

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



2015 Research  
Year End  
Report  
March 2016



# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Chuu TI'it trail crew on Ch'idrii Ddhàa - Heart Mountain. Photo Philip Rispin©VGG 2016

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Cover photo: Chuu TI'it Trail revitalization camp

Photographs are S.Smith©VGG unless otherwise indicated.

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project

## 1. Introduction to the Project

Polar Continental Shelf Project 391-15  
Yukon Scientists & Explorers License 15-63 S&E

The Vuntut Gwitchin Government (VGG) Heritage Branch completed the inaugural year of a new project to research and document Gwich'in historic life ways in a focussed, in-depth manner. The project is directed toward specific, historically/culturally significant locations and individuals. An integral part of research and knowledge-transmission is mentoring youth and other learners to undertake active and creative roles. The Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project builds on the VGG Heritage databases, participates in developing educational materials, expands the range of sources of information (e.g., younger elders) and time span, and collaborates with other researchers

The foundation of the VTG Historic Lifeways Project originates with the series of research projects into oral history, place names and Gwich'in geography, cultural technology and trails/routes and navigation systems that the VGG Heritage Department has conducted since 1990. Following from this broadly focussed and geographically comprehensive research, the VTG Historical Lifeways Project delves deeper into important historical topics and



Mentor Martha Benjamin and youth Cheyanne Kapuschak at mountain by Useful Lake

### Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project Objectives

- conduct research in culturally and historically significant locations
- enhance use and transmission of information to younger generations by mentoring Gwich'in youth and learners to take an active role in research
- conduct background research drawing on databases and products of previous research and other sources
- expand previous data sources by including younger elders and, where possible, Gwich'in elders from other communities
- produce materials with a view to enhancing the teaching and interpretation potential of the research
- bring historical and geographical research closer to current times by including events and changes over the past 20-30 years, updating the databases and keeping them relevant.
- collaborate with academic and other researchers to enhance knowledge of the traditional territory and provide learning and training opportunities for Gwich'in participants and the community

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Pass across the Richardson Mountains at Summit Lake

geographical areas, and gathers the kind of detail and specific insights not possible in broad surveys. The project investigates themes of strategic resource use, historical events, relationship with land, and aggregation and dispersal. As well, historical and geographical databases are brought closer to current times. Research also involves a significant Gwich'in language education component. An important facet of the research is to mentor youth and other learners to participate fully in the research and work closely with Elders and knowledge holders to enhance transmission to Gwich'in and all Canadians.

The overarching research problem of the VTG Historical Lifeways Project is: What are the detailed, in-depth histories attached to significant places/people/events on Van Tat Gwich'in lands? How can both the process of research and the products be enhanced by mentoring youth to take greater roles in the project? Research will focus on various kinds of significant events and places: e.g., places where people gathered to make decisions and reinforce social cohesion;

where they went in times of famine or war; regular landmarks or stopping places; hunting and fishing locales that go back centuries or longer in archaeological time; cultural processes and technologies like long-distance travel on the land; places outstanding for their natural resource use; and where significant events took place that became the stuff of legends. Further, certain individuals and stories are outstanding for their depth, detail and importance. The history associated with important ancestors concerns themes such as leadership, innovation, particular accomplishments, and important teachers.

The VTG Historic Lifeways Project continues the practice begun in previous VGG projects of collaborating with academics and other researchers to expand the knowledge base about traditional Gwich'in history and lands and expose Van Tat Gwich'in to this knowledge and research skills. As well, the project includes training and transmitting project information to the Van Tat Gwich'in and the general public. The VTG is fortunate to work with knowledgeable elders and youth with diverse cultural and land-based skills.

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Heritage Coordinator Mary Jane Moses filming youth learner Tyrell Kassi discussing his family land use and history with mentor Robert Bruce Jr.



Planning David Lord Creek trail revitalization: Lawrence Lord, David Lord, Georgie Moses, Dakota Foster.

Photo: Megan Williams ©VGG 2015

## 2. 2015 Research

The Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project conducted five days of helicopter-assisted field research in Van Tat Gwich'in traditional territory in July 2015, two five-day trail revitalization expeditions in November 2015, and one twelve-day trail revitalization trip in February 2016 (see Map 1). The research was directed toward providing more in-depth information on the areas/sites chosen (land use, history, heritage), connecting youth with their heritage through mentoring and experiential learning. We also continued ongoing data gathering such as recording land-based information (e.g., routes, trails, locations), cultural historic and technological data (e.g., travel technologies, history of activities at specific sites), collaborating with other researchers and monitoring contaminated sites. In addition, we recorded a new archaeological site.

### a) Learner mentoring

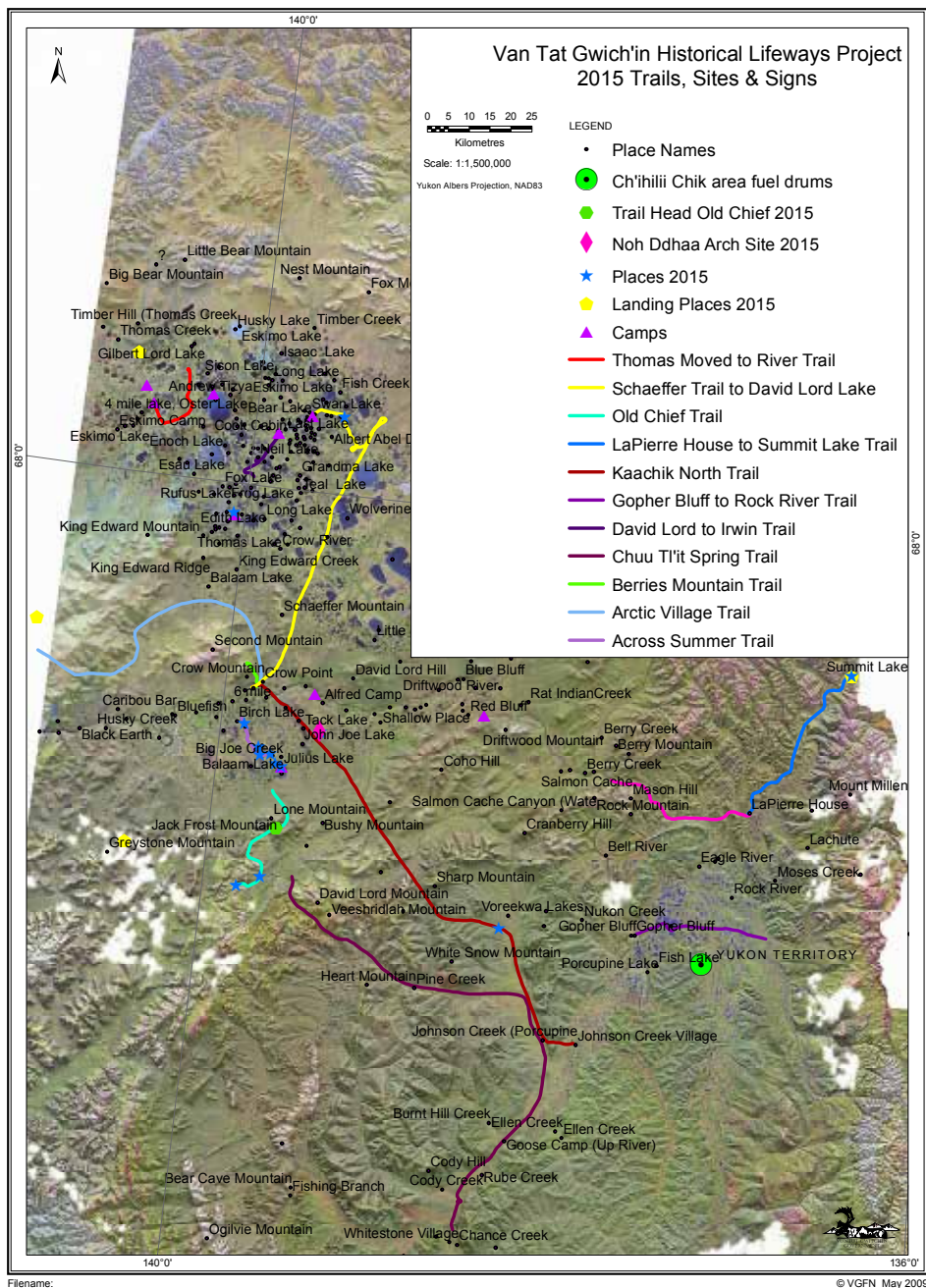
Youth/learners were recruited for each stage of the project. For the aerial surveys, two younger high-school aged students (Cheyanne Kapuschak

and Tyrell Kassi) and two older learners (Sophia Flather and Brandon Kyikavichik) brought diverse skills and experiences to the project and created opportunities for sharing and co-mentoring.

Learners began with an introduction to the project and background interviews with Heritage Committee member Robert Bruce Jr., who provided an overview of their family areas and history on the land, while answering many student questions about land use and heritage. Then the learners were matched with appropriate mentors to guide their work on the land where they conducted further interviews to experience some of the information in context.

Mentored youth/learners' experiences were diverse. Summer aerial survey participants were also introduced to VGG Oral History collections and databases and gained insight into the resources available for further research/learning. Participants were involved in hide tanning and paleontological collections curation. Winter trail revitalization crew members took part in all facets

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Map 1. 2015 Aerial survey

of the expeditions, from the historical context of the routes, direction and terrain, gear and supplies, safe operation of equipment, establishing camps, navigation with maps, GPS and landmarks, and cold weather survival skills.

Part of the mentoring program was to impart research skills. Learners were prepared for conducting interviews on the land with their mentors, photographing their research trip, preparing a brief presentation to the community (summer participants), and reporting on their

research. The mentors and Heritage staff ensured the students were prepared for the research experience, and also that research and data collection were undertaken according to customary professional standards. Students had the opportunity to observe and participate in a wide range of research activities, including route navigation and documentation, video filming and digital audio recording, GPS mapping, and documenting environmental contaminants and environmental change.

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Mentor Harvey Kassi and student participant Tyrel Kassi at Thomas Creek Caribou Fence. Below: David Lord Creek trail crew places trail markers (Lawrence Lord, Dakota Foster, David Lord). Photo Georgie Moses@VGG 2015



Mentor Joel Peter and youth participant Nathaniel Schafer on the Caribou Bar trail. Photo Stanley G. Njootli@VGG 2015 Below: Joseph Bruce on the Chuu Tl'it trail. Photo Philip Rispin@VGG 2016



## b) Aerial survey July 24-28 [5 days]

In July 2015, we conducted helicopter-assisted research to travel to significant places on the land relevant both to the student participants and the broader research objectives.

For example, student Cheyanne Kapuschak travelled to her grandfather's and great uncle's camps near Bluefish River, from there mapping some of their portages, the route to Rampart House, and then up the Bluefish River (their trapping and hunting areas) to a high viewpoint for an overview of the area and interview with her aunt/mentor Martha Benjamin. In the process, we recorded locations and condition of portages, camps, ongoing reconstruction work at Rampart House, the border survey camp, and recorded an

oral history interview. The student began in familiar territory and moved further afield to understand connections to wider VTG traditional lands used by her ancestors.

Similar research was conducted with the three other student participants. Tyrell Kassi and mentor Harvey Kassi travelled to his family's area at Zelma Lake and thence to northern Van Tat and the Thomas Creek caribou fence. On this trip he erected a sign where the Thomas family moved from their spring camp to the Crow River and assisted in mapping two historic trails.

Sophia Flather and mentor Irwin Linklater went to the Kâachik-Chuu Tl'it area (villages on the upper Porcupine River) where her family travelled and tanned hides, a particular focus for her. Her experiential research on hide-tanning has been

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Robert Bruce Jr. leading a prayer for a safe journey before starting on 12-day Chuu TI'it trail trip.

Photo: Megan Williams@VGG 2015

incorporated into her research project. Her in-depth community presentation will form the basis for a short film about her experiences connecting with her culture and her relatives through hide tanning. While at Kâachik, the project assessed nearby gravesite locations and an alternate trail to Kâachik that went north of Zhoh Drin Choo (White Snow Mt.).

Older learner Brandon Kyikavichik was able to add to the information from his mentor Georgie Moses about trails and lakes in his family's area south of the Porcupine River, and assist in locating an archaeological site on nearby Nohddhâa. From there, the team mapped trails in the LaPierre House area, part of the Skull Mountain trail, the Rock River area, and the route to Summit Lake, doing environmental assessment in the process.

Finally, participants and mentors travelled to Schaeffer Mountain, a key lookout over Van Tat and routes to Old Crow and the Porcupine River, to conduct oral history interviews.

#### c) Trail revitalization: Caribou Bar Creek November 19-23 [5 days]

During winter 2015-2016, research expeditions were conducted by snow machines to revitalize three significant trails. The first was from Old Crow northwest to Chyah Ddhâa - Caribou Bar Creek via Ch'idzèe Njik - Second Mountain. One elder [Joel Peter], one youth [Nathaniel Schafer] and two



Joel Peter & Nathaniel Schafer encountered dense 'shrubification' between Chyah Ddhâa and Ch'idzèe Njik

Photo Stan G. Njootli@VGG 2015

skilled learners [Derek Kapuschak and Stan Njootli Jr.] travelled the route and encountered an effect of global warming: 'shrubification' - the proliferation of brush in formerly open ground. This resulted in difficult travel, extending higher in elevation up Second Mountain than previously encountered. Like other trail revitalization experiences, part of the learning process was redefining historic trails where necessary to deal with changed conditions.

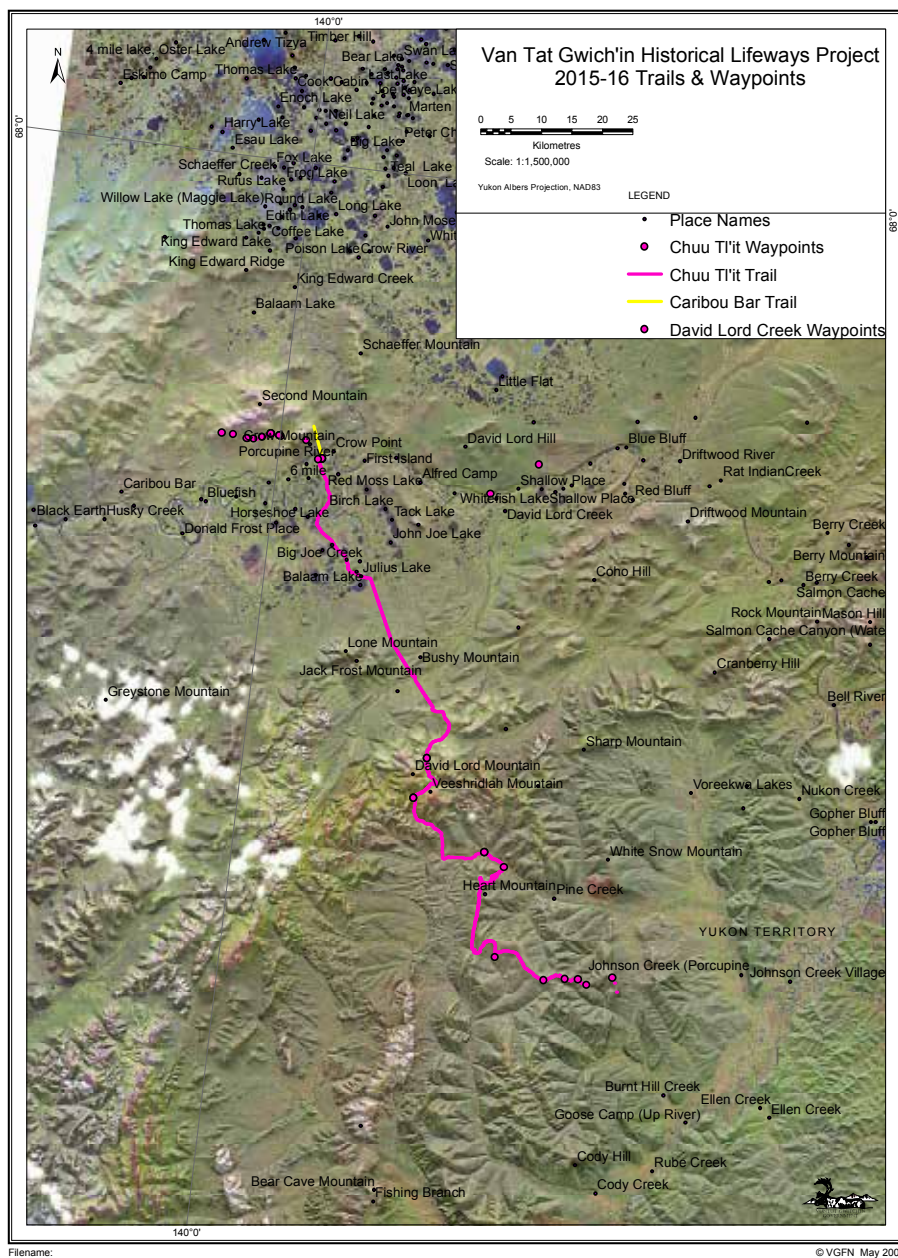
#### d) Trail revitalization: David Lord Creek November 24-28 [5 days]

Also in November 2015, four team members revitalized a section of the David Lord Creek trail. Mentors David Lord, Georgie Moses and Lawrence Lord and youth learner Dakota Foster marked and recorded the trail from the Lord family cabin on Ch'oodeenjik (across the river from David Lord Creek) toward Van Tat Gwatsal (Little Flats) and Schaeffer Mountain. Like on the Caribou Bar Creek trail, the crew encountered dense shrubs on parts of the route.

#### e) Trail revitalization: Chuu TI'it February 16-27 [12 days]

In late winter 2016, a 5-member team embarked on a longer trail expedition, travelling toward Chuu TI'it (Whitestone Village) on the Whitestone River at the headwaters of Ch'oodeenjik (Porcupine River). The team combined the skills of all the participants as both mentors and learners due

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Map 2. 2015-2016  
Trail revitalization

to the need to investigate alternate routes. Joel Peter, Randal Francis, George Nukon, Joseph Bruce and Philip Rispin travelled the challenging route over Ch'idrii Ddhàa (Heart Mountain) and, instead of going through dense brush on Vihsraiinjik (Cody Creek), travelled west on the mountains. The journey required an advance cache/supply team (Douglas Frost and Robert Kyikavichik) and provided a good opportunity for a Yukon Community Development Fund site visit (Sofia Flather, Douglas Frost, Robert Kyikavichik and Nancy Lewis-deGraff). The trail crew reached the headwaters of Gwak'àn Chòo Njik (Burnthill Creek), very close to their destination. There fog

rolled in and further progress was impossible in the complex and potentially dangerous terrain where the Porcupine, Miner & Whitestone rivers, along with Cody Creek and the Fishing Branch River - know for its year-round open water in places - all intersect.

All in all, the aerial survey and trail revitalization expeditions were remarkable for the engagement of both youth/learners and mentors/elders in the objectives of the research. The mentor-learner model of research has the potential for more nuanced data and other results, along with greater engagement in heritage knowledge interpretation and transmission.

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Sophia Flather's contribution to the community presentation, August 2015



Heritage Coordinator Mary Jane Moses and youth learner Sofia Flather processing audio & video data and tending equipment. Working copy of place names map in background.

## 3. 2015 Results & Products

In the 2015-16 research seasons, we conducted 5 days of helicopter-assisted research to visit significant historic locations associated with particular individuals and families, mapped locations of 8 trails and trail segments, identified associated landmarks (e.g., the mountain Ch'it'oo Tsal [Small Nest Mountain] south of the flats south of Ch'oodeenjik [Porcupine River]), installed an interpretive Gwich'in/English sign, collaborated with an academic researcher and a Yukon Heritage program, and monitored the territory for contaminants and the location and condition of grave areas.

In winter 2015-2016, we conducted 3 trail revitalization expeditions. Teams flagged and cleared sections of culturally and historically important trails, mentored 6 learners in geographical knowledge of trails & travel skills, collected GPS map references, investigated alternative trail alignments in light of changing climate and terrain, and contributed to place name and trail/route databases.

In total, all of these research activities resulted in mentoring 10 youth & learners to take an active role in project activities. Youth took part in preparatory interviews with elders (e.g., Robert Bruce Jr.) who gave them an overview

of their family history in the context of broader Gwich'in land use and history. The learners then travelled on the land and took photographs and conducted interviews with their mentors. These were incorporated into VGG Heritage databases and, for summer 2015 participants, into the annual community presentation (early August 2015). In some cases, participation in the project tied into other student activities, such as Sophia Flather's interest in hide tanning. This was part of her desire to travel to Kâachik [Johnson Creek Village], an important area for her ancestors and where hide tanning took place. Student presentations are in the process of further development as part of new online digital exhibits of local presentations and films.

During fall and winter 2015-2016, we processed the data from summer/fall/spring research activities. We transcribed the oral history interviews, indexed video tapes, catalogued photographs, updated databases (place names, interviews, video, GPS mapping, photographs); prepared reports; created products such as language materials, maps and a draft Atlas; applied for funding; and liaised between Heritage staff, Heritage Committee, VGG, the community, consultant, government agencies and other researchers. We also conducted debriefing

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project

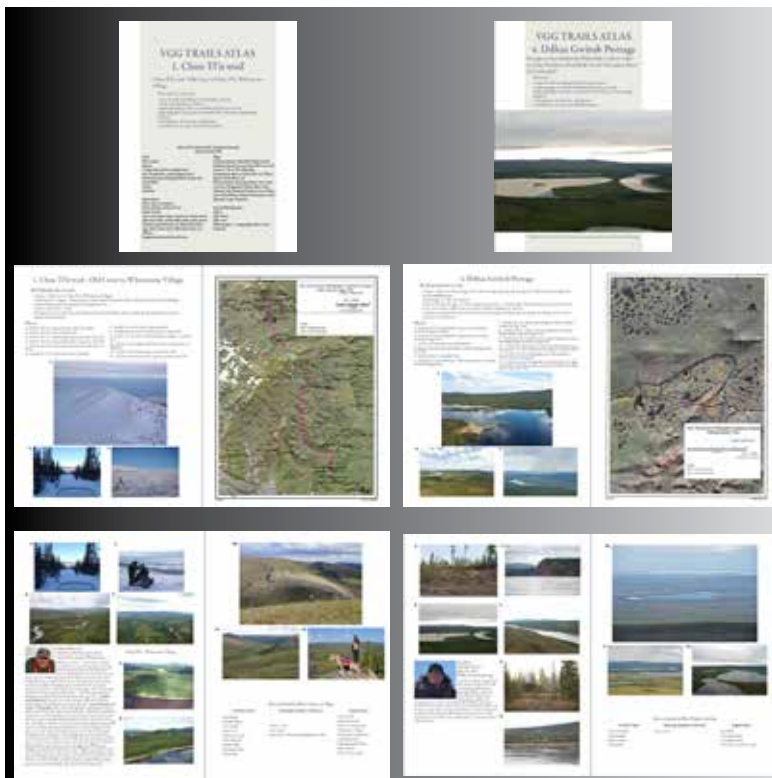


Elders Stringer Charlie and Joel Peter verifying trail map data.  
Photo Megan Williams©VGG 2015

sessions after the trail revitalization expeditions, and reviewed and refined the mentoring program and the Historic Lifeways project in general.

Certain results are planned as larger, longer-term products (e.g., language materials, Trails Atlas). As part of trails research and Atlas production, we conducted an intense process of trails verification. Drawing on all our trails research, we conducted five group verification meetings (based on people's geographical area) followed by GIS editing and then a series of individual follow-up sessions. Group session interviews were recorded (VG2015-01-10 to 14) as part of the Oral History collections. Individuals who took shared their extensive cultural-geographical knowledge included: Joel Peter, Harvey Kassi, Georgie Moses, James Itsi, John Joseph Kyikavichik, Robert Bruce Jr., David Lord, Stringer Charlie, Irwin Linklater, Robert Kyikavichik and Stephen Frost.

Currently, sample mockups of two trails (Chuu TI'it and Ddhaa Gwitch portage) for the Trails Atlas have been presented to an interested publisher. Final Atlas production will depend on the publishers response and scheduling.



Sample mockup Atlas entries for the Chuu TI'it trail [left] and the Ddhaa Gwitch portage trail [right]

To summarize, in 2015 we accomplished:

- 10 youth & learners in mentoring program
- 27 oral history interviews with student participation
- 332 student photos
- 1361 project photos
- 400 trail revitalization photos
- 20 hours digital video
- 12 trails GPS mapped/confirmed (helicopter)
- 3 trails GPS mapped/confirmed (snow machine)
- 1 trail head marked
- 12 places GPS located
- 9 camps locations confirmed and assessed
- 3 landing places recorded
- 12 place names verified
- 1 place name sign installed
- 1 archaeological site (new) recorded/reported
- 1 environmental site (tanks/contamination recorded)
- 4 presentations for online interpretation development
- 65 routes edited, verified and prepared cartographically for printing
- 2 mockups for Trails Atlas submitted to publisher

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project

## Learner/youth Photos

Part of learner/youth involvement in the project was to record their experiences. Photographs, notes,

oral accounts and Powerpoint presentations provided data for the project and assisted in understanding and evaluating the experiences of participants.



Tyrell Kassi's photo of his family's camp at Zelma Lake



Brandon Kyikavichik's view of the Little Bell River



Sophia Flather with part of a trap from Kâachik



Stanley G. Njootli's photo of two ptarmigan on the Caribou Bar Creek trail



Dakota Foster and the view from the Lord family cabin on Ch'ooddeenjik



Derek Kapuschak's portrait of the Caribou Bar Creek trail crew on Second Mountain



Joseph Bruce's photo of Philip Rispin on the Chuu Tl'it trail



Philip Rispin's shot of sundogs on the Chuu Tl'it trail

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Abandoned tanks and drums in the Ch'ihilii [Whitefish Lake] area.



Stone artifacts (flakes) from an archaeological site on Nohddhàa discovered by research participants, 2015

## 4. 2015 Collaborations & Environmental Monitoring

This year VGG Heritage undertook a number of collaborations over the course of the research year. The project collaborated with ornithologist Dave Mossop on the Peregrine Falcon survey on the Porcupine River between Eagle Plains and Rampart House from July 4-17. This survey of breeding pairs is conducted every 5 years on the Porcupine and Crow rivers. Two Van Tat Gwich'in assisted in the research: Peter Abel and Clifton Nukon.

The project also collaborated logistically with the Yukon Heritage initiative to install interpretive materials such as signage and walkways at LaPierre House. Log building restorer Freddy Frost and assistants Will Connellan and Derek Kapuschak worked at the site during July.

In the course of over a half century of working with archaeologists (and other researchers), Gwich'in have developed considerable expertise in identifying humanly-created stone artifacts. Although there was no formal archaeological

collaboration in 2015, the research team located a new archaeological site: a scatter of flakes on Nohddhàa (mountain near Old Crow to the south, important for navigation). This site was then recorded in Yukon's archaeological sites registry.

In conjunction with research activities, VGG Heritage conducts an ongoing project to document and monitor contaminated abandoned resource extraction sites and debris. In 2015, we located some oil tanks and drums in the Ch'ihilii [Whitefish Lake southeast of Bell River] area. Information will be used for future cleanup and mitigation.

Lastly, the Historic Lifeways Project collaborated with the Gwaandak Theatre Workshop, a project to bring Elders and youth together to create theatre scripts for production. The workshop shares objectives with the VTGHLP to foster inter-generational learning and cultural transmission, and promote use of the Gwich'in language. Two scripts were produced: Bushman and Grass Pants.

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Upper Driftwood River Photo Ray Le Blanc©VGG 2012

## 5. Proposed 2016 Research

In 2016-2017, summer research will centre on 2 locations in Van Tat Gwich'in traditional territory: the upper Troochònjik [Driftwood River] area north of the Porcupine River and upper Ni'inlii Njik [Fishing Branch River] area. We will investigate themes of strategic resource use over time, relationship with land, key historical events, seasonal and distant travel, as well as bringing historical and geographical databases closer to current times. In addition, we hope to collaborate to bring an archaeological element into the research. We will mentor 4-6 youth to participate fully in the project and work closely with Elders and knowledge holders, and enhance transmission to Gwich'in and all Canadians.

During the winter months of 2016-2017, the project will conduct trail revitalization trips to 2-3 locations. Thusfar, the 3 main candidates and alternatives are: the portages downriver from Old

Crow or the Schaeffer Mt. winter trail; Chuu Tl'it to Zheh Gwatsal (Lapierre House); or, Old Crow to Kâachik (Johnson Creek Village) or the head of Driftwood River to Schuman House (Alaska border). Trail revitalization decisions will depend on available personnel, weather and terrain conditions, and funding.

2016-2017 research will follow the over-arching direction for the VTG Historic Lifeways Project. Objectives are to sharpen the geographical and historical focus and capture more in-depth and detailed information. Methodologically, the project is committed to the youth/learner mentoring program to expose youth and older learners to information about Van Tat Gwich'in history and places on the land, combining research with transmission of Gwich'in culture and history. The active participation of learners also provides them with tools to pursue their own curiosity and

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Chelsea Charlie at the Poulton Station archaeological site at Drifting Snow Creek on upper Fishing Branch River  
Photo Ray Le Blanc©VGG 2009



Upper Driftwood River Photo Ray Le Blanc©VGG 2012

an awareness of the resources of their Heritage collections, and potentially an opportunity to contribute to the direction of future research. As part of project evaluation, we conducted debriefing sessions with learner participants and mentors and will incorporate their experiences into the objectives and conduct of 2016-2017 research.

Research in 2016 will also continue to involve collaboration with other researchers wherever possible, environmental monitoring, recording locations of trails and other cultural features, and contributing to the VGG Heritage collections of data on VGG heritage and lands. Along with other years' research, results and experiences contribute directly to interpreting Van Tat Gwich'in history and culture, including experiential learning on the land as part of the project itself.

Research objectives for 2016-2017 will focus on:

- in-depth investigation of selected historical and geographical topics
- preparatory background research drawing on VGG Heritage data and elders/mentors
- intense involvement, training and mentoring of a group of 4-10 Van Tat Gwich'in youth/learners
- involve more younger elders as resource and knowledge sources
- production of interpretive and educational materials such as Gwich'in language books drawn from the oral history collections

- production of a Trails Atlas in conjunction with an interested publisher (currently in the mockup/assessment stage)
- presentation of material as a virtual exhibit of Van Tat Gwich'in history on the land, created by youth/learners mentored by Elders and the VGG Heritage Branch
- select geographical locations and ancestors appropriate to the student/youth participants and having cultural and historical importance. For example, in 2015 Teetlinjuu in Van Tat [Crow Flats] was relevant to youth Brandon Kyikavichik and filmer Erika Tizya, and the Kâachik area was important to youth Sophia Flather. The Bluefish River area and David Lord Lake were significant for Cheyanne Kapuschak and Tyrell Kassi's travel across Van Tat to Thomas Creek provided an overview of his family's land use and history. Trail crew participants were similarly matched to their families' traditional territory and travel routes. In 2016 we will endeavour to select locations important for VGG Heritage research that are also relevant to learners in the mentoring program.
- seek to disseminate interpretive materials and Gwich'in history, culture and language more extensively in educational/interpretive settings by offering assistance in interpretation
- continue emphasis on using Gwich'in language
- continue collaborations with academic researchers
- conduct training and orientation seminars and community presentations

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



Tors by Caribou Bar Creek west of Van Tat, 2015.

## 6. 2015 Project Supporters



Canadian  
Heritage

Patrimoine  
canadien

**GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, PARKS CANADA, VUNTUT NATIONAL  
PARK**

**in kind: salaries, equipment, expertise**

**OBJECTIVES:** Vuntut National Park was established in 1995 as part of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement, to conserve, protect and present to Canadians a portion of the North Yukon Natural Region, to recognize Vuntut Gwitchin history and culture and to protect the traditional and current use of the park by the Vuntut Gwitchin. Parks Canada supports the Historic Lifeways Project and previous research through the participation of Parks staff in research, training and interpretation, and provision of equipment, supplies, logistics assistance and expertise.

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project

## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, POLAR CONTINENTAL SHELF PROJECT



Natural Resources Canada

**26.28 hours helicopter support [valued at \$70,000]**

**OBJECTIVES:** The Polar Continental Shelf Project provides critical logistical support for arctic research. The PCSP funded the Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project under its Traditional Knowledge Program and its commitment to support research relevant to northern Aboriginal communities which fosters development of their research capability.

## VUNTUT GWITCHIN GOVERNMENT

**in kind: salaries, office space and facilities, project management**



**OBJECTIVES:** The VGG is directing the Historic Lifeways Project, providing the services of the VGG Heritage Manager, Heritage Coordinator and seasonal Heritage Department personnel, arranging logistics and expediting for researchers and other project personnel, liaising between community resources and the project, providing office facilities, meeting and storage spaces, facilitating Heritage Committee meetings which direct the project, and general logistical and administrative support. VGG support includes Gwich'in language programs formerly covered by the federal Aboriginal Language Services.



Potentilla on Nohddhàa

## YUKON DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM AND CULTURE, HERITAGE TRAILS \$20,000



**OBJECTIVES:** The Yukon Heritage Trails program provides support for researching, planning, improvement and development of heritage trails throughout the Yukon. Support for the Historic Lifeways Project is directed toward revitalizing and documenting Van Tat Gwich'in heritage trails to make them available to the community, younger generations, and the wider public.

## YUKON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND \$67,157



**OBJECTIVES:** The Community Development Fund (CDF) gives Yukon community, industry and professional associations; non-profit and charitable organizations; and municipal and First Nations governments money for projects and events that: support community well-being, create jobs, generate spending on Yukon goods and services, have measurable social, cultural and economic benefits for Yukon residents and communities. The primary goal of the CDF is to fund projects and events that provide long-term benefits and value to Yukon communities.

# Van Tat Gwich'in Historic Lifeways Project



## 7. 2015 Project Participants

### Elders & Resource people

Martha Benjamin  
Robert Bruce Jr.  
Harvey Kassi  
Irwin Linklater  
David Lord  
Georgie Moses  
Stanley Njootli Sr.

### Heritage Committee

Robert Bruce Jr.  
Jane Montgomery  
Marion Schafer

### Filmers

Sophia Flather  
Mary Jane Moses  
Erika Tizya

### Collaborators

Dave Mossop, biologist  
Peter Abel, bird survey assistant  
Clifton Nukon, bird survey assistant  
Freddy Frost, interpretive infrastructure construction  
Will Connellan, assistant carpenter  
Derek Kapuschak, assistant carpenter

### Youth/Learners

Joseph Bruce  
Sophia Flather  
Dakota Foster  
Tyrell Kassi  
Cheyanne Kapuschak  
Derek Kapuschak  
Brandon Kyikavichik  
Stanley G. Njootli  
Philip Rispin  
Nathaniel Schafer

### Heritage mentors/ Research team

Robert Bruce Jr.  
Mary Jane Moses  
Shirleen Smith  
Megan Williams

### Caribou Bar Creek trail team

Derek Kapuschak  
Stanley Njootli Jr.  
Joel Peter  
Nathaniel Schafer

### David Lord Creek trail team

Dakota Foster  
David Lord  
Lawrence Lord  
Georgie Moses

### Chuu TI'it trail team

Joseph Bruce  
Randal Francis  
George Nukon  
Joel Peter  
Philip Rispin

### Food/Catering

Elizabeth Kaye

### Pilot

Andy Kokkinen

### Chuu TI'it gas haul crew

Douglas Frost  
Robert Kyikavichik

### Chuu TI'it CDF site visit

Sofia Flather  
Douglas Frost  
Robert Kyikavichik  
Nancy Lewis-deGraff