

Out of Respect



The Tahltan, Mining, and the Seven Questions to Sustainability

Report of the Tahltan Mining Symposium, April 4–6, 2003



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the Seven Questions to Sustainability
Report of the Tahltan Mining Symposium
April 4–6, 2003
Dease Lake, British Columbia**

The International Institute for Sustainable Development contributes to sustainable development by advancing policy recommendations on international trade and investment, economic policy, climate change, measurement and indicators, and natural resources management. By using Internet communications, we report on international negotiations and broker knowledge gained through collaborative projects with global partners, resulting in more rigorous research, capacity building in developing countries and better dialogue between North and South.

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Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development

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ISBN 1-895536-80-4

International Institute for Sustainable Development

161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Canada R3B 0Y4

Tel: +1 (204) 958-7700

Fax: +1 (204) 958-7710

E-mail: info@iisd.ca

Web site: <http://www.iisd.org>

Tahltan Central Council

Reserve No. 9

Dease Lake, British Columbia

Tel: +1 (250) 771-3276

Cover photography: Clockwise starting with main central photo: Eskay Creek Gold Mine camp, Barrick Gold Corporation; Grizzly sow with three cubs near the Golden Bear Mine, R. Dennis Bergen; Tahltan mill worker, Barrick Gold Corporation; Service staff at Eskay Creek Gold Mine, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation, Barrick Gold Corporation; Crow's House above Eagle Rock at the confluence of the Tahltan and Stikine rivers, David Rattray.



Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper
with the cover printed on 15% post-consumer recycled paper.
Printed by Unigraphics, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

There were no written laws in our history. The rules we lived by were taught to us from childhood and were based on respect. We were expected to respect ourselves, to show respect for others, to show respect for all things in our world, and to show respect for our environment. In this way we believed that our world would be in harmony and we would live a long and healthy life.

- Tahltan belief

Dedication

At the time of European contact in the mid- to late 18th century, tens of thousands of aboriginal people inhabited the Pacific Northwest of North America including the Tahltan people whose traditional territory encompasses the vast inland drainage area of the Stikine River and its tributaries, now part of British Columbia.

In 1896, a federal count registered 296 Tahltan. They, like other aboriginals in this part of the world, had been ravaged by smallpox and other diseases, the effects of substance abuse brought to them by Europeans and a loss of hope in the future that came with the demise of their traditional culture.

In the Spring of 2003, the Tahltan registry included about 5,000 people of which about 1,000 live full-time in Tahltan traditional territory, while the rest have spread out across B.C. and the Yukon. These numbers reflect a remarkable recovery given the challenges they have faced. Once again, the Tahltan are finding their spirit and taking control of their own future.

This report is dedicated to the Tahltan of the past who kept the spark alive, and to today's community for advancing the transformation with pride, talent and passion.

Acknowledgements

The Tahltan Mining Symposium was made possible through the contributions of the following:

Barrick Gold Corporation

British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

Natural Resources Canada

Noranda Inc.

Wheaton River Minerals Ltd.



Eagle Rock (with Crow's House above) at Tahltan – David Rattray.

Preface

Mining is in an unprecedented period of transition as it continues to face a broad array of interrelated technical, environmental and social issues. Financial implications have multiplied as investors, indigenous people, communities, non-governmental organizations and other interests apply increasing scrutiny to mining operations. With the immediacy of worldwide communications, local incidents become global news overnight. For some, mining's "social licence to operate" is in question.

Faced with this situation, in 2001 the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (Geneva) in partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development (London), initiated a global review of mining-related practices using as a vehicle, the project "Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development (MMSD)."¹ As part of the global review, a number of independent regional reviews were initiated. One of the regional initiatives took place in Canada and the United States where the Mining/Minerals Team of the International Institute for Sustainable Development led MMSD – North America.²

The genesis of the Tahltan Mining Symposium lies in MMSD – North America. One output of MMSD – North America was the collaborative development of a robust framework for tracking the contribution of mining and mineral activities as a means of assessing the compatibility of mining/mineral projects and operations with the concept of sustainability. The framework came to be known as the Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS).³ Following its development, projects were sought in which practical application would test the effectiveness of the framework. The Tahltan Mining Symposium provided an ideal opportunity particularly because the needs and interests of the Tahltan people could be directly addressed while working to find a win-win relationship between the Tahltan and the mining industry.

The Tahltan Mining Symposium was held April 4–6, 2003, in Dease Lake, British Columbia. The symposium brought together 28 Tahltan, nine representatives from industry and government and the IISD facilitator to undertake a review of the relationship between the Tahltan people and territory, and mining/mineral activities—past, present and future. The specific output that was sought was a strategy to guide the Tahltan-mining interface in the years to come.

This report reflects the collective effort of all participants of the Tahltan Mining Symposium. All participants were provided with the opportunity to review the draft report and the full draft was vetted by the Tahltan Band, the Iskut Band and the Tahltan Central Council. During the symposium and in the subsequent development of this report, consensus was always sought although not insisted upon.

Throughout the drafting of this report, we have made every effort to accurately reflect the views of participants, particularly the Tahltan people whose priorities and concerns drove the symposium process. However in the end, final responsibility to bring closure to the report fell to us. Thus, while credit for the insight contained in this report lies with all participants, any remaining limitations are ours.



Jerry Asp, Chief
Tahltan Band

Tony Hodge, Facilitator
IISD Mining/Mineral Team



Tahltan Mining Symposium Participants

Organizers

Jerry Asp, Chief, Tahltan Band

Marilyn Norby, Coordinator,

Tahltan Mining Symposium

Telegraph Creek

Lorgan Bob

Sheila Bob

Wayne Quash

Richard Jackson

Rob Morin

Bill McPhee

Beatrice McPhee

Pat Carlick

Edith Carlick

Dease Lake

Ed Asp

Curtis Rattray

Christine Ball

Lil Campbell

Vernon Marion

Christina Lindstrom

Liz Edzerza

Annita McPhee

Andrea Louie

Iskut

Louis Louie

Marie Quock

Sally Havard

Ramona Quock

Odelia Dennis

Theresa Abou

James Dennis

Feddie Carlick

Barrick Gold Corp.

Vernon Betts

Steve Job

John Kinyon

Marlin Murphy

British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Dave Lefebure

British Columbia Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

Romona Blackwell

Maija Finvers

International Institute for Sustainable Development Mining/Mineral Team

Tony Hodge (facilitator)

Natural Resources Canada

Lise-Aurore Lapalme

Wheaton River Minerals

R. Dennis Bergen

Tahltan Staff Support

Marilyn Norby (Local Coordinator)

Andrea Louie (Catering, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation)

Catherine Morin (Catering Assistant, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation)

Kailene Louie (Catering Assistant, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation)

IISD Staff Support

Don Berg (Graphic Design, contracted by IISD)

Karen Goulding (Distribution)

Jason Manaigre (Web Support)

Rachel Parry (Media Relations)

Stuart Slayen (Publications Management)

Endnotes

- 1 Results of MMSD Global are reported in *Breaking New Ground – Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development* (2002, London: Earthscan Publications), available online at <http://www.iied.org/mmsd>
- 2 Results of MMSD – NA are synthesized in *Towards Change – The Work and Results of MMSD North America* (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at <http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp>
- 3 MMSD – North America, 2002. *Seven Questions to Sustainability – How to Assess the Contribution of Mining and Mineral Activities*. (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at <http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp>

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Multi-hued volcanics from the Spectrum Range in Mt. Edziza Park – Geological Survey of Canada.



The most important skill that our ancestors learned was how to live and work in co-operation with each other.

- Tahltan belief

1. Introduction

Tahltan mining experience began several thousand years ago with the extraction and trading of obsidian from the flanks of Mt. Edziza. However, exposure of the Tahltan people to “modern” mining activities dates from 1861 when gold was discovered on the Stikine River and a small rush ensued. Since then, Tahltan involvement in mineral exploration and mining has varied. The benefits that have accrued to the Tahltan people and their land have not always outweighed the costs.

This project marks the beginning of a concerted and strategic effort to ensure that mining and mineral activities that take place in Tahltan traditional territory lead to a net positive gain for the Tahltan people and their territory. The spirit of this initiative is one of fairness and respect. There are many win-win opportunities that can be realized through fair collaboration and respectful relationships among all interests.

Through 2001 and 2002, the Mining/Mineral Team of the International Institute for Sustainable Development led and facilitated the Mining, Minerals and Sustainable Development North America (MMSD–NA)¹ Initiative. One output of this effort was the development of a robust framework for assessing the compatibility of mining and mineral projects/operations with the concept of sustainable development. The framework came to be known as the *Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS)*.² Following its development, a set of pilot studies was initiated to serve as a means of testing the effectiveness of the approach. The Tahltan mining initiative provided an ideal opportunity from this perspective, one in which the needs and interests of the Tahltan could be directly addressed.

The project was initiated in the late fall of 2002 as a three-phase process:

Phase 1. Decision to Proceed. A project concept paper³ was developed and reviewed by the Tahltan people. Based on this review, the community decided to proceed.

Phase 2. Tahltan Mining Symposium. After securing sponsorship, the Tahltan Mining Symposium was held April 4–6, 2003, in Dease Lake, British Columbia. The workshop brought together 38 participants: 28 Tahltan; five industry participants; four government representatives; and a facilitator from the International Institute for Sustainable Development. Their task was to undertake a review of the relationship between the Tahltan people and territory, and mining/mineral activities. Specifically, the objectives of the Symposium were to:

- a. provide an opportunity for the Tahltan First Nation to apprise itself of mining and mineral activity in the Tahltan traditional territory (the Stikine Watershed)—past, present and future—and to express their sense of what this has meant, or could mean, to the Tahltan;

Tahltan workers with family members, Eskay Creek Gold Mine – Barrick Gold Corporation.

- b. use the 7QS Assessment Framework to systematically identify and review implications of mining/mineral activity to the Tahltan people and, in the process, test the effectiveness of the framework;
- c. identify issues and concerns from the perspective of the Tahltan people, the mining industry, government and others;
- d. undertake a preliminary and cursory assessment in order to build a sense of: (a) sources of data and information; (b) the state of current knowledge; and (c) current capacity to fill gaps;
- e. build an initial strategy and action plan for guiding future Tahltan relationships with the mining/minerals industry; and
- f. decide on next steps to be taken (if any) for implementation of a more rigorous Phase 3 7QS Assessment.

Phase 3. Follow-up Implementation. The third phase of activity is envisioned as the implementation phase using the strategy and action plan developed at the Tahltan Mining Symposium as a guide. Implementation will take some time and success will depend on the willingness of all parties to move forward.

This report marks the end of Phase 2 of this initiative. It documents the results of the Tahltan Mining Symposium and sets out the strategy and action plan intended to guide Phase 3 implementation of the 7QS Assessment Framework.

Endnotes

- 1 MMSD–NA was an independent regional component of a global review of mining practices undertaken by the International Institute for Environment and Development (London) on behalf of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (Geneva). Results of MMSD–NA are synthesized in the report *Towards Change – The Work and Results of MMSD North America* (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at <http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp>. The review was aimed at developing prescriptions for improving mining- and mineral-related practices.
- 2 MMSD – North America, 2002. *Seven Questions to Sustainability – How to Assess the Contribution of Mining and Mineral Activities*. (2002, Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development), available online at <http://www.iisd.org/mmsd/publications.asp>
- 3 R. Anthony Hodge. and Ian Thomson, 2002. The Tahltan, Mining, and Sustainability. Unpublished discussion paper prepared for the Tahltan First Nation by The Mining/Minerals Team, International Institute for Sustainable Development, Winnipeg, Manitoba.



To our ancestors, Tahltan country was part of their life, their way of living. It was more than a place to live and hunt, it was the root of the culture. Some of us still believe that we belong to the land.

- Tahltan belief

2. The Tahltan, Tahltan Country and Mining

The Tahltan people live in a vast, mainly remote area of northwestern British Columbia. Their traditional territory covers some 93,500 km² at the heart of which lies the Stikine River Watershed. The Stikine River rises in the Spatsizi plateau and follows a wide, counterclockwise arc that crosses the Canada-U.S. border and enters the Pacific Ocean near Wrangell, Alaska (Map 1).

For the most part, the watershed is without roads and access is only available by helicopter, float plane, canoe, riverboat, horseback, sled and foot. The town of Iskut is on Highway 37, the only major road in the area, as is Dease Lake which lies just outside the Stikine watershed but serves as the region's service hub. Telegraph Creek, located in the heart of the watershed, is connected by gravel road to Dease Lake.

Two large protected areas lie within the Stikine Watershed: the Spatsizi Plateau Wilderness and Mount Edziza Provincial Park. They are linked by the Stikine River Recreation Area which also enjoys protected status (Map 2).

The area is home to some 1,300 people, of which about a thousand are from the Tahltan First Nation. Two bands comprise the Tahltan First Nation: the Tahltan Band centred in Telegraph Creek, and the Iskut Band centred in Iskut. Dease Lake is also home to a significant number of Tahltan.

At least three of five jobs in the area come from government and the service sector (including tourism). Remaining jobs are in construction, mining, fishing, trapping, logging and agriculture.¹

The Stikine Watershed is part of the Skeena Management Region of the B.C. Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management. It is covered by the Cassiar Iskut-Stikine Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP), which gained official status in October 2000 after a five-year period of development and public discussion.

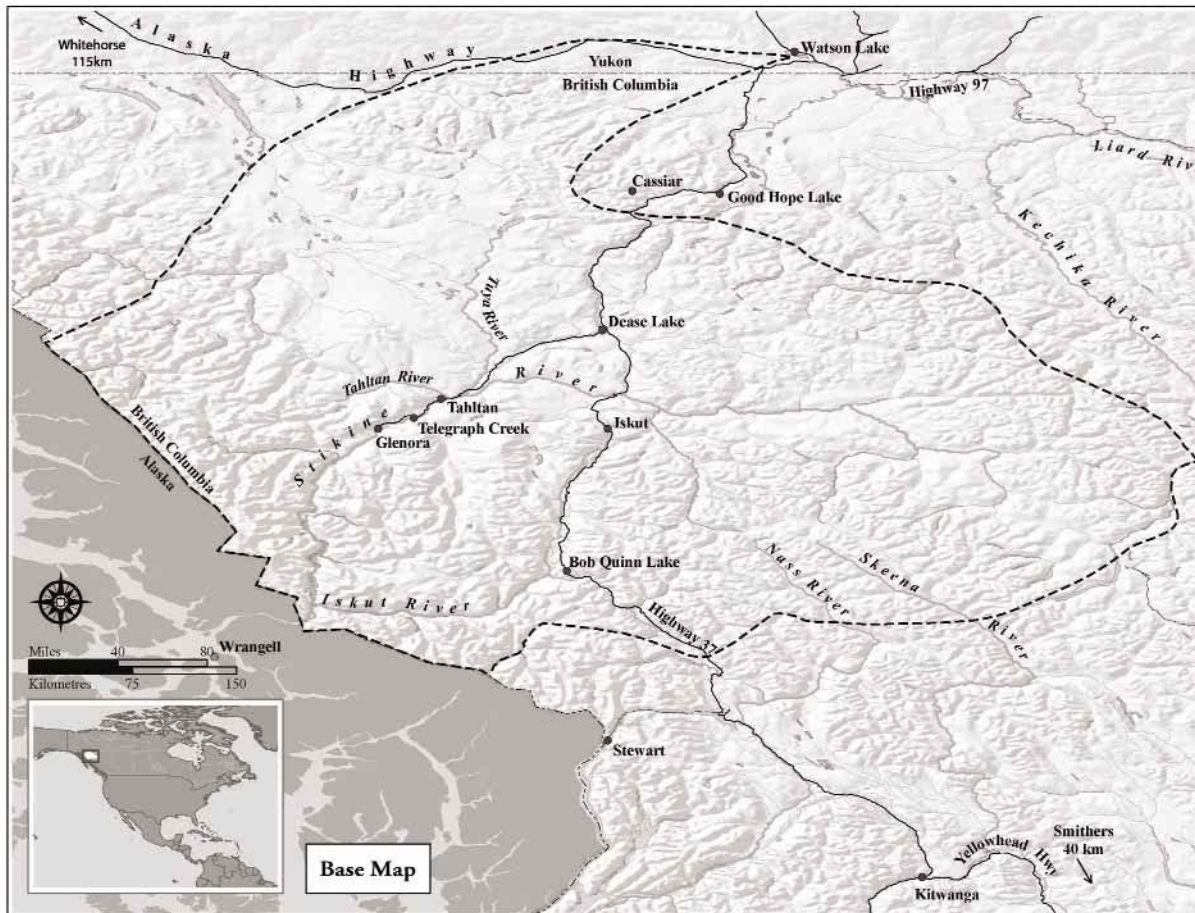
Confluence of the Tahltan and Stikine rivers, spiritual heart of Tahltan traditional territory – Ann Fraser.

Map 1. Tahltan traditional territory

Northwestern British Columbia showing the extent of Tahltan traditional territory with a dashed line along with topography, communities, major roads and larger rivers. Much of the area is mountainous with major river valleys providing the only access to the coast. The Tahltan people have lived and traded with neighbouring First Nations for thousands of years—coastal Tlingit to the west, Taku River-Tlingit to the northwest and Kaska-Dene to the north and northeast.

There are relatively few roads in the region reflecting the difficult topography and limited development of mining and forestry roads. Current access to the region is by the paved Stewart-Cassiar Highway (#37) and scheduled air flights to Dease Lake airport. Highway #37 connects to the Alaska Highway to the north and the Yellowhead Highway (#16) to the south.

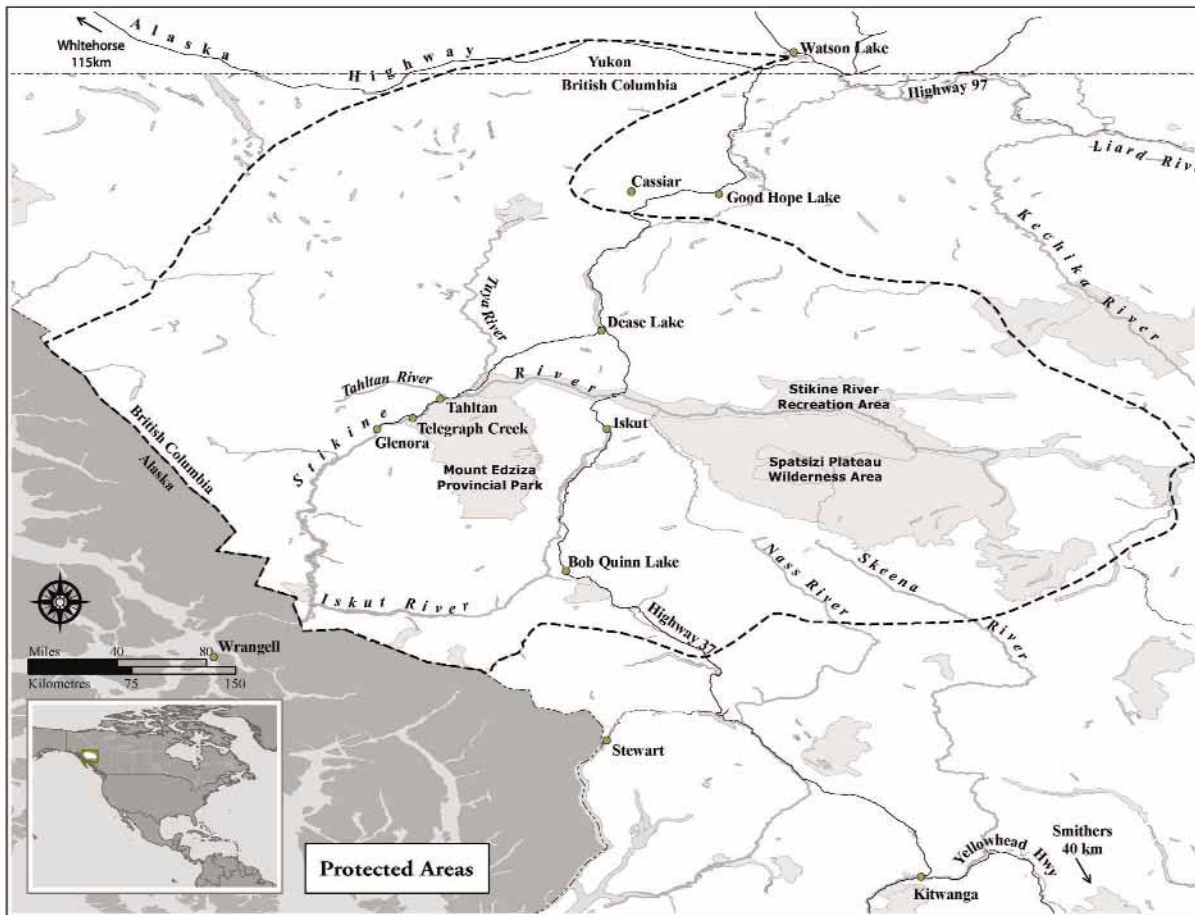
The closest deep-water ocean ports are at Stewart and Wrangell, Alaska. Prior to the construction of the Stewart-Cassiar Highway in the early 1970s, the region was accessed from the Pacific Ocean by the Stikine and Iskut rivers, with most boats travelling to the head of navigable waters on the Stikine at Telegraph Creek.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 2. Protected areas

Northwestern British Columbia has a number of protected areas, including some significant parks within the Tahltan traditional territory. Approximately 26 per cent of the Canadian portions of the Stikine and Iskut River Watersheds have been protected in parks, ecological reserves and other protected areas. All protected areas are off limits for mineral exploration and mining. In some cases protected areas limit road access to Crown Land bounding the protected area and in a few cases, this has led to specific provisions for allowing access to the Crown Land through the protected areas.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

The Tahltan People

The Tahltan have called the Stikine River area their home for thousands of years. Their traditional territory lies between the coastal country of the Tlingit and the inland homes of the Kaska to the east and northeast, the Nass to the south and the Atlin Tlingit to the north. For thousands of years they have been a trading people, exchanging coastal goods for those found inland and vice versa.

Russian explorers first touched the coast of what is now Alaska in 1741. Far to the south of Tahltan Country, the Spanish arrived in Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island in 1774 and the British followed in 1778. By the late 1700s, European-sourced goods found their way into the Tahltan trading system. In

1837–1838, explorer Robert Campbell pushed his way up the Stikine and established a trading post at what is now Dease Lake. Protective of their country, the Tahltan forced him to retreat and their way of life remained essentially unchanged until 1861—the year that gold was discovered on the Stikine River. The change that followed was dramatic.

During the 19th century, all across the Pacific Northwest, diseases brought by the Europeans—smallpox, measles, influenza, whooping cough, tuberculosis and scarlet fever—devastated the aboriginal people. By 1896, the Tahltan population which had numbered in the thousands when Robert Campbell passed through their country in 1838, had dropped to under 300.

Meanwhile, the overarching governmental decision-making structure was also changing dramatically for the Tahltan in a way that was well beyond their control.

In 1763, King George III had issued a Royal Proclamation asserting that aboriginal people of North America had existing rights and establishing a system of surrendering these rights by treaty. Following this principle, Sir James Douglas, as chief factor for the Hudson's Bay Company and governor of the Colony of Vancouver Island, completed 14 treaties on Vancouver Island between 1850 and 1854.²

Thereafter, the paternalistic and racist attitudes of many European settlers and the rapidly declining state of well-being of First Nations people combined to undermine any capacity for aboriginal self-determination. In 1869, the Indian Act was passed eliminating the system of hereditary First Nations governance, requiring elected band councils, forcing First Nation children into the government-controlled education system and dramatically changing First Nation cultural traditions.

Unknown to the Tahltan, and faced with concern for law and order associated with the large influx of American gold-seekers, James Douglas had claimed all the land north to the 60th parallel for inclusion in the colony of British Columbia in 1863. In 1866 the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were combined in a single “United Colony of British Columbia” and in 1871, British Columbia entered Confederation.

Faced with all of this, the Chief of the Tahltan issued a Declaration in 1910 that articulated their sovereign right to their land and urged the formalization of a treaty to address all matters regarding these rights (Appendix 1). No such treaty has ever been established.

The 1861–1862 Stikine River Gold Rush was short-lived and inconsequential from a gold perspective. But it marked the first major influx of non-Tahltan people into the Tahltan traditional territory. In 1862, the supply needs of the gold-seekers led to the advent of riverboat service from Wrangell, Alaska, to Telegraph Creek, effectively destroying the trader/middle-man role that the Tahltan had enjoyed for centuries.

The small Stikine River Gold Rush was followed a decade later by the more substantive Cassiar Gold Rush 1874–1876 and in 1898 by the stampede to the Yukon's Klondike. In both of these instances, Tahltan Country provided important transport routes for the influx of miners. However, from the perspective of the Tahltan, this period of time was characterized by the juxtaposition of: (1) waves of sickness and death; and (2) the introduction of the wage economy. Tahltan capacity to support themselves by traditional means was severely compromised and with the introduction of the wage economy, a new way of life began that has continued evolving to this day. Key events affecting the Tahltan during the period since 1861 are summarized in Table 1.

From their low point of about 300 in the late 1890s, the Tahltan population has recovered to about 5,000. Just under 1,000 live in their traditional territory spread across Telegraph Creek, Iskut and Dease Lake. The remainder is spread out across B.C. and the Yukon.

The Tahltan people are comprised of two bands, each with an elected council: the Tahltan Band (with headquarters in Telegraph Creek); and the Iskut Band (with headquarters in Iskut). An overarching Tahltan Central Council (with offices in Dease Lake)—comprised of Chief and Council of both bands—links the Tahltan and represents the bands on issues of joint concern.

Table 1. Key events affecting the Tahltan, 1861–present.

Date	Event/Comment
1861–1862	Stikine River Gold Rush, placer gold; first major influx of non-Tahltan into Tahltan Country.
1862	River boat service initiated from Wrangell to Telegraph Creek.
1863	Governor James Douglas claims all land north to the 60th parallel as part of British Columbia. The effect is to open up Tahltan Country to outsiders. Tahltan role as principal trader falls quickly.
1865–1866	Abortive attempt by Perry McDonough Collins to establish a transcontinental telegraph connection between North America and Russia. Telegraph Creek used as a staging area.
1871	British Columbia joins Confederation.
1874–1876	Cassiar Gold Rush, placer gold. Placer mining continues within the Tahltan traditional territory to modern day with activity levels that fluctuate with gold prices.
Around 1875	First horses introduced as a transport mode; Tahltan people quickly become adept handlers.
1898–1903	Klondike Gold Rush in the Yukon.
1901	Yukon Telegraph Line completed to Dawson City using route of the 1865–66 Collins initiative.
1910	1910 Tahltan Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe asks for resolution of land and rights issue through the development of a treaty among the Tahltan, the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia.
1928	The pack trail from Telegraph Creek to Dease Lake is upgraded to a road. The Stikine, Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake become essential transportation links between southern B.C. and the northern interior.
1930s	Bush planes provide new means of access to remote areas.
1941–1942	Stikine River used to transport heavy equipment and supplies for construction of the Alaska Highway.
1952	Production at the Cassiar Asbestos mine begins; continues until 1992.
1950s and 1960s	A number of Tahltan worked in mineral exploration industry.
1960s	Increasingly common use of fixed wing aircraft and the helicopter (which started in the 1950s) leads to the reduction in the use of Telegraph Creek as a staging point for exploration in Tahltan Country in favour of Smithers. Tahltan involvement in exploration activities declines as a result.
1970s	Population increase in the Iskut-Stikine area with homesteaders coming in from southern B.C. and the U.S.; focus is generally on subsistence living.
1972	Stewart-Cassiar Highway (37) completed; easy access to Tahltan Country established.
1972–1977	Road bed for the northern extension of B.C. Rail completed from Fort St. John to Dease Lake through Tahltan Country. Project abandoned in 1977 with the extension of the rail line never completed.
1982	Canadian constitution repatriated from England; aboriginal rights re-affirmed.
1990	Production at the Golden Bear Mine begins. It operates until 1994 and then again 1997–2001 (in 1997 becoming the first heap leach operation permitted in British Columbia).
1990s	Tahltan people became more directly involved with mining operations in their traditional territory by providing services such as road construction and maintenance and camp catering; interaction with mining companies increases.
1991	Production at the Snip Mine begins; operated until 1999.
1995	Production at Eskay Creek Mine begins; still operating, with 8–10 years of estimated mine life remaining.

Tahltan Country

By any standard, Tahltan traditional territory is vast, extremely variable (spanning coastal, mountainous and inland plateaus), spectacular, rugged and rich in natural resources.

At its heart lies the Stikine River which rises high in the Spatsizi Plateau—a large dry plateau ringed by mountains—some carved by glaciers and others of more recent volcanic origin. As the Stikine River flows toward the Pacific, it follows a wide, counterclockwise arc. In its mid-section soon after it crosses Highway 37, is the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, the deepest such canyon in Canada. In the lower reaches of the canyon and just before Telegraph Creek, the Tuya and Tahltan Rivers join. Below Telegraph Creek, the Stikine cuts through the Coast Mountains and just before crossing the Alaska border, it merges with its major tributary, the Iskut River which flows from the east side of the volcanic uplands of Mt. Edziza.³

Rainfall varies greatly from the dry Spatsizi Plateau which receives about 40 cm (16 inches) per year, to the Cassiar Mountains where precipitation of 300 cm (almost 10 feet) per year is common. In the south, in the Nass River valley, rainfall is heavier again. Similarly, temperatures vary dramatically. Inland, the heat in the summer can reach 35°C (100°F) with the same location experiencing –50°C (–60°F) in the winter.

Reflecting all of these variations, the ecosystem of the Stikine Watershed is rich and diverse. The fishery in the area has long been a centerpiece of Tahltan life. Sockeye and Chinook numbers have been increasing in recent years while coho stocks are declining, reflecting trends throughout coastal B.C. Dolly varden, whitefish and trout of many kinds are also important.

Wildlife species of note in the area include grizzly, black bear, woodland caribou (the Spatsizi herd of about 2,500 represents a quarter of the provincial population), mountain goat, Stone's sheep, moose, wolves, foxes (red, cross-fox, silver fox and black fox), wolverine, lynx, porcupine, rabbit, squirrel, many small rodents, trumpeter swans, grouse, ptarmigan and many migratory birds. The lower Iskut features the largest stands of cottonwood in the world.⁴ The upper Stikine area is home to 25 different types of edible berries including soapberries, raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, saskatoons and highbush cranberries.

The Iskut-Stikine area is geologically diverse and one of the richest and most active for mineral exploration and development in British Columbia. Commodities of interest include precious metals (gold, silver and platinum); base metals (copper, lead, zinc and nickel); coal; oil and gas; industrial minerals (asbestos, wollastonite, sand and gravel); and precious stones (jade, agate and other gemstones).

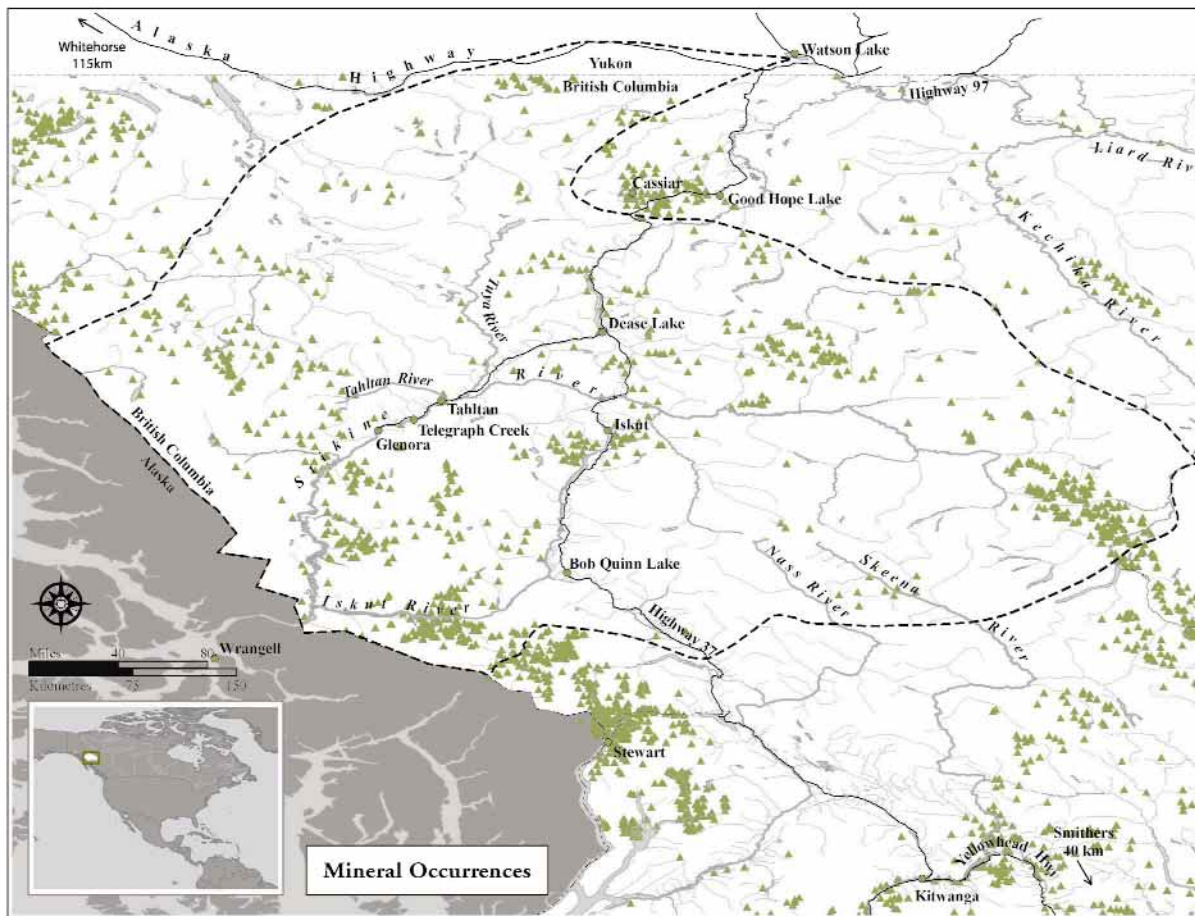
Maps 3–6 provide an overview of Tahltan traditional territory in terms of mineral occurrences (Map 3); mineral and coal claims (Map 4); active and historic mines (Map 5); and mineral potential (Map 6). Table 2 provides a summary of current mining activity in Tahltan traditional territory.

Map 3. Mineral and coal occurrences

Map 3 shows many of the mineral and coal occurrences discovered in the last 150 years. This pattern changes slightly virtually every year with new discoveries by prospectors, geologists and exploration companies. In some areas with attractive mineral potential, there are no known mineral occurrences because the area is covered by glaciers. Some other areas in northwestern British Columbia have only seen limited prospecting due to the extremely rugged terrain which is difficult and expensive to access. These occurrences vary from a minor “sniff” of metal-rich rock to large mineral deposits with drilled-off resources.

Some of these deposits came close to being developed as mines and may yet become mines in the future. In fact, several major metallic deposits in northwest British Columbia would have become mines if they had had easier access to a means of transportation and the power grid.

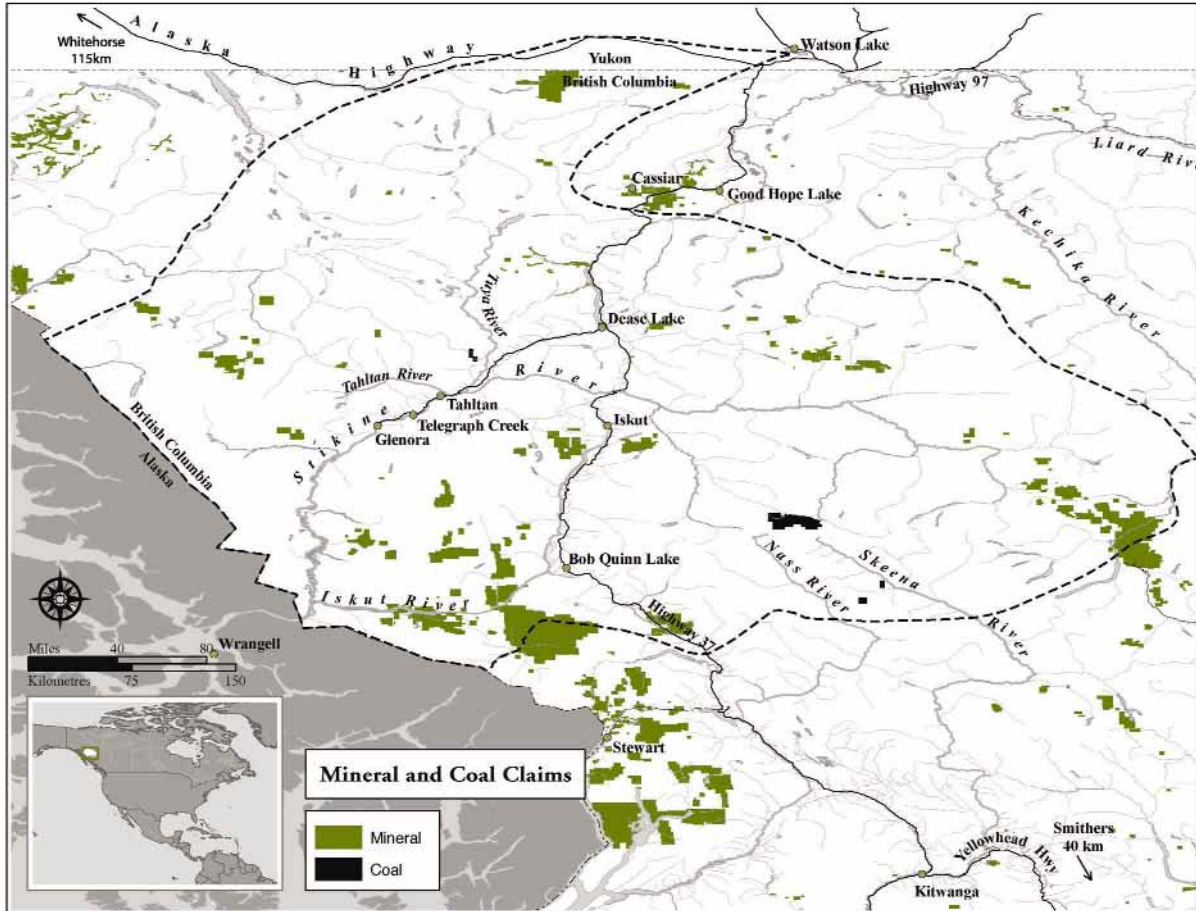
The known coal occurrences are found near the Skeena-Nass rivers and in the Tuya River area. While no coal has been mined to date, they do have potential for coal mining in the future. The coalfields in the Skeena-Nass rivers area include major resources of anthracite coal and are also considered prospective for oil and gas. The Tuya River coalfield is also prospective for coalbed methane. Potential coal areas have less potential for metallic mineral deposits and there are few metallic mineral occurrences in these areas.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 4. Mineral and coal claims as of February 2003

Mineral and coal claims change over time—sometimes quite significantly—depending on what commodity is of interest. Map 4 is a snapshot as of February 2003.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 5. Active and historic mines

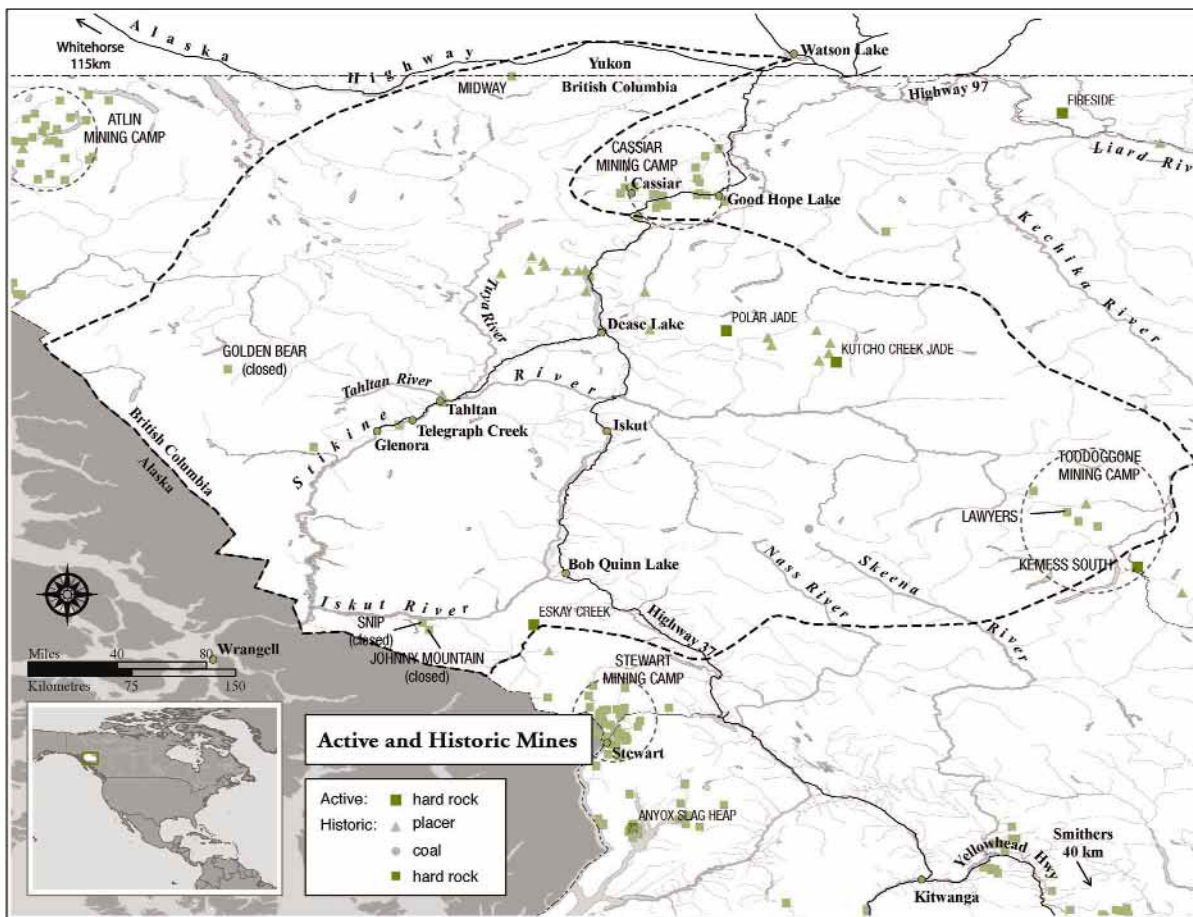
The Tahltan people have a long history of mining obsidian, jade and copper to trade with other First Nations. The Cassiar Mine was the first major mine in the region to employ significant numbers of Tahltan people. Today the active mines within the Tahltan traditional territory produce gold, silver, copper and jade. Today, active mines within Tahltan traditional territory produce gold, silver, and jade. The Eskay Creek underground gold and silver mine is the only active hard rock mine. Just outside Tahltan traditional territory to the southeast, the Kemess mine takes copper and gold from a large open pit. Both of these operate year round and together they employ hundreds of staff in a wide variety of jobs, including miners, cooks, engineers, truckers, carpenters and mill workers.

Placer gold is produced during the summer from gravels in several different rivers, most of which have been worked intermittently since the gold rushes in the 19th century. In recent years, placer mining operations have been located at the north end of

Dease Lake and south of Provincer Lake on Wheaton (Boulder) and Goldpan Creeks. The placer operations generally employ small crews and operate for the summer months. On Map 5, the Cassiar and Atlin Mining Camps include seasonal placer operations that are still active and are not apparent because of the map scale.

Some of the world's best jade is produced from the Provincer and Wolverine Lake area near Kutcho Creek; production is from one or two small quarries that only ship what the market will bear before the price starts to fall. There are also a number of gravel quarries operated by the Ministry of Transportation to supply materials for road building that are not shown in this figure.

Upon closure, mines are now required to reclaim the site. The Snip Gold Mine near the Iskut River has been reclaimed, while the Golden Bear Mine site is currently being reclaimed. International Skyline's Johnny Mountain Mine is in temporary closure.

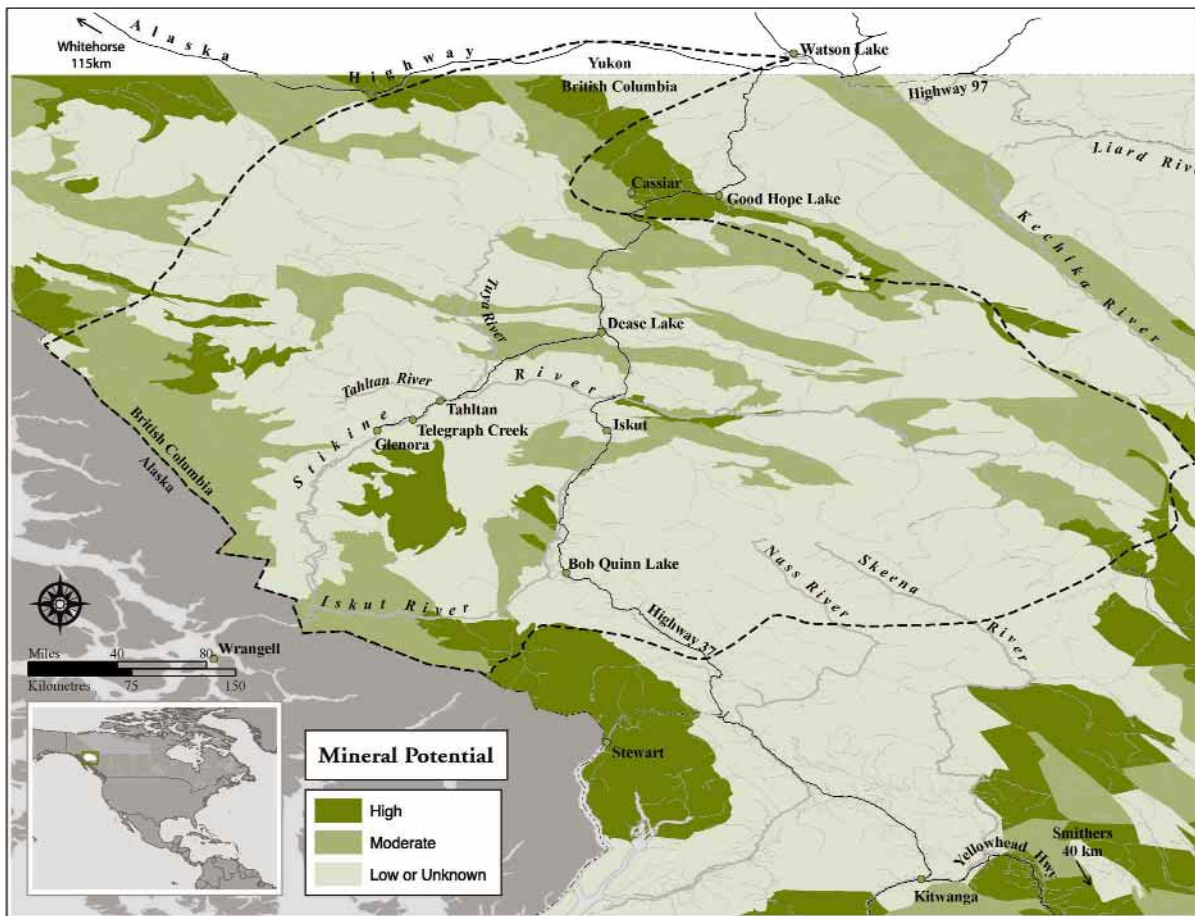


Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Map 6. Mineral potential

There are areas within Tahltan traditional territory that have very attractive potential for the discovery of new mines. During periods of high commodity prices, this potential has drawn prospectors and companies to invest their efforts and financial resources in the difficult search for these hidden resources. The attractive areas reflect a combination of favourable geology to host different types of mineral deposits and the limited extent of mineral exploration to date.

The British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines has used expert teams of industry geologists to estimate the probability of finding new mineral deposits in the different geological areas of the province. These estimates are strongly dependent on available knowledge for the area, current and past interest in specific commodities, and the overall understanding of the earth's crust. Therefore, mineral potential maps do indicate areas most likely to be attractive for mineral exploration at the present, but can change significantly as more geological mapping, new discoveries and exploration technology advances. There are frequent examples of new mines being found in the “wrong place.” This latter caution is particularly applicable to Tahltan traditional territory because of the limit to geoscience knowledge that applies in this region.



Source: British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines

Table 2. Current mineral exploration and mining activity in Tahltan traditional territory.⁵

Property	Owner	Location/Comment
Major Exploration Properties		
Red Chris (copper, gold)	bcMetals Corporation Ltd.	20 km south of Iskut, in pre-feasibility/feasibility
Bronson Slope (gold, copper)	International Skyline	Just east of Snip
Galore Creek (copper, gold)	Spectrumgold	Huge low-grade copper porphyry
Schaft Creek (copper)	955528 Alberta Ltd.	Huge low-grade copper porphyry
GJ (copper, gold)	International Curator Resources Ltd.	Porphyry copper west of Kinaskan Lake
Kerr-Sulphurets (copper, gold)	Noranda Inc.	Located near Eskay Creek
Isk (wollastonite)	Whitegold Natural Resource Corp.	Located in the area of the Snip Mine and Bronson Slope properties
Klappan (anthracite coal)	Fortune Minerals Ltd.	Near Klappan River 60 km southeast of Iskut
SIB, Bonsai (gold)	Heritage Explorations Ltd.	Large land holder in Eskay Creek district
Foremore (zinc, copper, gold, silver)	Roca Mines Inc.	Located 50 km north of Eskay Creek
Plus over 30 other prospects at varying stages of exploration.		
Operating Mines		
Eskay Creek (gold, silver)	Barrick Gold Corp.	Began commercial production in 1995; smelter reserves to 2005, mill reserves to 2008
Closed Mines		
Golden Bear (gold)	Wheaton River Minerals Ltd.	First heap leach operation permitted in B.C. in 1994 at site of previous operation owned by Chevron Oil and Homestake. Decommissioning and reclamation near completion
Snip (gold)	Barrick Gold Corp.	Reclamation completed
Johnny Mountain (gold)	International Skyline Gold Corp.	Temporary closure status

The Tahltan and Mining

Exploration and mining have long been significant activities for the Tahltan. Prior to European contact they dealt with obsidian, native copper, gold, jade, agate and precious stones in trade with other First Nations.

With the onset of the gold rushes in the later half of the 19th century, direct contact with European miners began and by the middle of the 20th century, Tahltan were being used as guides and trained by professional geologists as prospectors. The first significant foray of the Tahltan into active mining came with seasonal placer mining operations. The first full-time mining opportunities came in the 1950s with the Cassiar asbestos mine where Tahltan involvement spanned construction through mining and closure.

There has been cooperation as well as conflict in the Tahltan's relationship with mining companies operating on their territory.⁶ In 1997, concern about potential impacts led the Tahltan to briefly blockade an access road to the Golden Bear property. Agreement was subsequently reached that resulted in re-routing the access road away from prime moose habitat. Through the Tahltan Nation Development Corporation, the Tahltan were sub-contracted to maintain the access road as well as provide other services at the mine. A number of Tahltan were also directly employed by the mine and camp rules were established to control alcohol use. Tahltan are now actively involved in closure activities.

At the Eskay Creek Mine (now owned by Barrick through their merger with Homestake), employment and training agreements with the Tahltan mean that almost a third of the workforce is Tahltan. In addition, road maintenance and catering contracts have been struck between the Tahltan and the mine.⁷

Mining companies, local suppliers and government also worked together to fund and construct a community hall in Telegraph Creek.

From another perspective, Tahltan leaders have expressed concern that large disposable incomes from mining may be a significant contributor to drug and alcohol problems. This concern is part of a larger issue of effectively managing a community and culture in transition—in a way that maintains the best of past practices while taking on the best of new ways.

Endnotes

- 1 Holman, Gary and Terry Eliot, 1998. "Socio-Economic and Environmental Base Case Final Report, Cassiar Iskut-Stikine Land and Resource Management Plan." Victoria: B.C. Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.
- 2 Forty-five years followed before the next treaty—"Treaty 8"—which was signed in 1899 with five bands in the Peace River area (well to the northeast of Tahltan country). Treaty 8 assured an overland route to the Yukon's Klondike gold-fields. A full century would then pass before the next signing—the Nisga'a Treaty ratified by the Parliament of Canada in May 2000.
- 3 Edziza means cinders or volcanic ash and sand mountain in the Tahltan language.
- 4 Environmental Mining Council of British Columbia. Stikine Regional Overview. <http://www.embc.miningwatch.org/emcbc/publications/profiles/stikine>
- 5 This table was kindly reviewed and amended by Paul Wodjak, Regional Geologist, Smithers. British Columbia Ministry of Energy and Mines.
- 6 Environmental Mining Council of British Columbia, 2002. Stikine Profile. <http://emcbc.miningwatch.org/emcbc>
- 7 "Homestake and the Tahltan," 1998. Mining Quarterly.



In the ideal, all of the elements of sustainability assessment lie in a field of continuous learning and contribute to adaptive management.

3. The Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS) Assessment Framework

Development of the Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS) Assessment Framework was motivated by a desire to apply the ideas of sustainability in a practical way on the ground—in a way that is meaningful to explorer, mine manager, mill superintendent, community leader or public interest group. To address this challenge, MMSD – North America convened a work group of 35 individuals representing a broad range of interests and charged them with developing a set of practical principles, criteria and/or indicators that could be used to guide or test mining/minerals activities in terms of their compatibility with concepts of sustainability.

Work on this front began with a review of 10 recent initiatives from government, the mining industry, non-government organizations, indigenous people and the financial services sector. Authors of seven of these contributions were at the table. After significant deliberation, seven topics were identified that were deemed essential for consideration. For each of these, a question was crafted to be applied to any given project or operation.

From the Seven Questions falls a hierarchy of objectives, indicators and specific metrics. Simultaneously, the starting point for assessing the degree of progress is provided by an “ideal answer” to the initial question. In this way a single, initial motivating question—is the net contribution to sustainability positive or negative over the long term?—cascades into progressively more detailed elements which can be tailored to the project or operation being assessed. The questions in summary format are shown in Figure 1 and listed in detail in Table 3.

In this exercise, the seven questions were used to guide an assessment of the relationship between the Tahltan people and the mineral exploration and mining industry—past, present and future. For these purposes, the full mining-project life cycle was considered (Figure 2). The overall template that was used in this assessment is provided in Figure 3. This template was used through three aspects of assessment: (1) how it was in the past; (2) as it is now; and (3) how it should/could be in the future. Insights from these assessments were then compiled into the *Tahltan Mining Strategy – 2003* that is included as Section 5 of this report.

Grizzly sow with three cubs near the Golden Bear Mine – R. Dennis Bergen.

Figure 1. The Seven Questions to Sustainability in summary form.



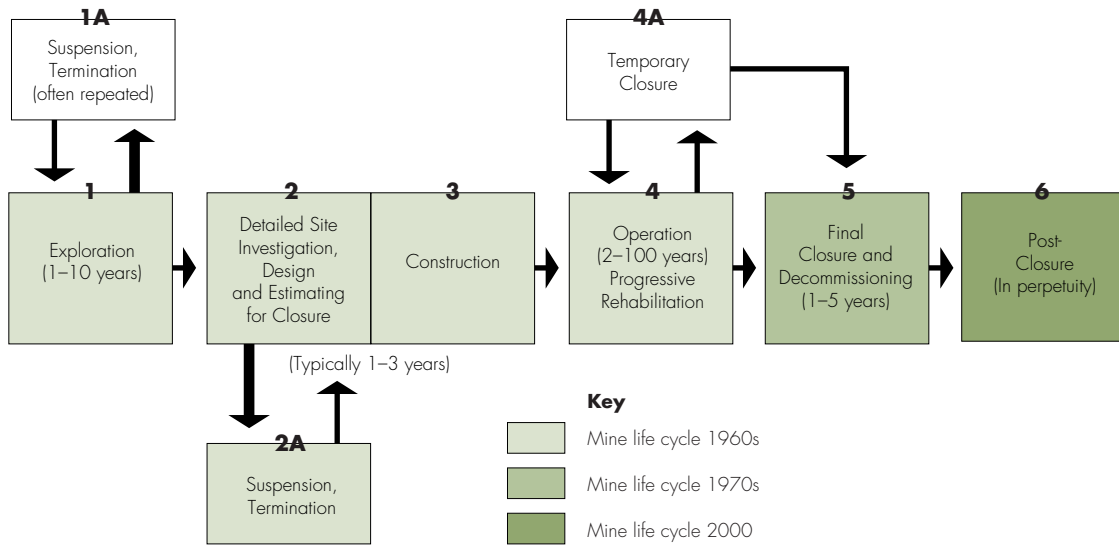
Human well-being (2) and environmental integrity (3) are the ultimate results to be achieved (and therefore to be assessed against for success). Mining, in particular, can be used as a catalyst in achieving these results. Activities of engagement (1); the market economy (4) (in this case mineral exploration and mining operations as well as the economy within Tahltan traditional territory); non-market activities (5) (which includes all of what we do that is not bought or sold in the market, including faith and cultural oriented activities, volunteer activities and housework); and governance (6) are all sets of activities that provide the means to achieve well-being. In the ideal, all of these elements lie in a field of continuous learning and contribute to adaptive management (7). To plan and act effectively, this larger picture needs to be considered as decisions are made about any particular resource development activity such as mineral exploration and mining.

Table 3. Detailed questions and sub-elements of the Seven Questions Assessment Framework

Question	Sub-elements
<p>1. Engagement: Are processes of engagement committed to, designed and implemented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure all affected communities of interest (including vulnerable or disadvantaged sub-populations by reason of, for example, minority status, gender, ethnicity or economic status) have the opportunity to participate in the decisions that influence their own future; and are understood, agreed upon by implicated communities of interest and are consistent with the legal, institutional and cultural characteristics of the community and country where the project is located? 	<p>1.1 Engagement processes 1.2 Dispute resolution mechanism 1.3 Reporting and verification 1.4 Adequate resources 1.5 Informed and voluntary consent</p>

Question	Sub-elements
<p>2. People: Will the project/operation lead directly or indirectly to maintenance of people’s well-being (preferably an improvement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • during the life of the project or operation? • in post-closure? 	<p>2.1 Community organizational capacity 2.2 Social/cultural integrity 2.3 Worker and population health 2.4 Availability of basic infrastructure 2.5 Direct, indirect and induced effects 2.6 Full social/cultural costs, benefits and risks 2.7 Responsibilities and sureties 2.8 Distribution of costs, benefits and risks 2.9 Social/cultural stress and restoration</p>
<p>3. Environment: Will the project/operation lead directly or indirectly, to the maintenance or strengthening of the integrity of biophysical systems so that they can continue in post-closure to provide the needed support for the well-being of people and other life forms?</p>	<p>3.1 Ecosystem function, resilience and self-organizing capacity 3.2 Ecological entitlement 3.3 Full ecosystem costs, benefits and risks 3.4 Responsibilities and sureties 3.5 Environmental stress and action to ensure ecosystem integrity</p>
<p>4. Economy: Is the financial health of the project/operation assured and will the project or operation contribute (through planning, evaluation, decision-making and action) to the long-term viability of the local and regional economy in ways that will help ensure sufficiency for all and provide specific opportunities for the less advantaged?</p>	<p>4.1 Project or operation economics 4.2 Operational efficiencies 4.3 Economic contributions 4.4 Community/regional economies 4.5 Government and broader society economies</p>
<p>5. Traditional and non-market activities: Will the project/operation contribute to the long-term viability of traditional and non-market activities in the implicated community and region?</p>	<p>5.1 Activity/use levels 5.2 Traditional/cultural attributes</p>
<p>6. Institutional arrangements and governance: Are the institutional arrangements and systems of governance in place to provide a reasonable degree of confidence that the capacity to address project or operation consequences will continue to exist through the full life cycle including post-closure?</p>	<p>6.1 Efficiency and effectiveness in the mix of legislated rules, voluntary programs, market incentives and unspoken cultural norms 6.2 Capacity to address operational consequences 6.3 Bridging to post-closure conditions 6.4 Overall confidence that commitments made will be fulfilled</p>
<p>7. Synthesis and continuous learning: Has an overall evaluation been made and is a system in place for periodic evaluation based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consideration of all reasonable alternative configurations and designs at the project level (including the no-go option in the initial evaluation)?; • consideration of all reasonable alternatives at the overarching strategic level for supplying the commodity and the services it provides for meeting society’s needs?; and • a synthesis of all the factors raised in this list of questions, leading to an overall judgment that the contribution to people and ecosystems will be net positive over the long term? 	<p>7.1 Project level alternatives 7.2 Strategic level alternatives 7.3 Overall synthesis 7.4 Continuous learning and improvement</p>

Figure 2. The full mine-project life cycle (modified from John Gadsby, 2001).



Up until the 1960s, little thought was given to activities beyond the operational phase. In the 1970s, the need for decommissioning and surface reclamation was recognized. Only in the last few years has attention been given to the human and ecological implications of the post-closure period.

Figure 3. Contribution assessment template used to guide the Tahltan 7QS Assessment: past, present and future.

	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	People Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	Environment Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	Economy Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?	Bush/non-market Are bush/non-market activities better off as a result?	Institutions & governance Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?	Synthesis; continuous learning Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?	Summary
<i>Exploration</i>								
<i>Operating mines (including construction)</i>								
<i>Closed mines</i>								
<i>Summary</i>								

The template was used to guide the Tahltan 7QS Assessment for each of three assessments: past, present and future.



Two women met at Tahltan: one was from the south; and the other from the north. They saw bright flashes in the water. They went and looked and saw salmon swimming up the little river and they stayed there to fish. They called each other sisters and settled at Tahltan. This was our beginning.

– Story told by John Carlick

4. Assessment: Exploration, Operating Mines, Closure

A summary of the assessment completed by The 2003 Tahltan Mining Symposium for mineral exploration, operating mines and closure is provided below in Tables 4, 5 and 6. Conditions in the past, the current situation and the desired future are summarized in each table.

Eagle Rock looking down the Stikine River at Tahltan – David Rattray.

Table 4. Assessment summary: the Tahltan and mineral exploration – past, present and future.

Time Period	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	People Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	Environment Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	Economy Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?
PAST (1950 – early 1990s)	Tahltans not recognized as interest group; industry worked in isolation; local non-Indians did the hiring. No formal engagement process with prospectors, companies or government.	Wage economy brought income and for those few employed, job-skills and a chance to stay on the land; through the 1950s, labour and bush skills in demand; in 1960s with helicopter, Telegraph Creek lost role as staging point; thereafter, the Tahltan were marginalized; disruption of traditional ways; increase in substance abuse; overall, Tahltan not better off.	Minimal respect for the environment, traditional camps, trails, and sites; overall, and until recently, the environment has not been a concern, let alone a priority.	Individual projects viable; local economy subject to seasonal pulses from local purchases; some jobs and income for a few, particularly in the 1950s, much less since; sometimes these facilitated unemployment insurance claims during the winter which smoothed out the boom and bust for a few.
PRESENT	No engagement; secretive attitude of industry an impediment; no dispute resolution system; no reporting and verification; inadequate resources to participate; no informed and voluntary consent; no government involvement.	More local hiring; some feel that some training now taking place while others feel little capacity building is occurring; local medical facilities better but overall population health remains a real concern; limited knowledge of what exploration is going on—stressful for the Tahltan.	Exploration activities are now more respectful of the environment, however, the Tahltan have not been involved in the design of any of the rules therefore lack confidence that the integrity of the environment will be assured; little sense exists of the overall environmental costs, benefits and risks related to the cumulative effects of all exploration.	Individual projects viable; little currently flowing to the local economy; limited contribution to local business except perhaps helicopter time.
FUTURE (desired)	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement processes that reflect respect, equality and fairness. Early and effective contact with the Tahltan. Enhanced Tahltan (skills and resources) company, and government capacity to engage effectively. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early and effective engagement with the Tahltan. Joint Student Participation Program to be created. Joint Career Opportunity Program to be created. Companies to make Tahltan aware of opportunities and to provide training. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair participation by Tahltan and Tahltan traditional land will be better off as a result. Tahltan involvement with inspection (could be single or multiple visits). Notice to Tahltan of any improper activity. Concrete steps taken to ensure that the Tahltan are aware of what is going on. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fair participation by the Tahltan in exploration activities. Tahltan to create an Exploration Services Co. Tahltan to provide industry and government with an inventory of available skills and services.
Summary	Until recently, there has been little progress on achieving effective engagement in exploration. There are now signals that the exploration community wishes to change that situation.	Exploration activities have generally not been concerned with Tahltan well-being; often job income has translated to substance abuse and the overall well-being of the community has declined; in the future, the key to changing this is greater direct involvement of the Tahltan.	Until recently, most exploration activity has been unconcerned with the environment. There is some sense that this situation has changed but with little involvement by the Tahltan either in exploration or its regulation, there is little confidence yet that the future will be better.	Project viability taken care of by companies. Local economy has received pulses of jobs and income from exploration, particularly back in the 1950s, less so since early 1960s. Future presents opportunities for Tahltan business capacity in terms of exploration services support.

<p>Bush/non-market Are bush/non-market activities better off as a result?</p>	<p>Institutions and governance Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?</p>	<p>Synthesis; continuous learning Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?</p>	<p>Summary</p>
<p>No respect for traditional way of life or camps, trails, and sites; no contribution.</p>	<p>Totally inadequate rules and institutions from a social, economic and environmental perspective; no incentives for enhancing local capacity in any way, especially education; system inadequate at all levels: corporate, local, provincial, federal; no confidence that people and environment will be better off or that capacities in place to address project consequences.</p>	<p>No synthesis undertaken; no system in place for continuous learning.</p>	<p>While a few benefits flowed to a small number of Tahltan—particularly before Telegraph Creek lost its role as a staging area—exploration in the past was not positive for either people or the environment.</p>
<p>Improved access helps the Tahltan get to country food and outsiders are exposed to local art and culture, however, more access can also increase hunting pressures; no requirements to report discovery of Tahltan-significant sites or for archeological assessment; overall impact on bush economy likely small, but could change.</p>	<p>Legislated rules and approvals process has improved but not yet adequate; no overall monitoring system in place; limited government capacity to monitor is a real concern; little local capacity to respond and participate in decision-making and enforcement process. Federal and provincial jurisdictional overlaps are confusing.</p>	<p>Companies may do overall assessment but do not involve Tahltan; cumulative impacts (social, cultural, economic, environmental) of all exploration activity a critical gap; no overall system is in place for synthesis and continuous learning.</p>	<p>There is little overall visible benefit to Tahltans. Ongoing concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inadequate engagement; • lack of care to ensure that the contribution to people and the environment is positive; • lack of local capacity to be involved; and • absence of a broad overview of all activities in Tahltan territory.
<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effort by companies put to not only minimize impacts, but also to strengthen non-market activities. • Sensitivity to guide, outfitting and trapping activities by companies. • Care to ensure that increased access is controlled from a hunting perspective. • Coordination of schedules between exploration and guide outfitters. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidence must be established that rules in place are leading to the right actions by all parties. • Effective reporting by all parties (companies, government, Tahltan, others). • Provision of resources to the Tahltan to ensure capacity to participate. • Direct dealing between Tahltan and companies on any infractions that arise. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic synthesis and review of implications of exploration activities taking place in Tahltan territory. • Annual face-to-face meetings involving the Tahltan, government, companies and other interests. • Tahltan to survey other First Nations to learn how they are dealing with exploration activities. 	<p>In the future, the Tahltan wish to be partners in development from a business perspective; in compliance and enforcement activities; in an overall management role; and from a decision-making perspective.</p>
<p>Until recently, there has been little concern for the Tahltan and their bush economy on the part of companies and government. Enhanced sensitivity to this is critical for the future.</p>	<p>An inadequate past has given way to more effective institutional arrangements. However, the system is not yet in place that will give confidence in the future. That confidence will only come with greater Tahltan involvement in all aspects of governance.</p>	<p>Until this exercise, no thought has ever been put to generating an overall synthesis of the implications of exploration to the Tahltan people and land. Undertaking such a periodic assessment to facilitate continuous learning and adaptive management is an essential future step.</p>	<p>Improvements can be recognized over the past 50 years. However, the overall contribution of exploration to the well-being of the Tahltan people and land is likely far below what it could be. Keys to a better future include heightened sensitivity on the part of companies and government and enhanced Tahltan capacity and involvement.</p>

Table 5. Assessment summary: the Tahltan and operating mines – past, present and future.

Time Period	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	People Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	Environment Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	Economy Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?
PAST (1950 – early 1990s)	No formal engagement processes in the past; little opportunity to participate with the exception of some at Golden Bear; little input from Tahltan on establishing mines; opportunity to participate in EIA process within last 20 years did exist but Tahltan did not have capacity or resources to effectively review environmental impact studies; companies did not have obligation to consult with Tahltan and Tahltan not considered part of development process at any level.	Concern about long-term health issues of workers from Cassiar; some employment from operating mines but many social problems related to substance abuse and cultural change; changes to hunting, influx of tourism and electricity in Telegraph Creek (1974) all had implications to the well-being of the Tahltan; change has brought improved services such as transportation and communication, but overall, Tahltan well-being remains depressed.	Varied with project; concerns remain regarding long-term contamination of wildlife, landscape scarring; increased hunting pressures from recreational hunting as a result of more access – 1950s - Cassiar, 1974 - Stuart-Cassiar Highway, 1970s - BC Rail access route; continuing concern about Cassiar tailings and the "temporary" closure of Johnny Mountain; earlier mines had little environmental concern; Snip and Golden Bear better; few fish/wildlife studies; lack of environmental bonding; overall integrity of the environment not assured.	Boom and bust; some work for locals during operation and purchases from local economy; Abrupt loss when mines shut down; "closed" local economy a problem— mines pay workers but then workers spend all their money in company store and pub; little Tahltan capacity to participate in the past; no spin-off businesses, little benefit to local economy; overall sense that money flows to federal and provincial coffers but not to the local First Nation government.
PRESENT	More informed communications between all parties; engagement processes are evolving as all sides learn about the other's needs and responsibilities; still a learning process for Tahltan, company and government.	Some Tahltan receive benefits from employment, training and apprenticeship programs; transferable skills are being learned. Thus the Tahltan are gaining both directly through wages and indirectly through the local purchase of goods and services; the negative social impact within the community, however, is escalating; serious substance abuse and related social problems remain that must be addressed; the net overall contribution is not positive.	Reclamation plans are mandated by government for all mines and exploration projects; for example, reclamation and closure plans are now in place for Eskay Creek which reflects a significant improvement over past practices.	Employment and local purchase of supplies and services enhance the local wage economy; opportunities to develop local businesses through direct contracts and joint ventures have strengthened the local economy; road access to mushroom harvesting areas has enhanced that business opportunity for the Tahltans.
FUTURE (desired)	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative development of an MOU to govern the engagement process. • Improve communication on local issues and address them in a timely manner. • The idea of a more formalized arrangement governing impacts and benefits to the Tahltan should be carefully examined by both the Tahltan and the company; elements to consider include monetary compensation, Tahltan employment, training, dispute resolution, environmental monitoring, shift changes and hunting. • The idea of a Tahltan Sustainability Fund to ensure a long-term contribution to the Tahltan should be examined carefully by the Tahltan, company and government. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication, planning and action involving company, Tahltan and government to address social issues (critical). • Additional programs to address substance abuse and related social issues. • On-site mental health support for workers. • Life-skills training for workers related to money management and lifestyle choices. • Current training should emphasize skills that will be useable in post-closure. • The Tahltan need to be provided with information on various training opportunities so skills can be developed outside the work place in preparation for the future. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tahltan skills and capacity related to environmental monitoring, enforcement and compliance should be enhanced so that the Tahltan can assume full responsibility. • Reports should be filed with the Tahltan government, companies, provincial and federal government and others. • There is an opportunity for the Tahltan to develop specialized skills in reclamation and restoration ecology. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further enhancement of employment and business opportunities for the Tahltan.
Summary	Engagement processes have improved over time but much yet remains to be done as the various parties learn about each other's values and concern. Formalization of arrangements through either MOUs or signed agreements may be helpful. Alternative mechanisms like a Sustainability Fund should be considered.	Overall, Tahltan well-being remains a real concern and mining activity has not contributed as much as is possible. While mining is not the only factor, care needs to be exercised to ensure that its contribution is positive.	Old practices have given way to many improved ways. However, a number of serious concerns remain such as the endless temporary closure situation at Johnny Mountain. The Tahltan, among others, do not yet have confidence that environmental integrity will be strengthened. The Tahltan have a potentially significant role to play in reclamation and restoration work during mine operation.	The contribution to the local economy has improved significantly both in terms of jobs and local purchase of supplies and services. There are additional business opportunities for the Tahltan to pursue.

<p>Bush/non-market Are bush/non-market activities better off as a result?</p>	<p>Institutions and governance Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?</p>	<p>Synthesis; continuous learning Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?</p>	<p>Summary</p>
<p>No contribution in the past, if anything, negative as the Tahltan shifted away from traditional lifestyle to wage economy; government conservation officers arrive and try to limit aboriginal hunt; neither companies nor government concerned with traditional culture of the Tahltan; no studies of traditional use of the land; no recognition of traditional knowledge and aboriginal rights and freedoms.</p>	<p>Not adequate—lenient laws, little monitoring and enforcement, lack of pre-planning for closure; no recognition of aboriginal rights; no requirement for consultation with the Tahltan on land use, environmental assessments or any other implication.</p>	<p>No synthesis undertaken; no re-assessment.</p>	<p>The Tahltan recognize that some factors (e.g., commodity prices) are well outside the control of companies and government. However, in the past, there was no net positive gain to people or the environment, a situation that is slowly changing for the better.</p>
<p>Negative impact on traplines; potential opportunity to enhance cultural activities through transfer of facilities and infrastructure to Tahltan after mining; road access has enhanced mushroom harvesting ability; work schedule allows the flexibility to enjoy fishing, hunting, etc., but the effect on family life still can be tough; company is supportive of local cultural activities including funerals, elections and school activities; more could be done with elders such as mine tours.</p>	<p>Comprehensive rules in place although the Tahltan are not signatories to these rules; mechanism for independent Tahltan review of policies and plans still missing as is a Tahltan monitoring process to ensure environmental protection standards are adhered to.</p>	<p>No overall review system in place, particularly to see if community needs are being addressed; mines and the Tahltan still very much in the learning stage.</p>	<p>Significant improvement has been achieved but much remains to be done by all interests.</p>
<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and actions to ensure that not only are impacts addressed, but that actions are taken to strengthen traditional cultural practices. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An independent Tahltan mine review process should be established. • Collaborative development of a co-management agreement between the Tahltan and the provincial government should be undertaken. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A company-Tahltan joint process should be developed to review project design alternatives throughout the various project phases. • An oversight or implementing team should be established to meet periodically (perhaps four times/year) to undertake a synthesis and review of the overall contribution that is being made by operating mine activities. 	<p>Over the long term, the Tahltan will work to build the skills and capacity that will allow them to participate directly and effectively in owning and operating mines. On the part of companies and government, more effort is needed to work with the Tahltan to address the substance abuse and related social problems that come with the wage economy.</p>
<p>Over time, companies and government had become more aware of and sensitive to traditional Tahltan activities. The learning continues on all sides and needs to be encouraged.</p>	<p>Institutional arrangements have been strengthened over time. Direct Tahltan involvement needs to be enhanced and the skills and capacity to do so effectively need building. Tahltan will develop their own policies and standards.</p>	<p>There is still a lack of capacity on all sides to generate a regular synthesis that provides an overview of the implications of mining on the Tahltan and provides the needed platform to learn and improve continuously.</p>	<p>Significant improvement has occurred since 1950 on most fronts. However, the issue of Tahltan health and well-being remains a critical concern to be addressed. Doing so is in the interests of all parties including companies and government. The solution is not simply economic; it must include enhancing skills and capacity as well as increasing Tahltan participation in decision-making.</p>

Table 6. Assessment summary: the Tahltan and mines in closure – past, present and future

Time Period	Engagement Are engagement processes in place and working effectively?	People Will people's well-being be maintained or improved?	Environment Is the integrity of the environment assured over the long term?	Economy Is project economic viability assured; will the economy of the community and region be better off as a result?
PAST (1950 – early 1990s)	Typically mines were just left; no information exchange occurred with the Tahltan so misconceptions arose; no formal engagement processes existed.	Little concern for Tahltan well-being in the past; when Tahltan participated, there were some benefits (e.g., with dismantling of Klappan Coal); generally, no participation and no benefits; no training programs; the negative social-cultural impacts outweighed gains.	Little or no consideration—just walked away (Johnny Mountain and Cassiar tailings are good examples); detrimental to the environment.	No economic benefit to community except through a small bit of local hiring and perhaps a bit of local rental.
PRESENT	Some sharing is starting but is still limited; Tahltan informed of closure.	Some consideration for employees (e.g., severance packages, some transfer of employment) but not much thought for the community; see slow change in including Tahltan for advancement, although few opportunities for Tahltan to transfer to other operating mines.	Improvement in reclamation and closure; Snip a good example; long-term site monitoring (10 years) but still limited or no critter monitoring; ongoing planning for closure during operations and reclamation.	Some employment and opportunities for reclamation and monitoring work, however, overall the contribution to the local economy is limited; possible benefits from facilities in post-closure, but need yet to be realized.
FUTURE (desired)	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full engagement in all aspects: assessment, permitting, bonding, ongoing and final reclamation, closure, post-closure and monitoring. • Tahltan skill and capacity enhancement to facilitate involvement. • Would likely be best to establish a kind of MOU involving Tahltan, company, government and others to cover all of this. • Tahltan to participate in “outside” mechanisms such as the NW Mine Development Review Committee. • Tahltan should lead the land-use planning process once mine is reclaimed. • Tahltan to establish own environmental office and internal review process to involve community. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical need to address long-term social and health issues. • Closure will not involve a large workforce but should involve some; key is to ensure a longer-term flow of benefits to the local community so that the ebb and flow of the mining activity is “smoothed.” • Skills and capacity of Tahltan need to be enhanced (e.g., environment, reclamation, monitoring, special cat skinner skills required for road de-activation) to ensure that they play a central role in reclamation and post-closure. • Companies to provide opportunities for Tahltan to transfer to other mines. • Career mentoring for young people is needed. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to define what “temporary closure” means (say maximum five years). Situation at Johnny Mountain (indefinite temporary closure) is untenable. • Need to set a positive example for others and ensure that reclamation and monitoring covers site, access routes, stream crossings, etc. • Effort required to ensure that environmental restoration is best possible; perfection may not be achieved. • Monitoring of contamination and health of wildlife and fisheries at all stages, including periodic inventory. • Restoration should include habitat enhancement, re-introduction of species that were driven out, use of native vegetation, etc. • Tahltan participation in development of environmental regulations. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to break the boom-bust cycle. • Need fairer distribution of resource revenues with contribution from taxes and royalties back to the community. • Tahltan to explore business opportunities for application here and elsewhere: reclamation and restoration services; long-term monitoring; and alternative uses of mine infrastructure and assets (e.g., logging, tourism, healing, exploration, back country recreation, prospecting, trapping, hunting and winter recreation). • With capacity in place, Tahltan should get first right of refusal on reclamation and monitoring contracts. • Alternative mechanisms like a Sustainability Fund should be considered.
Summary	Improvement in engagement over time regarding closure and post-closure but situation still not adequate from the Tahltan perspective.	Concern for the well-being of the Tahltan and their community has increased over time, but there remains a critical need for all parties to more effectively address the health and social issues.	Environmental sensitivity has increased over time but long-term concerns remain. Tahltan capacity to participate over the long term needs to be enhanced.	Tahltan capacity and opportunities continue to increase. However, the mechanisms to smooth out the peaks and valleys of the boom-bust cycle are still not in place.

<p>Bush/non-market Are bush/non-market activities better off as a result?</p>	<p>Institutions and governance Are rules, incentives, programs and capacities in place to address project consequences?</p>	<p>Synthesis; continuous learning Does a full synthesis show that the net result will be positive in the long term; is there periodic re-assessment?</p>	<p>Summary</p>
<p>No concern for bush economy in the past—very disruptive and destructive; after closure, activities picked up as before if they could; mining activities increased access by recreational hunters to traditional Tahltan hunting areas.</p>	<p>Totally inadequate institutional arrangements.</p>	<p>Never done in the past.</p>	<p>Closure in the past was often problematic for both human and ecosystem well-being.</p>
<p>Overall improvement has been achieved; with closure, access remains to traditional areas which makes things easier for the Tahltan but without controls, can bring in too many recreational hunters; limited critter monitoring upon which the bush economy is dependent.</p>	<p>Institutional arrangements have been improved; provincial closure regulations are now in place and include a requirement for some level of financial surety; closure of Golden Bear is much better than in the past but final condition remains to be seen.</p>	<p>Some concern for learning from the past now exists; Golden Bear and Snip are hearing and addressing concerns as they move ahead, but still no collaborative overview is being generated and reported.</p>	<p>Current closure practices are improved. The issue of defining “temporary closure” is outstanding. No system exists to entrench concepts of continuous learning and improvement.</p>
<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tahltan to explore community development opportunities with mine assets such as: cultural camps; healing and treatment centre; and rehabilitation centre. • With mining activity gone, Tahltan have undisturbed access, however, access needs to be controlled and the Tahltan should play a central role in this. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Tahltan participation in setting terms of closure (e.g., water quality, emergency clean-ups, etc.). • Need to address orphaned and abandoned sites and how to finance related restoration and emergencies. • Rules are in place but all interests need to learn how to use them more effectively. • Need to explore co-management arrangement with full Tahltan participation. 	<p>Actions required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to design and implement a collaborative and ongoing system of monitoring and reporting that provides the needed synthesis and opportunity for continuous learning related to all aspects of this preliminary assessment. 	
<p>There is now greater sensitivity to traditional activities. Opportunities to use closed facilities for health and cultural centres need to be explored.</p>	<p>There has been an improvement over time. Addressing orphaned and abandoned sites remains an issue. All parties are still learning how to use the rules more effectively. Direct Tahltan involvement in designing and implementing the governance mechanisms needs to be enhanced.</p>	<p>Designing and implementing an ongoing collaborative system of monitoring and reporting on all aspects covered in this preliminary assessment remains a gap.</p>	<p>Addressing the long-term health and well-being of the Tahltan people remains a critical issue to address. Full Tahltan involvement in all aspects of closure is essential. There are business and community development opportunities for the Tahltan to take advantage of and to do so, Tahltan skill enhancement is needed. A collaborative and ongoing system of monitoring and reporting that covers all aspects of this preliminary assessment is required.</p>



Drill rig on the West Zone, Sulphurets Property – Dani Alldrick, B.C. Geological Survey.



Each person had freedom of choice, but with that freedom comes responsibility. We often say that natives do not talk about rights, they talk about responsibility.

- Tahltan saying

5. Tahltan Mining Strategy – 2003

The Tahltan Mining Symposium set out to review the implications of mining and mineral activity from a Tahltan perspective. It did so to create a foundation for designing and implementing a strategy for ensuring that the contribution of mining and mineral exploration activity over the long term is positive to the Tahltan people and their traditional territory.

For many decades, the Tahltan people bore the brunt of the boom-bust cycle of mineral exploration and mining on their traditional territory. While a number of Tahltan have worked directly or indirectly for exploration and/or mining companies, until recently the Tahltan people as a whole could have little hope that benefits would outweigh the attendant costs and risks, let alone sum to an overall net long-term positive contribution.

Below is set out the strategy for action that emerged at the Tahltan Mining Symposium and as a result of subsequent review of symposium results by the Tahltan people. It aims to:

1. send a signal that Tahltan people are supportive of mining and mineral activity on their land under conditions that such activities are “done right” from a Tahltan perspective;
2. facilitate Tahltan participation in mining and mineral activity—not only through direct and indirect employment, but also in terms of overall management/co-management as well as the broad perspective of seeing a fair distribution (considering all participating interests) of all benefits, costs and risks; and
3. ensure that the broad range of concerns raised in the “Seven Questions to Sustainability” are addressed, in particular the health/social/cultural implications of mining/mineral activity that continue to receive inadequate attention.

Strategy:

- i. a coherent set of approaches and interventions proposed or chosen to accomplish an objective or group of objectives. While objectives state what we want to accomplish, strategies indicate how to proceed.
 - ii. an attempt to achieve a means of working smarter rather than harder by doing the right things at the right times for the right reasons.
-

Tahltan Mining Symposium – Romona Blackwell.

Potential Actions for the Tahltan

1. *Immediate Internal Communication*

- Develop a short summary report of this initiative and distribute to all Tahltan people.
- Convene (Chiefs and Council) meetings in each community to extend the discussion more broadly.
- Convene an annual Tahltan Mining Forum including Tahltan people, other local residents, government and industry to update everyone on exploration and mining activity.

2. *Resource Development Policy*

- Review the 1987 Resource Development Policy (Appendix 2); revise to include vision, goals and specific objectives related to the full mining-project life cycle (exploration through to post-closure) and covering the components of the Seven Questions Assessment Framework:
 - (1) engagement;
 - (2) human well-being;
 - (3) ecosystem well-being;
 - (4) the Tahltan market economy;
 - (5) the Tahltan non-market economy;
 - (6) governance and institutions; and
 - (7) synthesis and continuous learning.
- Get approval across the Tahltan leadership as necessary.
- Develop a generic framework to use in negotiating agreements (could be a Memorandum of Understanding, an Impact Benefits Agreement or some other instrument) with others who wish to undertake some activity on Tahltan traditional territory; obtain approval (across leadership) as necessary.
- Address in the policy, how best to ensure capacity development within the Tahltan community and when that capacity is in place, consider ways of ensuring that Tahltan people are given a preferential opportunity to participate.
- The policy should include development of specific “to-do lists” for exploration and mine development companies.

3. *Tahltan Mining/Mineral Resource Committee*

- Secure funding for a Tahltan Mining/Mineral Resource Committee and Secretariat to carry the current process ahead and to implement actions in the future; this should be established as a part of the Tahltan Central Organization.
- Name a coordinator to assume responsibility for implementation.

4. *Mining/Mineral Resource Data Base and Inventory*

- Establish a locally-based capacity to link to existing data bases in Smithers and Victoria that describe:
 - available mapping;
 - mineral claims and coal licences in Tahltan traditional territory;
 - geology and mineral occurrences; and
 - mineral potential.

5. *Tahltan Corporate Development*

- Develop a business plan (including a review of the most appropriate delivery mechanism) and seek start-up funding for providing the following services to the mining/mineral industry:
 - exploration services;
 - reclamation and restoration services;
 - environmental monitoring;
 - social/cultural monitoring; and
 - recruiting and placement services.

6. *External Communication*

- Communicate to industry (exploration and operating companies) and government:
 - the revised Resource Development Policy;
 - the generic Framework for Agreements;
 - the inventory of Tahltan capacity and interest in participating in mining and mineral activity; and
 - specific skill and services: (1) exploration services; (2) reclamation and restoration services; (3) environmental monitoring; (4) social/cultural monitoring.
- Consider developing a comprehensive external communications program that might include:
 - Web site with links to other key mining Web sites (Infomine, PDAC, MAC, ICMM, etc.);
 - direct contact with companies and industry associations;
 - outreach including a booth, participation in others' booths and/or presentations at: the Cordilleran Roundup (Vancouver, January); Prospector and Developers Association of Canada Annual Convention (Toronto, March); and the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy Annual Convention (May, various locations).

7. *Progress Monitoring*

- Establish a capacity for tracking progress on all of the recommendations of this action plan starting with one- and three-month assessments.
- Establish a capacity for periodically (say on a five-year cycle) undertaking an overall assessment of whether the contribution of mining/mineral activity to Tahltan people and Tahltan traditional territory is positive over the long term; this capacity should include an integration of qualitative and quantitative insight, insights from story and indicators, and wisdom from traditional knowledge as well as contemporary “western” thinking.

8. *Mining, Minerals and Youth*

- Establish scholarship funds for Tahltan students in areas of prospecting/mining/environment.
- Contact the exploration industry through the B.C. & Yukon Chamber of Mines to encourage companies to engage young Tahltan in summer exploration programs.
- Develop programs for young people through which they are made aware of potential careers in the mining and mineral industry.

9. *Tahltan Capacity Building*

- Undertake a strength/capacity/gap review (collaborative with industry and government) in terms of Tahltan skills and services available to support the mining/minerals industry.
- Seek appropriate support from industry and government to mount programs to enhance capacity in line with the results of the above analysis.

10. Mining, Minerals and Elders

- Develop a collaborative program with industry and government to tell elders about mining/mineral activity (the full life cycle) including mine tours and evening presentations in the communities.

11. Health/Social/Cultural Implications of Mining and Mineral Activity

- Make a concerted effort to address the health/social/cultural implications of the wage economy in general and exploration and mining activity in particular including:
 - creating the opportunity for all three Tahltan communities to work together to generate a strategy for addressing the health/social/cultural concerns;
 - ensuring that the entire Resource Policy is considered from the perspective of the health/social/cultural implications;
 - establishing means of tracking and reporting on the health/social/cultural implications of mining/mineral activity;
 - ensuring that health/social/cultural concerns are dealt with explicitly in any arrangement that is made between the Tahltan and exploration/mining companies; and
 - designing and implementing life-skills training courses for Tahltan workers and families to ensure that the income from the wage economy is used wisely; part of implementation will involve putting in place work-site and community counsellors;
- An immediate priority is to work with the Eskay Creek Mine to address health/social/cultural concerns arising from Tahltan participation there.
- Special effort should be put to working with government and industry to develop recreational facilities for youth and elders in each community.
- Special effort should also be put to working with government and industry to address cultural concerns including preservation of the Tahltan language and enrichment of Tahltan culture.

12. Resources to Support the Tahltan Mining/Minerals Action Plan

- Seek government and industry support for collaborative implementation of the Tahltan Mining/Minerals Action Plan.
- Examine innovative funding mechanisms that might include some kind of revenue-sharing mechanisms (from royalties, taxes, licences and fees).

Actions for Industry (Exploration and Mining Companies; Industry Associations)

1. Sensitivity to First Nations Society

- Take the needed steps to develop a sensitivity to First Nations society by:
 - becoming informed on First Nations rights from a legal perspective as expressed in recent court decisions;
 - establishing engagement processes that reflect a respect for Tahltan people and Tahltan traditional territory;
 - taking cross-cultural training to ensure that the company has the capacity to build the needed relationships with Tahltan people; and
 - committing to collaborative problem-solving approaches with the Tahltan people.

2. Health/Social/Cultural Implications of Mineral Exploration and Mining Activity

- Ensure that the health/social/cultural implications of mining and mineral activity are explicitly addressed.

3. Implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy

- Work collaboratively in support of implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy.

4. Specific Actions for the Eskay Creek Mine

- Continue formalization of an arrangement to clarify specific impacts and benefits to ensure that the long-term contribution to the Tahltan people and traditional territory is positive.

Actions for Government (Regional, Provincial and Federal)

1. Health/Social/Cultural Implications of Mining and Mineral Activity

- Ensure that the health/social/cultural implications of mining and mineral activity are explicitly addressed.

2. Temporary Closure

- Address the problem of the seemingly indefinite “temporary closure” of the Johnny Mountain Mine.

3. Implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy

- Work collaboratively in support of implementation of the Tahltan Resource Development Policy.



Tahltan fish house – David Rattray.

Appendix 1. 1910 Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe

We, the undersigned members of the Tahltan tribe, speaking for ourselves, and our entire tribe, hereby make known to all whom it may concern, that we have heard of the Indian Rights movement among the Indian tribes of the Coast, and of the southern interior of British Columbia. Also, we have read the Declaration made by the chiefs of the southern interior tribes at Spences Bridge on the 16th July last, and we hereby declare our complete agreement with the demands of same, and with the position taken by the said chiefs, and their people on all the questions stated in the said Declaration, and we furthermore make known that it is our desire and intention to join with them in the fight for our mutual rights, and that we will assist in the furtherance of this object in every way we can, until such time as all these matters of moment to use are finally settled. We further declare as follows:

Firstly – We claim the sovereign right to all the country of our tribe—this country of ours which we have held intact from the encroachments of other tribes, from time immemorial, at the cost of our own blood. We have done this because our lives depended on our country. We have never treated with them, nor given them any such title. (We have only very lately learned the British Columbia government makes this claim and that it has for long considered as its property all the territories of the Indian tribes in B.C.)

Secondly – We desire that a part of our country, consisting of one or more large areas (to be erected by us), be retained for us for our own use, said lands and all thereon to be acknowledged by the government as our absolute property. The rest of our tribal land we are will to relinquish to the British Columbia government for adequate compensation.

Thirdly – We wish it known that a small portion of our lands at the mouth of the Tahltan river, was set apart a few years ago by Mr. Vowell as an Indian reservation. These few acres are the only reservation made for our tribe. We may state we never applied for the reservation of this piece of land, and we had no knowledge why the government set it apart for us, nor do we know exactly yet.

Fourthly – We desire that all questions regarding our lands, hunting, fishing, etc., and every matter concerning our welfare, be settled my treaty between us and the Dominion and British Columbia governments.

Fifthly – We are of the opinion it will be better for ourselves, also better for the governments and all concerned, if these treaties are made with us at a very early date, so all friction, and misunderstanding between us and the whites may be avoided, for we hear lately much talk of white settlements in the region and the building of railways, etc., in the near future.

*Signed at Telegraph Creek, B.C., the eighteenth day of October, nineteen hundred and ten, by
Nanok, Chief of the Tahltans
Nastulta, alias Little Jackson
George Assadza, Kenetl, alias Big Jackson
And eighty other members of the tribe.*

Appendix 2. Tahltan Tribal Council Resource Development Policy Statement, April 7, 1987

In history as well as in mythology, the Tahltan Indian people have always been acknowledged as the original inhabitants of the Stikine River Watershed in northern British Columbia. Archaeological evidence has determined that the Tahltan people have continuously occupied this area for thousands of years, perhaps as many as 10,000. This is what is often referred to in poetic terms as “since time immemorial.”

The first white person to come into Tahltan country was Samuel Black who arrived in 1821 exploring for the Northwest Trading Company. Our people never met Black and so it wasn't until 1838 when the second white person, Robert Campbell of the Hudson Bay Company, entered our territory that European contact with our people was first made.

Tahltans had an elaborate trading economy already established when the Hudson Bay Company first encountered our tribe. Although the H.B. Co. was very interested in immediately setting up a competing trading operation in Tahltan country, our people blocked them for approximately forty years so as to protect our own established trading economy. At that time Tahltans had an active commercial network based on our position as a middleman between the coastal trade and the tribes living north and east of Stikine country. We also traded our own fish and furs and other natural resources such as obsidian to all peoples who came into our country.

Tahltan people are very proud of our tradition of commercial enterprise and equally proud that we were able to protect our interests against the mighty H.B. Co. empire for those many years. It wasn't until the 1870's Cassiar gold rush was in full swing that the H.B. Co. was able to open its first trading post in Tahltan traditional territory.

Even though our people have lost the monopoly position of business in our own country, we are still active on many business fronts. Our present tribal objective is to increase our participation in all business that develops within the borders of our tribal territory so that we can again enjoy a self-sustaining healthy and enterprising economy.

We wish to make it very clear that Tahltan people and the Tahltan Tribal Council are not inherently opposed to any specific type of business or resource development within our country. However, we do feel strongly that any development within our tribal territory must adhere to some basic principles that the Tahltan Tribal Council has developed.

We appreciated that most private developers “just want to conduct their business.” They do not want to have any discussions or participate in any actions that have overtones of aboriginal rights or native politics. We in one sense sympathize with that wish of developers because we, as businessmen, also experience frustration when politics begin to directly affect our business endeavors. However, the reality is that if our tribal objective of achieving substantial participation in business development within our country is to be realized within a reasonable time, we must combine politics and business when dealing with developers wishing to establish themselves within Tahltan country. Developers will have to come to terms with this reality if they expect to function successfully within our territory.

Before a resource development project can commence within Tahltan tribal territory, it will be necessary for the developer and the Tahltan Tribal Council to enter into a project participation agreement that encompasses the following elements and basic principles:

1. assurance that the development will not pose a threat of irreparable environmental damage;
2. assurance that the development will not jeopardize, prejudice or otherwise compromise the outstanding Tahltan aboriginal rights claim;
3. assurance that the project will provide more positive than negative social impacts on Tahltan people;

4. provision for the widest possible opportunity for education and direct employment-related training for Tahltan people in connection with the project;
5. provision for the widest possible opportunity for employment opportunities for Tahltan people with respect to all phases of the development;
6. provision for substantial equity participation by Tahltans in the total project;
7. provision for the widest possible development of Tahltan business opportunities over which the developer may have control or influence;
8. provision of the developer to assist the Tahltans to accomplish the objectives stated above by providing financial and managerial assistance and advice where deemed necessary.

If resource developers and the Tahltan Tribal Council can reach agreement embracing the points noted above, then we believe that Tahltans, the developers and all other Canadians will enjoy equitable benefits from each resource development undertaken and there will be business harmony within Tahltan traditional tribal territory.

Signed: Vernon Marion, President
Tahltan Tribal Council

Date: April 7, 1987

Appendix 3. Tahltan Mining Symposium Agenda

Approximate Time	Friday, April 4, 2003 DAY 1	Saturday, April 5, 2003 DAY 2	Sunday, April 6, 2003 DAY 3
7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.		breakfast	breakfast
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.		The Tahltan Today: Overview of Priorities and Concerns Jerry Asp and Elders	7QS Scan: Closed Mines Issues and Opportunities (small groups)
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.			Small Groups Report Out to Plenary
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.		refreshment break	refreshment break
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.		Overview of Mining and Mineral Activity in the Stikine Dave Lefebure B.C. Geological Survey	Phase 3 Strategy and Action Plan (Small Groups)
12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m.		lunch	lunch
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.		7QS Scan: Exploration Issues and Opportunities (small groups)	Small Groups Report Out to Plenary Followed by Plenary Discussion
2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.		Small Groups Report Out to Plenary	
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.		refreshment break	refreshment break
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.		Overview of Mining Attitudes R. Dennis Bergen, V.P. Wheaton River Minerals Ltd.	Final Round Table (all)
4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.		7QS Scan: Operating Mines Issues and Opportunities (small groups)	
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.		Small Groups Report Out to Plenary	
6:30 pm., evening	OPENING DINNER AND DISCUSSION Welcome (Jerry Asp), Introductions, Workshop Overview, Round Table (all): Mining and the Tahltan: The way it was, is, and could be tomorrow.	DINNER AND DISCUSSION Continued Round Table (all) Mining and the Tahltan: The way it was, is, and could be tomorrow.	Early Dinner

The Tahltan Mining Symposium was convened in April 2003 to (1) review the relationship between the Tahltan people, their land and the mining industry; and (2) build a strategy to guide that relationship in the future. Seeking a win-win outcome, and guided by the Seven Questions to Sustainability (7QS) Assessment Framework, the participants considered past, present and potential future conditions as a foundation for ensuring positive outcomes for the Tahltan people and their territory in the years to come. *Out of Respect* describes the process and documents the resulting strategy.

