

RESEARCH PROJECT SUMMARY

Explore, describe and develop a methodology to best account Indigenous perspectives on the value of Land Guardianship in Mountain Regions and the contributions to the biodiversity and well-being of their Nations

This project aimed to improve our understanding of how the Indigenous Land Guardian, Steward and Monitor programs are creating impacts within mountain systems, ecosystems, mountain biodiversity, traditional food and medicinal sources for Indigenous communities. Indigenous-led conservation and stewardship can be a source of important and effective investments for economic stimulus in communities, particularly where jobs related to conservation represent a proportionally important sector of employment. With the growing demand for training and building capacity in communities with Land Guardians, understanding the value and benefits of these programs will be imperative as part of a broader vision in which practicing and strengthening Indigenous culture creates sustainable livelihoods and opportunities for communities to share their culture, land, and water with other Canadians. Federal investments in Indigenous-led conservation can also lead to a boost in the local and regional economies due to capital and services needs related to the projects.

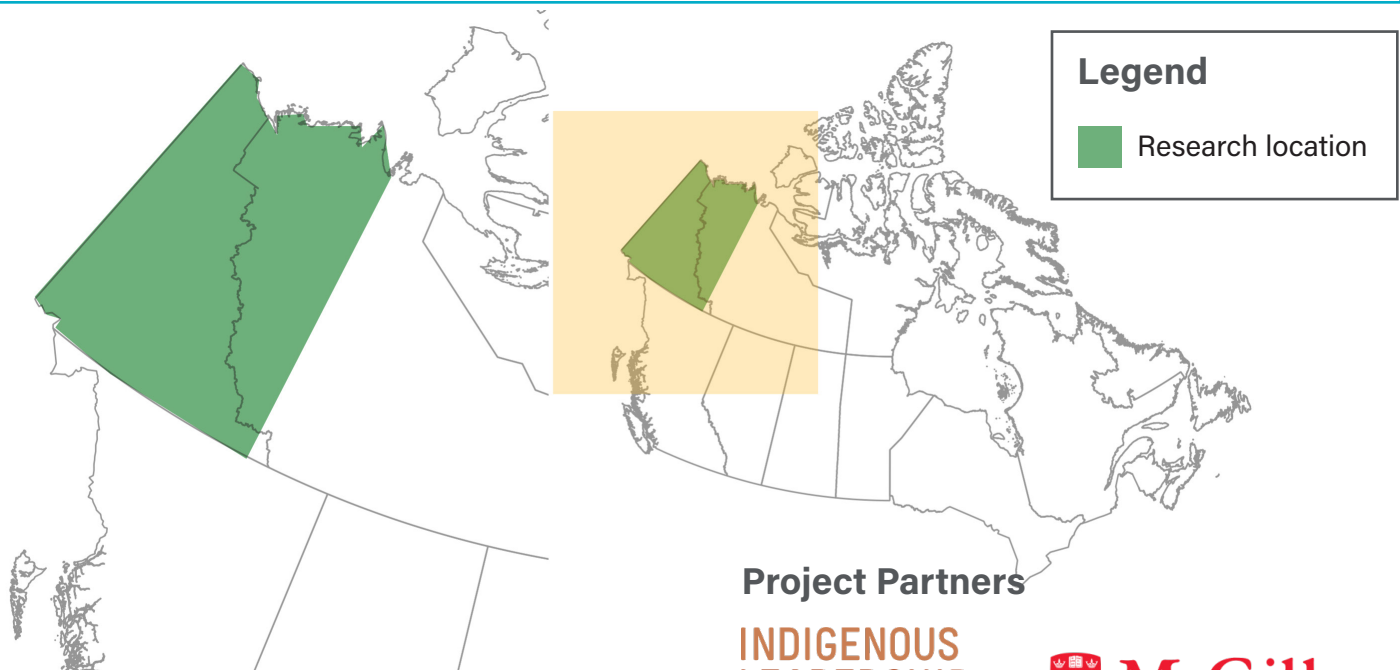
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Project Partners

INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE



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Goals

Explore the benefits that Land Guardians bring to the community, the land and biodiversity, climate change mitigation, and Canada's Reconciliation goals, as well as understanding the challenges that Land Guardians face.

Objectives

- Advance the role of both Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, doing and being in evidence-based decision-making.
- Create opportunities for interdisciplinary and inter-cultural learning, particularly for Indigenous tainees as well as knowledge dissemination.

Key Outcomes

- We identified successful practices amongst different Land Guardians programs across the Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories, and Labrador and shared good practices with other Land Guardians.
- We identified key challenges that Land Guardians face and discussed with a diverse group of knowledge holders different ways in which we can better support them.
- We identified common needs that must be addressed for Guardians training programs.
- We collected a vast knowledge base showing gratitude and purpose from the Guardians and their communities. Guardians expressed loving their work and how their position made them, their families, and their communities more connected to the land. Elders came together and brought stories and shared cultural traditions. The connectivity to the land became stronger by creating space for Land Guardians to share their stories from across the country.
- We were also able to demonstrate how to conduct and use story-telling interviews for Western data analysis in Indigenous-led research. We brought Elders and youth together, both in person and via Zoom, to create spaces for them to share knowledge in circles, showing how research methods can be designed using Indigenous ways.

Key achievements

- Demonstrating the value of land guardianship and Indigenous-led research in advancing key goals for Canada, including the climate adaptation agenda and international conservation targets, contributing to economic, health, community well-being, and biodiversity conservation.
- Identifying the types of training that guardians need so that guardian curricula can be developed to support culturally appropriate, economically feasible programs that are effective at conserving biodiversity.

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