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GWICH'IN TRIBAL COUNCIL

An Indigenous Place Names Handbook

Sharing the Gwich'in Experience in Canada

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Cat. No. M86-35/1-2023E-PDF (Online)
ISBN 978-0-660-49041-0

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Aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Un guide des noms de lieux autochtones : vivre l’expérience Gwich’in au Canada

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Contents

Gwitr’it Gwichìt Dagweedi’ìn’ Diiyah Tr’igwaandak Gwan

Dinjii Zhuh kat nan kak nijin gugweech’in’ oozrii gwits’an gìłtsaih, aii nan nits’òo gugwideech’in gwinjik tr’oozrii ts’àt jii oozrii k’iighè’ niinzhit dài’ ezhik gwich’in kat nits’òo gugwiindài’ tr’igwinah’inh. Uuzrii nihłi’ejuk leii goonlih. Nits’òo nan gugwideech’in, duuleh ddhah gòo han ezhik goo’aii k’iighè’ Dinjii Zhuh vuuzri’ gìłtsaih. Duuleh ihłee gòo niinzhit dài’ gugwindak gwinjik tr’oozrih. Jidìi t’atr’ijahch’uu, łuk gòo vadzaih jii gwinjik chan duuleh tr’oozrih. Dinjii Zhuh kat nits’òo nan guuzrii kaiik’it gwizhit nihkhah gahgidandaih, nan kak nagahdinjik ts’àt gwandak nihkhah gugwaandak dài’ jii uuzrii t’agijahch’uh.

Gwich’in Tribal Council Department of Culture and Heritage (gwichih Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute gwitr’ahnuu) 1992 ts’àt 2015 nagwidadhat 23 gahshuk anjoo 74 agwahłeii aii ts’àt juudin gwatat gòo kaiik’it gwizhìt gwich’in kat guughaii 55 – 95 goonlii jii Northwest Territories ts’àt Yukon Gwich’in nành kak nits’òo tr’oozrii ts’àt nits’òo gugwehdineetł’oo gik’itr’ahaandal geenjit guuvah gwitr’it gwiltsaii. Gwich’in anjoo kat nits’òo nan tr’oozrii yeendoo tthak gahgwiheedandaii gwijiinchii goonlii giiniindhan k’iighè’ jii geenjit gwitr’it gwiltsaih. Jii gwitr’it chil’ee gwichiilagoo’ee tł’ee nan uuzrii 900 agwahłeii anjoo kat hàh gwidinithitł’oo ts’àt nits’òo aii nan kak tagwijuudhat chan gwidinithitł’oh. Jii gwitr’it k’iighè’ nan gwik’it tagwiłtsi’, map gwitr’ahnuu tr’iłtsaih (nan gwik’it tagwiłtsi’ 22 agwahłeii) Northwest Territories ts’àt Yukon gwa’an nan uuzri’ vakak goo’aii, jii nan k’it tagwiłtsi’ gwi’dinehtł’ee duuleh printer kak nihk’it tr’igwahahtsaa diiyeenjit goo’aih, nan kak khehtak tr’igwahtsii kat t’agahdahch’aa geenjit.

Geomatics ts’àt Cartographic Research Centre, Carleton University danh goo’aii guuvah gwitr’it gugwiłtsaii k’iighè’ jii kat tthak internet kak goo’aih. Aii gehghee jii gwitr’it k’iighè’ National Historic Site (Nagwichoonjik NHS) gwitr’ahnuu tr’igwiłtsaii, jii t’at niinzhit dài’ nan kak tr’igwiindài’ geenjit diiyah tr’igwaandak ts’àt łoohah gwijiinchii goo’aii tr’igwiłtsaih aii gehghee Territorial Historic Sites nihk’ii daan tr’igwiłtsaii, kaiik’it gwi’dinehtł’ee leii gìłtsaii, guugwitr’it gugwindak gìłtsaii ts’àt Gwich’in nànhkak nits’òo tr’oozrii nihłinehch’i’ 500 agwahłeii gugwidinuutł’oo ts’àt Northwest Territories ts’àt Yukon geenjit k’adagwidaadhat kat ts’àt Geographical Names Board of Canada aii nànhkak nits’òo tr’oozrii łoohàh gwijiinchii gidiinù’ ts’àt Canada gwizhìt nan k’it tagwiltsi’ gwi’dinehtł’ee kak chan jii uuzrii gwidinithitł’oh.

Jii gwitr’it łoohàh nizii k’iighè’ Governor General’s History Award 2020 dài’ nikhwits’an tr’iłtsaii ts’àt Canada gwizhìt kaiik’it goo’aii gwi’dinehtł’ee haatsaa Natural Resources Canada geenjit nikhwiguujahkat. Jii k’iighè’ jii kaiik’it gwi’dinehtł’ee dhàatsaih. Jii dinehtł’eh gwizhìt Dinjii Zhuh Kat nits’òo guunànhkak niizhit dài’ tr’oozrii natr’iguuheendal geenjit guuvah tr’igwaandak: niinzhit dài’ nan tr’oozrii nits’òo geenjit gik’igahaandal, nan uuzrii łoohàh vuuzri’ diininch’uu ts’àt nits’oo gugwehdineetł’oo geenjit gik’igahaandal ts’àt jii uuzrii nan k’it tagwiłtsi’ gwi’dinehtł’ee kak nits’òo gugwehdineetł’oo chan diiyah tr’igwaandak. Nagwidadhat leii jii gwi’dinehtł’ee geenjit Gwich’in nànhkak gwizhìt gwitr’it gwiltsaii Gwichan anjoo kat ts’àt juudin gwatat tr’igwiindài’ kat guuvàh jii gwitr’it gwiltsaii. Nits’òo nihkhah gwitr’it tr’igwahahtsaa, nits’òo gwitr’it gisriindè’tr’ijahłii ts’àt nits’òo gwitr’it gwitseedhoo atr’igwahah’aa jii tthak jii dinehtł’eh gwizhìt goo’aih. Jidii t’atr’ahdahch’aa, nits’òo geenjit diits’àt tr’igiheekhyaa, nits’òo nan k’it tagwiłtsi’ gwi’dinehtł’ee kak uuzrii gugwehdineetł’oo ts’àt gwitr’it tthak ndòo nyaa’ài’ tł’ee dagwiheedya’aa jii tthak geenjit jii dinehtł’eh zhìt goo’aih.

Nan nits’òo tr’oozrii gugwitr’it k’iighè’ Dinjii Zhuh kat guunànhkak geenjit gahgwiheedandaii łoohàh gwijiinchii goo’aii diiyah tr’igwaandak geenjit nizih. Jii geenjit gik’itr’aanjii k’iighè’ Dinjii Zhuh kat guukaiik’it gwizhit t’agahdahch’aa ts’àt k’eejit kat guunànhkak geenjit gik’igahaandal chan geenjit t’agahdahch’ah.

Dinjii Zhuh kaiik’it gwa’àn jii dinehtł’eh t’agahdahch’aa geenjit diinjiidizhit ts’àt yeendoo Canada gwizhìt nan k’it tagwiłtsi’ gwi’dinehtł’ee kak Dinjii Zhuh ginjik zhìt nan uuzrii gugwehdineetł’oo k’iighè’ niinzhit dài’ nits’oo tr’igwiindài’ gahgwiheedandaii, diiginjik gik’itr’ahaandał ts’àt niinzhit dài’ gwik’it gwiinli’ natr’igooheendał geenjit chan diinjiidizhit.

Executive summary

Indigenous place names are the names that Indigenous people assign to various features on the land, and they are windows into the culture and history of people who have long lived there. There are many types of names. An Indigenous place name may refer to a type of geographic feature, such as a mountain or river. It may refer to a person or to someone or something in the legendary realm. A name may even refer to a useful resource such as fish or caribou. Indigenous place names are shared amongst the community and are used when travelling or telling stories.

For 23 years, between 1992 and 2015, the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) Department of Culture and Heritage (formerly Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute [GSCI]) worked with 74 Elders and traditional land users ranging in age from 55 to 95, both on the land and in our communities, to document place names and create an inventory of heritage sites in the Gwich'in Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories and Yukon. This community-based project grew out of concerns by Gwich'in Elders that this knowledge was being lost, and that it was important to protect, share and celebrate Gwich'in place names so they could be available for many generations to come.

At the end of this impressive project, more than 900 place names were recorded with Elders, along with their oral history. A complete set of 1:250,000 National Topographic System maps (22 maps) with place names for Gwich'in traditional lands in the Northwest Territories and Yukon was created and is available for printing and travelling on the land. Plus, a large wall map with a subset of the names was made. These are all available on an online atlas we created in partnership with the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre at Carleton University. Other outcomes of the research include the designation of a National Historic Site (Nagwichoonjik NHS) and 8 new Territorial Historic Sites, community-based publications, reports, and over 500 Gwich'in names officially recognized by the governments of the Northwest Territories and Yukon and the Geographical Names Board of Canada – significantly decolonizing the maps of northwestern Canada.

Because of the success of this project, which won the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Community Programming in the fall of 2020, the department was approached by Natural Resources Canada to write a handbook for other communities across Canada that may be interested in this work. This handbook is the result. It provides generous information to help other Indigenous communities to repatriate their own place names: how to carry out Indigenous place names research, how to verify and correct the spelling of their names, and how to have the names replace colonial names on official maps. The information and best practices identified in this handbook are based on over two decades of place names research carried out in the Gwich'in Settlement Region under the direction of Gwich'in Elders and traditional land users. To that end, this handbook includes sections on building research relationships, planning a project, and finding funding. It also includes what equipment will be needed, how best to conduct interviews and map place names, and all the work that comes after the names are recorded.

Place names studies can be a wonderful way for an Indigenous organization to record important, timely, and vital information. These studies can also allow Indigenous organizations to give back to their own communities, by having these names recorded for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

We hope that this handbook will be useful to many Indigenous communities and organizations and that the future maps of Canada are filled with many more thousands of Indigenous names, repatriating knowledge, languages, and traditions to where they belong.

Preface

The Gwich'in are one of the most northerly Indigenous Peoples on the North American continent, living at the northwestern limits of the boreal forest. The Gwich'in speak an Athapaskan language and at the time of contact with Euro-Canadians, lived in nine different bands with lands stretching from the interior of Alaska through the Yukon and into the Mackenzie Valley. The Gwich'in of the Northwest Territories (N.W.T.), who now reside in the communities of Tsiigehtchic, Fort McPherson, Aklavik, and Inuvik, were signatories to Treaty 11 in 1921 and signed the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement in 1992, which included provisions about the protection of Gwich'in culture and heritage. The claim had a specific provision (25.1.12) about place names, stating that, "*The Gwich'in have traditionally referred to certain lakes, rivers, mountains, and other geographic features and locations in the settlement area by traditional or aboriginal names. Upon request of the Gwich'in, the official names of such a place shall be reviewed and the traditional Gwich'in name may be recognized …*"

In recognition of this provision and the importance of traditional place names, the Gwich'in Tribal Council Department of Culture and Heritage (formerly Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute) worked with more than 70 Elders and traditional land users ranging in age from 55 to 95 years old, both on the land and in Gwich'in communities, to document place names and create an inventory of heritage sites in the Gwich'in Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories and Yukon. This community-based project, which was ongoing for 23 years between 1992 and 2015, grew out of concerns of Gwich'in Elders that this knowledge was being lost, and it was important to protect, share and celebrate Gwich'in place names so they could be available for many generations to come.

This handbook provides information to help other Indigenous communities to repatriate their own place names: to carry out Indigenous place names research; to verify and correct the spelling of their names; and to have the names replace colonial names on official maps. The information and best practices identified in this handbook are based on over two decades of place names research carried out in the Gwich'in Settlement Region under the direction of Gwich'in Elders and traditional land users. We hope this handbook will be a valuable resource for those carrying out such research and will foster a greater understanding of the significance of Indigenous place names and the many benefits to recording them and bringing them back into active use.

Alestine Andre, Ingrid Kritsch, Kristi Benson, Sharon Snowshoe

Acknowledgements

Hai' Choo—a special thank you—to the more than 70 Elders and land users in the Northwest Territories who shared their knowledge of Gwich'in place names, stories, legends, and traditional knowledge over the many years we have worked with them. The place names and maps that were created, as well as this handbook, are a special tribute to the people who have occupied and used Gwich'in lands with great respect:

Abe Stewart Sr., Fort McPherson

Agnes Mitchell, Tsiigehtchic

Alan Koe, Aklavik

Albert Ross, Tsiigehtchic

Alfred Semple, Aklavik

Alice Snowshoe, Fort McPherson

Amos Francis, Fort McPherson

Annie B. Gordon, Aklavik

Annie Benoit, Aklavik

Annie Jane Modeste, Fort McPherson

Annie Norbert, Tsiigehtchic

Annie Vaneltsi, Fort McPherson

Antoine (Tony) Andre, Tsiigehtchic

Barney Natsie, Tsiigehtchic

Bella (Norman) Modeste, Tsiigehtchic

Bertha Francis, Fort McPherson

Billy Wilson, Fort McPherson

Bob Norman, Tsiigehtchic

Caroline Andre, Tsiigehtchic

Caroline Kay, Fort McPherson

Catherine Semple, Aklavik

Cecil Andre, Tsiigehtchic

Dan Andre, Tsiigehtchic

Dolly McLeod, Aklavik

Doris Itsi, Fort McPherson

Edward Coyen, Tsiigehtchic

Eileen Cardinal, Tsiigehtchic

Eli Norbert, Tsiigehtchic

Eliza Kunnizzi, Fort McPherson

Eunice Mitchell, Fort McPherson

Fanny Greenland, Aklavik

Fred John, Aklavik

Fred W. Koe, Fort McPherson

Gabe Andre, Tsiigehtchic

George Edwards, Aklavik

George Niditchie Sr., Tsiigehtchic

Grace Blake, Tsiigehtchic

Hannah Alexie, Fort McPherson

Hyacinthe Andre, Tsiigehtchic

James B. Firth, Inuvik

James Simon, Tsiigehtchic

Joan Nazon, Tsiigehtchic

Joanne Snowshoe, Fort McPherson

John Norbert, Tsiigehtchic

John P. Kendo, Tsiigehtchic

Joseph Kay, Fort McPherson

Julia Edwards, Aklavik

Lucy Greenland, Aklavik

Marka Bullock, Inuvik

Mary Kendi, Aklavik

Mary M. Firth, Fort McPherson

Mary Teya, Fort McPherson

Mary Vittrekwa, Fort McPherson

Mildred Edwards, Aklavik

Nap Norbert, Tsiigehtchic

Neil Colin, Fort McPherson

Neil Snowshoe, Fort McPherson

Noel Andre, Tsiigehtchic

Percy Henry, Dawson City

Peter Kay Sr., Fort McPherson

Peter Ross, Tsiigehtchic

Pierre Benoit, Tsiigehtchic

Pierre Norman, Fort McPherson

Richard Ross, Aklavik

Robert Alexie Sr., Fort McPherson

Sarah Jerome, Inuvik

Sarah Simon, Fort McPherson

Stephen Charlie, Fort McPherson

Therese Remy Sawyer, Tsiigehtchic

Tommy Wright, Inuvik

Walter Alexie, Fort McPherson

William Teya, Fort McPherson

William Modeste (Willie Simon), Inuvik

We would also like to acknowledge the numerous project collaborators (community members, Indigenous partners, co-management, and non-governmental and government organizations) who helped us record and share these important place names.

This collaboration between Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) was initiated to document and publish best practices on the repatriation of Indigenous place names to assist other communities undertaking similar work. The content of this handbook is a product of the place names research experience of the GTC Department of Culture and Heritage and the traditional knowledge of the Elders in the Gwich'in Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories and Yukon.

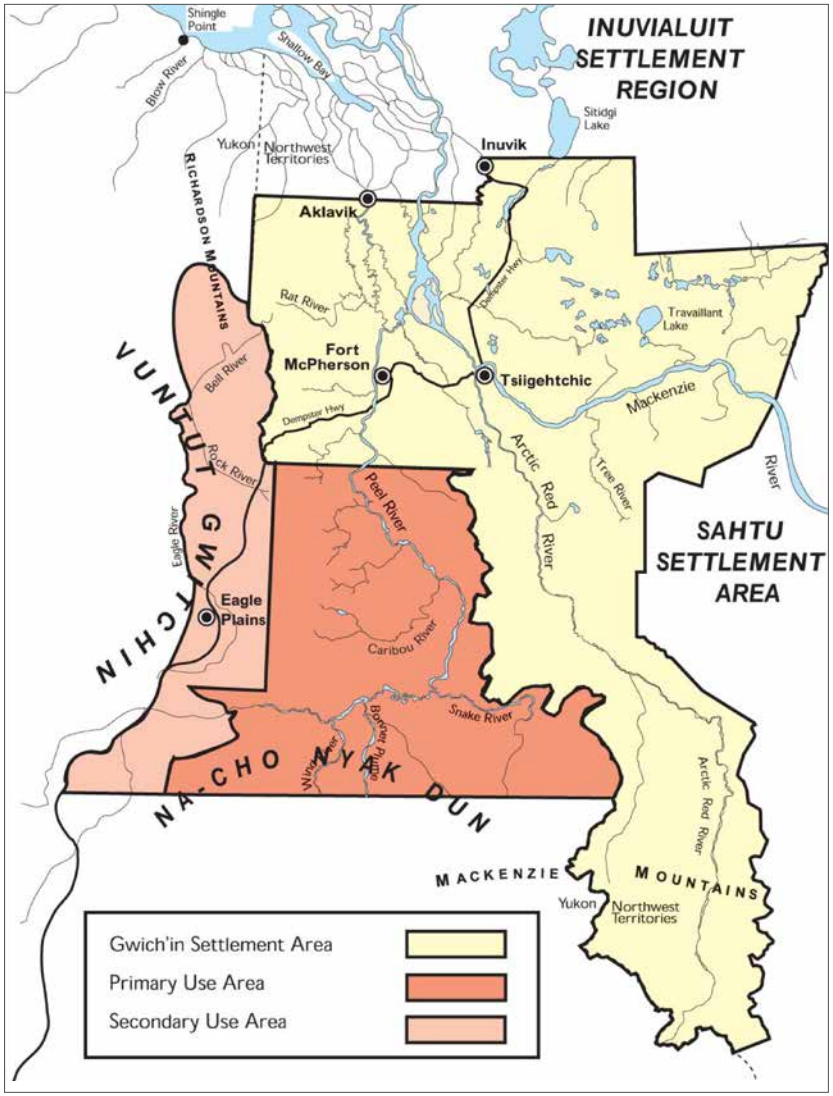

Figure 1. Gwich'in Settlement Region—credit Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board.

Alestine Andre
Photo: Itai Katz

Alestine Andre, a Gwichya Gwich'in from the community of Tsiigehtchic, N.W.T., grew up on the land around the Tree River and Travaillant Lake area. At age 7, Alestine was sent along with her siblings to school, and after 12 years at residential school, she graduated high school. After each school year, she has fond memories of spending two summer months at Tree River with her parents, grandmother, auntie and her siblings and cousins. Alestine enjoys learning, so today she has a B.A. in Anthropology and an M.A. degree in Environmental Studies, along with "on-the-land skills." In her lifetime, Alestine has travelled to many countries around the world. She has worked with First Nations organizations in both administration and research capacities, and each year in August, she returns to her family's fish camp at Tree River. Today, Alestine is retired and lives with her husband in Whitehorse, Yukon, where she continues to work on GTC projects.

Kristi Benson

Kristi Benson is an archaeologist, anthropologist, and Geographic Information System (GIS) manager living in northern British Columbia. She began work with the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute in 2004 as a project director for the Gwich'in Knowledge of the Mackenzie Gas Project Area study and has continued to work for the Institute and later the Gwich'in Tribal Council Department of Culture and Heritage since that time. She has a B.A. and M.A. in archaeology and attended BCIT for Geographical Information Systems. She oversees the Department's GIS and digital ethnographic archives, conducts traditional knowledge studies, and reviews licence and permit applications. In addition to her anthropological work, Kristi is a professional dog trainer and dog training educator and writes extensively about dogs as well. She lives with her wife and seven dogs on a mixed farm in the Bulkley Valley.

Ingrid Kritsch
Photo: Tom Andrews

Ingrid Kritsch is a cultural anthropologist and archaeologist and has worked with Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian subarctic since 1977. She was the founding Executive Director of the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute (GSCI) from 1993 to 1998 and Research Director from 1998 to 2019. During this time, she managed over 120 research projects, which included many hours of on-the-land travel with Elders and youth documenting traditional use and knowledge of Gwich'in traditional lands. In 2008, Ingrid was elected an honorary member of the Gwich'in Nation of the Northwest Territories. Ingrid holds a B.A. in Anthropology and Geography from McGill University (1978), an M.A. in Anthropology from McMaster University (1983) and an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from the University of Alberta (2022). Ingrid is currently retired and lives with her husband in Sherwood Park, Alberta, where she continues to work on Gwich'in projects. For more information, visit https://independent.academia.edu/IngridKritsch.

Introduction

What are Indigenous place names?

Travelling around the Travaillant Lake and Tree River area with my family as a youngster, I, along with my siblings, would sit back quietly listening to our parents as they visited with relatives or other people when they stopped at our camp. They would converse and give news about other families, friends, their travels across lakes or to different camps and the places and trails they travelled through to get to their destination, whether it was by boat in the summer or by dog team in the winter. I always remember the sighting of fresh caribou or moose tracks near a named place was big news. As a young child, I remember these stories were attached to certain named places on the land or along the river, but didn't know their location yet.

- Alestine Andre

Everyone and every culture need ways to talk about and name their physical world. They need to talk about the trails and roads that take them to places they need or want to be; they need ways to talk about the places they get valuable resources or meet with loved ones. It would be impossible to relate to each other if the only way we could talk about our journeys, large and small, was with vague pointing gestures. And without place names, it would be trying and tiring to tell almost any story of our lives. "I flew to that city, which is on a very large lake, northeast of here by more than 1,000 kilometres, you know, the one with the big grey hotel?" Instead, we can just say, "I flew to Yellowknife," and everyone knows exactly where that is, but also, they likely have knowledge about what the journey was probably like and what was found there upon landing. They may even have their own memories of Yellowknife or have family or friends there.

Alestine Andre (centre), tape recording Annie and Nap Norbert telling stories about living in the Mackenzie Delta area while sitting on the beach under the hill called Njoh Njii'ee. Gwich'in Place Names Project 1994.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC

Indigenous place names are the names assigned to various features and significant places on the land. The names may refer to the type of geographic feature, like a mountain or river, or they may refer to a person, to something in the legendary realm, a resource such as fish or caribou, and many other things. However, the names are shared amongst the community and are used when travelling or telling stories to situate oneself.

Names and stories, places and trails, history, and culture are closely connected. Understanding the meaning of place names is an important step toward understanding the traditional way of life. The children would learn about the names of places while travelling on the land, and they learned about the names' meaning through the Elders' stories.

Tony Andre remembers that when he was a young boy, parents would teach the children about the many important trails and places on the land. While the family was travelling on the land, his parents would sometimes rest on the trail and test the son's knowledge.

> *You know how I know all the names of the lakes? Even if I were half blind, I'd still remember, because my dad taught me all of these trails and lakes. So suppose I am way over here someplace, and then she asks me, my mother asks me—or my dad—"What lake is this? That lake, what's its name?" I have to name it right there. Yes, he's testing me. He's trying to tell me some crazy word, and then … he says, "What's the name of this lake?" Well, I can't be stuck, I just got to say it right there. "And what is Caribou Lake?" he asks. "Well, Vàdzaih van."—"What is Khaii luk, right here? What is Tl'oo nadhadlaii, right here? What is Gugwijaanaii, right here?" You see—all that is in me, it's in my blood.*
>
> - Tony Andre[1]

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1 Gwichya Gwich'in Googwandak: The History and Stories of the Gwichya Gwich'in As Told By The Elders of Tsiigehtshik. 3rd revised and expanded edition. Heine, Michael, Andre, Ingrid Kritsch, Alma Cardinal and the Elders of Tsiigehtshik. Published by Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, 2021:56-57.

Since humans have had the ability to draw on any surface, they have made maps. Maps show geographic features, such as rivers, lakes, and mountains, but they also show place names: names attached to a feature or group of features; names that can be used to refer to the location so it will be understood by anyone looking at the map. In colonial times, maps became a tool to overwrite Indigenous knowledge and use of traditional lands. Maps, and the places and names they hold, were used to claim ownership. For hundreds of years, Indigenous names—which had been passed down through rich oral traditions for hundreds of generations—were ignored by colonial map-makers or modified and misused as part of the colonial process in Canada.[2]

2 This section relies heavily on Aporta, C., Kritsch, I., Andre, A., Benson, K., Snowshoe, S., Firth, W., Carry, D., 2014. The Gwich'in Atlas: Place Names, Maps, and Narratives. In: Taylor, D.R.F., Lauriault, T.P. (Eds.), *Developments in the Theory and Practice of Cybercartography*. Elsevier Science, 229–244.

What is an Indigenous place names study?

In the summer of 1992, Alestine Andre and I were contracted by archaeologist Jean-Luc Pilon to carry out a traditional knowledge study with Gwichya Gwich'in Elders from Tsiigehtchic (then called Arctic Red River) on land use and occupancy in the Travaillant Lake and Trout Lake areas. This area fell within a proposed oil and gas pipeline route and part of a larger research project called the Northern Oil and Gas Action Plan (NOGAP), which would help in the assessment of the effects of the project. Jean-Luc was particularly interested in us recording traditional trails, camp sites, harvesting locales, and place names to complement the archaeological research he was carrying out in the area. Although Alestine and I had known each other since 1989 when we met at an Oral Traditions workshop in Yellowknife, we had not had the opportunity to work together and were thrilled to do so. During the summer, we interviewed 33 Elders and traditional land users, using maps and a tape recorder to document 130 place names with their oral history, plus the locations of trails, graves, resources, camps, cabins, stages, and fish traps. The Elders kept saying, "This is only part of our traditional land use area. We are concerned that this knowledge is being lost." They invited us to come back the next summer to work with them on recording another part of their traditional land use area. Neither Alestine nor I knew at the time that this would be the beginning of a research partnership that flourished for over 30 years—and is still continuing in our semi-retirement!

- Ingrid Kritsch

An Indigenous place names study is a research project, or series of research projects, that focus on documenting Indigenous place names. These studies may have one or more goals. A community may wish to simply record the place names and the stories and information associated with these names. They may also wish to have the names officially recognized and replace colonial names on official maps. The community may also use the names to help bring back Indigenous languages or protect their lands and heritage from development. Indigenous place names can also be used to teach young people about their history, language, and culture.

Indigenous place names projects may record other information in addition to place names. They may record community history information, land use, and the legends and stories associated with each place name, as well as names of families or people who used a particular area of land and stories about them. In this way, families and individuals are remembered in the place names. You can find more information about what this looks like in later sections of this handbook.

Documenting traditional place names is urgent. The knowledge of the Elders who know the names and the stories associated with them can be lost forever, even in just a single generation, if they are not recorded, taken care of, and shared. Before the days of tape recorders, paper maps, and smart phones, this knowledge was passed down orally from person to person and from generation to generation. Telling stories and sharing knowledge through on-the-land living and experiences was how Indigenous communities ensured that their information was secure. Colonialism and residential schooling disrupted these means of transmitting knowledge. Formal studies to record Indigenous place names are now important and timely, playing an important role in reconciliation in Canada.

> An Indigenous place names study carefully records your community's traditional place names, in your language. Your names will be spelled correctly, placed correctly on a map, and have all appropriate stories and information recorded with them.

Indigenous place names projects can vary in size and scope. Some might be carried out over a few months, some might take several years or even longer. Some might record the names and stories for an entire traditional land-use area, while others focus on just a particular land-use area of interest. These differences relate to who is doing the research and why and how it is being funded.

For example, the Gwich'in Place Names project took place in many phases over several decades, working with Elders and traditional land users from four Gwich'in communities in the Northwest Territories. The project recorded almost 1,000 names, along with photos, transcripts and videos, resulting in thousands of pages of stories, oral history, and other information. The names span 225,000 square kilometres. The project was funded through many different funding agencies and spearheaded by the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, a non-profit organization that eventually became the Department of Culture and Heritage of the Gwich'in Tribal Council.

Other smaller projects may look like …

- A development such as a mine or a road may be planned through a part of an Indigenous community's traditional territory. As a part of the environmental impact assessment process, a small Indigenous place name project is carried out, which may include a handful of people and record a handful of names over a period of several weeks.
- An area of importance to the community is being considered for protection or commemoration, under a land-use plan or another legislative process. There are numerous studies undertaken to help with planning, such as ecology and species at risk. In addition, a place names study is undertaken by the regional Indigenous government, recording numerous names, trails, harvesting areas, special sites, and more. The site may be tens or hundreds of square kilometres in size, and the project may last from a season to a few years.

The hillside along the Mackenzie River across from the community of Tsiigehtchic is called Chii Gho' Tł'ąįį (translation: rock-teeth-between). When looking across from the community, the hillside looks like a partial set of teeth.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC, 1994.

Why are Indigenous place names important?

Tatehsheii is a place below our Tree River camp on the Mackenzie River, a short walking distance. This timbered area was where we used to set rabbit snares in the willows in late summer or in winter months or set muskrat traps on the many lakes in the spring. In our GGPN 1993 interview, I was surprised to learn from my older brother, Noel Andre, that there are many places called tatehsheii along the Mackenzie River. These places are known for being timbered with many lakes within an area, some are big, and some are small. Noel pointed out a tatehsheii located upriver from the community of Tsiigehtchic and one near the Ferry Camp across the Mackenzie River from Tsiigehtchic. All those years, I thought there was only one Tatehsheii!

- Alestine Andre

Indigenous place names are rooted in the culture and knowledge about Indigenous lands and are a window into how Indigenous worlds are culturally constructed.

Place names can also preserve ancient aspects of language and place-based knowledge, including traditional knowledge. They can point to resources used in earlier times but lost in current memory, such as sources of flint for making stone tools, fish trap locations, and even sources of eagle feathers for fletching the ends of arrows.

Place names can function as an important way to decolonize maps, and reassert Indigenous claims and heritage. This addresses several key Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action report (2015), which calls upon various governments and other bodies to, "*[r]epudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands and peoples such as the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius*" (e.g. in 45.i).

> Your place names are important. They are rooted in your culture and language and record important aspects of your land use and heritage. Recording your place names can also decolonize maps, in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

It also addresses Article 13.1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, "*Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.*"

Why are place name studies important?

In 1992 when Alestine and I recorded Gwichya Gwich'in use and occupancy of the area from Tsiigehtchic into the Travaillant and Trout Lake areas, we used 28 [National Topographic System (NTS)] maps at 1:50,000 scale that we had taped together. The map mosaic covered many kilometres and was so unwieldy and large, that even when rolled up, it took the two of us to carry it around the community—a funny sight I'm sure for the community.

Hyacinthe, who was Alestine's father and 82 years old at the time, was one of the first Elders we interviewed that summer. When Hyacinthe saw the oversized dimensions of the map, he knew that it wouldn't fit on the floor of his living room where we had hoped to interview him, so we set up the map outside his house on a large flat area, using a tarp as an underlay. Being outside also allowed Hyacinthe to see the map more clearly in the light. It was so windy though, that we had to put rocks on the corners to keep the map flat, and I sat in the middle of the map—partly to keep it in place and partly to hear and see Hyacinthe clearly so I could take notes and keep an eye on the tape recorder.

Hyacinthe sat on a chair beside the map and pointed out the trails and the place names using a long willow stick, while Alestine recorded them on the map. Then midway through the interview, when Hyacinthe was recounting one of the places where he trapped marten, he turned to me and said, "You[re] sit[ting] on my trap line!" [GGPN Tape 92.18, page 28]. At first his words startled me. I didn't know what to think, and I probably looked rather confused to him. Then he laughed and it suddenly hit me—the power of place names to evoke memories and attachment. I wasn't simply sitting on a map, I was sitting in a cultural landscape that was alive. And the map was a means for us to travel with him to earlier days, sharing knowledge and memories with great joy. All of the names had significance and meaning—based on his many decades of living on the land and hearing the rich oral history passed down through the generations. This was personal for him. The land was alive. This was his home.

- Ingrid Kritsch

In the summer of 1993, archaeologist Jean-Luc Pilon interviewed Grace Blake, then chief of Arctic Red River (now Tsiigehtchic) about the Northern Oil and Gas Action Plan Archaeology Project, which included the very first Gwich'in Place Names research undertaken by Ingrid Kritsch and Alestine Andre. Chief Blake spoke about culture, heritage, place names, and the value of this research:

> *The more we know, the better we feel about being who we are … It is very important, as part of our claim, to have all the campsites and the burial grounds … designated … So, with that in mind, I think [the place names] project helped us to identify those areas with the knowledge of the people and the legends and [the] stories that they have. So, it enhances their wisdom, confirms what they say … like you know, finding out from the people first where they lived, where they travelled, and where they camped, so that both [sic] information could be used in conjunction to make a whole report from the community's perspective; as well as from people on the other side, like yourselves with your expertise … You're asking them for their opinion, telling them that they matter and all of this, you know, because they are the first people … I could see where it would be beneficial all across Canada for people to start using multiple [types of] information to build and develop their curricula in the schools, all across the board, from elementary to university using information instead of talking in the abstract about native people … I take a lot of pride in Alestine [Andre] and Ingrid [Kritsch] doing the work that they're doing, collecting place names because that information is building up the esteem of the Elders as well as documentation, which is very valuable to people like yourself [archaeologists] who are going to be coming and doing work in the future. But also, to us, we can use that as a tool … [for example], land management … we're going to be setting up various boards with our claim and working in conjunction with other claimant groups, and we need to be aware of not only from history but as much documentation as we can gather; valuable reports that we can use to make sure that our claim is implemented in the best way possible.*[3]

3 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CAdgDrSxswo

Place names studies are important for many reasons.

- They help to document this information before the knowledge is lost.
- They can help to develop educational resources such as school curricula.
- They help with the revival of Indigenous languages.
- They help communities to identify significant local, regional, and national heritage sites.
- They are vital to the official recognition of Indigenous names on official government maps.
- They help communities manage their lands and heritage resources.
- They help Indigenous communities interpret their heritage and culture for tourists.
- They are useful when reviewing permits to develop or conduct research.

Place names studies can be a wonderful way for an Indigenous organization to both record important, timely, and vital information, and give back to their own communities by having these names recorded for future generations to learn from and enjoy.

> Place names studies are important. They record your Elders' knowledge of place names and allow you to use the names for many other purposes.

Alestine Andre recording place names and trails with one of the youngest traditional land users we worked with, Danny Andre, at his family's camp called Tr'ineht'ieet'iee. Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names Project 1992.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC

Who should be responsible for and/or involved in a place names study?

I remember Elders and community members wanting one of their people to be involved with the study because they can learn from the place names work and also learn how the study was carried out. They can be the "go-between" between the outside researchers and the community people. And someone who can speak in their language would be a bonus for everyone involved in the study.

- Alestine Andre

Indigenous communities must set the overall direction and goals for any place names study. A place names study must first meet the community's needs and wishes, before meeting any secondary goals.

Indigenous communities must also decide on the research methods to be used. This will likely include hiring several local research assistants and training them to have the skills needed to help out. It may also include hiring either an out-of-community researcher or someone within the community with skills and education who has experience running large research projects. Hybrid models may also suit a community or project. We will go over how to ensure a project is community-led in a later chapter.

Indigenous place names studies should consider having an advisory group that is recognized and supported by the community. For example, a steering committee comprised of Elders, teachers, and other relevant community members who will meet with the project team and decide on key project details is very useful. This will also ensure that the study stays on track in meeting the community's needs and ensure that any sensitive questions or information can be appropriately and respectfully dealt with. The advisory group can also help to identify interview and workshop participants.

Having an advisory group, community experts and research experts working together collaboratively brings a lot of value to a research project. It also advances the process of reconciliation in Canada.

> Your place names study should meet the goals of your community, and the methods and direction of the study should be decided upon by your community.
>
> Preferably, your place names study should be run by a community organization.

Chii Akàn (translation: Rock-its (beaver) lodge) is the name of this hill on the Dempster Highway. According to local oral history, this was the home of giant beavers, part of the megafauna that lived in this area in Pleistocene times. There are many old-time stories related to giant beavers. According to Elder Robert Alexie Sr., there used to be many boulders and sticks here, like a giant beaver dam, and this place was damaged during the construction of the highway.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC, 1999.

Building relationships in collaborative research

I recall that Alestine and I did a lot of visiting (and drinking tea) before we even did our first interviews!

- Ingrid Kritsch

Good place names projects come from good relationships. It takes time to build mutually respectful relationships between a community and researchers whether the researchers are from the community or not.

This means that before a place names project can even start, the organization doing the research and the researchers themselves must build trust and meet with the people. If they are from outside the community, they must spend time in the community and reach out to knowledgeable Elders, land users, and youth. If a researcher is from the community, they must reach out to inform others about their potential project and make it clear that they have the skills and experience to do a good job and respect the knowledge they will be given.

Researchers who are leading place names projects in their own communities have many advantages and a few disadvantages. They likely already have relationships with many of the people they will be asking to share information and can rely on these relationships and the goodwill of their friends, family, and neighbours to extend their reach. They also have a well-honed sense of how to conduct research in a respectful, appropriate way. Researchers from outside the community, however, may be able to ask all kinds of questions that someone from the community would be "expected to know," because the interviewees will recognize that the outside researcher may not have the same knowledge base and want to learn and understand. This latitude in asking questions can be very useful, and for this reason a team approach may be the best approach.

> Your project is more likely to succeed if you have strong relationships in place before you start your formal interviews. The first time your community hears about your project should not be when they are called in to do interviews.

Community-based researchers must strive to conduct careful, transparent work. Before their work starts, they must reach out to the relevant community or regional organizations through proper channels. How they reach out will depend on their position and their organization. They may have a letter signed by the leadership of their organization and send this as an introduction. They may go on the community radio station, Facebook or other social media platforms to discuss their work. In some cases, the idea of the project may have come from the community to start with and reaching out to the people who requested the study will also be a good idea.

Organizations to reach out to may include …

- Chief and council; tribal council/regional council
- Elders' council
- Youth council
- Language organizations/departments
- Lands/resource organizations/departments
- Previous researchers from other place names projects
- Local media
- Appropriate government offices and departments that might be interested in funding the research

When speaking with community organizations, the conversation should remain a two-way street as much as possible. The researcher must be upfront about who is doing the work, why, what the end goals or tangible deliverables will be, and who is funding it. They must be clear about where the project materials will be stored and how intellectual property rights will be protected. They must ask or answer questions about any issues with the project, including the timing, selection, and research methods, and they must be willing to discuss ways to make sure the project is meeting the community's needs.

In March 1998, 16 Elders and youth from Fort McPherson and staff from GSCI and GNWT travelled the traditional Teetł'it Gwich'in trail between Fort McPherson and Mayo/Dawson under the guidance of Gwich'in Elders Walter Alexie and Robert Alexie Sr. During the eight-day, 300-mile snowmobile trip, we travelled in the Ddhah Dik'ee area, a range of mountains north of the Peel River.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC.

Outside researchers

Outside researchers are often brought in to help with Indigenous place names projects and can bring specialist skill sets to the table. Outside researchers must respect the guidance of the host organization in regard to ethical and appropriate work. They must also follow all guidance about community protocols.

It is vital for outside researchers to build relationships with the communities they will be working for before they start recording their first interview. The Indigenous organization that they are working for may have already started this process and will likely have protocols and processes in place to spread awareness about the project and consult with the communities about the proposed project. It makes sense for the Indigenous organization to facilitate introductions between the researcher and other community members, organizations, and people. For example, the Indigenous organization may set up meetings with the researcher and the Elder's council, and someone from the organization may attend a meeting with the researcher as well.

Some options for finding help in the form of outside researchers:

- Reach out to other Indigenous communities who have done place names projects and ask about their research team.
- Ask the provincial or territorial toponymist (a government employee who oversees named places and who can be found by searching for your province/territory and "toponymist") for their thoughts and experiences.
- If existing research relationships are in place with academic or museum-based researchers, these people may also be appropriate or know of others who are.

In 2008, GSCI partnered with the Yukon Government Department of Tourism and Culture to carry out a helicopter survey of named places and archaeological sites in the Peel watershed with GSCI and Teetł'it Gwich'in Elder Walter Alexie. Due to the high cost of hiring helicopters, this was not something we did very often. It allowed us to visit areas inland that were traditionally accessed by walking trails off the rivers. Peel Heritage Inventory Project 2008.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC.

Intellectual property rights and Indigenous knowledge

For generations, the knowledge of Indigenous people has been appropriated and used without their consent and with no recompense.

Modern place names projects must protect the rights of Indigenous Knowledge Holders, respect the collective nature of place names knowledge, and respect the confidential nature of some place names.

To protect the rights of Indigenous Knowledge Holders, a place names project must meet the following criteria:

1. The project design and the informed consent process must clarify that the knowledge continues to be owned by the individuals and the community, not by the researcher or funder.

2. Knowledge Holders must be credited in all products made by the research project, both collectively and individually. For example, if an on-line atlas is made, there should be a “credits” section that lists all the people who were interviewed or otherwise provided information. Reports must have these names included as well, on the cover or at the front of the report. Academic papers may include all the names as co-authors. The exact way that knowledge holders are credited should be a decision made by the community and the Knowledge Holders, not the researcher or funder.

> Your place names study must ensure that the ownership of the names and all other information stays with the people and the community. It is not owned or controlled by the funders, the researchers or any other outside party.

Colours of the Arctic fall on the Ogilvie Mountains, Yukon

Getty Images.

Ethical principles for conducting place names research

Research is a step into the unknown. Because it seeks to understand something not yet revealed, research often entails risks to participants and others. These risks can be trivial or profound, physical or psychological, individual or social. History offers unfortunate examples where research participants have been needlessly, and at times profoundly, harmed by research, sometimes even dying as a result. Ethical principles and guidelines play an important role in advancing the pursuit of knowledge while protecting and respecting research participants in order to try to prevent such occurrences.

People have also been gratified and have had their lives enriched by their participation in research, either because they may have benefited directly or because their participation has contributed to the expansion of knowledge. Given the fundamental importance of research and of human participation in research, we must do all that we can as a society to ensure that research is conducted in an ethical manner so as to build public confidence and trust.[4]

Research ethics refers to how researchers and their projects must not do harm to the people they are studying. Place names research projects must meet or exceed all appropriate and applicable research ethics requirements with primacy given to the research ethics of the Indigenous community.

Although many other provisions may apply, some basic requirements to ensure a place names project is ethical include:

1. That the principles of good research in this handbook are also a part of research ethics. Poor research can harm Indigenous interests.

2. Meeting the codes of research practices created by the Indigenous community is as important as any other research ethics process (such as from a university or funder).

4 Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, December 2018, p 5. https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/documents/tcps2-2018-en-interactive-final.pdf

3. The project methods and goals all respect the intrinsic value of Indigenous people and their knowledge.

4. The project methods and goals support and do not damage the Indigenous community's welfare and need for justice, self-governance, and self-determination.

5. Privacy and confidentiality are based on the norms of the Indigenous community, and the rights and wishes of the people involved, rather than on outside ethics.

6. Conflicts of interest by any member of the research team need to be addressed clearly and with transparency.

7. Any risks (including cultural or psychological harm) need to be considered carefully.

8. Consent to conduct research must be given by research participants (Indigenous peoples), following the principles of free, informed, prior consent as outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Consent must also be considered as ongoing and revokable at the discretion of the people/community.

9. The place names project should increase the capacity of the Indigenous community to do further research and to otherwise meet their own goals.

10. The place names and their stories should be shared with the community as freely as possible unless there are confidentiality constraints.

11. The Indigenous people who provided knowledge and place names must be acknowledged.

12. Indigenous participants in the interviews and workshops must be compensated appropriately for their time and knowledge. Rates for compensation can be found by asking local or regional governance.

Some of these topics are explored more fully below in this research handbook.

There are many documents about research ethics that might be important to review. The Indigenous community may have developed research or traditional knowledge policies, which should be followed. The funder may have research ethics policies or processes, or if a researcher is affiliated with a college or university, they may have ethics review boards and policies as well. The following sources may also be useful:

Gwich'in Tribal Council Department of Culture and Heritage: *Conducting Traditional Knowledge Research in the Gwich'in Settlement Area: A guide for researchers*

The First Nations Information Governance Centre: The First Nations Principles of OCAP®

Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Tri-Council Policy Statement: *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*

Gwich'in Tribal Council's *Traditional Knowledge Policy*

Government of the Northwest Territories *Traditional Knowledge Policy*

Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies: *Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North*

Wildlife Management Advisory Council North Slope: Conduct of Traditional Knowledge Research—A Reference Guide

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The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife, N.W.T., displayed Gwich'in place names as part of an exhibit in partnership with GSCI to celebrate the 414 Gwich'in place names the Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) officially recognized on National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21) 2013. We submitted these names for official recognition as part of a large multi-year place names project, Gwich'in Goonanh'kak Googwandak: The Places and Stories of the Gwich'in. The following two panels, and the five other panels throughout this text, show the different inspirations for Gwich'in place names.

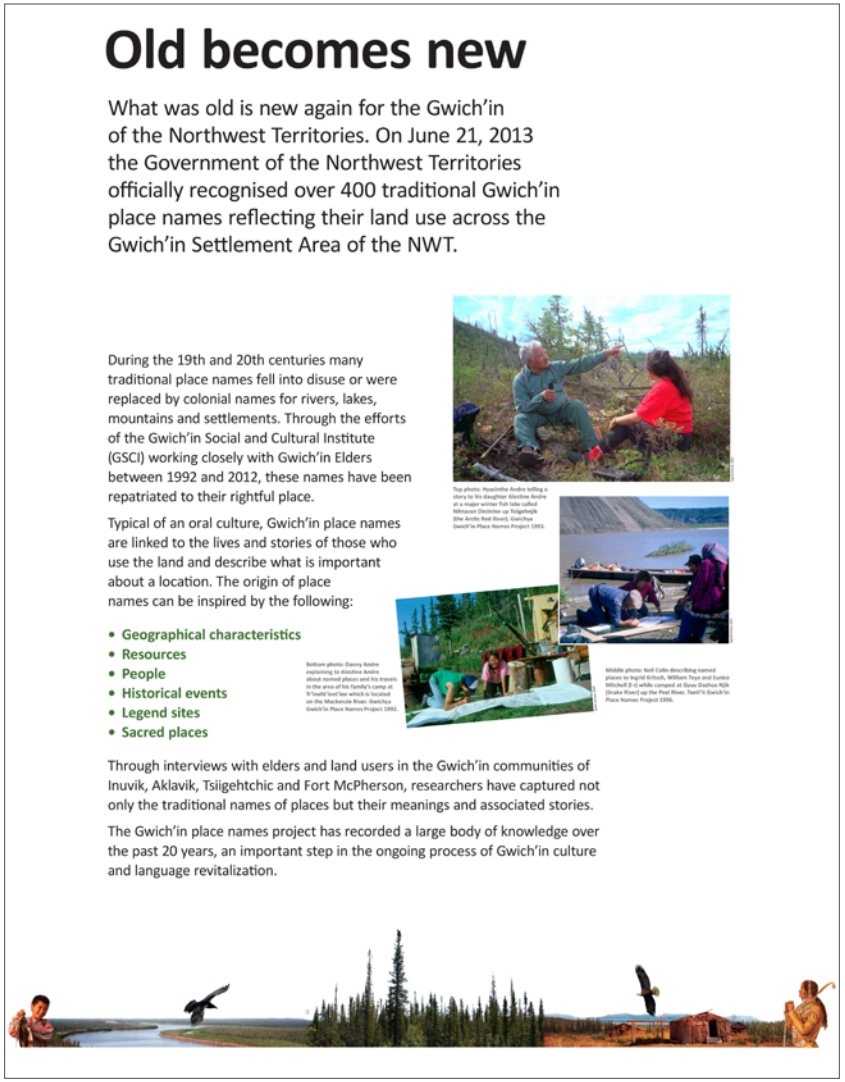


Figure 2. Gwich'in traditional place names information panel created by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and GSCI: Introduction

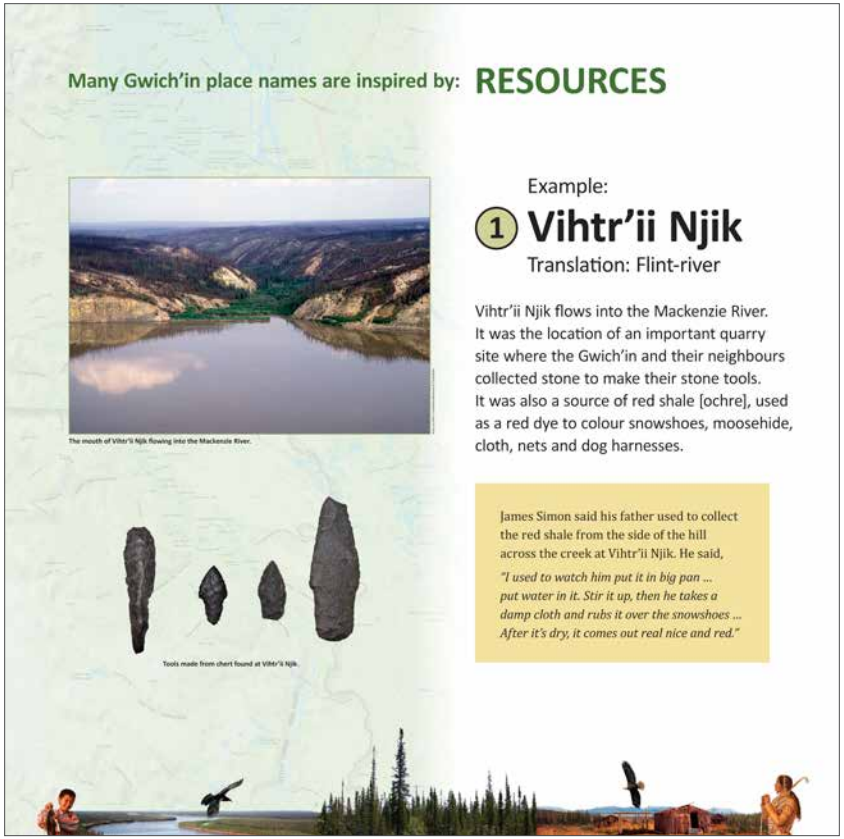


Figure 3. Gwich'in traditional place names information panel created by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and GSCI: Resources

Jimmy and Christie Thompson's cabin, one of many log cabins, warehouses and smokehouses standing at an old village site called Nàgwichootshik (translation: at the mouth of the big country river) near the confluence of the Peel and Mackenzie rivers

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC, 1996.

Ehdiitat Gwich'in Elder Annie B. Gordon pointing out the extent of a place name on a projected map during the Atlas workshop in Aklavik in 2010

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC.

Planning a place names project

In December of 1995, the GSCI initiated the first phase of the Teetł'it Gwich'in Place Names Project with Elders living in Fort McPherson. Unlike the Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names Projects we carried out between 1992 and 1994, which started "from scratch," we knew that previous place names research had been done by linguist John Ritter with Teetł'it Gwich'in Elder William Nerysoo, Sr. in the 1970s. This information was recorded as part of the linguistic research that John Ritter was carrying out in Fort McPherson at this time. Although the scale of the knowledge recorded was not ideal (numbers for place names were recorded primarily on 1:250,000 NTS maps vs. 1:50,000 NTS maps we used for the Gwichya Gwich'in project), we decided to use this information as a foundation for the Teetł'it Gwich'in project. Our first task, however, was to reassemble the maps and accompanying place name keys so we knew how the numbers corresponded to the place names—and ascertain which of several available keys was the correct one and matched the maps. This took several months as the information was scattered among four communities: Fort McPherson, Inuvik, Yellowknife and Whitehorse.

Once all the information was in place, we designed a computerized database using FileMaker Pro, and our team member from Fort McPherson, Sarah Jerome, entered each place name plus any corresponding information into this database. In the spring of 1996, Sarah and I held a workshop in Fort McPherson with eight Elders, and for three days we verified/clarified the names, adding several more during the process, and Margaret Thompson transcribed the names using the updated Gwich'in writing system and assisted in their translation. We were now ready to carry out interviews in the community and then on the land, to further refine the location of the place names, take photos, add graves, cabins, moose skin boat-making locations, trails, and other significant places to the maps, and any oral history associated with the named places. The bulk of the fieldwork was carried out in the summer of 1996, with further research carried out until ca. 2000 and again in 2008, resulting in the documentation of almost 400 named places, along with their oral history.

- Ingrid Kritsch

There are many details to be considered in the early planning stages of a place names project. There are logistical and detail-oriented considerations (will the project use paper maps or direct-to-digital, what season will the interviews and workshops happen, and so on), to much bigger picture topics, such as the project's goals and, of course, funding.

The project team should review the entire handbook before starting to make specific plans and a budget. The guidelines and directions about interviews, candidate selection, workshops, and reporting may all affect project planning.

Teetł'it Gwich'in brothers Robert Alexie Sr. and Walter Alexie reviewing draft place name maps with Ingrid Kritsch before they are finalized. February 2015, Fort McPherson.

Alestine Andre, GSCI-GTC.

Project goals

Place names studies raise an awareness and appreciation of (Indigenous) knowledge about the land, culture, and language.

Place names studies provide an opportunity for Elders and youth to work and learn together on the land.

Place names can identify culturally significant sites or areas for protection and land management purposes using the oral history as a foundation for this work.

Place names research can help develop more culturally relevant teaching materials.

Place names research can develop more accurate and relevant information for visitor interpretation centres.[5]

The first thing to consider when planning a place names project is to clarify what the goals of the project are. Some examples of goals for a place names project include:

- Documenting place names (and associated oral history) in a particular area within the traditional land use area—perhaps an area threatened by development
- Documenting place names and oral history of the entire traditional land-use area

> Clarifying the goal of your place names project will help you to speak to your Elders and community organizations about your work, get funding, and plan your fieldwork.

- Documenting place names and oral history from a particular subset of the Indigenous nation, such as a single community or family

5 Adapted from Kritsch and Andre 1997: 141

The project's goals can change according to funds available and the purpose of the project.

Once a project team has established their project goals, it may make sense to reach out to others to discuss these goals. For example, outside researchers who are familiar with the community and who have worked on similar projects, Elders and community leadership, or other people might be willing to speak about the project goals, budget, and timelines during planning. These early conversations can help to identify issues and challenges that might prevent the project from being successful.

If issues are identified early, the project team can revise and rethink their goals as needed. For example, if the project is too large for the funding available or the staff available—too many interviews planned or too broad of a geographic area—then the project can be reimagined. A smaller area, fewer interviews, and a plan to continue the project in future years might all be reasonable changes.

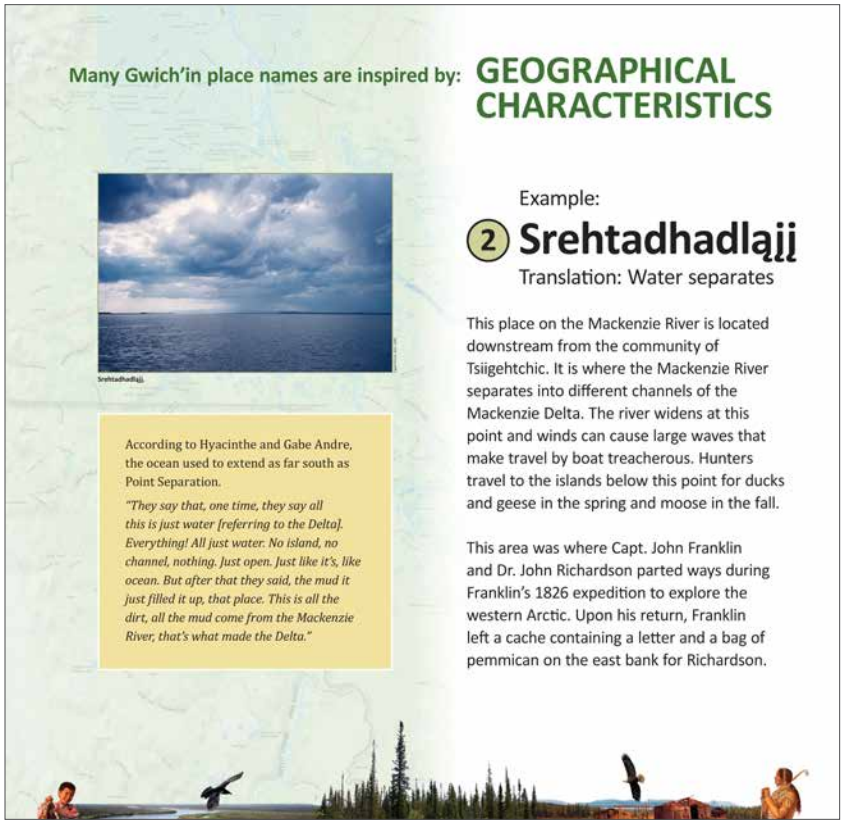


Figure 4. Gwich'in traditional place names information panel created by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and GSCI: Geographical characteristics

Consulting the community

Even if the project is being run by a community organization, it is important to get community approval for the project, since place names projects are vital and important to all members of the community. The way to reach out and discuss the project with other community organizations will vary, but might include some of the following:

- Email and phone **community and regional leadership**, such as chief and council. If needed, the project can be discussed at a scheduled meeting and approvals in the form of a motion can be obtained. Having an approved motion in support of the project can be useful for funding purposes.

- If **Elders' councils** or groups exist, the project can be discussed at a scheduled or special meeting of this council. In addition to spreading awareness of the place names project, the Elders may also have feedback about who to interview and other aspects of the project's methods. If a youth council exists, it may also be worthwhile to let them know about the planned project. Note that if a special meeting is called to discuss the project, payment may be expected.

- **Renewable resource councils, hunters and trappers committees**, or similar groups should be contacted and the project explained. This may be in the format of an explanatory email, or if possible, a time for the project to be presented may be scheduled at a regular meeting. A separate special meeting may also be suggested (if a special meeting is called to discuss the project, payment may be expected). The council or group that oversees renewable resources can be a useful ally for place names projects for many reasons: they are aware of who uses or used the lands in the various areas of the traditional territory, and they may have important, ongoing discussions about land-based work with the community.

> You will need to share and discuss with other community organizations about your project in order to get their support.

- **Education councils** or other teachers' groups may be interested in hearing about the project, as it may relate to their curriculum goals or there may be opportunities for the project team to present to the classes.

- **Research oversight** bodies. There may be an Indigenous forum or department that oversees research in the area.

- **Local newsletters, social media**, or **radio**, or any other available method can be used to reach the community members themselves about the place names project. The project team can create graphics or announcements and provide them to appropriate channels. The project team can also offer to do interviews about the project – before, during, and/or after.

If possible, a letter of support should be obtained from at least two or three different communities or regional organizations after the project is discussed. Since many Indigenous communities and regional organizations have limited capacity to provide such letters, it can be useful to draft letters of support and email a Microsoft Word document for them to review and edit, add their letterhead to, and sign. An example of some text that can be modified for such a support letter follows—this letter can be modified to be suitable to the project as needed. If the project is in the process of applying for funding, the letters of support can include wording about the specific funding source, such as "We support this project's application to receive funding from *[insert funding opportunity name*]."

Place names interview with Elders Hyacinthe Andre (left) and George Niditchie (right) in the Band/Settlement boardroom in Arctic Red River (Tsiigehtchic), using a large map mosaic on the floor. Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names Project 1993.

Lisa Andre, GSCI-GTC.

[*Date, salutation, etc*.]

The [*insert the name of the council signing the letter*] is [*insert a short paragraph about the purpose/intent of the council, which can often be found on their website*].

The [*council*] is in full support of the project, [*insert the name of the project*]. This project is being carried out by [*insert the organization doing the place names project*]. This project will carefully record the traditional place names and associated oral history of [*Indigenous community or regional name*]. This project is addressing concerns that traditional place names are in danger of being lost or replaced on official maps by settler names. Putting our names on maps can help to keep our history and knowledge of the land alive. Our place names are rooted in our knowledge about our lands and our language and are a window into how our world is culturally constructed.

This work will ensure that our geographic place names will be safely recorded for future generations and can be repatriated to maps of this region.

[*Sign off*]

Previous place names work

There may have been previous efforts in the area to identify and map traditional Indigenous place names. The project team should assess the previous work and determine if they should build on it or start fresh.

To find out what other work has been done, the project team may want to check the following sources:

- Google and Google Scholar
- Within community and regional organizations, especially land-claim organizations, Métis communities, or other organizations that might have been active in previous efforts to map Indigenous use of their lands for negotiations, Indigenous reserves, or self-government purposes
- "Grey literature" sources
- Archives, including local museum, regional, territorial/provincial, or university archives
- University researchers who have worked in the area
- Ask Elders if they recall work being carried out on this topic.
- In the N.W.T. and Nunavut, scientific research licence compendia
- With the provincial/territorial toponymist and in any relevant gazeteers, which can usually be found online. There may be traditional names in the gazetteer and a record of who submitted them.

> You will want to find any place names that were recorded from other projects, so you aren't re-inventing the wheel.

Once previous place names projects or data have been unearthed, the project team will need to find the relevant files, maps, transcripts and reports, if possible. It's generally worthwhile to review previously recorded placenames information to assess if it is useful and if it is useful, to build on it or incorporate it into the project. However, the project team must keep track of where the information comes from, within their notes and the databases they are using.

Previous place names will likely not be in the same format as the current project intends to use (be that in a Geographic Information System [GIS] or in Google Earth or other online mapping function). All the names will need to be digitized into the same format as the current project is using, and there will need to be a way in the database to track where, and how, the name was originally recorded. These names can be verified in the interviews and workshops conducted to ensure they are in the correct location and are spelled correctly.

Since the mapping of place names in a computer format is a specialized task, it should be undertaken by someone with GIS training. There will be more on this later in this handbook.

If previous place names were recorded using out-of-date fonts (for example, custom-made ASCII 8-bit fonts that look incorrect or odd when displayed using modern computers), careful attention will have to be paid to getting the spelling of the names correct. One good way to assess this is to check how the names show up in any old files and compare them with printed documents that were printed when the file was first developed. If there are odd accents that aren't used in the local dialect showing up in the computer file, the names should be re-typed manually to match the printed files. A linguist with familiarity with changing fonts over time can be very useful to sort this out.

Developing a work plan

A good work plan sets out all the project tasks and timelines: who is doing what, when, and where. It will help to ensure the project runs smoothly in the time allotted and will be the basis for creating a project budget and for writing proposals for funding. A good work plan can help the project team to set realistic goals—it is easy to underestimate how long a particular task may take if it is not clearly laid out and considered. For example, large community meetings must be planned at least a few weeks in advance to ensure that enough people show up and that they are the "right" people: those most knowledgeable about the area under discussion. Another example is that even a very dedicated interviewer can only handle one or two interviews per day without becoming tired and losing focus, so if there are numerous people to be interviewed and only one interview team, this will likely take some time.

Additionally, some tasks require a specific order of events. The work of transcribing sound and video recordings, which is a necessary component of a place names project, can start only after interviews begin, and not before. Verification sessions with knowledgeable Elders can happen after interviews are complete to review spellings and locations and can also happen after the transcripts are complete and a draft report is ready to review.

> Your work plan will clearly set out who is doing what, where, and when. It will be the basis for your budget and any proposals for funding.

Your place names project may include visiting named places and other areas, out on the land. This is a wonderful way to record Elders' reminiscences about important places and activities and will often result in many wonderful stories, photographs, recordings and video. However, travel out on the land can be prohibitively expensive, especially in areas where helicopters must be used. If a project budget will not stretch to include helicopter time, travel using boats, vehicles, fixed-wing planes, or snow machines/ATVs may be a good interim solution. High quality satellite images can also be displayed on digital "globes," which can provide a useful virtual experience for interviewees.

What follows is an example work plan, which can be used as a template and modified as needed. This work plan assumes that the community has already been introduced to the project and has approved this work.

EXAMPLE OF A WEEKLY WORK PLAN

Week 1: Fieldwork preparation, purchase and testing of needed equipment and software, prepare/acquire a map database

Weeks 2 to 5: Interviews within the community(ies). Transcription of the sound recordings begins.

Week 6: A four-day on-the-land trip with Elders, youth, summer students, local guides, a translator, wildlife monitor, camp cook and project team. The Elders will assist in the location and interpretation of traditional sites and other significant features. One or more members of the project team will be responsible for taking photos and notes, including sketch maps of camps and other above ground features, e.g. grave markers.

Weeks 7 to 10: Finish the transcripts, prepare a draft report, photos, and maps. Digitize the maps.

Weeks 10 to 11: Elders meeting to verify the draft report and that the traditional sites, their meaning and locations are complete and accurate, along with the spelling and translation. Community presentation(s) as appropriate to share knowledge.

Weeks 12 to 14: Complete the final report with notes from the verification session. Provide the report to funders, community partners and interviewees, as requested. Community outreach: Create an exhibit or poster, report to community council(s) and media interview(s). Community meetings are often held with snacks, coffee, tea, water, and lunches provided. A larger spread of food (a feast) can be provided at community presentations.

Ongoing work: Maps may be produced with a graphic designer and printed, community outreach, place names projects in adjacent areas, etc. Posters can also be created, using photos and place names, as a nice way to share the place names information.

EXAMPLE OF PERSONNEL ROLES

Personnel for the research project include approximately 10 Elders, two summer students, two local guides, a GIS manager, and two researchers.

Elders taking part in the project will be chosen for their willingness to participate and their knowledge of the study area. Two summer students will be chosen by the community and will assist in all aspects of the fieldwork. The guides, recommended by the community, will be responsible for guiding the research team for on-the-land trips.

The GIS manager will digitize maps or handle direct-to-digital mapping in interviews and workshops, create or acquire the place names spatial database, and create and print any maps.

The administrator will administer the project funding, issue cheques, order supplies, etc.

The two researchers will share the responsibility for coordinating the research project, conducting interviews and workshops, planning all project activities, training the students, and writing the report.

EXAMPLE OF TRAINING PROVIDED

The two summer students will be introduced to the techniques and procedures of oral history research and recording during the project. This will require hands-on training both in the community and on the land. The students will assist in interviewing Elders, keeping notes, taking photos, preparing transcriptions, and summarizing transcriptions of the interviews.

Making a budget

How a project team approaches creating a budget will depend on a few factors, especially the upper limit of the funding available. If the funding is tied to a development project, there will likely be restrictions to the area and, therefore, the number of interviewees with familiarity to the area, and a more constrained timeline. If the project is being planned and funding is actively being sought, there may be more flexibility over project timelines and budget size. The preparation of the work plan will assist in creating a budget, and if there is a mismatch between the funding required to do a particular work plan and the work plan itself, then the work plan will need to be modified to fit within the budget.

With most projects, it is important to have financial and in-kind support from the Indigenous government or organization running the project. This can help in fundraising by showing these organizations' commitment to goals of the project, and many funders require a certain amount of in-kind or cash support to successfully obtain funding from them. This may be in the range of 20% or even up to 50% of the total project budget. Financial support for the project may come from core funds or from other fund-raising activities. In-kind support is often the salaried time of on-staff members of the project team to carry out aspects of the work or through office space and materials, software, telephone and Internet costs, and so on. If the organization running the project pays software licencing fees, a portion of these can also be considered as in-kind support.

What follows is an example of many of the items of a project budget, which can be used as a starting point.

> A good budget will ensure your project has the financial and other supports needed to make it successful. Some types of expenses can be surprisingly high, such as transcription, so it is worth getting quotations in advance and making sure you have all your financial ducks in a row.

Scow entering the lower part of Chuu Tr'idaoodìich'uu, the Peel Canyon, one of the most significant places along the Peel River. Teetł'it Gwich'in Place Names Project 1996. R-L: Robert Alexie Sr. (driver), Neil Colin, Troy Alexie, Franklin Ross.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC.

EXAMPLE BUDGET CATEGORIES

PROJECT TEAM

Research team: Anthropologist(s), seasoned community researchers, or any other knowledgeable individual(s) to lead the project, conduct interviews and write reports. Typically budgeted for in fees per day if under contract, and salary per day if an employee. The research team will need ample time to prepare for and conduct interviews, draft, verify and finalize the report. At least two days of "office" work for each day of interviewing/field work should be included.

GIS manager: Individual with cartography and/or GIS experience. Typically budgeted for in fees per day, may be provided in-kind from the community or regional organization, if possible.

Summer students/youth/capacity development positions: Typically budgeted for in salary per hour or day. Various employment and youth-related funding may be applied for.

Translators/interpreters: Interpreters may be required or requested for interviews. They may be paid hourly or daily fees—check with qualified interpreters for their preferences. Translators work on transcripts, either typing out the Indigenous languages or translating to English and transcribing. They will typically charge per word or hour of recording. Very technical recordings may cost more. Some translators work with Elders to verify their work, which must also be budgeted for.

Other project team members as required: Elder in residence, wildlife monitor, camp cook, graphic artist to help with final maps, etc.

INTERVIEWEES

Interviewee: Typically budgeted for in honoraria per hour of interviewing. Check with local culture and heritage organizations, tribal councils or renewable resource organization for typical rates.

Elders: For fieldwork, project oversight or other work. Typically budgeted for in fees per day. Discuss with Elders and the project team to determine how payment should be provided, for example, as honoraria, as a contractor payment, or other.

TRAVEL

Travel and accommodation for research team: Typically includes costs such as flights, mileage, taxis, vehicle and boat rentals, fuel, hotels, billeting and per diems (meals and incidentals)

Training may be required as well, such as wilderness first aid for those travelling on the land to carry out fieldwork.

FIELD TRIPS

Vehicle rental or mileage.

Helicopter costs, which are typically charged by the hour in flight and will need to be provided from the helicopter company

Boat rental and fuel costs

Guides, typically budgeted for as a daily rate

If cooks and camp managers are required, typically budgeted for as a daily rate

Rental of needed equipment, such as tents, campers, and any needed for cooking

Food, a daily estimate based on the number of people

EQUIPMENT

Sound recorders, microphones, video recorders, a camera (include extra recording devices as backup, batteries)

Plotter and projector

Maps

Computers and laptops (can be provided as in-kind contributions from sponsoring organizations)

Miscellaneous office supplies: Typically an amount, such as $1,000, is included in a budget to cover incidental office expenses such as printing.

Printing copies of the report: If Elders or other community members want a printed/bound copy of the report or if funders want hard copies

OTHER COSTS

Financial administration: Typically the organization that is administering the finances of the project will charge an administration fee, which is limited by the funder. It is often 10% or 15% of the budget.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

Project funders often want to see financial or in-kind support from other organizations. Include staff support as a daily fee, use of office/telephone/printers/Internet/software as a set cost, and a usage fee for culture and heritage data sets as appropriate. In some cases, project team members may be paid through their salaries and their time provided in-kind. In this case, a reasonable daily rate for their in-kind contribution can be used.

Writing a project proposal

If the place names project doesn't have funding in place, the project team will need to apply for funding to support the project. The quality of the funding proposal and the match with the funder's goals will determine whether or not funding is received.

Funding sources that directly support culture and heritage projects should be sought, as they will be more likely to fund place names research. Community organizations, tribal councils, and organizations set up by the land claim may have funding opportunities that will work, as these "community-based" funding opportunities may be more likely to fund place names projects. In some cases, funds set aside for implementing the land claim can be used for place names research. Provincial, territorial and federal funding sources relating to Indigenous heritage, culture, tourism, and language may also be good options, especially if there is funding available from the provincial/territorial/federal toponymist's department—it may pay to reach out to them specifically. In addition, private foundations may support place names research. Funding opportunities from Canadian Heritage may also be a good option.

Other possibilities might include funding sources that support Indigenous knowledge of wildlife and the land, as place names are integrally tied to peoples' use and knowledge of the land. However, a place names project may not be as likely to be successful.

When one or more funding sources have been identified, a proposal will be required. The full request for proposals should be reviewed carefully, and the exact instructions followed. This includes the number of words for each section and the questions to be addressed in each section. The deadlines for most proposals are very strict and must be followed. In some cases, an on-line form must be filled out and getting an account may take several days. Some proposals require a large amount of work getting the project's details, team members, and budgets into very particular formats, so it should not be left to the last minute.

> A lacklustre funding proposal might be the death of your place names project, so it is worthwhile putting in the effort to do it well. If you are not experienced at writing proposals, get help from someone in your organization that has numerous successful proposals under their belt.

Often, there are words and clues in the question that can help to clarify what the funder is looking for in any one question. For example, if the question asks about project deliverables, the answer should state "The project deliverables include …" There are often other clues in the request for proposals that can help to guide the proposal-writing process as well. For example, if the request for proposals states that they are seeking to fund projects that meet one or more of the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the proposal should include which specific calls to action are being addressed. There may be other words and phrases in the request for proposals that can be easily dropped into the proposal text and expanded upon, which demonstrates to those reviewing the proposal that the project fits well with the funding source.

Finally, the project proposal should be well-crafted, with attention paid to grammar and spelling. Someone who is accomplished in writing successful, funded proposals should write the proposal or review it before it is submitted.

What follows is some wording from a successful proposal to obtain funding for a place names project. Any wording from this example may be used as a template.

PROJECT TITLE: Gwichya Gwich'in Traditional Sites Project (Phase III)

PROPOSAL SUMMARY: This research project will document and map traditional sites and land use and occupancy of Gwichya Gwich'in lands in the Mackenzie Delta with Gwichya Gwich'in Elders from Tsiigehtchic.

NEED FOR PROJECT: A traditional knowledge study with Gwichya Gwich'in elders of Tsiigehtchic has been underway for two years. To date, this study has recorded over 200 place names and associated land use and occupancy information in two of the three areas traditionally used by the Gwichya Gwich'in. The areas completed to date include: 1) the Travaillant Lake area, and 2) the Arctic Red River (Tsiigehnjik) and into the Tree River area. This proposal for Phase III of the project seeks to complete the data collection portion of the study by recording knowledge about the remaining area, the Mackenzie Delta. As in previous years, the traditional trails, resource harvesting locations, sacred sites, campsites, and historic cabin sites will be documented. The emphasis of the project, however, is on the oral narratives associated with these traditional sites and trails. There is an urgent need to continue this research because of the age of some of the Elders and the fact that the traditional knowledge associated with these places and trails is not being passed on. It is critical that this information be recorded so that it may be used in the future to develop more culturally relevant school curricula in the Gwich'in Settlement Area, thereby enabling Gwich'in to better understand their own past. This project seeks to serve as a vehicle for recording the traditional knowledge pertinent to these places before it is lost for all time.

OBJECTIVES: The objectives of this research project are to document and map Gwichya Gwich'in traditional knowledge of land use and occupancy in the area north of the Mackenzie River from the present-day settlement of Tsiigehtchic into the Mackenzie Delta. The proposed traditional knowledge study will assemble information that can be used for a variety of purposes:

1. **Preserving the Past**
   The primary objective of the project is to record traditional knowledge which may be otherwise lost forever. By creating a permanent record of the knowledge associated with these important places, future generations of Gwich'in will have the benefit of the wisdom of lifeways which no longer exist. This heritage archive will provide a foundation for Gwich'in youth to understand and appreciate their own traditions.

2. **Strengthening Traditional Culture**
   The Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute is interested in developing, through the Gwich'in Language and Cultural Centre, education material that will promote Gwich'in heritage and history. The information gathered from this, and future traditional knowledge projects, will therefore enable the Gwich'in to better understand and appreciate their own past through the stories associated with the traditional sites identified.

3. **Heritage Management**
   The information will be of value to boards, agencies or committees that will be established in the Mackenzie Valley by government to administer or protect Gwich'in heritage resources.

4. **Resource Management**
   The information will be a valuable addition to the base of traditional knowledge for use by the Renewable Resource Board and the Renewable Resources Councils. These bodies have been established as per the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement.

5. **Recognition of Traditional Gwich'in Place Names**
   The place names documented during the course of the project will continue to be entered into the GIS computerized database system that has been developed for the Gwich'in Settlement Area. This information will also be of use to the Gwich'in Tribal Council for renaming requests concerning geographic names.

6. **Interpretation for Visitors**
   Information gathered on place names will be of value to federal and territorial agencies responsible for giving visitors a heightened understanding and appreciation of Indigenous peoples of the Northwest Territories. The information will be particularly useful for interpretive and orientation materials intended for use by recreational users of the Arctic Red River and the Mackenzie Delta.

EVALUATION: Following the data collection portion of the study, an Elders' meeting will be held in Tsiigehtchic, with a trained Gwich'in linguist from the Gwich'in Language Centre. This meeting will serve to clarify any questions that the researchers may have and to ensure that all of the place names and other Gwich'in terms that they have collected have been transcribed properly. This meeting will also help the researchers to verify that they have a complete and accurate record of the traditional sites, their meaning and their location. When the interviewing in the community has been completed, a public presentation will be made to the community of Tsiigehtchic, detailing the research results. Maps and research materials will be displayed for public viewing and comment.

Financial administration and project leadership

One or more members of the project team will need to oversee the project's finances. This might be the lead researcher or someone from the organization who is running the project. This person can approve project expenditures and help the other team members plan for the work within the allowed budget and timelines. This person will likely not be the same person who handles the actual cheques and disbursements in the finances department, as the finance department will not have a specific role in the management of the project. All members of the project team should be aware of who is tracking the budget and how to report to them.

There are many ways for a project team to function smoothly and efficiently and this will depend in part on the organization or researcher undertaking the work. There may be a single person in charge of all decisions, including financial, administrative, and project-related decisions. Or there may be a small team who makes decisions together in a consensus style. A project will run more smoothly if everyone's roles and responsibilities are understood clearly from the start and if there is transparency in decision-making.

Licences and permits

Place names research may require permits or licences, depending on who is doing the work and where.

University- and college-affiliated researchers will likely need to apply for ethics approvals to undertake research with human subjects. If a place names project is being led by someone with a college/university affiliation, they will need to follow the ethics approvals process in their institute. This may take weeks or even months, so it makes sense to apply as early as possible. In some cases, ethics boards are unfamiliar with Indigenous research protocols and may request changes which are out of line with the research methods preferred by the Indigenous community. In these cases, the community leadership and Elders may have to make a case, in the spirit of Truth and Reconciliation, to ensure community research methods are used.

In certain areas in Canada (N.W.T.[6], Nunavut[7]), all scientific research is licensed. The research application process may take weeks or months, so it should be started as early as possible. It typically involves filling out an application form and including other documents such as ethics approvals, a consent form and an interview questionnaire. Any affiliated archaeological research will require a permit through the provincial or territorial government. A qualified archaeologist must be involved.

6 NWTresearch.com

7 https://www.nri.nu.ca/home

Getting ready: Preparations and first steps

Once project funding and any required permits or licences are in place—which may take two or three months—it is time to get to work!

Equipment and supplies

> *My worst experience in the field happened when my tape recorder started acting up during a taping session with Joan Nazon at her fish camp in July. I was visibly upset about this ordeal and swore on the spot that I would purchase a new machine the first chance I got. The tape recorder incident did not bother Joan as much. She was willing to tell the stories that did not record over again but at another time. I was relieved and grateful for this attitude … Joan Nazon was the only Elder who spoke directly to me when she told her stories. It was hard not to laugh out loud during the taping sessions with her because her stories were of a humorous nature.*
>
> - Alestine Andre[8]

Before interviews begin, all project staff should be hired and trained and required equipment purchased and tested. This may include some or all of:

- sound recorder
- video recorder
- microphone(s)
- camera
- computer/laptop(s)
- transcribing software and hardware (such as a USB foot pedal), if needed
- plotter
- projector

You will want to have your equipment purchased and tested before you begin interviews. Your sound recorder should result in clear recordings both inside and outside buildings. With interviews carried out outside, a "windsock" may be required. Your camera should take clear pictures of both people and places.

8 1990. *Final Report: Oral Histories of Four Gwichya Gwich'in Elders, Arctic Red River*. Manuscript report, Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, Tsiigehtchic N.W.T.

Sound and video recorder technology is changing very quickly. For place names research, the equipment purchased should produce files of archival standards. A project team should reach out to archival staff for their opinions and suggestions before purchasing new equipment.

Sound recorders can be purchased for several hundred dollars up. One that can record archival-quality sound files should be purchased. There may be good options to rent or borrow available in the community. Smart phones or tablets may be used, with a good enough microphone. The recorder should have ample enough file storage room to store hours of sound files.

A microphone that can be used with the sound recorder or video recorder should be purchased. These come in many different styles, including stand-alone and clip-on. If interviews are conducted outside, a microphone equipped with a cover to reduce wind sound, also known as a windsock or windjammer, is an absolute must. Using a standard microphone or no microphone in conditions with even a small breeze may cause the recordings to be full of wind noise, and the words of the interviewee will likely be lost.

If videos are taken, the video recorder should be capable of recording archival-quality video and sound at a minimum. It must have ample storage and a tripod or other stand. Only experienced videographers should take video if the video camera will have to move during a shot, and stationary video camera placement is preferred for interviews for this reason. There is more information on choosing audio or video recording later in this handbook.

Pictures of people and places form an important record of the project and are useful for reports, books, posters, websites, exhibits, and more. A quality camera that can take good photos of interviewees and landscapes should be purchased, or if possible, borrowed. Smartphone cameras can work. While taking photos, it is important to keep notes on the date, location, people, etc.

If needed, computers may be acquired for a place names project. This might include a desktop (office) computer, perhaps for the GIS/mapping component or a laptop for both office and fieldwork. A GIS computer will need to be relatively powerful and fast. A GIS expert will know which computer and software to purchase.

A laptop can be used to record sound files, with the addition of a good microphone and some free software.[9] Special software and fonts will likely need to be installed in order to type and see any special characters or diacritics on place names. For example, the Gwichya Gwich'in place name Deetrìn' Ehchi̱ K'ìt has several diacritics: a low tone over the first "i," nasals under the second and third "i"s, and another low tone over the final "i." These are typed using a software package that allows a regular keyboard to type in non-English characters and diacritics following Unicode standards.[10] It is very important to avoid the fonts that rely upon ASCII or non-Unicode diacritics or that are proprietary fonts that cost money to buy. Proprietary fonts must be avoided as they can become unreadable in the future. If in doubt, the project team should speak to local language experts and linguists.

9 For example, https://www.audacityteam.org

10 https://www.languagegeek.com

Transcribing may be completed by the project team, local contractors or can be hired out to professionals. It is a rather hard and slow task, so if none of the project team is familiar with it, it might be best to hire a professional transcriber to do it. They will have all the equipment and skills. In some cases, they may use computer software online to get a rough draft (AI-driven) and then rework it. A summer student who is dedicated and detail-oriented may also be a good option but note that each hour of recording may take up to 6 to 8 hours to transcribe. The person transcribing should be provided a list of all of the place names, so they are spelled correctly in the transcripts. It is also a good plan to include a list of other Indigenous or local words and names, so they are spelled properly.

As discussed in greater detail below, place names can be recorded in interviews and workshops in a few ways. The names can be recorded directly on a paper map or they can be recorded direct-to-digital, on a computer screen or projected image. If paper maps are used, they can be purchased (such as NTS 1:50,000 or 1:250,000 maps) or they can be made for the project by the GIS staff and printed on a special printer called a plotter, which handles the larger size of paper used for most maps. The decision about whether to buy a plotter should be made by the GIS consultant and project team, who will know what will best suit the interviewees. There may be a preference by interviewees to have paper maps, which should be considered carefully.

A projector will be useful for workshops and community presentations to show maps of place names and other media, such as photographs and video.

Figure 5. Gwich'in traditional place names information panel created by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and GSCI: Legend sites

Background research

There may be traditional Indigenous place names recorded in the study area from previous research (see Previous place names work, which is a previous section in this handbook). If so, these names may need to be digitized and catalogued into the place names database. The project team will need to decide if and how to show previously recorded place names on the interview maps. In some cases, it may make sense to show the names to help interviewees remember them and tell stories about them. This would be the case, for example, if the place names were likely recorded accurately.

In other cases, where the names might not have been recorded consistently or with Indigenous methodologies, it may make sense to use maps without these names to allow the knowledge of the interviewees to lead the discussions and interviews.

It makes sense for the interview team to have at least a passing awareness of other major culture and heritage projects undertaken in the area as well. Previous research occasionally comes up during interviews, and interviewees may want to know what the project outcomes were.

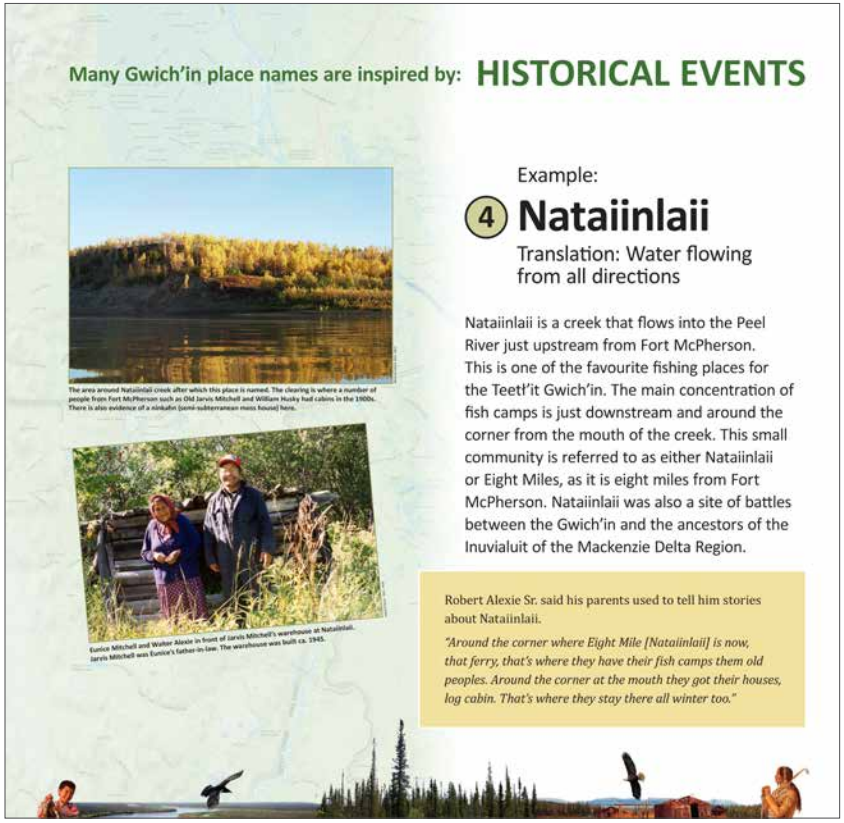


Figure 6. Gwich'in traditional place names information panel created by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and GSCI: Historical events

GIS database

I remember how excited I was when I first created a geodatabase to hold all the Gwich'in place names data. This was in the early 2000s, and we had been making do with files spread across a bunch of formats: FileMaker Pro databases, Excel files, and shapefiles … I had even created Unicode shapefiles! But getting all that information into a single, useful, beautiful database felt almost revelatory. My first test of the "Identify" function brought up Khaii Luk, also known as Travaillant Lake. This lake, the name of which translates as "winter fish," is an important lake for the Gwichya Gwich'in, in no small part due to the important winter fishing areas it contains. As I skimmed the attribute information attached to the lake polygon, including a rather long oral history section, I felt like I was a part of history in the making.

- Kristi Benson

The member of the project team with experience and knowledge in GIS will create a place names database to store the names. Although Unicode shapefiles can be created and used, place names are best stored in a geodatabase or other similar file type. Google Earth and other globe-based and free programs have many uses, but they should not be used to store traditional place names or other culture and heritage data sets, for numerous reasons. Instead, a program made to store, display, and query spatial data (such as ArcGIS) should be used.

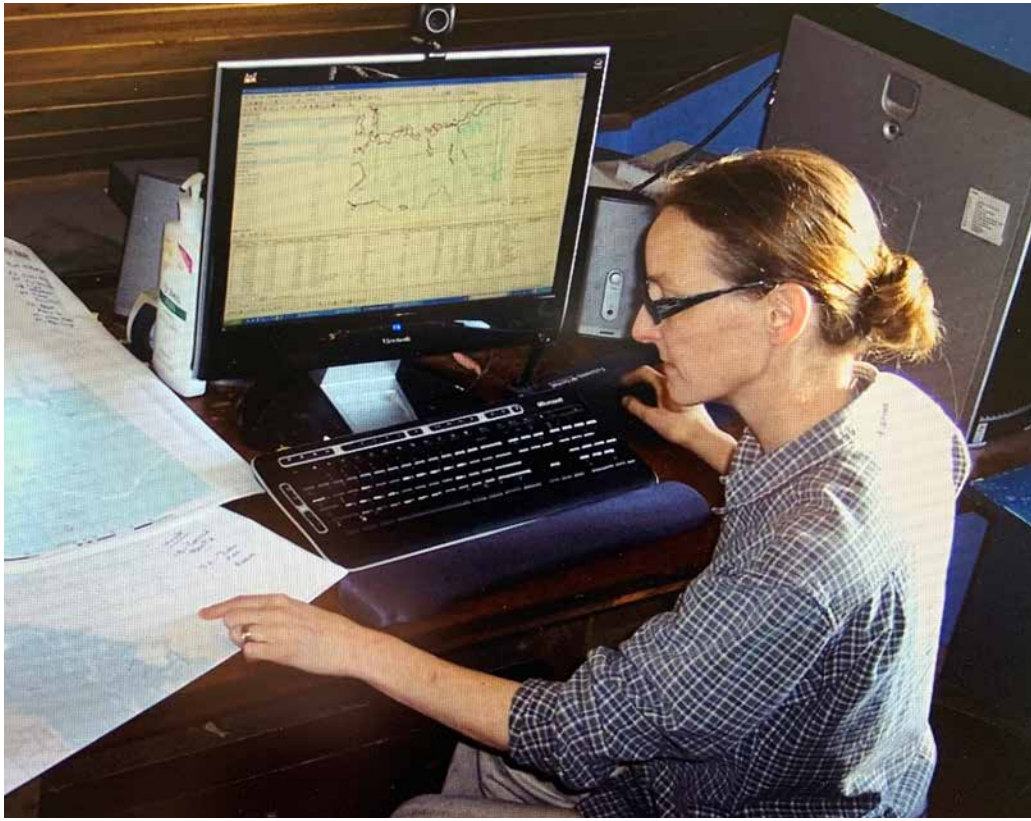
An early decision for the GIS manager will be whether point data or full-location data will be used. Points are much quicker to digitize and easier to store, and they may be used to submit the names as official place names in some areas. However, use of points will drastically limit the functionality of the place names data set for cartographic purposes and may not be acceptable for submission as official names in all areas. For example, typically a point location for a river is at the mouth, where it empties into another water body. A map that has a portion of the river on it but not the mouth where the point is located will not have the name show up as a label, unless the map maker manually adjusts the labels. Manually adjusting labels is slow and relies upon actual knowledge of the area in question.

> Your GIS manager should consult with the rest of the project team and be familiar with place names research before creating your place names database. It can be hard to change course after digitization starts, so it is worth getting it right from the start!

Additionally, spatial statistics, the Identify function and other higher functions in a GIS program will not function well if only points are used. For this reason, using the cartographic extent of the feature (for example, a polygon of a lake, not just a point in the middle of the lake) is the preferred method.

Importantly, recording and showing extents on maps can also help the project team to better understand Indigenous naming practices and Indigenous concepts related to geography.

Place name features may have multiple spatial feature types. For example, a river may have line sections and polygon sections. For this reason, a separate attribute table may be used, in a one-to-many relationship (one attribute record to multiple features and feature types). If more than one name is recorded for a particular feature, for example, if different families or different communities each have a name, the database structure may be even more complex, with a many-to-many relationship structure.



Kristi Benson digitizing place name maps in 2012. Over the years, the GSCI-GTC DCH built a comprehensive GIS–a spatial data warehouse of Gwich'in traditional knowledge, trails, cabins, camps, historical sites, place names, and more. The maps in the GIS are part of a larger digital archive that the department uses every day.

Yoenne Ewald.

The following types of information can be included in a place names data set, along with any other relevant information as appropriate for the project:

COLUMN(S)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
Place name	Proper spelling of the name
Translation	Word for word translation of the name
Gloss	If the translations are word-for-word, and a gloss describing what the name means is available, it can be included and is often very useful.
Language	Language the name is in
Other names/other versions	If there are names recorded using previous orthographies, or other names recorded that are not considered "main" names by the community, they can be included in one or more columns. If there is more than one "main," accepted name, a separate record for each name may be included instead, in a one-to-many relationship.
Source for other names	Comments about where the other names came from.
Existing/gazetted name	Official name on government maps
Community or other group	If multiple communities, language communities, families, or other groups provide place names, it is useful to categorize the name by which group provided it, especially if multiple records (multiple names) for a single feature exist, one from each community/group.
Location description	A one-line description of the name's location is a very useful addition, for example, "This place name refers to a river that flows into the Arctic Red River about 15 kilometres from the community of Tsiigehtchic."
Location (latitude/longitude)	Can be automatically created in a GIS, although it is best to do it by hand and add an appropriate "pin" or point location. You may be required to submit the name as an official name, in which case the provincial/territorial place names process should be used to determine where the "location" is. This will not be the automatically generated centre point for some features.
Original map scale	The scale of the original map used in the interview provides context/confidence in location.

COLUMN(S)	RATIONALE/COMMENTS
Original map details	If an NTS map was used in an interview, include the number/name. If another map was used, provide details if relevant. If direct-to-digital, include a description.
Digitizing comments	Digitizer's comments about source materials (CanVec, tracing map, etc.)
Project name	Name of place names study or other study in which the name was originally recorded
Publications	Any publications about the name
Researcher(s)	Name of researcher(s)
Date	Date of the project/interview in which the name was recorded
Feature type	Geographic feature type—each province/territory will have a list of geographic feature types, and new ones may possibly be added upon request (e.g. river, camp, ridge, headwaters).
Number	A place names database will need index and other numbers to reference spatial features and attribute features, along with numbers and codes on any maps.
Oral history	Stories, traditional use, and other culture/heritage information can be included in a place names database.
Digitizer/cataloguer	Name of the person who did the original data entry/digitization
Entry date	Date of original data entry/digitization
Submission status	Whether or not the name should be submitted for official recognition, when it was, confirmation of acceptance, etc. Depending on the project, multiple columns may be needed to track submission.
Publications	Reports, papers or other publications

Informed consent

At the start of each interview, an informed consent agreement will be signed by the interviewee. This form outlines what the interviewee is agreeing to and is a vital step to protect the interviewee's knowledge and the project's integrity. The form can be reviewed by the interviewee and signed, or it can be read out loud and agreed to in the recording.

> Your informed consent statement is a very important part of doing ethical research. It gives vital information to your interviewees and ensures they are consenting to your project.

The signed informed consent statements must be safely archived with other project materials, such as maps, audio files and transcripts.

According to the Gwich'in Tribal Council Gwich'in Traditional Knowledge Policy (2004, 2022), the following are the essential elements of an informed consent statement:

1. Identify the interviewer (name, company/university they represent)
2. Date
3. Identify the interviewees (name and any affiliation they may have with a community/company/university)
4. Identify the community of the interviewees as well as the community where the interview is taking place
5. Brief statement about the goals/rationale of the project and specifically, what the interviewer wants from the interviewee and why
6. Identify what this information will be used for
7. Identify who will benefit from this information
8. Identify who will be using this information
9. Identify who will have access to the information
10. Identify how this information will later benefit the interviewee, their community and future generations of that community
11. Identify what the interviewer is gaining from this information (university degree, government contract, proceeds from future book sales, etc.)
12. Indicate if the information is to be recorded, either by audio tape, videotape, DVD or CD and if so, what is to be done with this tape, where this information will be stored, how many copies of the information will be made, who will have access to this recorded information now and in the future

13. Does the interviewee want to be cited or credited for any information being given? If yes, cited in general (such as in a bibliography) or specifically (such as at the end of all quotes). If this is not the case, does the interviewee want a pseudonym created and used? If not cited, the interviewer must assure confidentiality of all information received. This point is crucial in traditional knowledge collection.

14. Crucial to informed consent is the clause that the interviewee understands that they do not have to answer any questions they do not want to and that they can stop the interview at any time.

15. Assure that a draft of the information collected will be presented again, either personally or in a community forum for verification and any suggestions at that time will be considered and incorporated into the final report.

16. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the interviewee when available or alternatively, to the community when available.

Ensure that written consent is given to the above elements once it has been read and explained in English, French or in Gwich'in. Alternatively, if the interviewee does not read or write, the Consent Statement should be read to them in English, French and/or in Gwich'in, any questions answered, and a verbal consent recorded on tape. Any exceptions to the above should also be noted in the Consent Statement.

The way informed consent and confidentiality are handled will depend on the project and the community, and there may be local guidance documents that apply. The interviewee should have the ability to consent to specific aspects separately, such as giving permission to be photographed and have audio or video recorded.

Interview set-up and questions

In a place names interview, unlike some other types of traditional knowledge interviews, it is unlikely that there will be a set list of questions to be followed. Instead, the interviews will likely be based on maps, and a series of questions will be asked about each place name identified by the interviewee. The nature of the questions asked will be specific to the type of place name and the person being interviewed, and the interview will likely be more conversational than strictly question-and-answer. The questions may include (depending on the name and the interviewee):

> Once you have your interview guidelines drafted, you may want to ask other knowledgeable people to review them to make sure you are asking questions in an appropriate and sensitive way. Set yourself up for success! And do not be afraid to change your approach after a few interviews if you find things are not working as well as they could.

1. What is the name of this place?
2. What is the exact translation of each word in the name?
3. What does the name mean (gloss)?
4. What or who is the place named for (a person, historical event, feature of the landscape, story, etc.)? Or, how did this place get this name?
5. What if anything, exists physically at the site? (cabins, tent location, etc.). Was there anything there in the past?
6. What do people do at the site? In what season? Has this changed over time? (harvesting/hunting, camping, travel through, etc.)
7. What is the full extent of the place? That is, what is the full extent of the area the name refers to? (For example, if it is a river, how much of it is called by the name; if it is a trail, the full length of the trail, if possible. If not possible with the maps available, get a description.).
8. Who is also known to use the site?
9. Has it ever been known by another name?
10. Are there any stories about people using this place? Are there any legends about this place?
11. Are there any confidentiality concerns about this name?

There may be other questions in the interview that are not about place names—for example, a traditional knowledge and land-use project may include specific questions about how people use the land, if there are trails or other routes, and about people's knowledge of the animals, plants, and other natural systems. Since camps, trails, berry picking and hunting areas and other types of traditional use areas will be recorded,

there should be symbols selected and used for these. They should also get numbers so that they can be digitized and recorded properly: who identified them, what is now present at the site, what was present in the past, and so on. These symbols will vary depending on the area in question, but may include such places as camp sites, tent frame sites, cabins, hunting/kill sites, fishing/whaling locations, berry harvest areas, graves/burial sites, traditional trails (divided into season and method of travel), and traplines.

Generally, the questions we asked depended upon the goals of the project and sometimes who we were interviewing. For example, with the 1992 project, besides recording the trails, traditional camps and stops, place names, and seasonal resources, Alestine and I also asked questions to help understand the archaeological sites being excavated in the area and the material found during excavations carried out in Tsiigehtchic on the Flats. Also, because most of the map work was carried out with men, as they seemed most comfortable working with maps, we also wanted to document at least some women's knowledge, traditional practices and activities related to living on the land—but not necessarily map-related. For example, information on marriages, such as arranged marriages and any preparation for them including feasts, women's work in and around camp, women's behaviour regarding men's hunting equipment and the animals killed, and their knowledge about medicine including the use of medicinal plants and birch fungi. In some cases, and other years, we also asked questions about traditional rites of passage such as seclusion, the process of tanning hides and tools needed, building traditional house structures, and midwifery. The latter was with well-known midwives.

- Ingrid Kritsch

The questions will need to be asked in a way that is culturally appropriate, which will depend on the type of name and the way that information is appropriately shared in the communities doing the research. Sometimes, an interviewee may ask for the recorder to be turned off to talk about culturally sensitive matters they do not want recorded. It is important to respect their request. Once the interview guidelines have been drafted, the project team should check with other knowledgeable people to ensure the questions and approach are acceptable, especially if the researchers do not have much experience working on similar projects in the area. This may be working with one or more Elders to review the questions or do a practice interview, or it may include discussing the interview guidelines with other researchers or community/regional research committees.

Archives

Place names research projects will result in a collection of files and products. There might be paper maps with places drawn on them, sound or video files, transcripts, field notes, reports, project and family photos, presentations, administrative files, sketches by interviewees and more. These files, both computer and hard copy, are important records. They tell the story of the project itself, but more importantly, they are a record of the place names and other oral history knowledge recorded. These files must be carefully protected in the future.

There are several ways that place names and other culture and heritage information can be lost forever. Information stored on old computers, which are never updated or opened, can easily be lost through security or software upgrades or when the computers are replaced, and the old files not transferred over. Hard drives regularly fail on computers, so if there is only one copy of the files, they may be lost this way. Files that are stored on a researcher's private computer may also be lost when they stop working with the community. There are also more catastrophic ways: sadly, a lot of vital and irreplaceable research materials have been lost to fires and water damage over the years.

To prevent the loss of Elder's knowledge, a place names project must carefully plan for the storage and care of all the materials and files that will result from it. The way this will be done will depend on the community's capacity to store this information in an appropriate archive.

> You will need to carefully consider where the materials that you create will be stored once you are done. This is one of the important ways to respect the knowledge entrusted to you in your interviews.

Some Indigenous organizations have well-functioning archives in place, including staff and a location that is suitable to store files. These archives ensure that the information, no matter the format, will be kept safe and accessible in the future. Researchers and community members can, with appropriate permissions, find and access the information.

Other Indigenous organizations are not yet at the point of having functioning, stable archives. In these cases, the research team should consider other options for the long-term storage of the research materials, keeping in mind two, equally important, directives:

1. Will the materials be safe long in the future? This includes being safe from fires and obsolescence.

2. Will the materials be accessible in the future? This includes having them properly catalogued and available, with appropriate staff handling information-sharing requests.

Some possible options might include having an agreement to store this material with a regional Indigenous organization or a non-Indigenous archives, such as municipal or territorial archives or one associated with a museum. A donation agreement should include access rights and eventual repatriation. Negotiations with the eventual long-term home of the place names project should begin early in a project's life, so the storage of the files can be included in the informed consent statement if possible. If this is not clarified before interviews begin, the informed consent statement should let the interviewees know that a storage facility will be identified and used to ensure the longevity of their contributions.

Interviews, interviews, and more interviews

Once the project team has created the interview protocols, purchased all the required equipment, created a database to store the place names information, and is ready to go, it is time for the actual interviews to start.

> Interviews are the backbone of a place names project, so you will want to be thoughtful about how you carry them out. Carefully consider your equipment choices, where you will conduct the interviews, and whom you will interview.

Who will be interviewed and by whom?

The first order of business is to finalize the list of interviewees. The project team may already have a good sense of who should be interviewed, but they can also reach out and ask others in order to get a full list. Care should be taken that the interview list has adequate representation covering the entire study area, any dialects, all communities, and if appropriate, family or other cultural groups.

The interview team may approach community/band leadership to ask about interviewees, along with Elders' councils, interviewees themselves (can be a question at the end of the interview guide), renewable resource or hunters/trappers societies or other community groups. A good time to begin this conversation may be when the project is originally introduced, for example, by visiting with Elders before the interviews start.

It often makes sense to either call or meet the interviewee before the interview. The interviewer can discuss the project, ask about which part of the traditional land use area the interviewee is knowledgeable about and if they know place names for the area of interest. If all seems to be a go, an interview date, time and location can be arranged. The interviewer should ask about which language they prefer the interview to be in. If the potential interviewee is not available, interested or knowledgeable about the area in question, it makes sense to ask for names of others who may be.

From the project team side of things, there should be two researchers present at each interview. One will be in charge of running the equipment and taking notes, and the other will be the principal interviewer who asks questions. The interviewer, note taker or another person present at the interview will also record information on the maps, such as the location of place names, trails, camps or other features.

Some people with good knowledge may not wish to be interviewed for the project and their wishes should be respected.

Determine the language of the interviews

One of the most memorable Gwich'in place names I recall was the first one that we recorded with Hyacinthe Andre, Alestine's dad, in 1992. The place name was Khadigitr'aa'ao and referred to a small lake along a major trail between the Mackenzie River and the Trout Lake area. When Hyacinthe said the name, he had a real sparkle in his eyes and laughed when he said it, knowing that we would have a hard time with it, even acknowledging later that "it was a tough one." I still recall Alestine pausing after she heard the name and saying to me, "Okay, he's giving us a real Gwich'in name for this lake." I really struggled with trying to capture the name in my notes so we could say it back to Hyacinthe, finally deciding to give it initials and try again later listening to the tape. Then Hyacinthe had a lot of fun acting out what the name meant so we could understand and translate it. I can still see him as he rose from his chair and squatted close to the ground and pretended to put a heavy packsack on his back and then really struggle to get up on his feet again. He was 82 years old and still strong and captured the act so perfectly that it's etched in my mind whenever I hear the name. So, as Hyacinthe explained, Khadigitr'aa'ao translates as "This man [who] put a very heavy pack on his back and he couldn't get up because of the heavy load, so he was struggling to get to the upright position (laughs). That is why it is called Khadigitr'aa'ao." All that wonderful movement captured in a single word. How poetic Gwich'in is!

- Ingrid Kritsch

If interviewees are fluent in their own Indigenous language, they may want to be interviewed in this language. Indeed, they may be the most comfortable speaking about their lands and knowledge in their own language. Encouraging people to speak in their own language is an important part of conducting a good place names project. Each interviewee should be offered the choice about which language(s) they prefer to speak in, and the interview may switch between languages for the interviewee's comfort.

Alestine Andre, Hyacinthe Andre and Ingrid Kritsch at the narrows of Vidi Chų' (a.k.a. Trout Lake), one of the larger lakes north of the Mackenzie River where the Gwich'in traditionally fished and camped. Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names Project 1993.

Jean-Luc Pilon, GSCI-GTC.

Interpreters and translators

If an Indigenous language will be used in any interview, an appropriate interpreter must be present, unless there are members of the project team who can function in this role (in other words, who are both fluent in their language and skilled at interpreting). The interpreter should, if possible, have professional training or credentials, and should speak the local dialect.

Working with an interpreter may be a new skill for the interviewer. They may want to consider the following:

- Meet with the interpreter before the first interview and provide them with a copy of the interview guidelines. Tell them about the project and the project's goals. Listen to any advice they have about the project.
- If there will be questions that are more technical in nature (such as about certain industrial developments), provide a plain-language summary of these concepts. Do not expect interpreters to come up with translations for complex topics and phrases that may not have existing terminology in their language.

> If you have never worked with an interpreter before, you will want to meet with them before your first interview to discuss how best to work together. And remember to add interpretation and translation/transcription to your budget!

- In interviews, interpretation is usually "intermittent," which means that the interviewer will speak, then the interpreter, then the interviewee and then the interpreter. The interviewer should discuss with the interpreter how much interpretation they would like back from the interviewee. If the interviewer can understand the language but not speak it very well, they may be fine to listen and not need interpretation back into English. A full record will be available on the recording.

- If the project includes larger workshops, simultaneous interpretation may also be used. This involves technology such as microphones and receivers. The speaker will need to speak slowly and clearly and have worked with the interpreter to explain the material they are presenting.

- The interviewer should avoid using idiomatic expressions and acronyms as much as possible.[11]

If a project includes interviews in an Indigenous language, the recordings will need to be translated and transcribed. A translator (may be the same person or people who provided interpretation services) will listen to the recording, translate it into English, and type the English version into a file. Typically, a typed transcript of the Indigenous language version is not made. Although it would be ideal to provide an Indigenous language version of the interview, particularly alongside the English translation, this is a very time-consuming process and requires extensive knowledge of both the oral and written versions of the language. Many people who are fluent orally have a difficult time reading or cannot read the written language. As well, only a few fluent speakers, who were trained to read and write, are able to read the language. In areas where the language is critically endangered, finding people who can do this and have the time to do this is challenging and very expensive. Further details on translation and transcription are included later in this handbook.

11 Tips for Working with Inuktitut Interpreter-translators in Nunavut. Nunavut IPY Coordination Office. May 2007.

Spreading the word

The project team will likely be speaking with potential interviewees before they start interviewing (more on this later in the handbook), but there may be other ways that they should spread the word about the fieldwork and interviews. The project team will be consulting with Elders and community leadership about the project (as covered previously in this handbook) but may wish to follow up more formally as well with details relating to interview and fieldwork specifics. This may take the form of letters or newsletters about the project sent to anyone who may have an interest: potential interviewees, leadership, and neighbouring communities/partners.

With a few of the Teetl'it Gwich'in place names projects, we would not only talk to the Elders beforehand, but also send out letters to them, particularly when we were going out on the land with another First Nation group we partnered with (for example, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in in the Tombstone area and Upper Blackstone area) outlining the dates, the area we hoped to cover, other participants involved, fees, accommodations, travel, and so on.

- Ingrid Kritsch

Figure 7. Gwich'in traditional place names information panel created by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and GSCI: People

How will the place names be mapped?

I remember an Elder's words once when I pulled out a beautiful, custom-made map to use in an interview. It was a bit too large for the kitchen table—so had to stay partially folded up—and had a satellite image as the base map. The details and colours of the satellite image were beautiful, and the Elder commented on how nice it was. He then went on to suggest, helpfully, that NTS maps would have been a better choice for the interview. He was right! The NTS maps we used for later interviews were much easier to work with as the size was just about right for a kitchen table (with room for requisite tape recorders and mugs of tea), and the colour scheme was light enough to make it easy to draw on them using markers and coloured pencils. But the most important factor was that the Elders were very familiar with NTS maps, which made the interviews easier and more pleasant for everyone.

- Kristi Benson

There are two main ways to record place names during an interview:

1. On a paper map or series of paper maps
2. "Direct-to-digital," which means the maps are recorded directly on a computer.

PAPER MAPS

If paper maps are used, there are numerous options. As noted above, maps can be produced by a GIS manager and printed on a large printer (plotter). This gives the most flexibility, as the map can be any scale and any style. However, there are also NTS maps, which may be preferred by Elders familiar with them. The 1:50,000 scale NTS maps are readily available and useful for documenting place names—they can even be downloaded and printed on a plotter—but 1:250,000 or 1:1,000,000 maps can also be very useful for providing a larger context and are particularly useful for recording trails which can cover several 1:50,000 scale map sheets. A project will likely record all the names on a single set of maps, rather than have a new map for each interview, which allows interviewees to reflect on the names already on the map.

A system to record the names drawn on the maps must be decided upon before interviews start. The codes can include who the speaker is who provided the name (perhaps their initials), a code to indicate the name, and/or a number to separate the name from other names provided. On a separate sheet, the codes should be recorded, along with the name (spelled as accurately as possible). The interviewers should also make sure to say the code out loud so it is caught on the recording, which will allow for the transcript to be digitally searched for all the codes as needed in the future.

Alestine and I changed our system of recording place names on maps over the years. In 1992, we used plastic overlays over our base map and recorded the information for each Elder with different colours of markers. We created a list of acronyms, which were one to three letters in length, with some numbers included. These were written on the overlays to correspond to named places that had no name on the maps we were interviewing with (for example, GJ = Gugwijàanąįį).

These were also the acronyms I used to record and track the named places in my field notes along with oral history provided by each Elder during the interview. If the map had a name for a feature, I'd use that name in my notes to anchor that named place and tried to spell out the Gwich'in name as it sounded so we could also try to repeat it back to the Elder. Lots of laughing there! At the end of the project (after the verification/clarification meeting with the Elders), we typed up and printed off the 125 place names we documented, and hired Agnes [Mitchell] to cut them out and glue them to the large base map of 1:50,000 scale that we were sending back to Jean-Luc Pilon, and tape ca. 30 names on the 1:250,000 map we included in our report. So high tech!

In 1993, we started off with using the same system, and then switched to using numbers for each named place. In 1994, we used only numbers for each named place. The use of numbers was continued in the TGPN and Aklavik Place Name projects – much easier to track than letter/number codes.

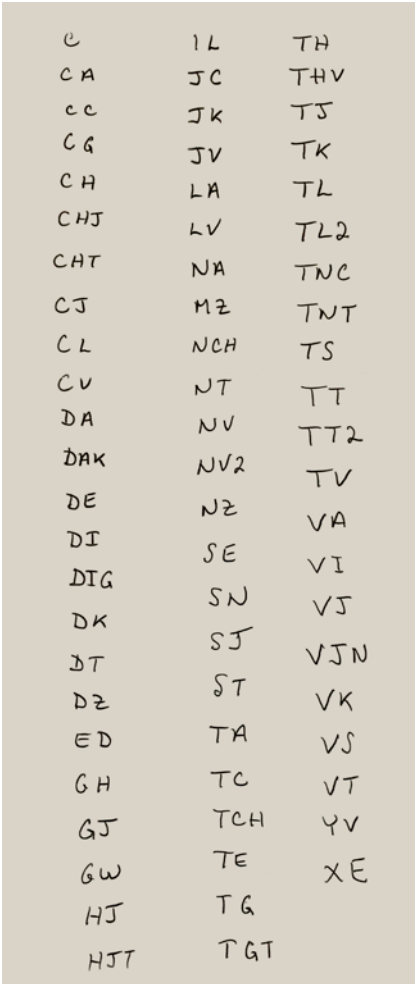
- Ingrid Kritsch

Before the interviews start, the project team must also decide how to handle things in the interviews when separate people talk about the same name or the same place. Will each interview have a separate map and all the names discussed be recorded again in each interview? This approach requires many maps, which is expensive, and requires the project team to sort out any differences and inconsistencies after the interviews are done, hopefully with the help of a team of Elders and other knowledgeable people.

Another approach is to use the same maps in every interview and have a system record who said and who marked what. Any differences (for example, multiple names for the same location or if a particular name might be assigned to slightly or vastly different areas) should be captured using map codes and through discussion and caught on the interview recording and field notes. Adding the interviewees' initials to the map code might suffice or a numbering system could also work.

It should be noted that any final decisions about the names do not need to be made in the interviews. Instead, everyone's perspectives and knowledge should be gathered and respected. If appropriate in the interview, differences can be discussed with the interviewee. Later, during a community workshop, differences and multiple names can be sorted through consensus.

Depending on the size of the study area, there may need to be more than one map. In this case, the maps can be kept separate, or they can be folded along the edges and turned into a larger mosaic. The edges should not be cut off as the mosaic will need to be disassembled later, and a single person should be able to handle the whole mosaic. For archival purposes, maps should not be laminated and archival pencils should be used to annotate them—if in doubt, a museum archivist or conservator can provide direction.



C	IL	TH
CA	JC	THV
CC	JK	TJ
CG	JV	TK
CH	LA	TL
CHJ	LV	TL2
CHT	NA	TNC
CJ	NZ	TNT
CL	NCH	TS
CV	NT	TT
DA	NV	TT2
DAK	NV2	TV
DE	NZ	VA
DI	SE	VI
DIG	SN	VJ
DK	SJ	VJN
DT	ST	VK
DZ	TA	VS
ED	TC	VT
GH	TCH	YV
GJ	TE	XE
GW	TG	
HJ	TGT	
HJT		

Codes used for place names recorded in 1993. This table was stapled into Ingrid Kritsch's notebook so the codes could be marked on the maps and tracked in her field notes as the interviews proceeded. In subsequent years, numbers were used to correspond to the names recorded. Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names Project 1993.

Used with permission.

Direct to digital

We used a direct-to-digital approach during our place names verification workshops in 2012. These workshops were held after hundreds of hours of preliminary work in the form of research and interviews had been completed, for all four of the Gwich'in communities. In each workshop, we had the almost-final place names showing on a big screen in front of a room full of Elders, using a laptop with enough juice to run our GIS software and a good projector. We could zoom in and out and pan around, going from one name to the next. The Elders were deciding on the exact spelling, translation and gloss, and full extent of each name, and they were also deciding whether or not each name should be submitted to the place names register to make them "official." In Fort McPherson, a well-respected Elder, Robert Alexie Sr., stood up in front of the screen when we were discussing one name, a large hill. He started gesturing to show how large the hill is, and I was trying to quickly trace along where he gestured. I soon realized that he was making a spiralling motion across the screen, almost "colouring in" the whole hill, rather than showing just the outline … but I kept tracing the spiral anyways, for a joke. After a moment, we were all laughing at the big red tornado shape on the screen! I was able to trace the outline of the hill after he was done (and I deleted the tornado), ensuring the full extent of the hill is now in our database.

- Kristi Benson

Place names and other mapped features can also be recorded direct to digital, which means using some combination of a computer, laptop, tablet, projector or similar technologies, so that features can be recorded right into a GIS or other spatial database during the interviews or workshops. For example, one member of the project team can have ArcGIS installed on a laptop and show the laptop screen to the interviewee during the interview. The interviewee can point out locations during the interview, and the person working on the computer can digitize (trace) in the shape, line or point as the interviewee points it out.

Other software options may include Google Earth, which produces files that can be imported into a GIS system but does not function well enough as a GIS to be useful as an end point.

There are many things to consider about when and where to use a direct-to-digital approach.

PROS

- It can be faster than using maps, especially if the locations will be mostly point locations, rather than larger shapes.
- It is more engaging than paper maps for younger people familiar with mapping technologies.
- Unlike paper maps, which only show a certain area, a computer map does not usually have borders.
- Zooming in and out can be useful to really drill-down on a place's specific location (especially a place that is geographically small) or to see the whole area from a bird's-eye view.

CONS

- For most shapes and lines, further GIS work to clean them up will be necessary anyway, making the direct-to-digital approach less of a time saver than it may appear.
- Elders, in particular, may find the format awkward and unpleasant, and this may negatively impact the interviews and place names recording process.
- The digitizing will take time away from the interview when everyone has to wait for the digitizing to catch up, making the interview less spontaneous and natural.
- Many GIS platforms require a stable and relatively high-bandwidth Internet connection. Depending on the location, this is unlikely to be available in every home and using a cellular hotspot may not suffice.

If a decision is made to use a direct-to-digital approach, the GIS manager must help to plan the interviews and preferably sit in on the interviews and do the digitizing. An interim database will likely need to be created, which will have the basic information needed to be recorded in the attribute table during the interview (who said it, the place name, extra information, the reference number to be matched with interview transcript). Depending on the platform selected, the GIS manager will need to set up the map in order to best fit the interview process.

If using the direct-to-digital approach, it is best to have a copy of the paper maps at each interview anyway, in case of problems or interviewee preferences.

> The direct-to-digital approach may sound attractive in theory, but it has drawbacks in practice that might mean you will want to consider paper maps instead or in addition.

A practice interview to test out the system should take place before the first real interview. The project team should test out the system in a place without good Internet service and with someone—a fake interviewee—describing place names, to ensure that the hardware, software and database are sound and functioning smoothly. There will almost certainly be kinks to work out.

How will the interviews be recorded?

When doing individual or very small group (two to three) interviews, we almost always used lapel microphones as they provided a good, clear sound. They had little [foam] covers so they could also be used outdoors. Very occasionally we used two tape recorders to ensure everything was picked up.

- Ingrid Kritsch

Interviews should be recorded for as long as the interviewees are comfortable with it, as these recordings will be used to transcribe the interviews, and the recordings themselves form a vital part of the archival record of the project. If an interviewee has an issue with being recorded and would prefer not to, the project team may want to ask follow-up questions to determine why there may be this reluctance and to see if they can address it. For example, some interviewees fear that their recording may end up on the public radio or otherwise publicized. If that is a concern, the project team can ensure confidentiality through the informed consent process. If an interviewee wants to participate but is firm about not being recorded, having an extra person in the interview who just takes notes will be important, as it is tricky to take notes and ask questions at the same time, along with doing all the relevant mapping.

There are two choices to record the interview: audio or video recording. For both, the project team must ensure that the audio being recorded is clear and of archival quality. If possible, the video being recorded should also be high-quality, but this matters less than the sound quality. Good quality sound recordings will involve several aspects.

Both audio and video recording equipment are much less expensive now than in the past, giving you many choices. If you are not familiar with how to make good quality recordings, reach out and ask! There are many people around you that can help: a sound technician at the local radio station, the information technology specialist of your organization, and the municipal or provincial/territorial archivist can all help.

Equipment: The microphone used should capture the interviewee's and interviewer's voices clearly. If any of the interviews will be conducted outside, a special windproof cover must be used. The sound recorder or video recorder must allow for a good quality microphone to be plugged into it.

Software: The video or audio recorder must be able to record high-quality archival sound/video files. For information about what currently counts as archival files, the provincial or territorial archivist (or similar) can provide assistance.

If video will be recorded, the camera must be on a stand such as a tripod and should stay on the stand/tripod for the whole interview. If the interviewees will be moving around during the interviews in such a way that the camera must also move, an experienced camera person should be hired, as this is a specialist task. The preferred method is to use a tripod and a stable video camera.

Deciding which recording method to use will depend on the available resources, the comfort and familiarity of being recorded of the interviewees and the desired outcomes of the project. Some of the questions that may help the project team to decide are:

- Is there a need for video? For example, will the project team create a film about the project or the places and will having the Elders speaking about the places on video be useful?
- Will the Elders be uncomfortable being video recorded?

Considering the low cost and accessibility of reasonable video recording options and the affordability of computer storage, it does make sense for many projects to consider video recording if the interviewee will be amenable. However, the quality of the recorded audio must be assured.

Keep a journal

The main interviewer should keep a journal or field notes. The journal may be a physical hard-copy journal or might be a text file on a laptop or tablet. The journal can contain the following types of information:

- Interview notes, such as the name of the interviewee, interviewers and those present when the interview occurred; the date, time and location of the interview; background information about the Elder (if not already recorded); place names (locations, oral history, translation, map codes, symbols used on the maps along with a key to what they meant)
- Ethnographic notes
- Travel notes, including coordinates and information about the places visited
- A photo log, including the photo number, date, location, photographer, direction, and the names of people and places
- Sketches to complement interview notes and transcripts
- Plans or maps of sites that have buildings or other features

Summer student Lisa Andre transcribing taped interviews with Elders. Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names Project 1993.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC.

I included a variety of info in my field notes … a calendar to record dates of travel, interviews and other activities during a project. It served as a kind of "snapshot" of the project activities. Sometimes I'd include maps in my field notes to provide an overview of the project area. I also brought the project proposal and budget to make sure we remained within our budget and accomplished everything we said we would, questions to consider asking our interviewees, questions that came out of interviews and whom to follow up with, and so on. In 1993 when we decided to hire a helicopter, I took notes and correspondence on costs from different companies. I was responsible for ordering all of the maps we thought we needed, so I kept a list of maps that I had ordered. Finally, I kept notes about meetings or other activities and lots of other odds and ends.

- Ingrid Kritsch

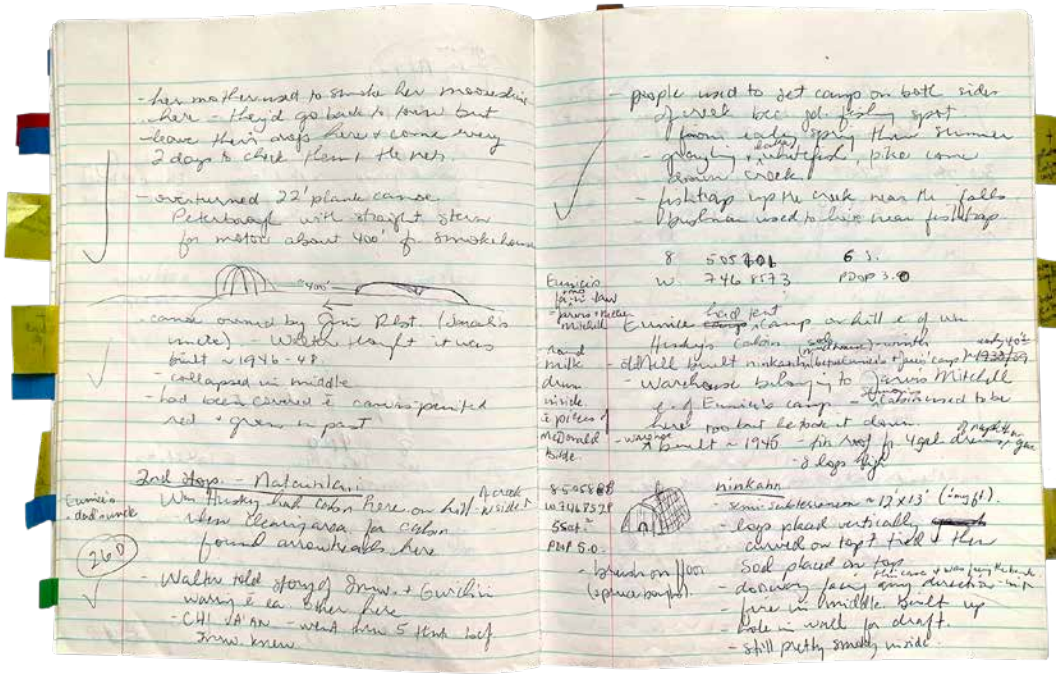


Figure 8. Hand-written notes by Ingrid Kritsch from the Teetł'it Gwich'in Place Names Project 1996 during an interview with Robert Alexie Sr. at the Nataiinlaii Visitor's Centre where he was working. Used with permission.

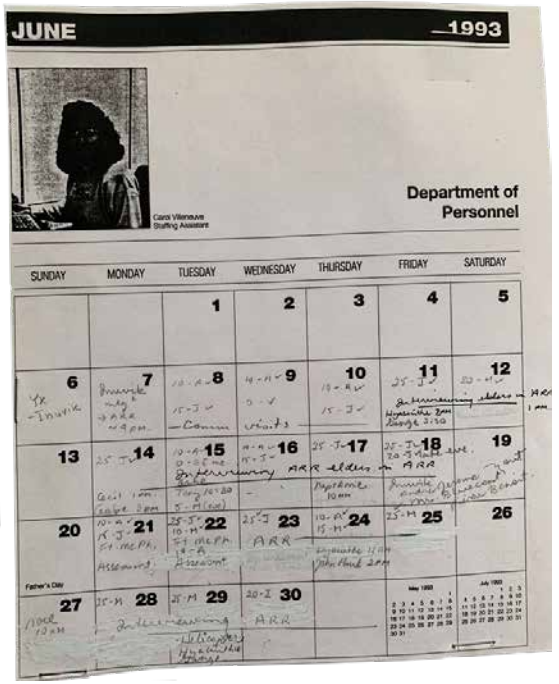


Figure 9. Calendar with hand-written notes by Ingrid Kritsch from the Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names Project 1993 showing scheduled interviews, travel and meetings. This calendar was stapled into her notebook. Used with permission.

Interview locations: In the community or on the land?

The interviews may happen in a few places—in the community or on the land. If interviews take place in the community, there will need to be a quiet location where the interviewees will be comfortable. This can be in the interviewees' homes, at the band office or school or another quiet place. Before the interview starts, the interviewer should stop and listen to see if there are noises such as televisions and radios that will need to be turned off.

Interviews on the land can be a wonderful way to remind interviewees of stories and knowledge they have, and many Elders appreciate the opportunity to see their land as they speak of it—particularly if they have not been to a place for a long time. On-the-land interviews do require more planning: day trips are much easier, as multi-day camping trips will require much equipment (cooking pots, tents, bush radio or satellite phone, and so on) and staff. Interviews on the land will also likely include interviews outside, which means that a good wind-reducing cover should be used on the microphone. Using paper maps and computer screens outside may be problematic, so exact locations may need to be recorded during a separate interview. Keeping papers and equipment in secure zip-loc bags can help to keep everything safe and dry! A GPS can be used to record the location of place names and structures in the field as well. The project team should record the coordinates in their notes as well as using waypoints in the GPS.

If there will be any on-the-land travel as part of the project, safety and liability must be attended to by the project team. This may include the use of waivers and safety briefings, wildlife first aid or other training for key project staffers, the use of wildlife monitors or guardians, if necessary, or other measures.

Interview set-up

Before starting to record the interview, the interview team will need to set up any maps and pencils or the direct-to-digital mapping system. Maps may be set up on the floor or on a table. If a large map mosaic is used, a long stick should be available for Elders who find it hard to reach places they are identifying. Now is the time to bring out other useful equipment that may be needed as well, such as a magnifying glass for a closer look of smaller map details. Some Elder interviewees may be hard-of-hearing, which needs to be considered.

The interviewers will also want to test their equipment before each interview. After the sound recorder and all microphones are set up, the interviewer should start a recording, watch the recording device to ensure it is functioning and say a few test words, such as “testing, one, two, three.” The recording should then be stopped, and the result played back to ensure everything is working before the actual interview recording starts.

> Your interviewees will be happier, and your interviews will be easier, if you can get relaxed before you start the actual interview. Have tea and treats on hand and make sure everyone is comfortable and ready to chat.

Once the recording has been started, the interviewer should identify on the audio or video recording device who is being interviewed, the interviewer(s), others present and the date, time and place. For example, “Today is August 13, 2022, and my name is Sue Charlie. I am interviewing Margaret Villeneuve in her home in Springfield about traditional place names in the River Valley area. Also in the room is Celinda Brooks.” After this introduction, the interview questions as prepared can be asked.

Lights, camera, action!

A caveat

If the interviewers are both new to interviewing, they should reach out to a more experienced interviewer in their community, or in a university, for advice and training. The interview process is absolutely vital to obtaining quality results and respecting the knowledge of the Elders, so should not be undertaken lightly. Even a few hours of training with someone familiar with anthropological practice can make a large difference in the quality of the information provided. This is especially the case if the information will be used in any legal or environmental proceedings.

The interview team will ask a series of questions about the study area or a series of questions to ask about each place they are recording. However, the questions should not be asked one after the other, with no recognition of the flow of conversation or the points the interviewee is making. Instead, the interview should unfold more like a guided conversation. The interviewer should pay close attention to the words and content provided by the interviewee. They should not interrupt and should ask any relevant follow-up questions to clarify what was said before moving on to the next question or area. If the interviewee goes far off topic, they may need to be gently guided back on topic. The interviewer should be mindful not to ask for already provided information, which can feel disrespectful on the part of the interviewee.

> Your interviews should flow more like a conversation between a teacher and student than a stilted question-and-answer session.

Interviewers should also avoid asking leading questions as much as possible. This means that the interviewee should avoid answering the question in the way that it is asked—many of these questions can be answered as either yes or no, and they do not prompt more conversations and knowledge sharing. Allow the interviewees' knowledge to be primary in the interview. See some examples in the following table.

INSTEAD OF ASKING …	ASK …
Is that river called Valley River?	Do you know what that river is called?
Is it called Valley River because of the size of the valley?	Do you know why it is named that? I wonder where the name comes from.
Did people gather there in the winter?	What was that location used for long ago? Do people still use it today?

One of the interviewers will be taking notes during the interview. These notes will be very helpful in case the sound recording fails or if anything is unclear. The goal of taking interview notes is to include as much information as possible so that if something happens to the audio or video recording of the interview, there would still be a good record of what was said. These notes are also really helpful in preparing reports, and sometimes they can help to conceptually understand what was said in an interview.

Usually in my interview notes, I include the date and time of the interview, the name or names of people being interviewed, the name of their community, and the place of interview (their home, band or community office board room, or an office) and the names of other people in the room. I make sure the note pages are numbered. The notes include important information like names of family members including children, stepchildren, husband or wife; dates of births, deaths, marriages, significant events; years of travel and names of places travelled to; names of trails including the trail head, length of trails in miles, or good places on the land for harvesting resources; highlights of stories; the names of legends like "when Raven lost its beak" and highlights.

- Alestine Andre

A place names interview will likely last around one and a half to two hours. If that is not enough time to review the entire study area as needed, there should be multiple interviews instead of having a single very long interview, which can tax the interviewee. The interviewees are not the only ones who will find interviewing to be tiring and taxing: the interview team will likely find that one or two interviews per day is the maximum that they can handle without being overly tired. It may seem efficient to do three or four interviews in a day, but a very tired interviewer will likely do a disservice to the interviewee and the knowledge being shared.

Locations must be recorded by the interviewer as the interviewee indicates the location of the names on the map. While some interviewees may be comfortable recording on the map themselves, this will typically be done by the interviewers. A map code can be added to the map for obvious features, such as a lake or river, with a line to the feature. For less obvious features, such as riverbanks, hills, camps and similar features, it is best to try to get a basic idea of how large the area is and draw the outline of it. See the figure below for an example of an interview map showing numbers on a lake, a river and an old-time trail drawn in with a pencil.

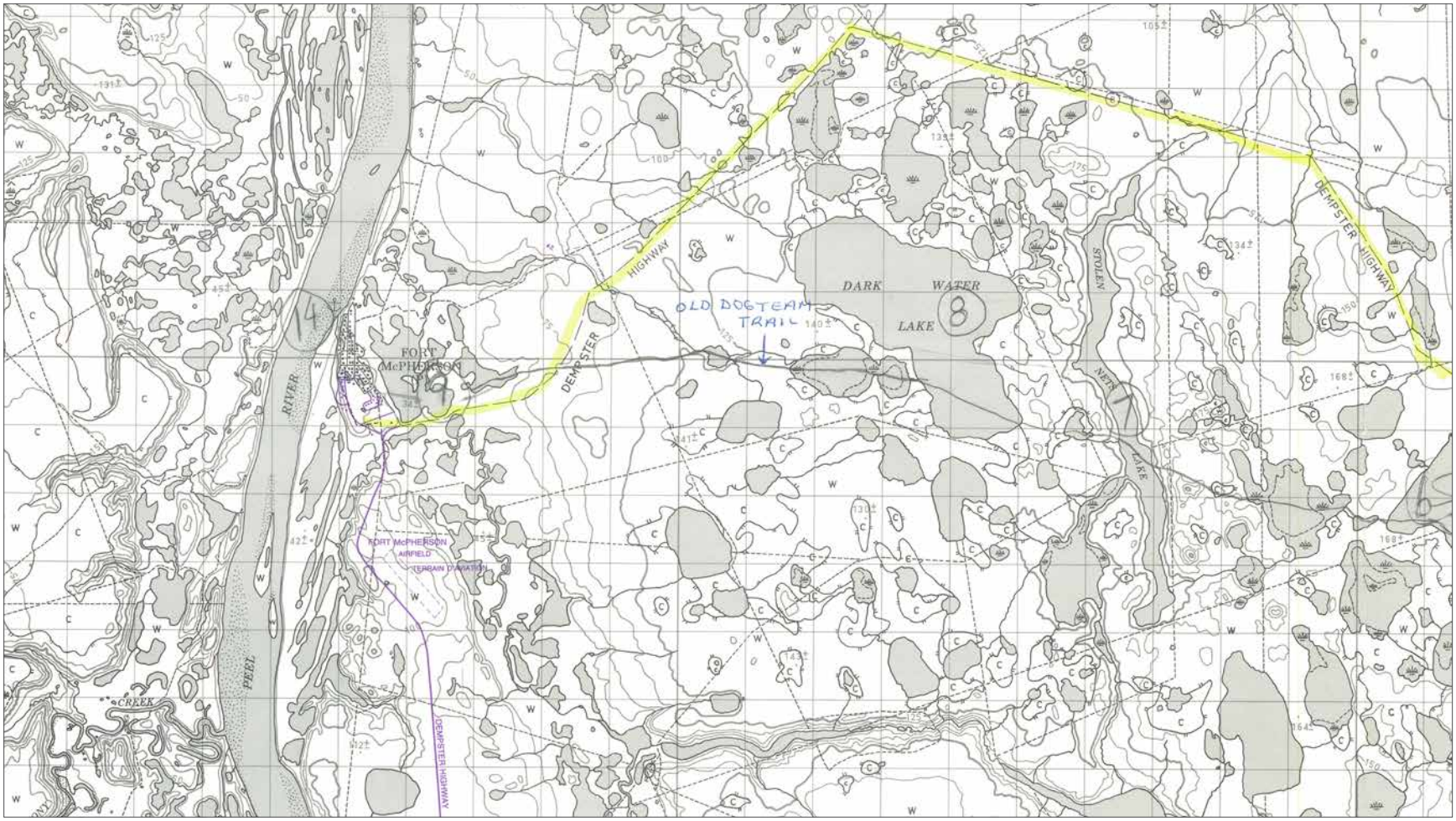


Figure 10. Portion of NTS map 106M7, showing numerical labels and old-time trail annotations[12]

12 Map accompanies Kritsch, Ingrid and Alestine Andre. 1994. Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names in the Gwich'in Settlement Area – Phase III [Tsiigehtchic, N.W.T.], Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute.

Photos: People and places

The consent form and process will include whether the interviewee minds having their photo taken. If they agree, one of the interviewers should be in charge of taking photos. It is nice to have photos of the interview process itself, for example, with an Elder pointing at a map, but also clear photos of the interviewee's face. Try to stay out of direct sunlight or backlit scenarios and have a background that is as plain as possible. Take several photos for each set up, differentiate the angle or settings slightly, to increase chances of getting a great shot.

In taking photos on the land of named places, it is good to take a series—both at a distance to see what the surrounding area is like, and close-ups with people, features and artefacts that may be on site.

A note or log should be made for each photo. The photo log should contain all the following information for each photo or set of photos:

- Photo number
- Date
- Photographer's name
- Location or named place
- Names of the people in the photo, from left to right or otherwise identified
- If out on the land, the location or direction from which the photo is being taken
- GPS coordinates for the named place

> Getting great photos of the people you interview, the project team and the places visited will be useful for sharing on social media and for final reports. But they will also be used for decades into the future!

It is also nice to have a more narrative caption, such as "Elder Grace Farrier pointing to the location of Valley River on an interview map in her home" or "Shaun Messier's camp in the foreground, with Moose Mountain behind it, taken from the east."

For an example of how place names and other photos can be used in social media posts, check out this post: The Gwich'in Love to Travel! The 1998 FM-Mayo skidoo trip.

Paying interviewees

Interviewees will typically be paid for their time and knowledge. Some communities and regions have an established rate for culture and heritage interviews, which can be found by asking the local tribal council or cultural institution. If not, the going rate for nearby Indigenous organizations can be a useful guide. The interview rate can also be discussed and decided upon if there is a steering committee for the project.

The interviewees may be paid by a cheque issued after the interview is complete and may need an honoraria form or other expense form filled out. If it will take time for the cheque to be issued, this should be clearly explained before the interview starts. It is not appropriate to inform an interviewee after the interview that it may be a week or more before they get their payment.

In some cases, a gas card or gift card to a local store can also be used to pay for interviews. Cash or e-transfers are also possible. The decision to issue cheques or other forms of payment, such as gas cards or cash, should be discussed with the finance department that is handling the project early on, as their reporting requirements may constrain what can be used. They may also have rules about what information is gathered for each interviewee, such as their SIN, legal name and address. In some cases, a community organization such as a renewable resources council can be contracted to pay interviewees with less paperwork and red tape. They will reasonably expect to get a financial administration fee for this work.

> How much you will pay your interviewees, and how you will pay them, should be sorted out well in advance of your first interview.

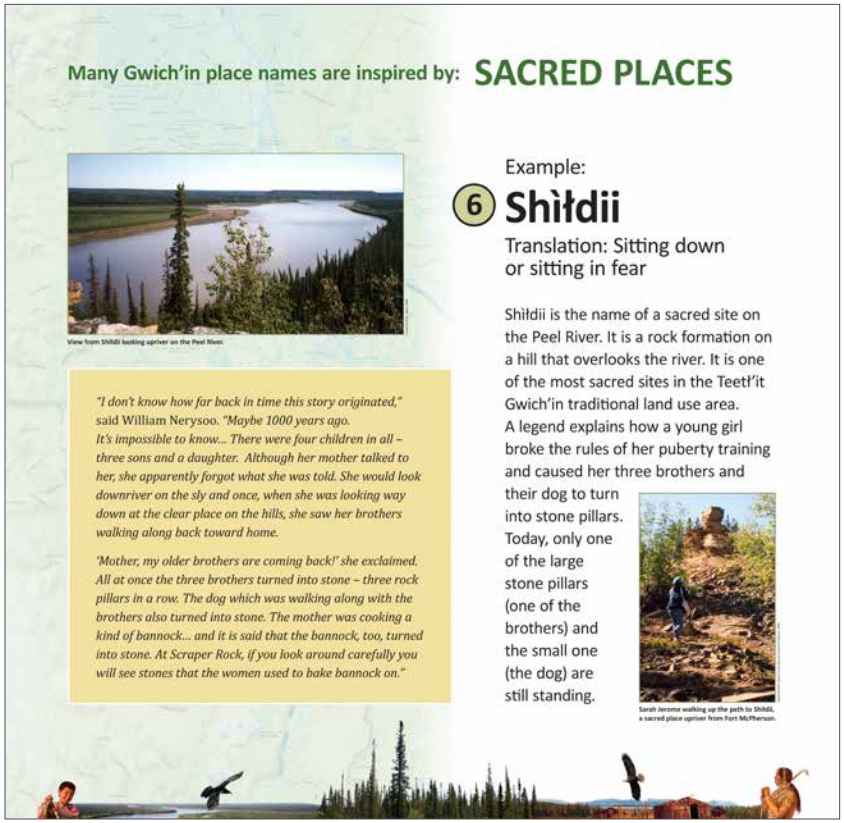


Figure 11. Gwich'in traditional place names information panel created by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and GSCI: Sacred places

Making the interview a good experience

Nearing the end of our place names project in Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson, the Elders we interviewed had become quite comfortable with our interview routines. At several interviews in both of these communities, the Elders being interviewed knew to take the clip-on microphone which they expertly clipped on to their sweater or shirt and waited patiently while we set up the recorders.

- Alestine Andre

Place names interviews should be a special time where the interviewee feels respected and enjoys sharing their knowledge. They should not feel belittled if they do not know the name of any place or if they do not have fluency or knowledge of their language. Some interviewees may be fine being interviewed by researchers from outside of their community, such as contractors or employees who are of settler ancestry, but some may not. Their choices should be respected.

There are ways to make an interview more comfortable, especially for Elders. They may want tea or snacks, which should be provided beforehand. They may also need breaks to smoke or take a breather, and the interviewers should keep an eye on them and ask them if they need a break if they are looking tired or otherwise on edge.

The interview location should be comfortable for the interviewee. They may prefer to be at a kitchen table or even on their couch. They may also prefer to be away from their home, in a band office board room or other room. If possible, the location should be free from as many distractions as possible, such as televisions, radios, videos or music from another room, interruptions from children or grandchildren and any other noises or distractions.

Sometimes the noises cannot be helped such as a noisy machine like the community water or sewage truck beeping as they're backing up or the land line phone ringing, or an out-of-town visitor showing up at the interviewee's door. If the noise is too distracting, we usually turned the recorder off until it became quiet again.

- Alestine Andre

Scheduling a good time for the interviewee is also important. I recall that in 1992, Alestine and I worked hard on finding good times to interview and interviewed in the day, evening and even weekends to accommodate people's availability. We even travelled to other communities and to people's camps. We had to work around people who worked during the day, liked to watch their favourite soap opera "All My Children," and weren't in town on specific dates—either working or in the bush.

- Ingrid Kritsch

Next steps: After the interviews are completed

As soon as the first interview is completed, the next stage of the project work can begin: bringing the place names information together and making sense of it; translating and transcribing the interview recordings; performing preliminary mapping work; providing captions for the photos; and so on. At the end of this phase, the project team will have everything they need to work with the community to finalize and verify the place names.

Necessary administration

There will be some administration tasks that need to be done before transcribing and report-writing can begin. Keeping track of files and notes is crucial: losing track of an Elder's sound recording can mean their words are lost forever. Typically, administration work will include:

- Ensuring all the sound files are named and numbered correctly
- Making back-up copies of sound recording files, photographs, maps and notes and sending the back-up copies to safe storage
- Filling out the photo log for each photograph
- Verifying that all information in the files is correct, such as people's names and interview dates
- Ensuring all computer files are put in the correct folder to make them easier to find later

After the project is complete, any remaining paper records or hard copies such as paper maps or notes should also be scanned and copies sent for safe storage. Map scanners can be found in some government offices or commercial printers may have them where any maps with annotations can be scanned for a fee.

Łiidlą̨ (translation: the forks) where the Arctic Red and Cranswick rivers meet. An old-time trail was located here and used to access the mountains where people lived in the winter, returning to the river in spring. Blazes on trees can still be seen to mark the trail.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC, 1993.

Translating and transcribing interviews

Once an interview is done, the sound or video file should be backed up from the recording device, so at least two stable copies exist. The computers or drives should be safely stored in a locked office or home office. If cloud storage is used, it should not be the only copy available, and the cloud server should be in Canada (and, therefore, subject to Canadian jurisdiction for legal matters and confidentiality).

Sound recordings that are partially or wholly conducted in an Indigenous language will need to be translated and transcribed into English. A qualified person must be hired to do this work, which requires both fluency in the language and skill. Often, a qualified translator will work with Elders and other speakers to really get the meaning if there are tricky phrases or words that have fallen out of common use, which is typical for place names, and might have great antiquity. A qualified translator/transcriber will charge more than English-only transcription services because of this increased workload.

If there is more than one language or dialect, the transcriber will need to have fluency in the dialect spoken to make a quality translation and transcription. Multiple translators may be needed.

Additional options are available for English recordings. A transcriptionist may use an AI-assisted approach, where the sound recording is uploaded to a service such as Otter.AI or rev.com, for an initial automated transcript, which will then need to be carefully reviewed and updated by the transcriptionist. Alternatively, the transcriptionist may transcribe the recording manually. A transcription program such as Express Scribe can be used, which allows for keyboard hotkeys or even a foot pedal to be used to start, stop, and rewind the recording. Transcription is slow, careful work. It often takes six to eight hours of work to transcribe each one-hour recording. Since the amount of time required is large, transcription often takes quite a bit of the project's budget.

> Having a quality transcript—that is, a word for word record of what was said in the interview—is important. Transcripts should follow a template and be typed using standard spelling. This honours the intellect of your interviewees and allows for digital searches of the transcripts.

Community transcribers may be used if there are good candidates. They must have excellent typing and spelling skills and an attention to detail. If such candidates exist, this can be a good way for the place names project to keep the budget in the communities. However, not everyone will do well or enjoy transcribing. If this is the case, there are many professional transcription services available, which are often cheaper than going with a local transcriber. Any report or transcript produced by the contracted professional will need to be carefully reviewed, as they will likely miss some local place and people's names. They may also be confused by some local speech habits and patterns.

Interview summaries

If desired, the project team can draft interview summaries from the transcripts. These summaries create a narrative "story" of what the interviewee said, often with a timestamp. Unlike transcripts, which are word for word and include all the questions and sounds heard on the sound recording and are an exact copy of the way the person spoke, these summaries can instead be easily read and interpreted. They are in the third person. The following is an excerpt of an interview summary:

Tape #42 – Annie and Nap Norbert

[535] Annie Norbert said that her parents did not move around. They only stayed at Big Rock. Her father only went to town from there.

Annie said, " … only one time we went … up to Caribou Lake and up that way and we almost went to Kugaluk." She said that it took them almost three months to travel there from Big Rock. They moved there and then they came back in April when it was warm.

Annie said the trail went from Big Rock to the end of Campbell Lake.

Annie said she was about 16 years old. Then, they travelled to Caribou Lake. She said, "[My dad] don't follow ts'ii dęįį tąįį [trail]. He just makes his own road." They went close to Kugaluk. Annie said that John Niditchie came along with them that time. Annie remembers the landscape, "The ground is white because there were no trees there. It was close to the ocean." Annie's father and John Niditchie went to Kugaluk to the trading post to get supplies while Annie and her mother stayed behind. From there they turned back. Annie said that Amos Niditchie was trapping in that area too. They ran into his trail. Annie said, "Good country around there."

Annie added that there was a trading post at Kugaluk Lake. She said, "That's why people around there don't … go to Tuk. They stay around … that trading post. In the olden days, was lots of trading posts in the bush … Travavaillant Creek … Herschel Island … they go there for their … buying … with boat." The priest from Arctic Red River and his helpers would bring back supplies from Herschel Island. (Annie and Nap Norbert, GGPN92, Tape #42, July 16, 1992) …

Additional information

pp. 35–38 – material for spruce bark smoke house and drying stage
p. 47 – the origin of the name Gwichya Gwich'in

Updating the GIS

The digitizing work can begin as soon as the interviewees are done marking names on the maps and the transcripts are available. If paper maps are used, they will typically be scanned and georeferenced by the GIS manager, who will then digitize the place names into the database created for this purpose. If multiple versions of the same name exist, or if multiple names exist for the same place, this must be noted by the GIS manager and flagged for discussion during the workshops.

The digitizer will need to cross-reference the transcripts and perhaps the interview notes in order to fill out the attribute (textual information) portion of the database. As noted earlier in this handbook, the database will have columns to store who provided the name and to have a summary of the oral history information, which can be copied from the transcripts, tape summaries and interview notes.

If the place-names interviews are done using a direct-to-digital approach, where the names are entered right into a computer rather than on to paper maps, the database will very likely need to be updated. An interim file may have been used, and the "drawing" of the place name will likely need finalizing. Point locations should be carefully checked against topographic data, and the extent of geographic features should be compared to and updated with topographic data as well. The extent of the place name should follow vector-based topography files. In addition, the attribute data will need to be carefully updated as well, as with any names recorded on paper maps: who provided the name, when, the translation and any other information.

The GIS manager will need to consult with the project team to assist them in the final verification sessions. There may need to be paper maps made or a direct-to-digital approach might be appropriate. The project team will also need maps for their final reporting after the verification sessions.

Verification of the place names

Place names will typically need to be checked after they are originally recorded in interviews. This is for several reasons:

1. A single place or feature may have more than one name. Therefore, the community will need to decide together if one is primary. All place names, once verified, should be included for each named place or feature.

2. The spelling and translation of a name will need to be verified by linguists working with the community.

3. Oral history information provided in interviews may be added to during verification: often, additional information is added by other community members, and sometimes, clarification of information is provided.

4. The actual location and extent of the named place will need to be verified by the community.

This can be done in an ongoing fashion, by meeting with Elders and other knowledgeable people to discuss and ponder the interview results. Alternatively (or in addition), a verification session can be organized once all of the place names have been recorded. This session should have enough people present to adequately represent the community in making decisions about the names, the location,

> Verification sessions or interviews will ensure you have consensus in your community about the names you have recorded.

the spelling and the translation, among other topics. The make-up and size of the verification session can be discussed during the community consultations or with a steering committee, if one exists. Depending on how many names were recorded during the project, the meeting may take anywhere from several hours to several days.

There may be special equipment needed for a place names verification workshop. This includes a powerful laptop to run the GIS and, if direct-to-digital approaches are used, a large screen for projecting the maps and a quality sound recorder. The project team may also need to bring in extra help: an interpreter/linguist to help with Indigenous languages and the GIS manager.

During the meeting, each named place will need to be discussed and the name(s) finalized. This will include the following:

Name

The actual name itself must be agreed upon by relevant workshop participants. If multiple names were recorded, the workshop should discuss how to handle this. Are all the names equally applicable? Do different communities/families have different names? Is one name primary and the others secondary?

The spelling of the name, especially if in an Indigenous language, should also be finalized. For this purpose, a qualified interpreter/linguist should be present to ensure the spelling and diacritical mark (accented marks) are included. Someone who is fluent in the language should also be asked to carefully say the name into a sound recorder to have a record of the pronunciation.

Extent

The extent of the place name refers to the actual area to which the name applies. For example, in an interview, the project team may learn of the name of a river. However, this name may refer to the mouth of the river where it flows into another body of water or it may refer to the whole river. If it refers to the whole river, the project team will need to map out to which branches of the river the name applies, especially toward the headwaters of the river. Some features are relatively easy to record the full extent of (lakes, for example), but others are trickier. A hill feature might be somewhat diffuse on the ground, and it is important to get a good sense of where it starts and ends.

In some cases, there may be surprising things learned about the extent of place names. In the Gwich'in area, a large body of water has a reverse delta in the middle and there are two Gwich'in names for the lake: one for the lake north of the delta and one for the lake south of the delta. The English name, on the other hand, is just a single name for the whole lake. More recent names can also cause other issues in applying traditional names. For example, in several cases in the Gwich'in area, a tributary with a separate English name flowing into a named river was found to be incorrect. The tributary was in fact the main, named, channel of the river, and the other channel was a tributary. Seeing these features displayed on a map and carefully plotting their full extent can ensure that Indigenous geographies are honoured and can help to share understanding and knowledge of Indigenous naming protocols.

Oral history and tangible heritage

During the interviews, the history of many of the place names may be recorded. This may include stories and legends that reference the place, spiritual information, historical and traditional use information, and more. If there are special landscape features or built heritage (buildings or other human-made features), this should also be recorded. Ideally, this should be done on-the-land.

During verification, if there are any outstanding issues, this should be reviewed and covered. For example, if it is unclear how many cabins are at a site or who owns them, a consensus can be sought. If the meaning of the name is not known or if a full historical picture of the site has not been recorded but exists, the verification workshop is a good time to record any stories and discuss and settle any inconsistencies.

Official name status

Some place names projects have a goal to submit the place names to the provincial or territorial toponymist and have the names recognized as official names on government maps. If this is the case, the workshop participants should decide if each name should be submitted. They may not feel like every name should be submitted for official status. During the workshop, the research team should explain the process of submitting the names to be official names and what the outcome will be.

> If you submit your place names for official recognition, they will appear on government maps and signage in addition to other publications and websites. This can be a wonderful way to bring traditional names back into use and to decolonize maps.

An Arctic river near Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.
Getty Images.

Final steps

After the interviews and verification sessions are complete, there will be final steps to ensure the place names data (and any other project data) is in a finalized sustainable form. This includes reporting back to the community, mapping work, submission of names to the toponymist, writing final reports, and more.

Final maps

After the verification sessions are complete, the GIS manager will need to update the place names data set based on the recommendations and information from the verification workshops. This may include the location, extent, spelling, translation or any other information. There may also be additional oral history or other narrative information to add to the place name records. Good records should be kept in the attribute table about any changes made to the records as a result of the verification process. Notes should also be kept in the file's metadata, about the research project and the verification process.

Other members of the project team will almost certainly need maps for their reports and newsletters, and larger format maps can be made as well, for distribution to the community or other purposes. Working with a graphic artist can ensure that any maps are beautiful and enjoyable to look at, which is a credit to the Elders who provided their information during the project. An example of the Gwich'in NTS 1:250,000 maps produced after their place names project is included here.

Figure 12. One of a set of 22 Gwich'in place name maps at 1:250,000 scale for traditional lands in the N.W.T. and Yukon. Gwich'in trappers, harvesters, researchers, students, and travellers are using the maps and Atlas to learn the traditional place names and trails.

Reporting your results

A final report about the place names project will need to be written by the project team to meet the needs of the community and to satisfy funding requirements. A well-written place names report is also a great way to showcase the place names to the public and can be shared broadly.

> Your final report will live on and be used for decades to come, so it is important to make sure it is complete and reflects the knowledge given to you.

The actual content of the report will vary depending on the project and funder, but will likely include some or most of the following sections:

- Dedication and acknowledgements to the Elders and other interviewees, the funders and others who may have contributed to the success of the project
- Summary of the project and report (several paragraphs)
- Introduction, including the purpose and outcomes of the project
- Methods, including interview locations and equipment, general overview of timelines of the project and the GIS
- Elders' (and other interviewees) biographies
- Project team
- Study area
    - general geographic/ecological descriptions of the region, including major features and weather patterns
    - human history and prehistory of the area, along with a description of the Indigenous communities today
- Discussion of the place names in general terms
    - Types of features that are named
    - Categories of names
    - Languages
    - Other relevant information
- List of names with relevant information such as translation, which geographic feature the name refers to and a description (respecting confidentiality, where required)
- Maps and photographs
- Summary/discussion
- Recommendations
- References
- Appendices, such as questionnaires, informed consent statements, an interviews/recordings list, and a map list

Example Elders' biographies

These biographies are from *Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names in the Mackenzie Delta*, Gwich'in Settlement Area, N.W.T.[13]

Caroline (Kendo) Andre, 59

Caroline was born on January 24, 1935, "in the bush up the Red someplace." Caroline spent her younger life with her parents, Ernest and Mary Kendo, around Łeth jithakaii van (Ernest Cabin) up the Arctic Red River and around Big Rock in the Delta. Caroline married Antoine (Tony) Andre in 1949. They spent time around Travaillant Lake and the Siveezhoo area. Caroline and Tony continue to make dry fish during the summer at a fish camp near the community. Caroline is known for her skill and ability to lace snowshoes.

Gabe Andre, 64

Gabe was born at Nichiitsii Diniinlee (Big Rock) on March 25, 1930. Gabe spent most of his life living on the land in the Travaillant Lake and the Tree River areas. He was the youngest of the Andre family. He married Rosa McLeod of Aklavik at the age of 35. He lived with his parents and later with his mother the longest of all of the children, which is why he is so knowledgeable about the history, the culture, and the stories of the Gwichya Gwich'in. Besides hunting, trapping, and fishing, Gabe worked at a variety of jobs. He worked as a deckhand on the Hudson's Bay boat, the Pelican Rapids, for three summers. He also cut cord wood for the Hudson's Bay and the Roman Catholic mission in his younger days. In 1952 he served as a Special Constable for six months. Gabe established a permanent camp at Tr'ineht'ieet'iee (across from Hyacinthe Andre's Tree River camp) in the 1960s. Today Gabe continues to live on the land and is seasonally employed by archaeologists, biologists, fisheries, and forestry because of his vast knowledge about the land. In his spare time, Gabe can be found making snowshoes or tanning hides.

13 Kritsch, Ingrid and Alestine Andre. 1994. *Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names in the Mackenzie Delta*, Gwich'in Settlement Area, N.W.T. Tsiigehtchic: Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute.

Example of place names in a report

A place names report will likely contain a list of the names recorded during the project, with relevant information included as a summary. These place names examples are from *Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names in the Mackenzie Delta*, Gwich'in Settlement Area, N.W.T.[14]

Vakak njuu

Official name: Islands Lake

Reference: This place name refers to a lake along the Dempster Highway between Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson.

Literal translation: Vakak = on it; njuu = islands

English translation: Islands on it (lake)

Also known as: None

Description: This place name refers to a lake with several islands on it. An old dog team trail from Tsiigehtchic to Fort McPherson used to run across this lake.

Chiidjęę naa'ęjį

Official name: None

Reference: This place name refers to the end of a bluff on the Mackenzie River between Tsiigehtchic and Point Separation.

Literal translation: Chii = bluff; djęę = upstream end; naaęjį = (at the) end of

English translation: (At the) end (of the) upstream end (of the) bluff

Also known as: Moonshine Bay

Description: This name refers to the upstream end of a bluff, which runs several miles along the east side of the Mackenzie River, below the Inuvik ferry landing. In the 1920s, several white trappers lived here in tents in the summer. They fished and made moonshine out of "brew," thereby giving this place its more recent name "Moonshine Bay." Other people who used to live and fish at this spot in the summer are William and Clara Norman, Odella Coyen, and Hyacinthe Andre and his family. This is still known as a good place to fish. Dale Clark and Frederick Blake occasionally set a net here today during the summer.

14 Kritsch, Ingrid and Alestine Andre. 1994. *Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names in the Mackenzie Delta*, Gwich'in Settlement Area, N.W.T. Tsiigehtchic: Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute.

Reviewing and distributing the report

Once the report is finished in draft format, it can be reviewed by some of the Elders who participated in the project to give them an opportunity to clarify questions and ensure information is accurate and presented in an appropriate fashion. Additionally, other people may be useful reviewers of the draft report, such as colleagues working in other organizations or departments that oversee language, lands or renewable resources.

When the report is finalized, it can be distributed to any and all people and organizations who would like a copy. Typically, digital copies are provided, although some Elders and other community members may want a paper copy, so printing may need to be arranged. One way for the report to be distributed broadly is to put it on a website and share a link to download by email or social media.

The distribution list may include:

- All the participants who were interviewed or attended workshops
- Community and regional leadership
- Organizations that are engaged in language revitalization
- Lands and renewable resources departments or organizations
- Researchers or academics who have worked in the area
- Project funders

Arctic tundra in autumn, Northwest Territories.
Getty Images.

Pay it forward: Sharing place names project results

When I worked as the Heritage Researcher in Tsiigehtchic (1994–2016), I remember seeing Gwichya Gwich'in Elders standing to the large place names map that covered one wall in the board room. We had taped together many 1:50,000 scale maps from our 1992 place name interviews. Because the taped map piece was so large and bulky, we decided to tack the map to the wall and that's where it stayed for many years. Elder John Norbert in particular was interested, and when he dropped into the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute office, he would stand to the map looking over the details of trails, place names of rivers, creeks, lakes and so on marked during our interviews with our Gwichya Gwich'in Elders in the early 1990s.

I also remember the large 5 ft. x 7 ft. Gwich'in Place Names wall map posted at one of the community offices in Tsiigehtchic had disappeared. There were speculations it may be hanging up in somebody's house in the community!

- Alestine Andre

One of the things that surprised me was the amount of media interest in 2013 when the GNWT officially recognized 414 Gwich'in place names we submitted and when we launched our place name maps and online Gwich'in Place Name and Story atlas in 2015. Not only were we approached by numerous local newspapers and CBC radio programs in the Northwest Territories and Yukon, but also the national CBC program, As It Happens! I never expected to be interviewed about our work on national radio and was thrilled that the knowledge of the many Gwich'in Elders we worked with was being honoured in this way.

I was also really moved when our community-based place names work over 23 years was recognized with the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Community Programming in 2022.

- Ingrid Kritsch

There are many ways to share information about a place names project with the community and the broader public. Sharing information publicly ensures that the knowledge of the Elders is honoured, and the community has awareness of culture and heritage research. It also builds goodwill for future projects. Public sharing can respect confidentiality constraints, should they exist, about some of the information collected.

Radio interviews

A local or regional radio station can host an interview with the project team and perhaps an Elder about the work. This is an effective way to reach many households.

Social media

Posts on social media about the project can also be a useful way to share information. Project photographs, especially those with people, can often generate a lot of interest. Place names can also be shared, along with the translation and summary. Photos and maps can be shared about the name(s) as well.

Some examples of place names posts:

1. Gwich'in Place Name: Srehtadhadlą̨jį̨ (Gwichya Gwich'in)/Srehtàdhàdlaii (Teetł'it Gwich'in) – both mean "Water separates."

2. Theetoh Nin' is the traditional Gwich'in place name for the old trail through the bush between Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson. It translates as "Portage trail-across."

3. Eltyin Tshik (Jackfish-creek) - an Ehdiitat Gwich'in place name that refers to a creek on the Peel Channel, across from Aklavik.

4. Chii Echę̨į̨ ("Cliff - shelter of") is the Gwich'in place name for an area along the cliff across from Tsiigehtchic.

5. Charlie Rat Trail - a trail that goes from the Peel River west toward Millen Creek and Rat River.

Press release

A press release can be issued by the communications department of your organization about the project.

Website

A project-specific website, or a page on an existing website, can be used to share information about the project. If possible, a web-based interactive map can be included in addition to a link to download the report. You can find the Gwich'in Place Names atlas here.

Flyers

Flyers about the project can be produced, preferably with help from a graphic design professional, printed, and distributed. The flyers can be newsletters produced throughout the entire project or just a summary at the end, with photos and place names information. Flyers can often be distributed to each post office box in a community for a relatively small fee.

Posters and maps

Posters and maps are excellent ways of sharing knowledge and getting people interested in place names. Posters can have textual information, graphs, maps and photographs and can be hung in band offices, schools, community centres and other public locations. Posters should not have a lot of text, but instead should focus on being readable and eye-catching. A link to the project website, if it exists, can be included as well.

The wall maps and other large maps produced for the project can also be distributed. Band offices and other public spaces may want to display the maps. Maps can be laminated for durability for these locations. If NTS-style maps are produced, land users may wish to get copies of them to take out on the land, which is a wonderful way to repatriate the place names into active use. For example, the Gwich'in NTS maps and wall maps were very popular and can be downloaded here.

School and community presentations and open houses

Community schools may be interested in having the project team give presentations about the project and the place names. The presentations can highlight the kinds of work that anthropologists and cultural specialists do. They can also highlight the place names. Having some kind of “swag” to hand out to the students can be useful and fun and having games and contests can make the presentations more engaging and memorable as well.

Community presentations and open houses can also be a fun way to share information about the project and place names. To draw more of a crowd, door prizes or a meal can be offered. A presentation with slides showing pictures of the interviewees and the places can be engaging and might especially delight people who can no longer travel on the land as they used to.

The middle hill in this photo was the location of the “Old Arctic Red River” site, also known as Teetshik Goghaa, and Zheh Gwishik.

Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC, 1994

Protecting the information for future generations

Project materials, including computer files and all paper records, sound recordings, video and maps, must be stored in an archivally sound manner and be accessible to future researchers and community members. If an established Indigenous archive facility is available at a local or regional level, this may be a good solution. Established archives will have a secure storage building that is weatherproof and fire proof; trained staff to catalogue and process their collections; and long-term sustainable funding to cover their activities. If a local archive facility is not available, project materials may be donated to municipal archives or provincial/territorial archives, under an agreement. The agreement will cover off topics such as copyright, access and repatriation.

Beyond the final report: Using Indigenous place names in other initiatives

There will be many new opportunities to include Indigenous place names in other initiatives and to make use of the research and knowledge recorded during place names work. A project team can start using and sharing names and project information before the maps are even finalized!

For example, Gwich'in place names and place names research:

- Contributed toward the designation of Nagwichoonjik (the Mackenzie River in the Gwich'in Settlement Area) as a National Historic Site in 1997. This was one of the first such sites recognized under the theme of Aboriginal Cultural Landscapes and is one of the largest National Historic Sites in Canada (a 175-km stretch of river including 5 km on both sides of the river).
- Contributed toward the designation of eight new Territorial Historic Sites
- Were vital to the production of land-based and community history books such as the *Gwichya Gwich'in Googwandak*, the Fort McPherson Ethno-archaeology book *Yeenoo Daì' Gwatsat Teetł'ıt Zheh Googwandak*, and the Elder's life history book *Our Whole Gwich'in Way of Life Has Changed/Gwich'in K'yuu Gwiidandàì' Tthak Ejuk Gòonlih*

- Have been used to identify archaeological sites
- Contributed to the Gwich'in Land Use Plan and other land use plans on traditional Gwich'in lands in the Yukon
- Are continually used in the assessment of land-use permits, water licences, research applications and other permitting processes
- Have been shared with countless researchers who are studying Gwich'in culture, heritage and lands
- Have been used to create new signage in communities, along major roads and highways, and name parks or other significant heritage areas
- Have been used in the development of educational curricula
- Have been used in the assessment of species at risk
- Have been used to create road signage along the Dempster Highway
- Have been used by Canadian Heritage Rivers to produce tourist information maps
- And more!

The Honourable Ethel Blondin-Andrew (MP Western Arctic), and Tsiigehtchic community members Alestine Andre, Agnes Mitchell, and Margaret Donovan with the plaque for Nagwichoonjik National Historic Site, during its unveiling on July 11, 2003.

Terry Foster, GSCI-GTC.

Appendix: Resources

Example of a consent form

Teetł'it Gwich'in Oral History and Place Names Project 2008
Mackenzie Delta
Informed Consent Statement

To be signed or agreed to verbally on tape.

The Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute or GSCI is conducting a traditional knowledge and place names study for the area north of the community of Fort McPherson into the Mackenzie Delta. The project is being conducted with funding from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre.

This project is part of a multi-year study we began in 1995–1996 to document and map place names and traditional use and occupancy of Teetl'it Gwich'in lands. Our long-term goals are to produce a print and web-based place names and oral history atlas titled *Teetl'it Gwich'in Goonanh' Kak Googwandak* – The Places and Stories of the *Teetl'it Gwich'in* and a land-based history book. The interview information from this project will be entered into our computerized Gwich'in place names database and Geographic Information System (GIS) and used to draft the Teetl'it Gwich'in Atlas, the land-based history book and possibly other products in future.

We will be asking you about place names and related traditional knowledge for the area from Fort McPherson into the Mackenzie Delta including the Rat River. As in previous years, stories and legends, traditional trails, resource harvesting locations, sacred sites, camp sites and historic cabins will be recorded on tapes and marked on map sheets. This information will be added to a computer database and used for other studies that the GSCI may do in the future. Other researchers will have access to this data, but they will not own it.

A report will be prepared using this information, which will be forwarded to the PWNHC, which is funding the project. Depending on the results of the interviews, further studies may be conducted on the area, including more interviews or archaeological surveys.

This interview will be taped. The tapes will be transcribed and will be stored at the GSCI head office in Tsiigehtchic. Tapes and transcripts will also be put on deposit at the NWT Archives at the end of the project for safe keeping.

The Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute also requests permission to take photos of people being interviewed. The photos could be used in reports, posters, books, websites or in other resources.

You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to, and you can stop the interview at any time.

Interviewee name: _____

Community: _____

Date: _____

Interviewers: _____

Translator: _____

Interview location: _____

(i.e. *band office, home, RRC office*)

Do you (*interviewee*) wish to be given credit for the information you provide?
That is, have your name in the report? If not, confidentiality of your name is ensured. ☐ YES ☐ NO

Can the GSCI take your photo for use in this report and for other materials in future? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Would you like a copy of the taped interview? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Would you like a copy of the transcript of the interview? ☐ YES ☐ NO

By signing below, you are giving informed consent for this interview to happen:

X _____

Date:

Examples of place names reports

The following place names project reports may be downloaded:

1. *The Traditional Use of the Travaillant Lake Area Using Trails and Place Names of the Gwichya Gwich'in from Arctic Red River*, N.W.T. 1992.

2. *Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names up the Arctic Red River and south of the Mackenzie River*, Gwich'in Settlement Area, N.W.T. 1993.

3. *Gwich'in Territorial Park (Campbell Lake) Oral History Project Final Report*. 1994.

4. *Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names in the Mackenzie Delta*, Gwich'in Settlement Area, N.W.T. 1994.

5. *Ehdiitat Gwich'in Place Names Research*. 1999.

6. *Teetł'it Gwich'in Heritage Places and Sites in the Peel River Watershed*. 2000.

Gwichya Gwich'in Elder Nap Norbert travelling by scow toward a steep cliff called Tithegeh Chì' (translation: Seagull-their rock), also known as Gwi'eekatjilchit (translation: Somebody chipped (steps)-lake), located on Campbell Lake near Inuvik.

Photo: Ingrid Kritsch, GSCI-GTC, 1994.

Transcript template

INTERVIEW XX: Interviewee Name, Location, Date

INTERVIEWERS: Name, Last Name and Name, Last Name

TRANSCRIBER: Name, Last Name

INTERPRETER/ TRANSLATOR: Name, Last Name

OTHERS PRESENT: Name, Last Name

Name: Transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information.

Other name: Transcript information transcript information …

Name: Transcript information Bobby [Clark] at [Point] Separation and Nik [Nicole Clark] up the Red [Arctic Red River].

Other name: (Unclear) transcript information.

(Laughter)

Name: Transcript information.

Other name: (Sniffles).

Name: Transcript information transcript information [Gwich'in, 025-027, – English translation as follows: translated text]. Transcript information transcript information.

Other name: Transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript (whistling).

(END OF SIDE A) *only needed for cassettes*

(SIDE B)

Name: Transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information.

(BREAK IN RECORDING)

Other name: Transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information transcript information …

Name: Transcript information.

NOTES for TRANSCRIBERS

- use first names only for the main text (Mary:)
- extra information such as people's last names or full place names are in square brackets [ ] the transcription of sounds such as laughter and pauses are in parentheses ( )

Examples of photo logs

Photo log: TGPN (Delta) Project 2008
Photo log completed March 10, 2020, by Alestine Andre

IMAGE NUMBER	DATE	CAPTION/DESCRIPTION	PHOTOGRAPHER
DSC_0182	Feb 26, 2008	Caroline Kay in her home being interviewed with a place names map in front of her. Teetł'it Gwich'in Place Names (Delta) Project interviews in Fort McPherson in late February and early March 2008	Alestine Andre, GSCI
DSC_0183	Feb 26, 2008	Caroline Kay being interviewed by Ingrid Kritsch in her home. Teetł'it Gwich'in Place Names (Delta) Project interviews in Fort McPherson in late February and early March 2008	Alestine Andre, GSCI

Photo log: Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names 1994 Project
Photo log completed in 2021 by Ingrid Kritsch

Notes included with photo log: In the summer of 1994, Alestine Andre and Ingrid Kritsch carried out Phase III of the Gwichya Gwich'in place names project for GSCI, documenting place names and significant sites for the Mackenzie Delta land use region-north of the present-day settlement of Tsiigehtchic into the Mackenzie Delta and west along the Dempster Highway between Tsiigehtchic and Fort McPherson. The research project included seven Gwichya Gwich'in Elders from Tsiigehtchic and one Gwichya Gwich'in Elder who currently resides in Inuvik, two summer students, two river guides and two researchers. Most of the information was documented during the course of formal interviews in Tsiigehtchic. Additional information was gathered during a four-day river trip to the Delta from Tsiigehtchic to Reindeer Station, with three of the Elders. Clarification of the data was provided during two meetings and through visits and telephone calls to the Elders. This project documented an additional 89 Gwich'in and English place names along with their associated stories and legends, old-time trails, traditional campsites, historic cabin sites and renewable resources in the Mackenzie Delta. See the following report for project methodology and results. Kritsch, Ingrid and Alestine Andre, 1994. *Gwichya Gwich'in Place Names in the Mackenzie Delta*, Gwich'in Settlement Area, N.W.T. Published by Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, Tsiigehtchic, N.W.T., 1994, 61 pp. plus map – https://gwichin.ca/publications/gwichya-gwichin-place-names-mackenzie-delta. For more information on named places see atlas.gwichin.ca (Ingrid Kritsch 2021).

Note: Only select records are included below. A full photo log was made.

CONTACT SHEET	IMAGE #	CAPTION/DESCRIPTION	DATE TAKEN	PHOTOGRAPHER	NOTES
GGPN-1994-contact-001	1	Pierre Benoit pointing out named places in the Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute office, Tsiigehtchic	June 24, 1994	Ingrid Kritsch	
GGPN-1994-contact-001	2	Pierre Benoit pointing out named places to Ingrid Kritsch with Hyacinthe Andre looking on, in the Gwich'in Social & Cultural Institute office, Tsiigehtchic	June 24, 1994	Lisa Andre	
GGPN-1994-contact-001	7	Preparing for a river trip to the Mackenzie Delta with Elders, youth and GSCI staff and family. (L-R: Margaret Mitchell, Andrea Benoit, Gabe Andre, Nap Norbert, Alestine Andre, and Jenny Andre). Tsiigehtchic	July 4, 1994	Ingrid Kritsch	
GGPN-1994-contact-001	8	Annie Norbert and Erika Kritsch waiting for boats to be readied for the river trip to the Mackenzie Delta. Tsiigehtchic	July 4, 1994	Ingrid Kritsch	
GGPN-1994-contact-001	9	Noel Andre on Łèth T'urh Kak (The Flats), Tsiigehtchic	July 4, 1994	Ingrid Kritsch	Łèth T'urh Kak (Mud flats-on it). Also known as 1) Łeth Chyàh 2). The Flats 3) Łeth Chyàh Kak. This place name refers to the flats area below the community of Tsiigehtchic.
GGPN-1994-contact-001	10	Noel Andre on Łèth T'urh Kak (The Flats), Tsiigehtchic	July 4, 1994	Ingrid Kritsch	Łèth T'urh Kak (Mud flats-on it). Also known as 1) Łeth Chyàh 2). The Flats 3) Łeth Chyàh Kak. This place name refers to the flats area below the community of Tsiigehtchic.