

An aerial photograph of a majestic mountain range with snow-capped peaks. The foreground is dominated by a dense, green forest that surrounds a large, calm blue lake. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall scene conveys a sense of natural beauty and tranquility.

Dene K'éh Kusān

ALWAYS WILL BE THERE



**The Kaska Dena
peoples have cared
for Kaska Ancestral
Territory for
thousands of years.**

**At the heart of our lands sits
the largest intact landscape
in British Columbia.**

It's an area the size of Switzerland free of roads, power lines and development. Clean waters flow to our communities, and the forest nourishes our families, culture and tradition.

In our language we say Dene K'éh Kusān, which means Always Will Be There.

We have a plan to protect this area in a way that creates jobs, supports a thriving Kaska culture, shelters threatened species and becomes a world-class protected area for all to enjoy.

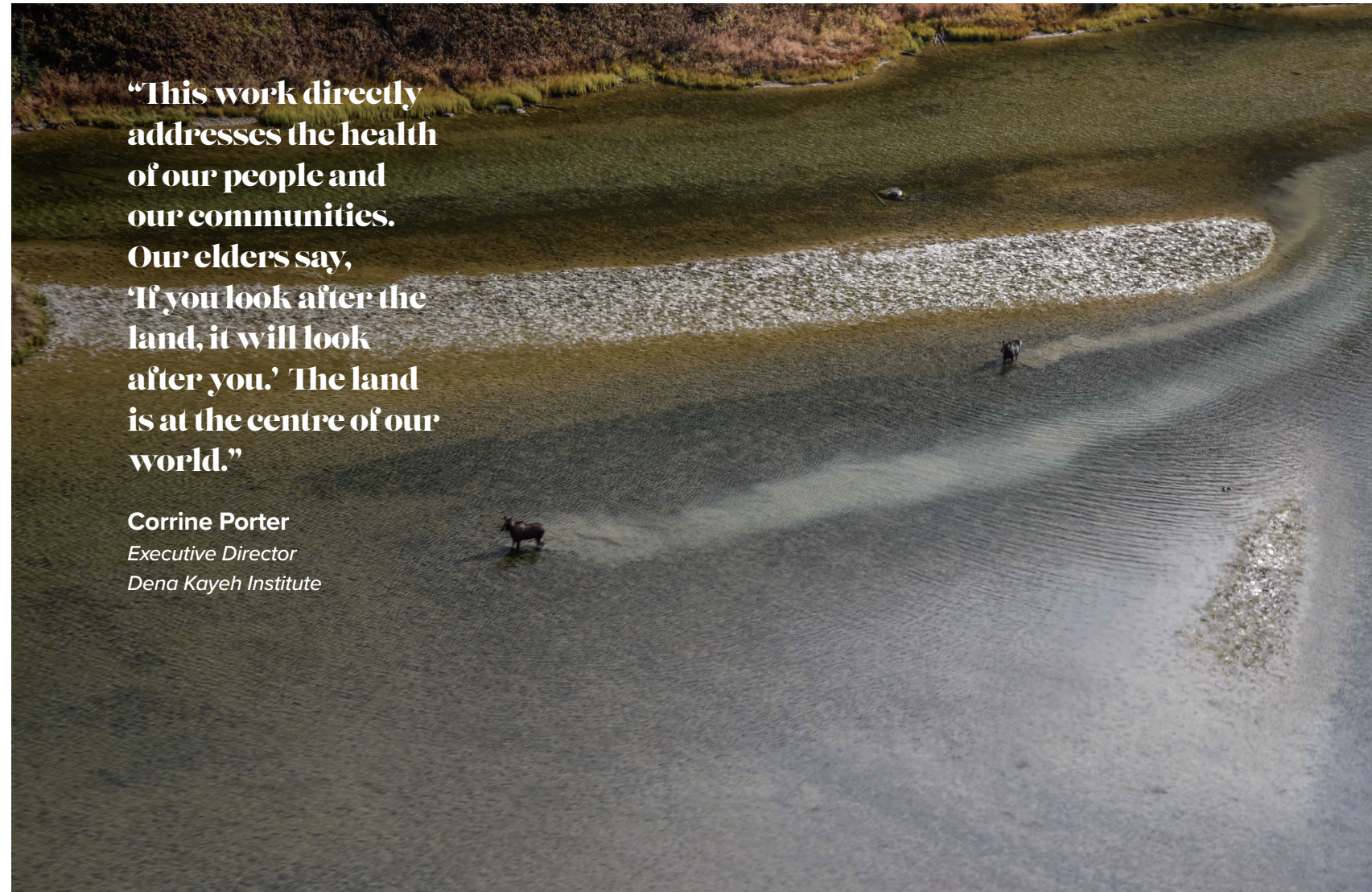
Honouring the Land

Protecting Dene K'éh Kusān is vital to Kaska culture and spirituality. We have lived on these lands since time immemorial.

Kaska documented about 18,000 Kaska cultural sites in the area. And Atse Dena Tunna (Trail of the Ancient Ones) still winds 300 kilometres along the Rocky Mountain Trench—a formation so prominent it's visible from space.

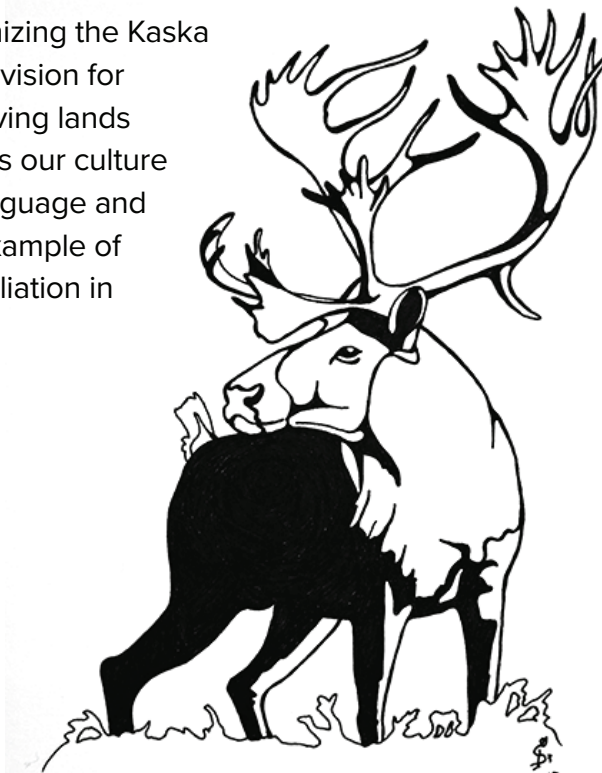
“This work directly addresses the health of our people and our communities. Our elders say, ‘If you look after the land, it will look after you.’ The land is at the centre of our world.”

Corrine Porter
Executive Director
Dena Kayeh Institute



Dene K'éh Kusān will preserve over half of these sites and revitalize our ancestral trails. It will ensure the Kaska Dena can maintain our relationship with these places—today and into the future.

Recognizing the Kaska Dena's vision for conserving lands nurtures our culture and language and is an example of reconciliation in action.





A Globally Significant Landscape

Dene K'éh Kusān is one of the last major intact landscapes in North America. Stretching across almost 40,000 square kilometres, it provides a shield against climate change and biodiversity loss.

Its deep boreal soil stores at least 362 million tonnes of carbon—the equivalent of about 18 months of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions.

And in a world facing rapid decline in animal and plant species, it sustains an abundance of life:

- ✦ Seven herds of woodland caribou roam here.
- ✦ Populations of genetically distinct Stone's sheep climb its mountains.
- ✦ Tens of thousands of migratory songbirds raise their young in its wetlands and forests.

Dene K'éh Kusān will protect this habitat. It will create a conservation corridor for threatened animals in British Columbia, a province with more species vulnerable to extinction than anywhere in Canada.

With its scale and vitality, Dene K'éh Kusān will also make a significant contribution to Canada's international commitments to address the global biodiversity crisis.

Kaska Stewardship

The Kaska Dena have long been stewards of these lands. The 2019 United Nations' assessment of biodiversity found that lands managed by Indigenous Peoples tend to be healthier than other areas. Dene K'éh Kusān confirms the power of Indigenous-led conservation and the application of the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

An expanded Dane nan yé dāh Network (Kaska Land Guardians) will manage the protected area, creating more long-term jobs in communities.



- ✦ The program prepares the next generation to implement co-management and governance models. We train guardians in wildlife, forestry, archeology, climate change, water quality and other areas.
- ✦ The guardians program helps connect the social, cultural, environmental, and economic well-being of the Kaska Dena.



We propose creating and managing the protected area through a joint authority arrangement with the BC government. The Dane nan yé dāh Network will assist with stewardship of the area along with provincial representatives and other conservation partners.



Jobs for the Region, Certainty for Industry

Establishing a world-class protected area will help build our region's conservation-based economy by creating opportunities for Indigenous land guardians, guide outfitters, and ecotourism ventures.

Guide outfitters, commercial trapping operations, and recreational access will not be affected. Protecting the Dene K'éh Kusān will safeguard the fish, game, and natural beauty of this region for generations of hunters, anglers, and hikers to enjoy.

Logging, mining, and other resource extraction will occur along the borders of Dene K'éh Kusān. These borders were carefully drawn to not interfere with existing industry operations. We will continue working with companies with interests in the area.

We welcome everyone to come experience this beautiful area—and work with us to make sure it remains intact.

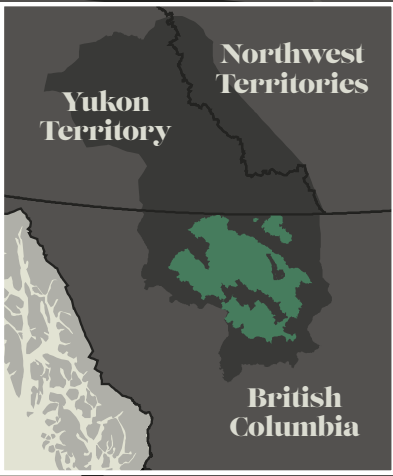


Working in Partnership

The Kaska Dena seek to collaborate with many partners to realize our vision for conserving Dene K'éh Kusān. We will work with neighbouring First Nations Governments, regional stakeholders and national groups. And we are working with the BC and federal governments to secure long-term protections.

**Together we can ensure that
Dene K'éh Kusān and all the
life it supports will be here
for generations to come.**





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