

Dene K'éh Kusān

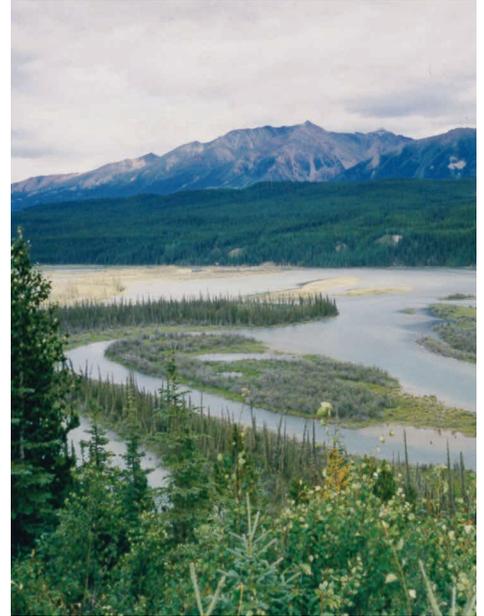
ALWAYS WILL BE THERE

HONOURING THE LAND

A KASKA WELCOME

The conservation of the Kaska Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area is a promise to the Kaska people and to British Columbians who fish, hunt and camp on this land. A protected Dene K'éh Kusān is a wild, bountiful wilderness that the Kaska Nation welcomes British Columbians to experience and enjoy.

- ✦ Dene K'éh Kusān conservation does not close off access to recreational users.
- ✦ Kaska-run tour outfitters will continue to welcome and guide visitors on ancestral territories.
- ✦ Hikers, hunters, campers, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts are welcome on Dene K'éh Kusān land.
- ✦ A protected Dene K'éh Kusān ensures the land that recreational users love remains safe and intact for generations to come.





JOBS FOR THE REGION, CERTAINTY FOR INDUSTRY

This conservation initiative will help support the region's prosperity. Dene K'éh Kusān's borders have been carefully drawn not to interfere with resource development outside its boundaries. The designation of the Dene K'éh Kusān does not preclude or constrain continued resource development in the Kaska Ancestral Territory in British Columbia. Forestry, mining, and oil and gas sectors continue to have access to viable surface and subsurface land base to generate revenue for the Kaska and non-Kaska people.

- ✦ Dene K'éh Kusān also offers new economic opportunities for Kaska, like guide outfitting and ecotourism.
- ✦ Expanding the Dane nan yé dāh Network (Kaska Land Guardians) to assist with the management of the protected area will also create more long-term jobs in communities.



BC'S LARGEST INTACT PIECE OF WILDERNESS

Imagine an untouched wilderness. A place with no roads, no power lines, no machine rumblings. A place rich with wildlife, like caribou. A place where you can walk along ancient Indigenous trails for weeks without meeting another soul. Welcome to Dene K'éh Kusān in northern BC, one of the most remarkable places on earth for its raw beauty, isolation and abundant biodiversity.

- ✦ At 3.9 million hectares, or 4% of the province, it's the size of Switzerland.
- ✦ A completely undeveloped part of the Rocky Mountain trench.
- ✦ Conserving Dene K'éh Kusān would make progress towards meeting Canada's goal to protect at least 17% of Canada's land and freshwater by 2020.
- ✦ It adds an important puzzle piece to the Yellowstone to Yukon conservation initiative.

SHELTER FOR ENDANGERED ANIMALS

British Columbians have seen the tragedy of endangered animal loss up close. From dying southern orcas to severely threatened mountain and boreal caribou herds, the UN has told Canada it must take action now.

- ✦ Between 1970 and 2014, mammals had declined by an average of 43%, grassland birds dropped by 69% and the fish populations had declined by 20% right across Canada.¹
- ✦ Dene K'éh Kusān is a caribou stronghold. Caribou maps are available to illustrate this point.
- ✦ This is a chance for the provincial government to meet endangered species targets and recover from previous, unsuccessful caribou projects.



¹ Startling UN biodiversity report is a reminder of the risks Canada faces, Nicole Mortillaro, CBC News, May 7, 2019

ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY

Impacts from climate change and the disappearance of animal and plant species are already having impacts to biodiversity and human life. Intact wilderness landscapes, like Dene K'éh Kusān, offer some hope in the fight against these dual challenges.

A 3.9 million-hectare conservation area in BC will boost the province's ability to mitigate the effects of climate change. Dene K'éh Kusān can help keep BC's environment healthy. Dene K'éh Kusān's deep boreal soil stores at least 362 million tonnes of carbon—the equivalent of about 18 months of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions.

- ✦ The 2019 United Nation's assessment of biodiversity found that lands managed by Indigenous Peoples tend to be healthier than other areas.



CONSERVATION ACKNOWLEDGES & PROTECTS KASKA RIGHTS

This land is critical to preserving the Kaska Nation's material, cultural and spiritual lives. Brushing aside its value is a step backward on this province's road to reconciliation.

- ✦ A top priority of Dene K'éh Kusān conservation is to protect Kaska culture.
- ✦ Significant studies have been ongoing since the 1980s that document 16,000 - 18,000 Kaska cultural sites, dwellings and trail networks. Half of those are captured in the proposed conservation area.
- ✦ Conservation is critical to Kaska's ability to retain culture and spirituality.
- ✦ 70-80% of ancestral territory meets title as defined by the Supreme Court of Canada.