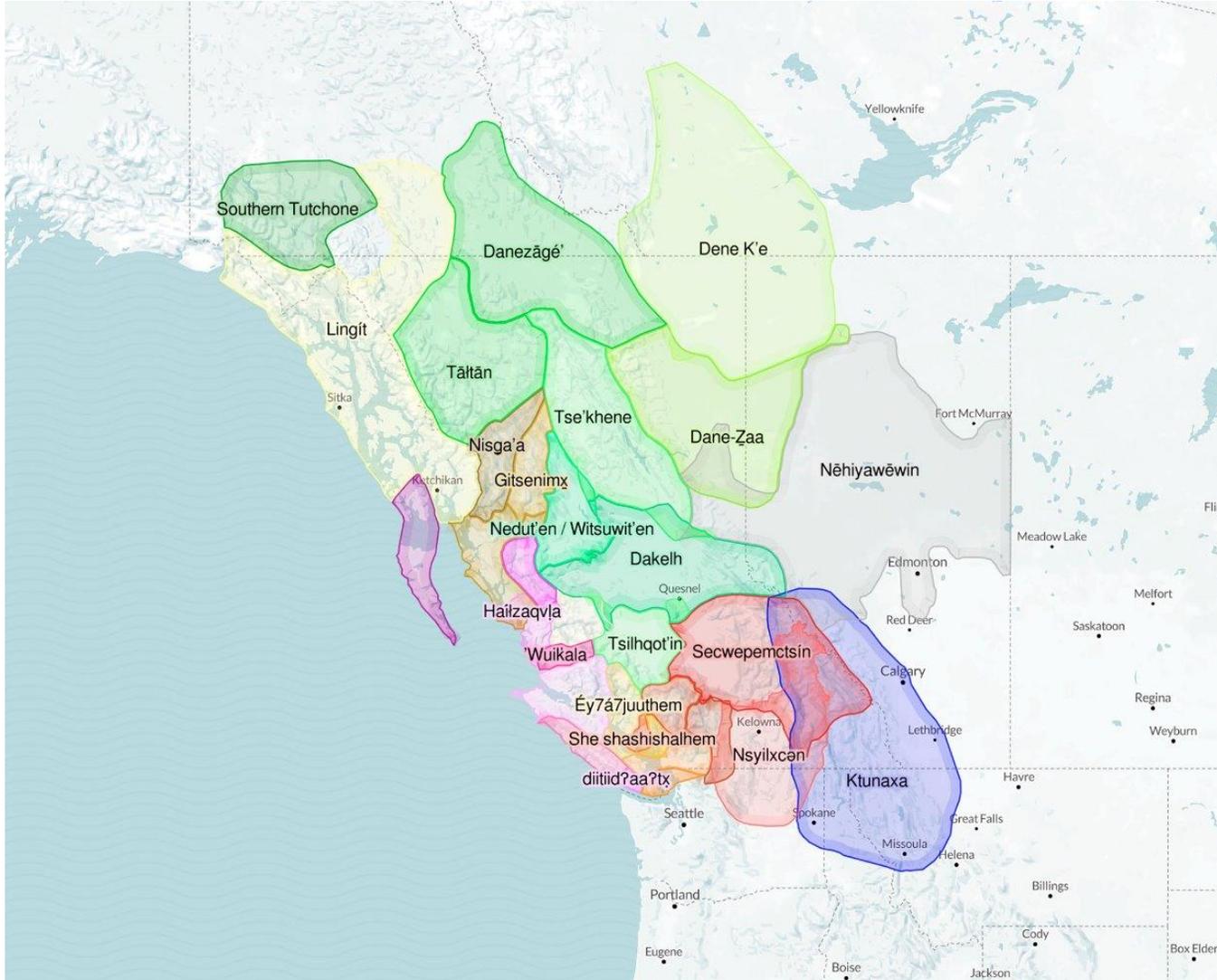


Territory Acknowledgments

Cultural Safety and Humility, Indigenous Health & Rural and Remote Operations
August 2025



Inherent Rights and Title of First Nations in “British Columbia”



- First Nations (or tribal or sovereign Nations') territories stretch to every inch of this province.
- Inherent rights, rooted in connection to lands and waters, have never been ceded or surrendered.
- Long-standing Indigenous laws and systems are integrally tied to the lands and waters of these territories.
- Place-based approach is critical.
- Inherent rights are upheld in international, national, and provincial law.





Intention Setting

- Our intentions today are to provide, and co-create a supportive environment for exchanging knowledge, conversations and to support one another in solidarity
- We are coming today with open hearts and open minds, and hope to be received in the same way
- We hope to assist in you in digging deeper into your learning, to increase curiosity, and strengthen your understanding of why Territory Acknowledgements are an important and positive action towards reconciliation.



Learning Objectives

- What is a Territory Acknowledgment and why are they important?
- Understanding Indigenous terminology, key terms, and the importance of language and pronunciation
- Personalizing our Territory Acknowledgement
- Commitment to practice



What is a Territory Acknowledgement?

A Territory Acknowledgement is an act of reconciliation. It's a way of honouring the deep and ongoing relationship between Indigenous peoples and their traditional lands and waters. It also invites us to pause and consider our own place in that relationship, and to recognize the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples to the land.



Why Acknowledge Traditional Territory?

“Territory Acknowledgements are a subtle way to speak to the truth of historical and ongoing processes of colonialism, and to signal the need for systemic change in society”

*-FNHA- Information booklet-
Territorial Acknowledgements*



The shell middens at Ba'as (Blunden Harbour) where 'Nakwaxda'xw members sustainably stewarded their territories for millennia. Today the Gwa'sala-"Nakwaxda'xw Nations are once again stewarding the natural and cultural resources of their lands and waters. Photo by Brodie Guy.

“I was told Territory Acknowledgements are tokenistic, why keep doing them?”



Personalizing your acknowledgment

Curiosity - Re-learn the diverse nations that existed and continue to exist across Turtle Island

Reflexivity – Root yourself in the place you are gathered

Humility – be patient with yourself and others, practice with peers, be open to feedback

Curiosity - Re-learn and Research

What is the true history of this territory?

What are the impacts of colonialism here?

What is this First Nation known for?
How do they define themselves?

Learn traditional place names & learn how to pronounce them

Attend open to the public Indigenous events, learning opportunities, and other educational opportunities

Read/listen to Indigenous voices

Reflection – Root Yourself



What is my relationship to this territory, land and water?



How did I come to be here?



What is my purpose here?

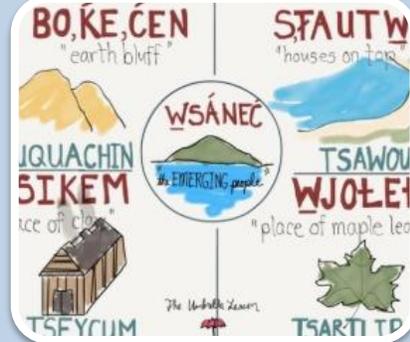


How do I benefit from living on these unceded ancestral & ongoing First Nations territories?



What intentions do I have to disrupt and dismantle colonialism beyond a Territorial Acknowledgement?

Humility, practice, and patience



Ensure your TA comes from a good place, also, expect to feel uncomfortable, embrace this discomfort

Don't shy away from using proper names

Practice your pronunciation with your peers and colleagues

Include a living statement, written in present tense

Don't be afraid to ask questions, and don't be afraid to "get it wrong"

Key Terms



Unceded

- First Nations people never ceded or legally signed away their lands to the Crown or Canada



Traditional

- The geographic area identified by a First Nation as the land they and/or their ancestors traditional occupied and used



Ongoing

- Continuing; still in progress. In this case, the traditional lands and territories that First Nations have historically and continue to inhabit and utilize



Uninvited Guest

- Traditionally protocols would have been in place, one would have introduced themselves, shared intentions for being here, and waited to be invited



Indigenous

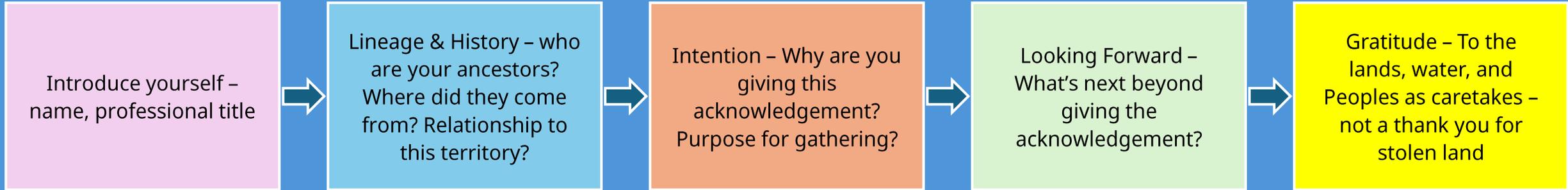
- Used as an umbrella term used to refer to First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada. Each group has its own unique history, language, culture and spiritual beliefs



Three Cultural Families on Vancouver Island

- Vancouver Island is home to 50 First Nations communities that make up three distinct cultural families: Coast Salish, Nuuchah-nulth and Kwakwaka'wakw

Personal Territory Acknowledgement – Quick Guide



Keep it authentic

Speak from the Heart

Let it evolve over time

An acknowledgement is an act of reconciliation – from the heart – to honour the Peoples, lands, and waters, and their continuing relationship. It's a work in progress that grows as you do!

Resources

- Whose land am I on? www.native-land.ca.
- Pronunciation guide: [**A Guide to the Pronunciation of Indigenous Communities and Organizations in BC.**](#)
 - **Or search the nation on YouTube to hear it pronounced.
- Residential School Interactive map: [**Interactive Map – NCTR**](#)
- Learn about Lekwungen Territory: [**lək wəŋən Traditional Territory — Songhees Nation**](#)
- Resources for Settlers: [**Settlers – WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council \(wsanec.com\)**](#)
- Poem – A Digital Land Acknowledgement by Deirdre Lee
 - [**A Digital Land Acknowledgement Existing As a Settler On Unceded Land: A Guide by Deirdre Lee | Are.na**](#)
- Len Pierre:
 - [**Transformative Territory Acknowledgment Guide – 1 hour webinar**](#)
 - [**Transformative Territory Acknowledgment Guide**](#)
- FNHA Information booklet, [**Territory Acknowledgment**](#)
- Indigenous Corporate Training: [**https://www.ictinc.ca/first-nation-protocol-on-traditional-territory**](https://www.ictinc.ca/first-nation-protocol-on-traditional-territory)
- Baroness von Sketch Show: [**Land acknowledgement: Baroness von Sketch Show**](#) (2019, October 14). CBC Comedy.
- [**Amnesty International Land, Water, and Territorial Acknowledgements**](#)

**huy ch q'u
λekoo λekoo!
gilakas'la
maarsii
nakumeeek
Thank you**

