilineal line are highlighted in the figure for ease of viewing. Extended families and individuals identified by Skii km Lax Ha as adopted are also shown in Figure 3.4-1, to show their context within the larger family tree/genealogy.

Following the Skii km Lax Ha matrilineal line from Esther (née Joseph) Lumm, the line can be traced through her female descendants: her daughter, Jessie Lumm; her granddaughters, Martha (née Wright) Risdale and Cora Wright; and her great-granddaughters Darlene (née Fargey) Simpson, Valarie Fargey, and Beatrice Wilson. The lines through Beatrice and Valarie end because neither woman had daughters to continue the line. However, the line does continue from Darlene with Esther's great-great-granddaughters Melissa Fargey, Shelley Wright, and Sandy Wright, and her great-great-great-granddaughters Mercedes and Penelope Johnson.



**Source Information:**  
 The genealogical information presented here has been provided by the Skii km Lax Ha and draws from historical documentation and matrilineal knowledge.



Lucy Morrison provides a key link between the Skii km Lax Ha and the Gyetem Galdo lineages. Lucy Morrison's name was *Nox To*, which means mother of Gytem Galdo. The connection lies with her sisters, Esther and Cecilia Joseph.

According to the Skii km Lax Ha, during Skii km Lax Ha's feast in early 2000, she took the Gyetem Galdo name from the White family and gave it to George Gray.

Esther Joseph died c. 1912. Her sisters included Nox To (Lucy (née Joseph) Morrison) and Nox Ganni (Cecilia Joseph) given in marriage to a Nisga'a man Charles Alexander (Nismoot) from the Wolf Clan. Traditionally, as explained by the Skii km Lax Ha, the word *Nox* means "mother of," given to women after name bearers died. As such, the Skii km Lax Ha indicate that *Nox To* translates as "mother of Gyetem Galdo." Charles was commissioned to carve the Skii km Lax Ha totem pole in c. 1880. Charles Alexander holds the name Gyetem Galdo in the Nisga'a maternal descendant of Nox Ganni.

The Skii km Lax Ha indicate the following sequence of transfer of the traditional name: Johnson Negin to Daniel Skawill to Johnny Wilson to Darlene Simpson. Plates 3.4-1, 3.4-2, and 3.4-3 depict their grave stones in the Hazelton cemetery. Another important member of the Skii km Lax Ha lineage is Jessie Sterritt, whose grave stone is presented in Plate 3.4-4. Furthermore, Daniel Skawill purchased the memorial stones of the sister of Nox To (one generation before the Joseph sisters), and nephew Charlie Nagon (same as Negin), and commissioned his own head stone before his death, all of which exist in the same plot in the Hazelton Cemetery (Plates 3.4-5 and 3.4-6). According to the Skii km Lax Ha, these were paid for by Daniel. The Skii km Lax Ha understand these grave stone purchases to mean that Daniel Skawill was wealthy and prosperous. Daniel Skawill is buried in the first cemetery of the town of Stewart, BC.



Plate 3.4-1. Grave Stone of Daniel Skawill.



Plate 3.4-2. Grave Stone of Johnson Negun.



Plate 3.4-3. Grave Stone of Johnny Wilson.



Plate 3.4-4. Grave Stone of Jessie Sterritt.



Plate 3.4-5. Grave Stone of Nox To Lich (mother of Galdo, "my sister) Daniel Skawill erected..



Plate 3.4–6. Grave Stone of Charley Nagon.

The Skii km Lax have suggested several causes of the breakdown of the hereditary system based on the matrilineal lineage. The Skii km Lax indicate that marriage and re-marriages as well as polygamy may have complicated the transfer of names as per Aboriginal law. The Skii km Lax Ha note that Euro-Canadian contact and, more specifically, the trapline registry with a patrilineal focus, may have caused a disruption in the tradition and order of feasting.

### 3.5 SITE-SPECIFIC DATA

Extensive Skii km Lax Ha past and current knowledge and use data for the area in and around the Highway 37 corridor from Cranberry Junction to Ningunsaw Pass were recorded during interview and mapping sessions in July and August, 2009. A total of 65 sites were identified during these sessions, including 18 cabins/camps, 2 burial sites, 3 historic sites, 12 hunting/trapping areas, 12 multi-use sites, 9 plant gathering sites, 3 fishing areas, 4 trails, and 2 other sites. Table 3.5–1 also provides information on the site number, whether it is a contemporary or a past site, site type, and a description of the site. Site type codes are provided in Appendix 3. Figure 3.5–1 and 3.5–2 depict information from the table, with unique identifiers provided to link the table with the figure. There are 32 sites indicating past or historic events and land marks important to the Skii km Lax Ha Nation. Table 3.5–1 indicates 21 exclusively contemporary Skii km Lax Ha traditional use sites that have been used recently (i.e., in the last five years). The remaining sites (i.e., 13 sites) have been used in both the past and present.

**Table 3.5–1. Summary of Skii km Lax Ha Historic and Contemporary TK/TU Sites**

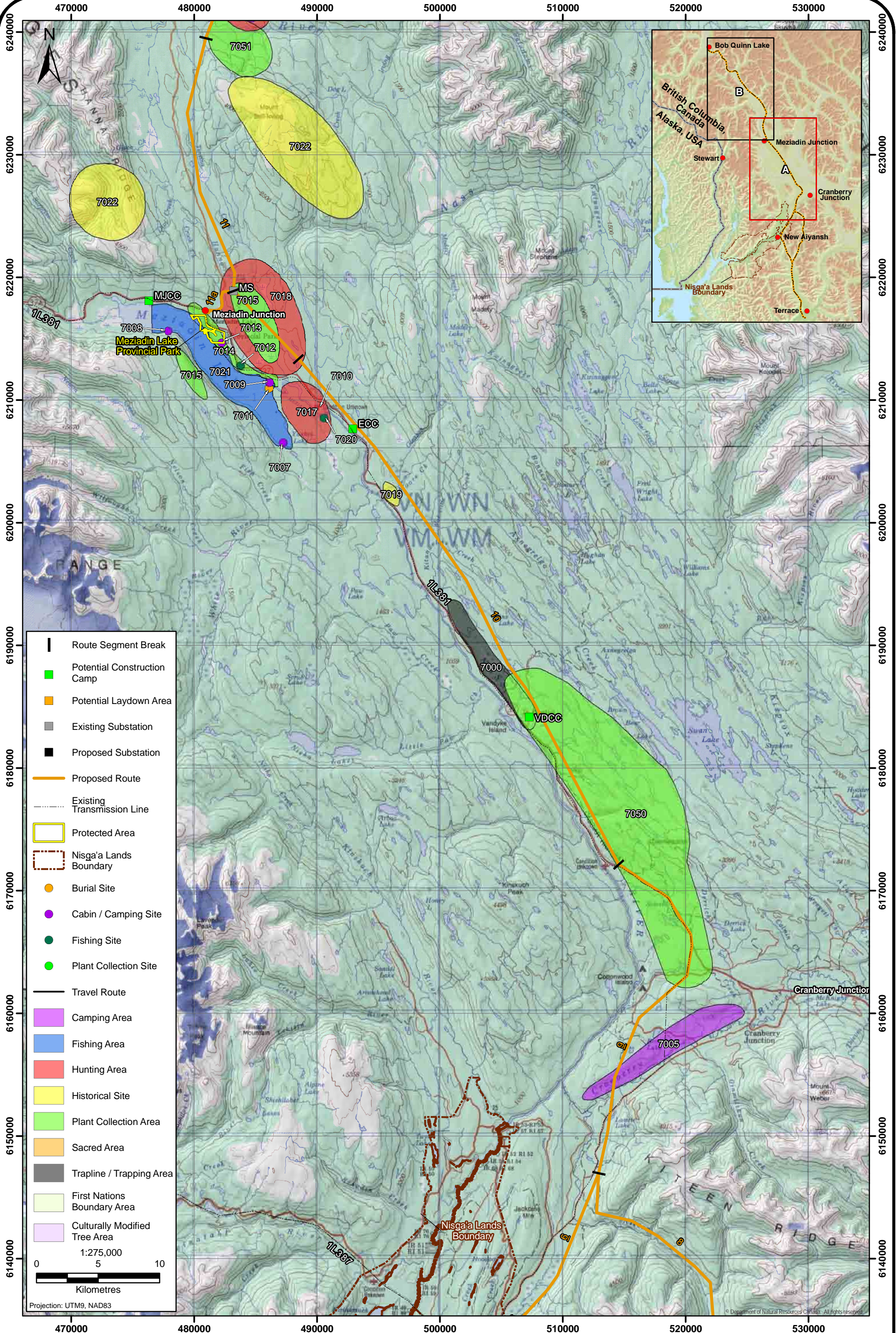
Site ID	Past/Current	Site Type	Description of Site
7000	Current	TL, PC, HA	Soapberry picking, moose hunting/crossing.
7001	Past	TR	Grease Trail.
7002	Both	TR, TL, HA	Old trail, trapline.
7003	Past	TR	Trail along ridge, above highway.
7004	Past	TR	Trail at Wolverine Creek.
7005	Past	CP, TL, HA	Camping, beaver trapping, martens, wolverine, wolf hunting and baiting.
7006	Both	TR	Group of trails around Meziadin Lake and Meziadin Area.
7007	Recent	CA	Cabin; a stop to White River.
7008	Past	CA	Hunting and trapping cabin.
7009	Past	CA	"Let's Make a Deal" campsite, bulldozed over.
7010	Both	CA	Big village site, several cabins. Access Meziadin Lake.
7011	Past	BS	Graves (two children).
7012	Both	FA, CA	Trout fishing, cabin. Access Meziadin Lake.
7013	Past	CA	Anhahl'yee.
7014	Both	PC	Huckleberries; blueberries.
7015	Both	PC	Areas burnt to promote berry production; huckleberries, blueberries.
7016	Current	PC, HA	Huckleberries, blueberries, grizzly and black bear hunting.
7017	Current	HA	Bear hunting.
7018	Current	HA, FA, TL	Wetlands used for trapping martens; heavy (at mouth of Tintina and Hanna) and abundant wildlife hotspot area; hunting and fishing; bears, beavers, birds, rearing grounds.
7019	Past	HS	Historic site.
7020	Current	FA	Sockeye, trout year round. Fishing at Meziadin Falls.
7021	Current	FA	Fishing throughout Meziadin Lake, especially trout, year-round (including ice fishing). Lake does not freeze reliably anymore, so winter access is risky.
7022	Past	HS	Historic site.
7023	Past	BS	Gravesite.
7024	Both	CA, DW	Cabin at Spruce Creek, heavy use. Hunts and berries are documented on walls.
7025	Past	CA	Historical cabin.
7026	Both	CA	Fisheries, historical cabin.
7027	Past	CA	Paul's cabin.
7028	Past	CP	Hunting/trapping camp.
7029	Past	CP	Peter Morrison's camp.
7030	Both	HA, PC, TL	Moose alley; limited at other times but concentrated here in fall and spring; bear in spring; marten. Spruce Creek - moose crossing. Huckleberries and cranberries. Trap collection area. Wetlands.
7031	Both	HA, TL, PC	Similar to 7030, but not as good.
7032	Both	HS, HA	Old burnt out areas (to encourage berries ~ 70 years ago). Culturally modified trees. Has been logged on north side. Moose hunting - heavy area - corridor, moose river crossing; wolves watch moose from the ridge. Trail along the river. Rabbit snaring.
7033	Current	PC	Cranberry, huckleberry and blueberry picking - one of the better areas.
7034	Past	TR	Trails along Bowser Lake to cabin at Graveyard Point, and branching trails to Hidden Lake over Mt. Anderson. Remnants and cabins.

*(continued)*

**SKII KM LAX HA TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND USE STUDY**

**Table 3.5–1. Summary of Skii km Lax Ha Historic and Contemporary TK/TU Sites**

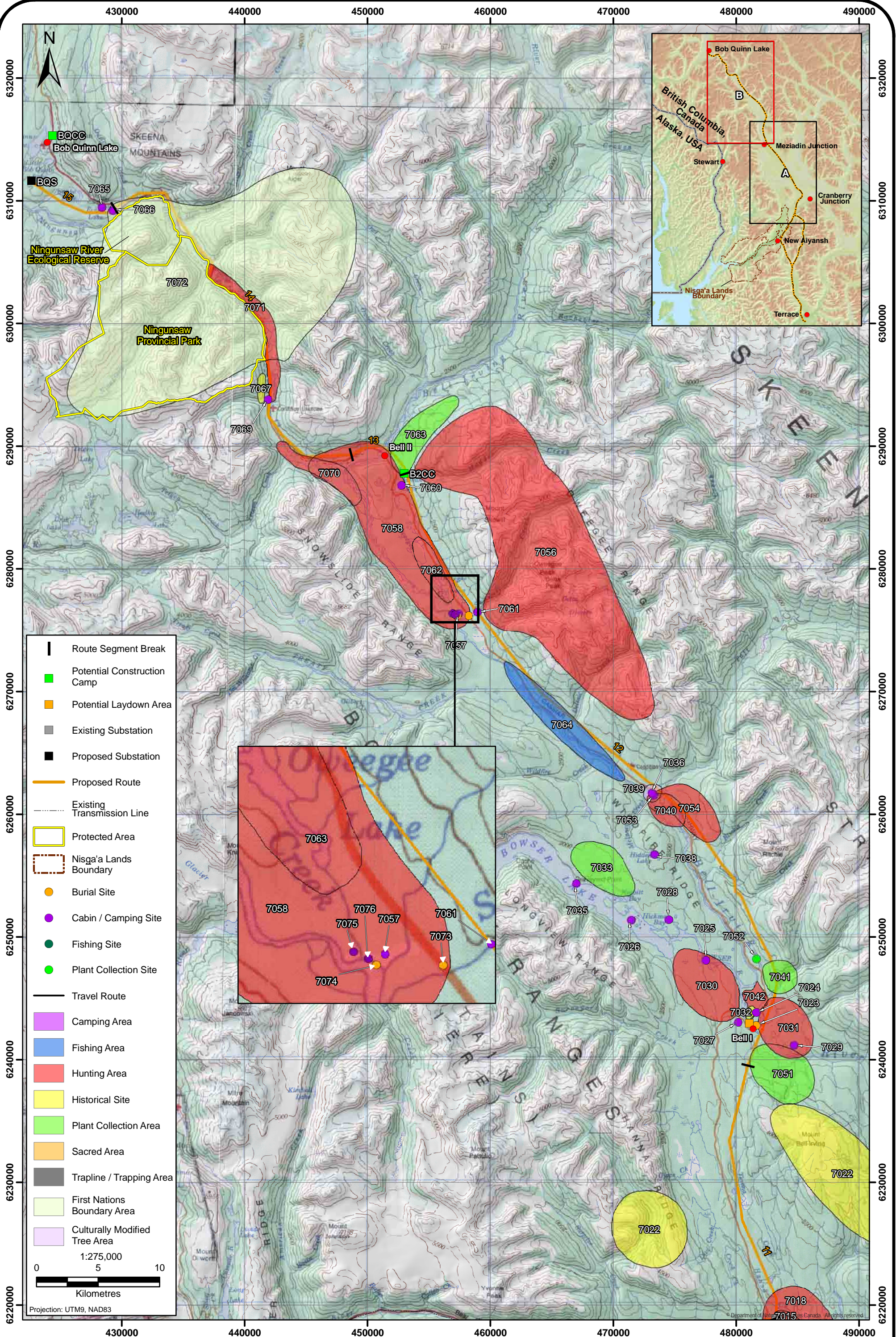
<b>Site ID</b>	<b>Past/Current</b>	<b>Site Type</b>	<b>Description of Site</b>
7035	Past	CA, BS, SA, RS	Graveyard Point; spiritual site/sacred area.
7036	Past	CA	Hunting and trapping cabin. Moose area.
7037	Past	TR, TL	One of the few passes/trails to get to the Nass headwaters.
7038	Past	CA	Cabin on Hidden Lake.
7039	Current	CMT	Culturally modified trees. Area is logged.
7040	Current	HA, TL	Good moose hunting and bear hunting in winter and spring, and beaver along Taft Creek. Area logged.
7041	Current	PC	Huckleberry picking at Spruce Creek.
7042	Current	HA	Rabbit snaring. "just down the little bushy flat" and near the gravel pit.
7050	Current	PC	Pine mushroom picking.
7051	Past	PC	Huckleberry picking; trapping at wetlands and lakes. Lemmings, martens, wolves, wolverine. Old cabins.
7052	Past	PC	Lean-to (Peter Morrison buried).
7053	Past	CA	Cabin (Peter Morrison, Skawill).
7054	Current	HA, TL	Moose hunting, Beaver City.
7055	Past	TR	Trail up Taft Creek to Nass watershed; one of the only good corridors to the Nass.
7056	Current	HA	Goats galore along the glacier. Two separate groups of grizzly bears: high alpine and the bear that are down on the Oweegee fishing.
7057	Past	CA	Daniel Skawill's smokehouse, four-five cabins/graves/split timbers, pots pans.
7058	Current	HA	Moose calving grounds, trapping, beaver, berries, fish.
7059	Past	TR	Trail easterly to groundhog area; trail to Treaty Creek crossings and through Ningunsaw Pass.
7060	Past	CA	Lean-to, CMTs, trapline in the area.
7061	Current	CA	Current, heavily used cabin.
7062	Current	PC	Huckleberries and blueberries.
7063	Current	PC	Huckleberries and blueberries. Grizzlies, moose hunting.
7064	Current	FA	Steelhead and rainbow trout fishing.
7065	Past	CA	Simon Gunanoot's cabin at Echo Lake.
7066	Past	CA	Old telegraph line cabin; 400-year old site.
7067	Past	HS	CMTs on ridge that predate 1846.
7068	Both	TR	Trail to Teigen Lake, beaver trapping.
7069	Past	CA	Cabin.
7070	Current	HA	Grizzly, moose, wolverine hunting in swampy areas.
7071	Both	HA	Grizzly, moose hunting, some berry picking.
7072	Past	BD	Buffer zone, as agreed upon by Bear Lake Sekani and Skii km Lax Ha (c. 1897). Beaver breeding ground, feeds Snowbank and Beaver Pond.



- Route Segment Break
- Potential Construction Camp
- Potential Laydown Area
- Existing Substation
- Proposed Substation
- Proposed Route
- Existing Transmission Line
- Protected Area
- Nisga'a Lands Boundary
- Burial Site
- Cabin / Camping Site
- Fishing Site
- Plant Collection Site
- Travel Route
- Camping Area
- Fishing Area
- Hunting Area
- Historical Site
- Plant Collection Area
- Sacred Area
- Trapline / Trapping Area
- First Nations Boundary Area
- Culturally Modified Tree Area

0 5 10  
Kilometres  
Projection: UTM9, NAD83

**Proposed Northwest Transmission Line**  
**Skikm Lax Ha Traditional Knowledge and Use Sites - Map A**



- Route Segment Break
- Potential Construction Camp
- Potential Laydown Area
- Existing Substation
- Proposed Substation
- Proposed Route
- Existing Transmission Line
- Protected Area
- Nisga'a Lands Boundary
- Burial Site
- Cabin / Camping Site
- Fishing Site
- Plant Collection Site
- Travel Route
- Camping Area
- Fishing Area
- Hunting Area
- Historical Site
- Plant Collection Area
- Sacred Area
- Trapline / Trapping Area
- First Nations Boundary Area
- Culturally Modified Tree Area

0 5 10  
Kilometres  
Projection: UTM9, NAD83

**Proposed Northwest Transmission Line  
Skii km Lax Ha Traditional Knowledge and Use Sites - Map B**



### 3.6 MAJOR HISTORICAL EVENTS

Table 3.6–1 is an overview of the chronology of the major historical events that inform Skii km Lax Ha understanding of their claim and rights to use the land. In some instances, the dates are approximate and based on ethno-historical documentation. These events are referenced and explained in more detail in the following sections.

**Table 3.6–1. Summary of Major Historical Events Important to Skii km Lax Ha Nation**

Date	Description of Event	Source(s)
~1829	Killing of Skawill and departure of GamlaxyeItxw and Hlamii from the Meziadin area. The dirge song sung on top of Mount Bell Irving, Site #7022 in Figure 3.5-1 as well as on top of Mount Madley as the location of the second dirge.	Barbeau and Benyon 1950a  Duff 1959:23-24  Sterritt, 1998: 261-62
~1840	Birth of Johnson Nagun.	<i>Delgamuukw vs Queen</i> , cr-ex Fred Johnson, 1953
~1873	Nisga'a travelled through Gyetem Galdo's territory on the way to war at Kispiox.	Barbeau and Benyon 1950b
1875	Lax-an-jok; a Tsetsaut village site at the confluence of Nass and Meziadin Rivers.	Duff 1959:33
1875	Gardiner's Gitanyow guides tell him to turn back shortly after passing the fishing site of Gwinak. According to Michael Inspring Bright's map of Gardiner's journey, AnxHon and Gwinak, which are Taawwook and Wii Litsxw's fishing sites, are south of Cranberry River, which the Skii km Lax Ha interpret to mean that the Gitanyow northern boundaries is at Cranberry River. These two sites are indicated on Inspring's map as south of the Cranberry River.	Skii km Lax Ha understanding of historical documentation  Sterritt 1998: 72
1875-1890	Simon Gunanoot grew up on his father's, Johnson Nagun's, hunting grounds at Meziadin. He was given permission by Nagun to use this area for the rest of his life. This privilege is called amniqwootxw.	B.F.89.20 Mortimer 1938 Appendix 5
1880	A.W. Clah's journal states that his Gitanyow guides were afraid of the Indians at Meziadin as they used to fight some years ago. Clah's guides persuaded Clah to return home.	Sterritt et al. 1998:213-216
1888	Gyetem Galdo was told to return to his home at the head of the Nass, generally considered to be the Meziadin area at that time.	Skii km Lax Ha understanding of historical documentation
1897	Johnson Nagun picked up three of Wii Litsxw's poaching traps in the Meziadin district, kept them and chased Wii Litsxw out. Wii Litsxw fled down the Nass.	McCallaugh (1897)
~1904	Simon Gunanoot forcefully expelled Taxwook and LigiIwii from the Meziadin, who were eventually killed south of the Meziadin.	Sterritt 1972 Cox 1958 Pearl 1926
1905	McCallaugh arrived at Lax-an-jok and left a pictograph of an individual he met there. The pictograph included a Raven on his head, which also appears on the grave stones of Alexander Mowatt (Gyetem Galdo) and Daniel Skawill (Skii km Lax Ha) and the Skii km Lax Ha totem pole.	Skii km Lax Ha understanding of historical documentation  Hazelton cemetery and totem pole

(continued)

**Table 3.6–1. Summary of Major Historical Events Important to Skii km Lax Ha Nation (completed)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Event</b>	<b>Source(s)</b>
1908	Death of Johnson Nagun. Daniel Skawill, Nagun’s brother, takes ownership of hunting territory “running 40 miles north and south of Bowser Lake. (Mortimer 1938, Simpson and Laetz 1934, Appendix 5)”	<i>Delgamuukw vs Queen</i> cr-ex Fred Johnson Mortimer 1938 (Appendix 5)
1912	Police chase of Simon Gunanoot via Portland Canal to Meziadin.	Williams 1982
1920	Jimmy Williams referred to lands on the north side of the Cranberry as belonging to Gyetem Galdo.	Hall 1994 McCallaugh 1905
1925	Daniel Skawill and Peter Shanoss charged and convicted of assaulting Henry Wii Litsxw and Edward Benson.	Provincial Police Records 1926
1934-38	Department of Mine Resources’ investigation of the tenure of the area 40 miles north and south of Bowser Lake. Daniel Skawill was indicated as owning the hunting grounds in question.	Mortimer 1938 (Appendix 5)
1959	Gitanyow chief consensus acknowledging the 1903 Tsetsaut village site at Meziadin Lake.	Duff 1959:33
1984	Jessie (née Lumm) Sterritt, niece of Nox To (mother of Gyetem Galdo) speaks at an overlap feast affirming Skii km Lax Ha’s ownership of Meziadin Lake.	Sterritt 1986
1986	Neil J. Sterritt, President of the Gitxsan Tribal Council wrote, acknowledging the Skii km Lax Ha claim and oral histories to the Meziadin and Mt. Madley / Kwinageese areas and stated he had, extensive supportive evidence, Meziadin Lake was owned by Skii km Lax Ha Nation	Sterritt 1986
2007	Skii km Lax Ha enter their traditional territory boundaries into the Consultation Database	Integrated Land Management Bureau (ILMB)

### 3.7 LANGUAGE USE

#### 3.7.1 Description

The Skii km Lax Ha have indicated that previous generations spoke the Tsetsaut language, a dialect of the Athapaskan language group. The Yinka Déné Language Institute (2006) notes that Tsetsaut was spoken in the Portland Canal area of northwestern British Columbia. The language is no longer spoken and has been documented to have been extinct since the early 20th century. The term ‘Tsetsaut’ comes from the meaning of the word “those of the interior” which was used by the Gitxsan and Nisga’a to refer to the Athapaskan-speaking people to the north and east. This also included some Tahltan and Sekani groups (Yinka Déné Language Institute 2006). The language was studied by the ethnographer Franz Boas (in the late 1800s), who was only able to collect a fragmentary amount of linguistic information (Duff 1981; Boas 1895; Boas and Goddard 1924). Other linguists who have studied the information collected by Boas have described the language as “the most strikingly aberrant...of all Athapaskan languages” (Kraus 1973:917). George Derrick in his interview with Barbeau and Benyon in 1924 also indicated that “Lurhawn was now speaking Tsetsaut. He and the rest of the Kanhada, at that time, were speaking the Tsetsaut tongue” (Barbeau and Benyon, 1924). In an interview with Patti Smith in 1980 (Jessie Sterritt and Risdale, interview), Jessie (Lumm) Sterritt (1980), she indicated that she and her sister ancestors spoke Athapaskan dialects, including Carrier. They also spoke Chinook and Gitxsan. Jessie also reports in the interview that the Josephs spoke Carrier as well.

#### 3.7.2 Numbers of Speakers

During TK/TU interview and mapping sessions, Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders indicated that few of their members speak the Tsetsaut or Gitxsan language with the exception of several Elders (K1,

interview) and ½ of Kitwancool spoke Tsetsaut/Stikine language. According to the Skii km Lax Ha and census records, Esther and Lucy Joseph, spoke Carrier, which is part of the Athapaskan language group. Also, Jessie Sterritt (Lumm) is reported to have spoken one of the Athapaskan languages. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, half of the Kitwancool who migrated from the north to the lower Nass spoke Tsetsaut.

### 3.8 1800s OR EARLIER

#### 3.8.1 Overview

The Skii km Lax Ha understand the location of the Tsetsaut village site of Tsimanluuskeexs (Gitanyus) to be in the Groundhog Range/Blackwater area. Sterritt et al. (1998) indicate that is in the Bowser area, 80 km to the east within the Awijii territory. According to Barbeau and Benyon (B.F. 61.3, 64.1, 61.8, and 59.5), Tsimanluuskeexs is at the headwaters of the Nass and Skeena rivers in Groundhog Country. The general area is at times referred to as Gitangus. Ambrose (also known as Arthur) Derrick identified the location of the Tsimanluuskeeks village at Blackwater River, and the mountain Tsimanluuskeek in the Groundhog Range. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, Ambrose states: Skawill (Skii km Lax Ha) remained at Tsimanluuskeeks at Blackwater River; after the Tsetsaut speaking Gamlaxyetxw and their related families migrated to Gitanyow (B.F. 59.5 in c.1830 (Barbeau and Benyon 1950a, c; Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs Nd.).

The Barbeau Files on information from Robert Pearl in 1927 also state that Daniel Skawill (Skii km Lax Ha) hunted at the head of the Nass (Barbeau and Benyon 1950f), which includes the Groundhog Range and Tsimanluuskeexs and the territory Ksemgunqweek. John Brown described the general location of the Ksemgunqweek territory to Constance Cox in 1920. He described it at the head of the Nass River with dimensions of 40 miles long (64.4 km) by 20 miles wide (32.2 km) (B.F. 79.2).

A Skii km Lax Ha adaawk notes that Gamlaxyetxw left the village of Tsem'anlusraerhs at Meziadin Lake following the death/murder of his brother Luuxhon (aka the killing of Skawill), whom he killed for taking his wife Larhkibu. Luuxhon had many friends and allies in the area. Fearing that they would avenge the death when they discovered that he had killed his brother, Gamlaxyetxw (the Tsetsaut) fled the area, moving far away with his family, establishing a new village at Kitwancool (Barbeau and Benyon 1950c; B.F. 59.3). This event is also reflected in the Skii km Lax Ha totem pole that stands in Hazelton (Plate 3.8-1 and Appendix 4). The split in the top figure represents the familial divide and their movement downstream to Kitwancool. The Skii km Lax Ha discussed the departure of Luuxhon and his family from the area, indicating that they sang dirges at the top of Mount Bell-Irving (Site # 7022 in Figure 3.5-2) and Mount Madley before migrating south. The Skii km Lax Ha understand this migration to be the same as the Tahltan concession referred to in Sterritt 1998.

This adaawk is commemorated on two totem poles: the Skii km Lax Ha's totem pole carved c. 1880 and Gamlaxyetxw and Luuxhon's totem pole, the oldest known totem pole in Gitanyow, named People of the Smoke Hole carved c. 1850 (Simpson 2007). The oral history of the killing of Luuxhon/Skawill is documented in the figure at the top of both totem poles. The top figure is split in half depicting the separation of the Tsetsaut Raven Clan over this killing (Plate 3.8-1). This figure is called Gistaluc (B.F. 73.3), meaning to wander around, migrating down river. The migration of Gamlaxyetxw and the splitting of the clan has been described by George Derrick (Barbeau and Benyon 1950a), Fred Johnson (Barbeau and Benyon 1950c), and Simon Gunanoot (B.F.90.1) and was documented in Duff's *Histories, Territories, and Laws of the Kitwancool* (1959). According to the Skii km Lax Ha, Gitanyow's new totem poles (i.e., People of the Smokehole) have undergone changes (e.g.,

## SKII KM LAX HA TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND USE STUDY

split at the top of Skii km Lax Ha totem pole does not appear in post-1929 poles), which indicates a revision or removal of historical events.



*Plate 3.8–1. Skii km Lax Ha Totem Pole in Old Hazelton, BC*

George Derrick (Luuxhon, Tsiwa) was born c. 1840 to 1845. In an interview with Barbeau, he described an event in the Meziadin area that happened before his birth. Derrick named a number of his relatives that were killed by an avalanche while gathering food in the Meziadin area. He went on to describe the loneliness Luuxhon felt longing to go back to his old territory at Meziadin. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, this Luuxhon adaawk at Meziadin happened before George Derrick's birth c.1845, and just before Gamlaxyeltxw, Luuxhon, and Hlamii's migration from Meziadin and Mount Madley areas to Gitanyow, for the killing of Luuxhon/Skawill in c. 1830. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, the killing of Skawill occurred at Site 7010 in Figure 3.5–2.

The Luuxhon/Gamlaxyetxw dispute initiated a series of murders and wars in which Luuxhon's Tsetsaut Raven Clan brothers at Meziadin (Luuxhon/Skawill.) made a retaliatory raid on Gitanyow, significantly diminishing their population. Several generations later, Gitanyow was repopulated and allied with Kisequecla and the great war chief Ksu, who proceeded to Meziadin and killed all of the Meziadin Tsetsauts (Prov. BC 2005: 16).

A footnote provided by George Derrick, identifies the English names of the specific individuals involved in the Luuxhon/ Gamlaxyeltxw dispute. Because English names are provided in the footnote it would appear that these claimed events have a post-contact date, and did not happen 400 to 500 years before contact. The footnote reads:

*The cause of the fight between Sam Douse and his own brother [Richard Douse, Gwasslam] against Gamlaxyeltxw was his own wife [Lilly Douse nee White], and Albert Williams and Elwin Williams, is the fact that the Douse family is claiming this territory involved here. They had come to blows after he left (Barbeau and Benyon 1950d:12)<sup>3</sup>*

According to the interviews that Barbeau conducted, the Meziadin and Mount Madley areas were the lands Gamlaxyeltxw, Luuxhon, and Hlamii vacated for the killing of Skawill (Barbeau and Benyon 1950a). According to the Skii km Lax Ha, it documents the exclusive ownership of the Mount Madley and Meziadin areas by the Skii km Lax Ha, including Daniel Skawill (Simpson 2007:12).

Both Nisga'a and Gitanyow chiefs and representatives in the early 1900s provide an indication of the dates around significant events related to the Tsetsaut settlement in and around Meziadin. For example, Charlie and Johnny Morven (both Nisga'a), in a 1929 interview with Barbeau and Beynon, inform them that Luuxhon was requesting permission to access the Kinischuck area. Nisga'a Chief Minee'esk (in reference to the Kinischuck area) stated that Luuxhon was a recent arrival there through a marriage and "the Gitwinhku'l [Kitwancool] have absolutely no claim to this territory whatever. That is exclusive" (Sterritt, 1998).

### **3.8.2 Travel**

Gerry Gunanoot, the nephew of David Gunanoot, describes a travel route to Stewart from Hanna Ridge, which passed along Hanna Ridge, up to the top of Meziadin Lake along a glacier bed and then travelled about 14 miles (22.53 km) toward Stewart, as far as the road ran from Stewart in the winter months (Delgamuukw vs Queen, cr-ex Gerry Gunanoot: 3-4).

### **3.8.3 Occupancy**

The Tsetsaut had a village at Meziadin known as Tsem'anlusraerhs (Barbeau and Benyon 1950d, Appendix 6). A story recorded by Barbeau and Benyon in 1927 (Barbeau and Benyon 1950f) also indicates that the Tsetsaut occupied this area during the summer.

### **3.8.4 Trading**

The area at the head of the Nass at Meziadin Lake was an important place for annual summer trading. During the summer months the people of Kitwanga, Gitlarhdamks, Laxwiiyip, Nisga'a, and Tsetsaut would come together at this location to conduct annual trading with their neighbours (Barbeau and Benyon 1950f).

### **3.8.5 Hunting and Trapping**

George Derrick recounts that groundhog were plentiful in the winter near Mount Bell Irving and were hunted with bow and arrow. Derrick also notes that there were many beaver in the winter in the Mount Madley area that were hunted for many years (Barbeau and Benyon 1950a).

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<sup>3</sup> Additional names added by Skii km Lax Ha in square brackets.

### 3.9 1900s

#### 3.9.1 Overview

The Skii km Lax Ha note the detrimental legacy of the trapline registry (introduced in the early 1920s) for Aboriginal tenure and historical understanding. According to the Skii km Lax ha, Henry Wii Litsxw wrongfully applied for a trapline in the Meziadin Lake area. By way of census records, Skii km Lax Ha have determined that Wii Litsxw was the chief of Wilp Lelt, and, as such, they do not consider him entitled to apply for a trapline in an area that the Skii km Lax Ha have determined was not his. There was much ensuing dispute between the Skii km Lax Ha and the Wii Litsxw regarding this registry. For the Skii km Lax Ha this is evident in the police reporting in 1926, where Daniel Skawill and Peter Shanoss were arrested and fined for assaulting Henry Wii Litsxw and Fred Benson (Provincial Police, 1926), presumably over the trapline registry issue. Also, the Skii km Lax Ha note that the killing of Taxwook and Ligigalwil speaks to the Skii km Lax Ha exercise of exclusive use of the area as evidenced by the unretaliated killing of Taxwook and Ligigalwil.

Given the Aboriginal tenure system, stories of territorial protection and defence are also significant for understanding ownership and rights to use. In the past, jurisdiction over a particular area was expressed in a variety of ways, including expulsion and death. There are examples of this in the ethno-historical record. According to a letter from McCallaugh in 1897 and Sterritt (1998), Johnson Nagun found a member of the Gitanyow Wolf clan, Wii Litsxw, trapping in an area that the Skii km Lax Ha understand that Nagun held tenureship, and as such, Nagun chased him out of the Meziadin area and took his traps. In 1904, Taxwook and Ligiglwi arrived at Lax-an-jok, a village at the confluence of the Nass and Meziadin rivers, where Simon Gunanoot forcefully expelled them from the area and eventually killed them for camping (Barbeau and Benyon 1950f). As a gesture of peace, Taxwook and Ligiglwi were wrapped in bear skins, which, according to the Duff files, prevented retaliation and is commemorated in the 1905 Gitanyow totem pole with a bear carving. According to Robert Pearl (Barbeau and Benyon 1950f) and Bob Skawill (Daniel Skawill's son), the date of the killing of Taxwook and Ligiglwi is approximated in the early 1900s, before Simon Gunanoot's birth (c. 1873). This is also documented in *Histories, Territories and Laws of the Kitwancool* as occurring in 1903 (Duff, 1959: 32).

Robert Pearl (Barbeau and Benyon 1950f) provides an account of the killing of Taxwook and Ligigalwil. Pearl describes Lilukus' life being spared because his mother had raised one of the Meziadin Lake Tsetsauts. According to the Skii km Lax Ha (Simpson 2007), Lilukus [Lulaks] is a name belonging to the matrilineage of Gyetem Galdo/Skii km Lax Ha. Members of the matrilineage of Gyetem Galdo/Skii km Lax Ha migrated to the lower Nass in the 1800s. Nox Ganni from the Gyetem Galdo/Skii km Lax Ha matrilineage was given to a Nisga'a in marriage. Her husband was brought to Gitanmaax to carve Skii km Lax Ha's second totem pole in c. 1880. Nox Ganni's brother, Albert Allen, held the name Gyetem Galdo. He migrated with his brother, the previous Gyetem Galdo, Steven Allen, and others to the Nass. The Raven Clan relatives of Lulaks at Meziadin Lake before and during this event are individuals documented as Gyetem Galdo (Barbeau and Benyon 1950a), Naguun (Cox 1958:35), Skawill (Mortimer 1938 (Appendix 5); Barbeau and Benyon 1950f), Sanaw, and Gunanoot (Cox 1958:35; Collison 1940; BF 89.2).

All documented accounts of the killing of Taxwook and Ligiglwi are clear on several points: Taxwook and Ligiglwi were told to leave Meziadin and return to their own village at Gitanyow; they left Meziadin and camped south of Meziadin remaining on Tsetsaut territory. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, Taxwook and Ligiglwi were killed approximately at Site #7019 in Figure 3.5-2. According to Aboriginal law, the actions of trespass by Taxwook and Ligiglwi were punishable by death without

compensation or right to retaliation. This was supported by consensus of the 1950 chiefs of Gitanyow documented in *Histories, Territories, and Laws of the Kitwancool* (Duff 1959), which also states that no retaliation ensued for Taxwook and Ligiglwil's trespass. The manner in which the trespassers were killed and handled was appreciated and considered an act of kindness by the Meziadin Tsetsaut.

In 1959, the Gitanyow chiefs agreed in consensus, that the killing of Taxwook and Ligiglwil happened after the Hudson's Bay Company opened in Telegraph Creek in 1903 (Duff 1959: 32-33). Taxwook and Ligiglwil were killed c. 1904, before McCallaugh went to Meziadin in 1905 and wrote *Autumn Leaves* in 1906. McCallaugh (1906) dates the killing of Taxwook and Ligiglwil to c. 1850 in his story.

Furthermore, Skii km Lax Ha indicate that a government-led investigation into the trapline registry dispute further supports their of understanding of their territory. According to Skii km Lax Ha (Simpson 2007), "ownership of this territory has been predetermined by the Indians in 1908, and again by the consensus of the older Indians and an Agent of the Federal Crown Mr. Mortimer in 1938" (Mortimer 1938, Appendix 5).

In 1934, John Simpson and Walter Latz declared in an official government document that they had witnessed a meeting 35 years earlier between Simon Gunanoot's heirs and the Stikine Indians who claimed the trapping grounds held by Simon Gunanoot's father (Johnson Nagun). It was at this meeting that Simpson and Latz witnessed the terms of peace between the two groups and that Gunanoots heirs were entitled to hold the hunting grounds "running 40 miles North and South from Bowsver Lake, B.C. (Simpson and Latz 1934)" However, this declaration was followed up by four-year investigation, culminating in a letter from G. C. Mortimer, Indian Agent, in 1938 further clarifying the matter:

*Simon Gunanoot had no claim to this hunting ground as he was descended from the Gail family who hunted at the headwaters of the Skeena River...*

*...Daniel Skawill, who now owns the hunting ground in question – and rightly so according to information received – was the brother of Simon Gunanoot's father and proved claim to this hunting ground on the latter's death. However, Simon Gunanoot was allowed to trap there during his lifetime, of which he took advantage. He died and was buried there.*

*Since that time Mrs. Sarah Gunanoot, widow of the late Simon Gunanoot, and her grown-up children have been warned by the Game Warden and myself to keep off this hunting ground... (Mortimer 1938).*

According to the Skii km Lax Ha understanding of the information provided by George Derrick and Isaac Tens, the area from Meziadin south to the Cranberry River was taken over by the Gyetem Galdo lineage, which is linked to the Skii km Lax Ha lineage. The connection arises from Lily (née White) Douse, who was a sister of James White (who incorrectly took the name Gyetem Galdo) (Figure 3.4-1). This area from Wolverine Creek to Cranberry River has been under some dispute between Gamlaxyeltxw and Gyetem Galdo. Support for Lily (née White) Douse and her line owning this land came from Gwasslam [Richard Douse], Biiyoux [Samuel Douse] and Raven Clan Chief Wadaxyetsxw [Albert Williams] (Barbeau and Benyon 1950d, Appendix 6).

Simon's friend, George Bierns, drafted a map for Pinkerton detectives. The map depicts Simon's use of the area in the headwaters of the Nass River and refers to it as Simon's hunting grounds. The map is stamped October 23, 1909, Provincial Police (Williams 1982). Furthermore, Williams (1982) indicates

## SKII KM LAX HA TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND USE STUDY

that Simon Gunanoot was well aware of the Iskut line of country running down the Iskut River ( southwest of Bob Quinn towards the Unuk River).

Constable Kirby also produced a map around the same time depicting Simon's occupation at the head of the Nass and a trail to one of his cabins (Williams 1982). The cabin location appears to be the same as identified on George Bierns map.

According to the Skii km Lax Ha, information from Gardiner in 1875 (Hall 1994), McCullagh's journal in 1905 (McCullagh 1906), and Jimmy Williams in 1920 (Barbeau and Benyon 1950b) indicate to some extent the Gitanyow's northern boundary at the Cranberry River.

Gardiner's information in 1875 (Hall 1994) potentially indicates the Gitanyow northern boundary and also provides evidence that the Gitanyow boundary lay south of the Cranberry River. Gardiner interviewed an individual near the fishing site Gwinak (belonging to the House of Wii Litsxw/Taxwook), south of the Cranberry River. According to Skii km Lax Ha, Gwinak is several miles south of the Cranberry and Nass River junctions. The location of this site is also identified on Map 27 in Sterritt et al. (1998) as location #60. It is spelled Gwinhaak (place of geese). Gwinhaak is also identified on Map 28 in Sterritt et al. (1998) several miles south of the Cranberry and Nass junction. James Haidzemxs, a Gitanyow Chief, also provided Barbeau with information of Gwinhaak (B.F. 62.9). Robert Pearl's maps from 1939 also identified Gwinak south of the Cranberry River.

During Gardiner's travels through the area in the 1870s (Hall 1994), he was told to go back up the trail [Grease Trail], to where it crosses a large stream [Cranberry River]. Later on in Gardiner's journal his location is again specifically identified while standing on Mount Bell Irving. Based on information from Gardiner's Gitanyow guide, they were not go to the Mount Madley and Meziadin areas.

The 1905 journal of J.B. McCullagh (McCullagh 1906) also identified the Gitanyow northern boundary at Cranberry River. Upon crossing the Cranberry River heading north, McCullagh's Gitanyow and Nisga'a guides warned everyone to load their rifles, because they were now on the enemy's territory. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, the Cranberry River boundary also matches the northern boundary of the combined Gitanyow Nisga'a petition of 1913.

Although Gardiner (Hall 1994) refers to the land north of the Cranberry River as Tahltan land, the words Tsetsaut, Laxwiiyip, and Tahltan are difficult to distinguish. The word 'Tahltan' and/or 'Stikine' was often used by ethnographers in this region to refer to groups to the north. In some cases, Tahltan would have indicated the Tsetsaut, Tahltan, or other northern groups (B.F. 61.2). Based on information from his Gitanyow guide on Mount Bell Irving, Gardiner's 1875 journal referred to the same occupants as Stikine Indians. Looking down the Nass to the Cranberry River he told Gardiner that the Gitanyow do not come very far up the low range of hills [Tax laxwiiyip].

In a 1920 interview with Barbeau (Barbeau and Benyon 1950b), Jimmy Williams also identified the Cranberry River as the northern boundary of the Gitanyow claim. Williams told of the last Nisga'a raid on the Kispiox c. 1870. Williams identifies the land on the north side of the Cranberry River on the trail heading to the headwaters of the Kispiox River.

The Kitwancool trapline is described in Sterritt (1998) as a collective registry that covered the entire Kitwancool territory. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, Henry Wii Litsxw incorrectly registered the Kitwancool trapline to cover an area in and around Meziadin Lake. Skii km Lax Ha indicate that old maps of this area depict Cottonwood Creek to be near Cranberry River, rather than proximate to



Surveyor's Creek. This reflects their understanding of the extent of the Kitwancool territory being south of the Cranberry, whereas their territory extends north of Cranberry River.

### 3.9.2 Burials

A number of graves belonging to members of the Gunanoot family are along the shore of Bowser Lake (Site #7035, Figure 3.5-2). Simon Gunanoot is buried there along with two of his children and his mother and father (Cox 1958). During interview and mapping sessions, Skii km Lax Ha also identified other historic burial sites, including Sites #7011 in Figure 3.5-1 and 7023 in Figure 3.5-2.

### 3.9.3 Hunting and Trapping

Numerous topographic features were named after the individuals who used the areas for hunting and trapping, as noted in Section 3.1.1. In 1929, Daniel Skawill applied for and was granted the registration of a trapline in the Bowser Lake, Todedada Creek, and Todedada Lake area, totalling 30 miles (48.2 km) in length. The application indicates that he had trapped the line for 50 years. The return on the line reported between 1931 and 1932 included 34 beaver, 1 fisher, 7 marten, and 2 muskrats. The trapline was transferred to Bob and Steven Skawill in the 1940s (Prov. BC 1929). Because of his hunting and trapping rights in the area and the camp that he had at Oweege Smokehouse, Mount Skowill and Skowill Creek were named after him (BCILMB 2009a).

Simon Gunanoot hunted and trapped in the area around the mountain which now bears his name (BCILMB 2009d). Furthermore, Williams (1982) indicates that Simon Gunanoot and his family spent several years in the area northwest of the "groundhog country" in and around the Iskut River, which he notes "was well known to Simon and his family."

In a 1980 interview with Patti Smith, Jessie (Lumm) Sterritt and Martha Risdale describe hunting grouse and rabbit in the winter with a dog team and toboggan, travelling along the frozen Skeena from New Hazelton to Telegraph Creek.

Johnson Nagan (1840–1908) was known to hunt and trap in the headwaters of the Nass River in late winter, early spring. He would travel from Kispiox to his hunting grounds in the Nass headwaters by the Kispiox River. He had success in hunting and trapping marten, beaver and bear. (B.F.89.20)

Groundhogs were hunted in the Groundhog Range on the east headwaters of the Nass River. The name for this area, Ksemgugweek, roughly translates to 'groundhog hunting grounds' (Simpson 2007). Daniel Skawill trapped in the area around Mount Skuyhill in the late 1920s (BCILMB 2009b). Simon Gunanoot shot a lot of caribou in the Adam Creek area (Sterritt 1998 and Delgamuukw vs Queen, cr-ex Gerry Gunanoot, 1998).

### 3.9.4 Fish

George Derrick recounts fishing activities undertaken by the Tsetsaut at a village along the Nass River where a tributary joins the Nass River at a large waterfall. They caught spring and sockeye salmon and "used hooks to spear the salmon" (Barbeau and Benyon 1950d, Appendix 6). Johnson Negun also lived at Meziadin Lake, where he fished and raised his son, Simon Gunanoot (Fred Johnson 1926 and Cox 1958)

### 3.9.5 Occupancy and Travel

Gerry Gunanoot described a camp location at Taft Creek, east of Bowser Lake. They used to access the area on foot, by snowshoe, and by snowmobile (Delgamuukw vs Queen, cr-ex Gerry Gunanoot 1998).

Daniel Skawill had three cabins that were used by those who ran traplines in the area. One of his cabins was on Skowill Creek by Oweege Lake and another was on Bowser Lake. During winter trapping, supplies could be flown in and dropped off on Bowser Lake and Gilbert Lake (Delgamuukw vs Queen, cr-ex Gerry Gunanoot, 1998). Daniel Skawill also had a cabin near Adam Creek (Darlene Simpson, unpublished data).

During Skii km Lax Ha interview and mapping sessions, several historic trails were identified, including Sites #7001, 7002, 7003, 7004, and 7006 in Figure 3.5-1. According to Skii km Lax Ha, these were used extensively as a means of travel by foot from cabin to cabin, connecting different hunting and trapping areas (K1/K2, interview).

In the 1980 interview with Patti Smith, Jessie (Lumm) Sterritt describes travel from Prince Rupert and Stewart by boat, and then hiking to Bowser and Awijii, all of which took a total of 2 weeks to do. Travel was expedited in the winter with snowshoes (Sterritt and Risdale, interview). Travel from Bowser Lake to Stewart was over the glacier, which was fraught with danger, and Jessie describes several near misses with family members almost falling into crevasses or off cliffs.

Skii km Lax Ha also document several historic cabins during their interview and mapping session, including sites #7008, 7009, 7010, 7013, 7025, 7027, 7035, 7036, 7038, 7053, 7057, 7060, 7065, 7066, 7069 in Figures 3.5-1 and 3.5-2. In their interview with Patti Smith, Martha Risdale and Jessie (Lumm) Sterritt confirm that they frequently camped around Meziadin Lake, where there were a lot of cabins (Sterritt and Risdale, interview). These exist in varying degrees of disrepair and degraded states, or are approximated if they no longer exist, based on Skii km Lax Ha knowledge or historical documentation. These were built and occupied by Skii km Lax Ha descendants, including Martha Risdale, Daniel Skawill, Simon Gunanoot, and Peter Morrison.

Jessie Sterritt's interview also provides reference to dozens of cabins in the Meziadin Lake area. Daniel Skawill also had a cabin at the confluence Kwinageese and Nass rivers (McEachern 1991 and Wilson).

Sterritt (1998) describes Callison staying at Meziadin, and he and his guides slipping away to visit Simon Gunanoot. This provides further support for Skii km Lax Ha territorial claim (since Simon Gunanoot was given permission by Johnson Negin to use and occupy his territory), confirmed by Mortimer 1938 (Appendix 5).

### 3.10 CONTEMPORARY

The interview and mapping sessions revealed extensive Skii km Lax Ha contemporary knowledge and use data for the area in and around the Highway 37 corridor from Cranberry Junction to Ningunsaw Pass. Skii km Lax Ha sites were recorded during interview and mapping sessions in July and August, 2009. A total of 34 contemporary sites were identified during these sessions, including 4 cabins/camps, 7 hunting/trapping areas, 11 multi-use sites, 7 plant-gathering sites, 2 fishing areas, 2 trails, and 1 other site. Table 3.10-1 provides details about each site, including its ID number, whether it is both past and contemporary or exclusively current use, type of use, and brief description of the site. Site type codes are provided in Appendix 3. Figures 3.10-1 and 3.10-2 depict information from the table, with unique identifiers provided to link the table with the figure. All sites are non-

confidential; however, Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders have not disclosed information about their trapping and hunting methods in this EAC Application.

**Table 3.10–1. Summary of Skii km Lax Ha Contemporary TK/TU Sites**

Site ID	Current/Both (Past & Current)	Site Type	Description of Site
7000	Current	TL, PC, HA	Soapberry picking, moose hunting/crossing
7002	Both	TR, TL, HA	Old trail, trapline
7006	Both	TR	Group of trails around Meziadin Lake and Meziadin Area
7007	Current	CA	Cabin; a stop to White River
7010	Both	CA	Big village site, several cabins. Access Meziadin Lake
7012	Both	FA, CA	Trout fishing, cabin. Access Meziadin Lake
7014	Both	PC	Huckleberries; blueberries
7015	Both	PC	Areas burnt to promote berry production; huckleberries, blueberries
7016	Current	PC, HA	Huckleberries, blueberries, grizzly, black bear hunting
7017	Current	HA	Bear hunting
7018	Current	HA, FA, TL	Wetlands used for trapping martens; heavy (at mouth of Tintina and Hanna) and abundant wildlife hotspot area; hunting and fishing; bears, beavers, birds, rearing grounds
7020	Current	FA	Sockeye, trout year round. Fishing at Meziadin Falls
7021	Current	FA	Fishing throughout Meziadin Lake, especially trout, year-round [including ice fishing]. Lake doesn't freeze reliably anymore, so winter access is risky
7024	Both	CA, DW	Cabin at Spruce Creek, heavy use. Hunts and berries are documented on walls
7026	Both	CA	Fisheries, historical cabin
7030	Both	HA, PC, TL	Moose alley; limited at other times but concentrated here in fall and spring; bear in spring; marten. Spruce Creek - moose crossing. Huckleberries and cranberries. Trap collection area. Wetlands
7031	Both	HA, TL, PC	Similar to 7030, but not as good
7032	Both	HS, HA	Old burnt out areas (to encourage berries ~ 70 years ago). Culturally modified trees. Has been logged on north side. Moose hunting - heavy area - corridor, moose river crossing; wolves watch moose from the ridge. Trail along the river. Rabbit snaring
7033	Current	PC	Cranberry, huckleberry and blueberry picking - one of the better areas
7039	Current	CMT	Culturally modified trees. Area is logged
7040	Current	HA, TL	Good moose hunting and bear hunting in winter and spring, and beaver along Taft Creek. Area logged
7041	Current	PC	Huckleberry picking at Spruce Creek
7042	Current	HA	Rabbit snaring. "just down the little bushy flat" and near the gravel pit
7050	Current	PC	Pine mushroom picking
7054	Current	HA, TL	Moose hunting, Beaver City
7056	Current	HA	Many goats along the glacier. 2 separate groups of grizzly bears: high alpine and the bear that are down on the Oweegee fishing
7058	Current	HA	Moose calving grounds, trapping, beaver, berries and fish
7061	Current	CA	Current, heavily-used cabin
7062	Current	PC	Huckleberries and blueberries
7063	Current	PC	Huckleberries and blueberries. Grizzlies, moose hunting
7064	Current	FA	Steelhead and rainbow trout fishing
7068	Both	TR	Trail to Teigen Lake, beaver trapping
7070	Current	HA	Grizzly, moose, wolverine hunting in swampy areas
7071	Both	HA	Grizzly, moose hunting, some berry picking

## SKII KM LAX HA TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND USE STUDY

The Project directly overlaps with 18 of the 65 Skii km Lax Ha traditional use sites, including berry harvesting, hunting, fishing, cultural, cabin, and boundary sites. Of particular importance and concern to the Skii km Lax Ha Nation is the cabin at Skowill Creek. Table 3.10–2 provides an overview of these sites, including site ID and a description of the site. Figures 3.10-3 and 3.10-4 present the sites in geographic context.

**Table 3.10–2. Summary of Skii km Lax Ha Traditional Use Sites Directly Intersecting the NTL Project**

SITE ID	SITE DETAILS AND NOTES
7005	Camping, beaver trapping, martens, wolverine, wolf hunting and baiting
7014	Harvest huckleberries and blueberries
7015	Areas burnt to promote berry production, including huckleberries and blueberries
7018	Wetlands used for trapping martens. At mouth of Tintina and Hanna, abundant wildlife area. Engage in hunting and fishing. Popular bear, beaver, bird, rearing grounds
7031	Harvest huckleberries and cranberries. Trap collection area
7039	Culturally modified trees. Area is logged
7040	Good moose hunting and bear hunting in winter and spring, and beaver along Taft Creek. Area logged
7041	Huckleberry picking at Spruce Creek
7050	Pine mushroom picking
7051	Huckleberry picking; trapping at wetlands and lakes. Lemmings, martens, wolves, and wolverine. Old cabins
7054	Moose hunting
7058	Moose calving grounds, trapping, beaver, berries, and fishing
7061	Skowill cabin. Current, heavily-used cabin
7063	Huckleberries and blueberries. Grizzlies and moose hunting
7064	Steelhead and rainbow trout fishing
7070	Grizzly, moose, wolverine hunting in swampy areas
7071	Grizzly, moose hunting, some berry picking
7072	Buffer zone, as agreed upon by Bear Lake Sekani and Skii km Lax Ha" (ca. 1897) Beaver breeding ground, feeds Snowbank and Beaver Pond

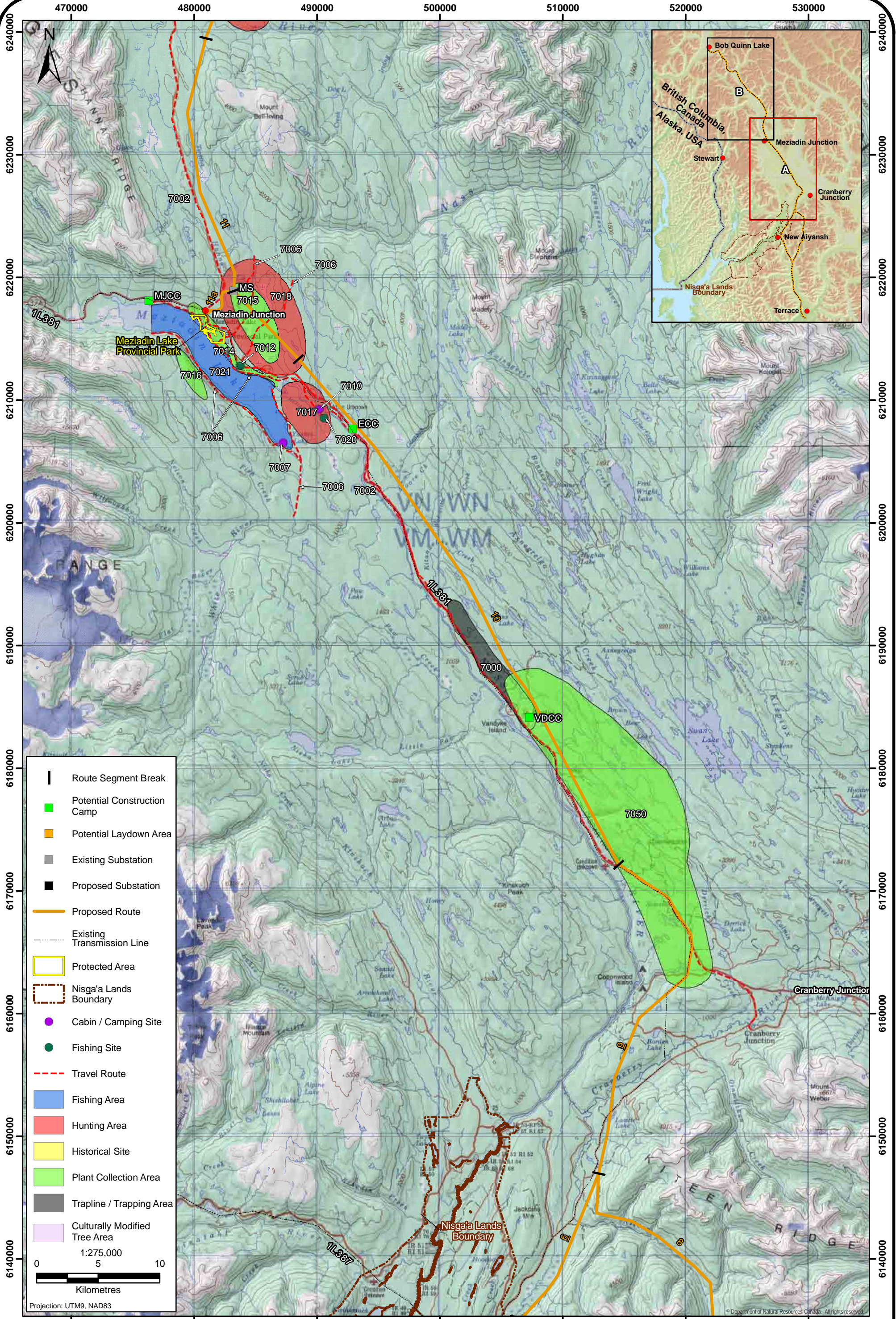
### 3.10.1 Burial Sites

There are several burial sites along Highway 37 and at Bowser Lake. Of all three burial sites, Site #7023 near Bell I (in Segment 12) is nearest the Project, which is less than 0.5 km away.

### 3.10.2 Hunting and Trapping

Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders and family members hunt extensively along the Highway 37 corridor and in concentrated clusters around Meziadin Lake, Bell I, Bell-Irving River, and Bell II. There are 17 Skii km Lax Ha past and current use sites associated with hunting and trapping (Figure 3.10-2 and 3.10-3), which makes up almost 30% of Skii km Lax Ha sites. They mostly hunt moose. During some seasons, Skii km Lax Ha harvest up to 15 moose to feed their immediate and extended family (K1, Interview). One of the knowledge holders expressed the importance of the land by saying: "When you're on welfare, you hear food banks here, food banks there. Well, this territory is my food bank and this is where I -- when I'm up against it, this is where I'm going to go" (K1, interview).

Members of the Skii km Lax Ha Nation combine several traditional use activities in one trip, including hunting moose while they are trapping. Besides moose hunting, the Skii km Lax Ha also hunt for black and grizzly bears.



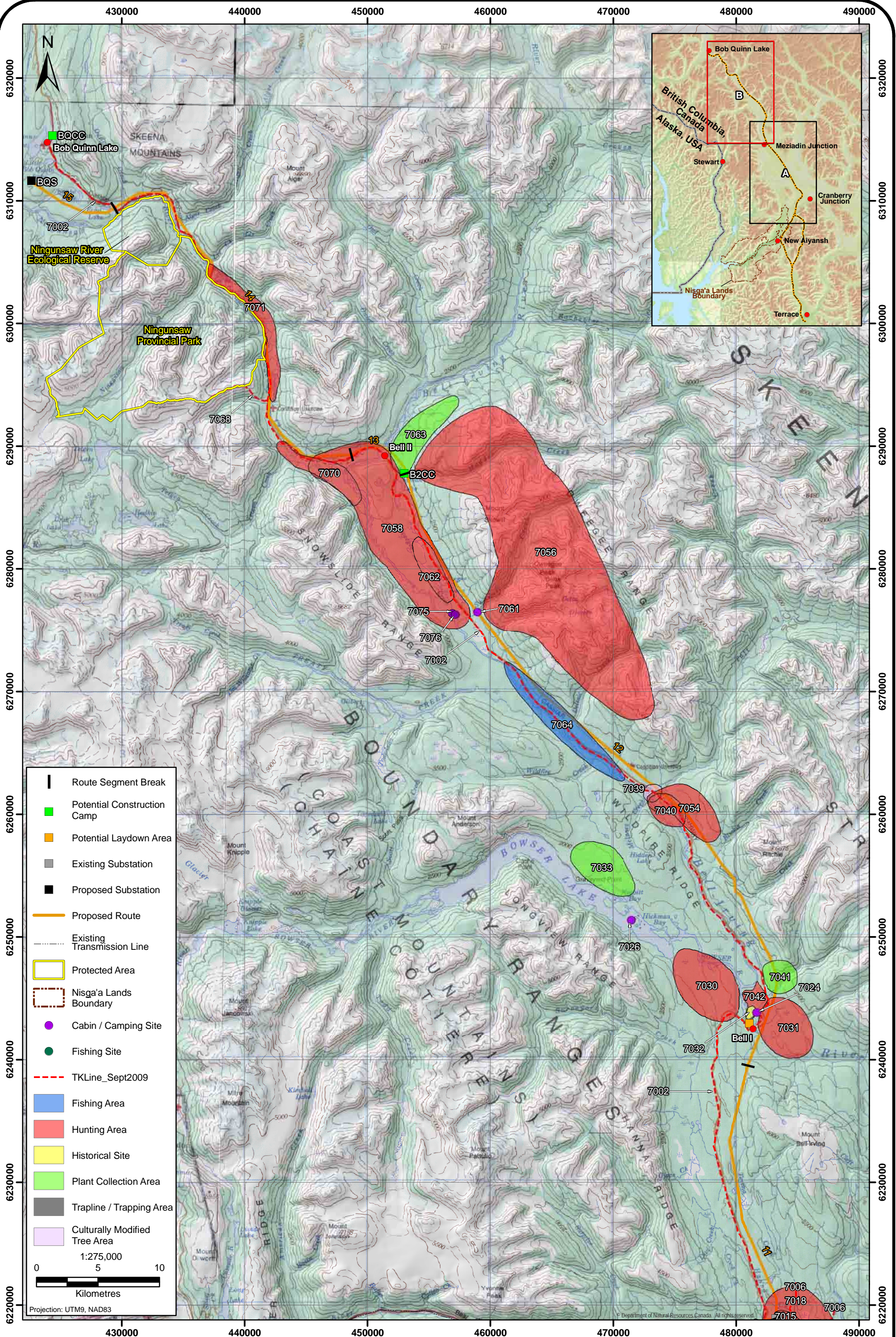
- Route Segment Break
- Potential Construction Camp
- Potential Laydown Area
- Existing Substation
- Proposed Substation
- Proposed Route
- Existing Transmission Line
- Protected Area
- Nisga'a Lands Boundary
- Cabin / Camping Site
- Fishing Site
- Travel Route
- Fishing Area
- Hunting Area
- Historical Site
- Plant Collection Area
- Trapline / Trapping Area
- Culturally Modified Tree Area

0 1:275,000 5 10  
Kilometres

Projection: UTM9, NAD83

**Proposed Northwest Transmission Line - Skii km Lax Ha Contemporary Traditional Knowledge and Use Sites - Map A**

FIGURE 3.10-1

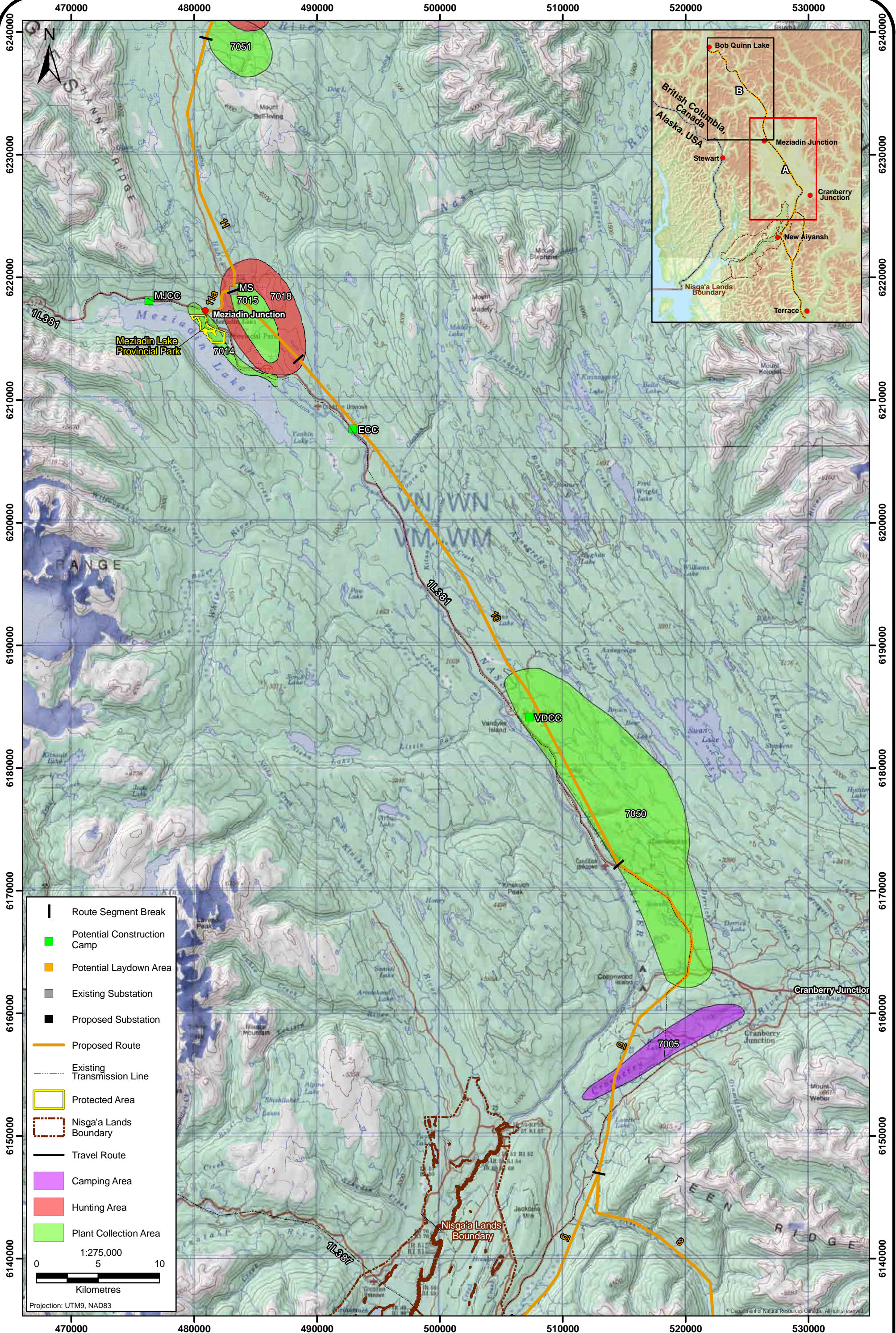















- Route Segment Break
  - Potential Construction Camp
  - Potential Laydown Area
  - Existing Substation
  - Proposed Substation
  - Proposed Route
  - Existing Transmission Line
  - Protected Area
  - Nisga'a Lands Boundary
  - Cabin / Camping Site
  - Fishing Site
  - TKLine\_Sept2009
  - Fishing Area
  - Hunting Area
  - Historical Site
  - Plant Collection Area
  - Trapline / Trapping Area
  - Culturally Modified Tree Area
- 0 1:275,000 5 10  
Kilometres
- Projection: UTM9, NAD83

**Proposed Northwest Transmission Line - Skii km Lax Ha  
Contemporary Traditional Knowledge and Use Sites - Map B**

FIGURE 3.10-2





-  Route Segment Break
  -  Potential Construction Camp
  -  Potential Laydown Area
  -  Existing Substation
  -  Proposed Substation
  -  Proposed Route
  -  Existing Transmission Line
  -  Protected Area
  -  Nisga'a Lands Boundary
  -  Travel Route
  -  Camping Area
  -  Hunting Area
  -  Plant Collection Area
- 0 1:275,000 5 10  
Kilometres
- Projection: UTM9, NAD83

**Skii km Lax Traditional Use Sites Overlapping the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line – Map A**

FIGURE 3.10-3

Moose dew claws (or hooves) from every Skii km Lax Ha, since the last naming feast, have been collected and are used in regalia, aprons, and leggings (K1, interview).

Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders indicate that they trap along the Highway 37 corridor, including beaver, marten, and wolverine. They run a line starting from the Cranberry River to their cabin on Skowill Creek, and pick up traps on their way back to Hazelton. Preferred trap locations include wetlands (K1, interview). Knowledge holders also indicated a recent increase in wolf and wolverine populations. There are high levels of trapping and hunting poaching in and around Awijii Lake, Meziadin Lake, and Bear Pass.

Given Skii km Lax Ha's hunting and trapping experience, they have several wildlife observations regarding population trends and movements. Knowledge holder observations conclude that there are also deer and cougars moving into the area near Wildfire Ridge north of Bowser Lake. Knowledge holders have observed a high population of moose in the Cranberry area. There are deer in and around Meziadin, but until recently there would not be many north of Meziadin, but they are starting to move into that area.

The area in and around Spruce Creek was identified by Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders as inhabited by goats in the past, but they have moved out of the area. They link the movement out of the area to the activity by the British Petroleum (BP) project. BP has been accessing and exploring the area with helicopters. Knowledge holders are particularly concerned about survey work related to environmental studies, whereby exploration work scares goat populations out of a particular area, and then wildlife surveys indicate low or no goat presence for baseline conditions. Harassment of wildlife, including goats and bears, by helicopters is very concerning to the Skii km Lax Ha Nation.

### 3.10.3 Fishing

Knowledge holders indicated extensive past and present fishing of various salmon species, steelhead, and trout. Skii km Lax Ha mostly fish in the summer. The Awijii area is heavily used for fishing; however, they prefer fishing in the Cranberry River and Meziadin Lake as they are closer to the coast and, as a result, the fish are fresher. Fish that reach Bowser Lake are not as desirable because they are worn out (K1, interview).

Skii km Lax Ha knowledge holders link increased parasites on salmon to climate change. The salmon contain more worms and lice, some of the worms are considerable length (up to 30 cm). The colder the water, the less likely the fish are to have parasites. Knowledge holders consider the Nass River as more suitable given its colder temperature as compared to the Skeena. Skii km Lax Ha have also noticed more fish with jaundice colour, especially among spring salmon. There has also been a change in taste and texture of the fish. The warmer water temperatures have also forced Skii km Lax Ha to change their processing timing. They use to be able to catch fish one day and process them the next, but because of more rapid spoilage, they now do so within three to four hours after catch (K1, interview).

There are several key locations for Skii km Lax Ha fishing. Knowledge holders also indicate that they fish for spring salmon in the Cranberry River. They use a net to fish. Skii km Lax Ha fish along the west side of the Bell-Irving for steelhead. One of their preferred fishing locations is at the confluence of Treaty Creek and Bell-Irving River, where the bridge use to be. Members of Skii km Lax Ha Nation also fish spring salmon at the confluence of Snowbank and Bell-Irving River.

Plates 3.10-1 to 3.10-4 depict the Skii km Lax Ha processing and preparation of fish.





*Plate 3.10-1. Skii km Lax Ha Salmon Processing (1998)*



*Plate 3.10-2. Skii km Lax Ha Salmon Smoking (1998)*



*Plate 3.10-3. Skii km Lax Ha Salmon Processing (1998)*



*Plate 3.10-4. Dried Salmon in Skii km Lax Ha Smokehouse*

### 3.10.4 Travel Methods and Routes

In the past, Skii km Lax Ha descendants would travel north of Bowser Lake on the west side of the Bell-Irving River and cross in and around Awijii Lake. Preferred crossings were where there were gravel and sand bars. They would cross by building wooden rafts. The crossings would change from year to year, but they were always in the same area where the river braided out and was shallow. The trail leading to the crossing is Site #7059.

### 3.10.5 Trade

Skii km Lax Ha trade soapberries for herring eggs and seaweed with members of the Nisga'a Nation and the coastal Tsimshian (K1, interview).

### 3.10.6 Occupancy

In the winter of 2008, knowledge holders were renovating one of their cabins (K1, interview). Knowledge holders indicate that they have a cabin at Skowill Creek (Figure 3.10-4, Site #7061). There is a high concentration of cabins and camps both past and current around Meziadin Lake.

Plates 3.10-5 and 3.10-6 depict use of two of Skii km Lax Ha's cabins in 1991.



*Plate 3.10-5. Use of Johnny Wilson's Cabin (1991)*

### 3.10.7 Climate

Knowledge holders have noticed a change in climate over the last 20 years. The changes are most apparent in the quality of salmon (K1, interview). They have noticed an increase in water temperature (K1, interview). Skii km Lax Ha have observed changes in weather patterns, including more rain during the winter. Also, smaller streams are unsafe to cross, because they do not freeze over anymore.



*Plate 3.10–6. Cora Wright and Ernie Burton’s Cabin (1991)*

Skii km Lax Ha have also noticed less snowfall from Cranberry River to the north to Meziadin. Past Meziadin Lake there is heavier snowfall. Knowledge holders estimate that on average snowfall begins in November and December in the Cranberry area.

### **3.10.8 Water**

Knowledge holders have observed that the Bell-Irving does not freeze over anymore. It is not safe to traverse or travel on during the winter.

Skii km Lax Ha are concerned about water quality, especially in the Bowser Lake area, because there are several abandoned exploration drilling sites upstream from the lake that maybe affecting their drinking water at their Spruce Creek cabin (Site #7024).

### **3.10.9 Terrain**

Near Sites #7070 and 7071, the terrain is steep and there is high risk of avalanches, making it difficult to trap. As such, the knowledge holders leave the area in November.

### **3.10.10 Vegetation**

There are a total of 11 contemporary Skii km Lax Ha use sites where berry and plant harvesting occur within the NTL study area.

Soapberry harvesting success is related to weather and temperature. If the weather is hot and dry, then soapberries ripen later in the season. Ripeness is determined by change in coloration from white to red.

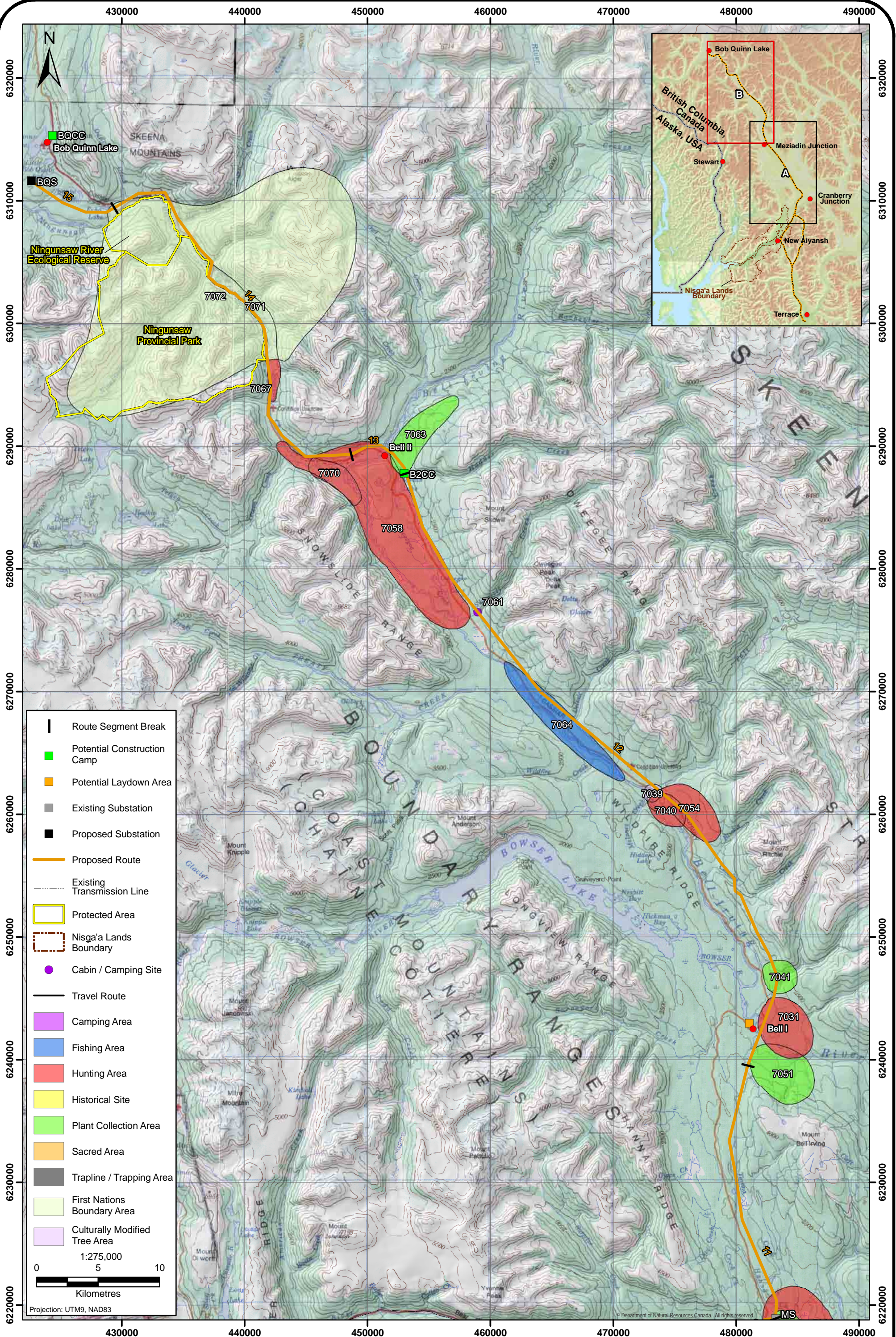
Plates 3.10-7 and 3.10-8 depict Skii km Lax Ha berry picking in the Oweege area in 1993 and 1997.



*Plate 3.10–7. Berry picking in Oweege area (1997)*



*Plate 3.10–8. Berry picking in Oweege area (1993)*



- Route Segment Break
- Potential Construction Camp
- Potential Laydown Area
- Existing Substation
- Proposed Substation
- Proposed Route
- Existing Transmission Line
- Protected Area
- Nisga'a Lands Boundary
- Cabin / Camping Site
- Travel Route
- Camping Area
- Fishing Area
- Hunting Area
- Historical Site
- Plant Collection Area
- Sacred Area
- Trapline / Trapping Area
- First Nations Boundary Area
- Culturally Modified Tree Area

0 5 10  
Kilometres  
Projection: UTM9, NAD83

**Skii km Lax Traditional Use Sites Overlapping the Proposed Northwest Transmission Line – Map B**

Skii km Lax ha harvest cranberries in the Bowser Lake area. The vegetation in and around Sites #7070 and 7071 are thick, making travel difficult. In the past, Skii km Lax Ha members used burning as a method of managing berry bushes.

### **3.10.11 Economic**

Hunting, trapping, and fishing are an important source of sustenance and supplements income from participation in the wage economy. These activities are especially significant to the Skii km Lax Ha Nation during economically difficult times.

### **3.10.12 Cultural Features**

The Skii km Lax Ha note culturally modified trees (CMTs) in the following areas:

- Spruce Creek
- Hodder Lake
- Beaver Pond Creek
- Snowbank Creek
- Meziadin Lake

## **4. Potential Effects**



## 4. Potential Effects

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Skii km Lax Ha are concerned about the effects of the proposed NTL Project on their way of life. “I don't like doing this [participating in the NTL Project] because I just know it's just the end. It's just the end of a certain way of life. ... I do a lot of smoked fish and a lot of dried fish and jarring and we raise our kids on fish and moose meat” (K1, interview).

Knowledge holders expressed desire to maintain old trails and cut new ones as a traditional activity they would like to do in the future. They are concerned that the NTL Project may hinder and/or conflict with these efforts. They want to avoid being prevented from accessing any new trails they may cut from now until begin of construction.

Skii km Lax Ha have concerns related to potential use of helicopters during construction of the proposed transmission line and management during operations.

## **5. Summary of Key Issues and Findings**

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The Skii km Lax Ha have collected extensive historical documentation and sources to support and present their understanding of the extent of their traditional territories. According to the Skii km Lax Ha, both their cultural survival and subsistence depend on their ability to continuously use and occupy their traditional territory. This report reflects Skii km Lax Ha's connection to the land and its resources is varied and long standing, and passed down from generation to generation along a matrilineal line. The Skii km Lax Ha name has been given to several key members of the Skii km Lax Ha, including Johnson Negin, Daniel Skawill, Johnny Wilson, and Darlene Simpson. The important women of the Skii km Lax Ha lineage include Esther Joseph, Jessie Lumm/Sterritt, and Martha Risdale. The Skii km Lax Ha emphasize and seek to demonstrate through historical sources the connection between the Skii km Lax Ha and Gyetem Galdo lineages. Feasting, their *adaawk* (oral history), grave stones, crests, and totem poles are of great importance to the Skii km Lax Ha in their effort to communicate and gain support for their Aboriginal right to use of the land and resources between Cranberry Junction and Ningunsaw Pass.

There are two major events that are an important part of Skii km Lax Ha oral history as reflected in their totem pole, including the Gamlaxyetxw/Luuxhon dispute (aka killing of Skawill) and the killing of Taxwook and Ligigliwil. Sites identified in mapping and interview sessions include #7005, 7010, 7019, 7022, and 7035. Other ethno-historical sources were described and presented in this report to reflect Skii km Lax Ha understanding of their territorial boundary to be "40 miles north and south of Bowser Lake" (Moritimer 1938).

Furthermore, extensive interview and mapping data support the historical information and provided insight into contemporary Skii km Lax Ha practices, uses, and interaction with the lands and resources on their traditional territory. Of particular importance to the Skii km Lax Ha is hunting and trapping, which they continue to engage in to support their extended family. These activities are supported by series of cabins along an old Aboriginal trail (now Highway 37). The Skii km Lax Ha also engage in plant, berry, and mushroom harvesting, fishing, camping within their traditional territory. The contemporary site of greatest concern to the Skii km Lax Ha is their cabin at Skowill Creek (Site #7061 in Figure 3.10-4), which directly overlaps with the Project.

**NORTHWEST TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT**  
**Skii Km Lax Ha Traditional Knowledge and Use Study**

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