

METLAKATLA FIRST NATION

Presentation to the Enbridge Northern
Gateway Joint Review Panel

Presented by: Chief Harold Leighton,
February 17, 2012



Metlakatla / Coast Tsimshian History

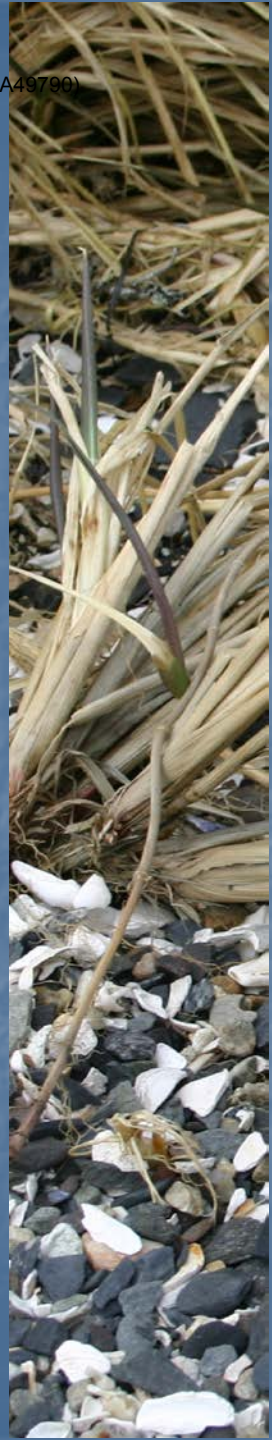
The members of the Metlakatla and Lax Kw'alaams Bands are the present-day descendants of nine organized aboriginal societies, presently called "tribes". The nine tribes have been organized societies since time immemorial. The tribes are the Gispaxlo'ots, Gitsaxlaał, Gitlaan, Gits'iis, Gitnaxangiik, Gitando, Gilutzau, Gitnadoiks, and the Gitwilgyots. Since contact and throughout the literature we are referred to as the nine tribes of the Coast Tsimshian or the Coast Tsimshian.

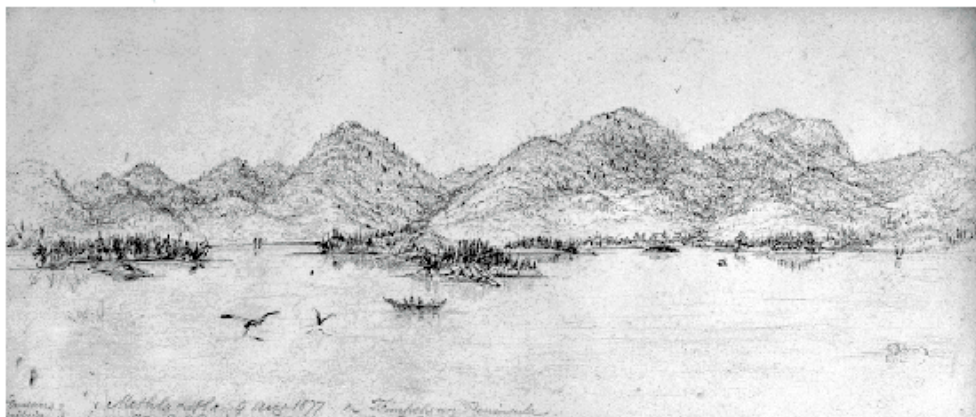


Metlakatla / Coast Tsimshian History

Under the Canadian *Indian Act* system, the nine tribes were subsumed into Metlakatla and Lax Kw'alaams. The Bands are the legal representatives of the members of the tribes and are the lawful holders of the collective aboriginal rights and title held by the tribes. However, each of the tribes continues to exist today as a distinctive traditional political government.

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Title: Methlacatla[Metlakatla] On Tsimshean[Tsimshian] ...



Indian burial ground Near Metlakatla, BC



Title: Metlakatla mission church.



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Each tribe owned and occupied a village site in Metlakatla Pass. Every House of the nine tribes owns territory along the Skeena River and its tributaries, each with a summer village and several resource-use camps throughout the territory. Territorial boundaries correspond to watershed boundaries.

The Coast Tsimshian tribal/clan/house system is an ancient Coast Tsimshian institution that involves true territorial ownership and tribal responsibilities. A territory is a clan stewardship area which is owned by the holder of a chiefly name that is passed down ritually from generation to generation and carries the entitlement of ownership of the watershed that comprises the territory.

The ayaawx, Coast Tsimshian traditional law, is clear that the territory owners of each generation have both the right to dictate use of the resources of their watershed and an obligation to protect living things in their stewardship areas, a duty which the Coast Tsimshian people recognize and their leaders are obligated to respect.



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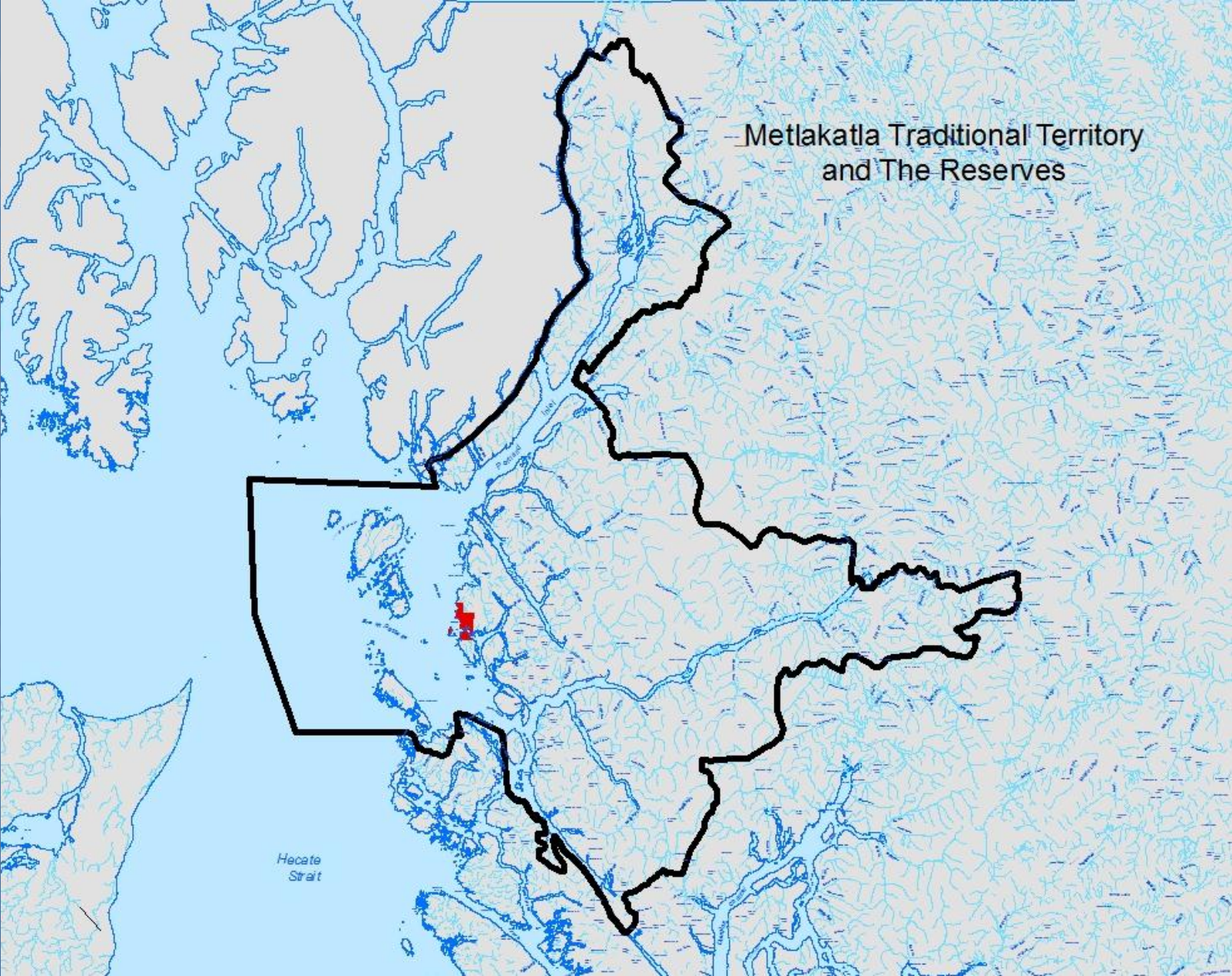
The people of Metlakatla still live off the land and waters. While tools and technologies have changed dramatically over the last two centuries, Metlakatla's annual cycle and dietary patterns remain largely unchanged except as restricted by declining stocks and pollution.

The resources of Metlakatla are as basic to Metlakatla life today as they were 150 or 500 years ago.

The heritage features of our territory remain important to us as modern day Tsimshian and our traditional feast tables must still include several types of fish, wild meats, sprouts, roots, berries and other traditional delicacies.

Metlakatla Territory

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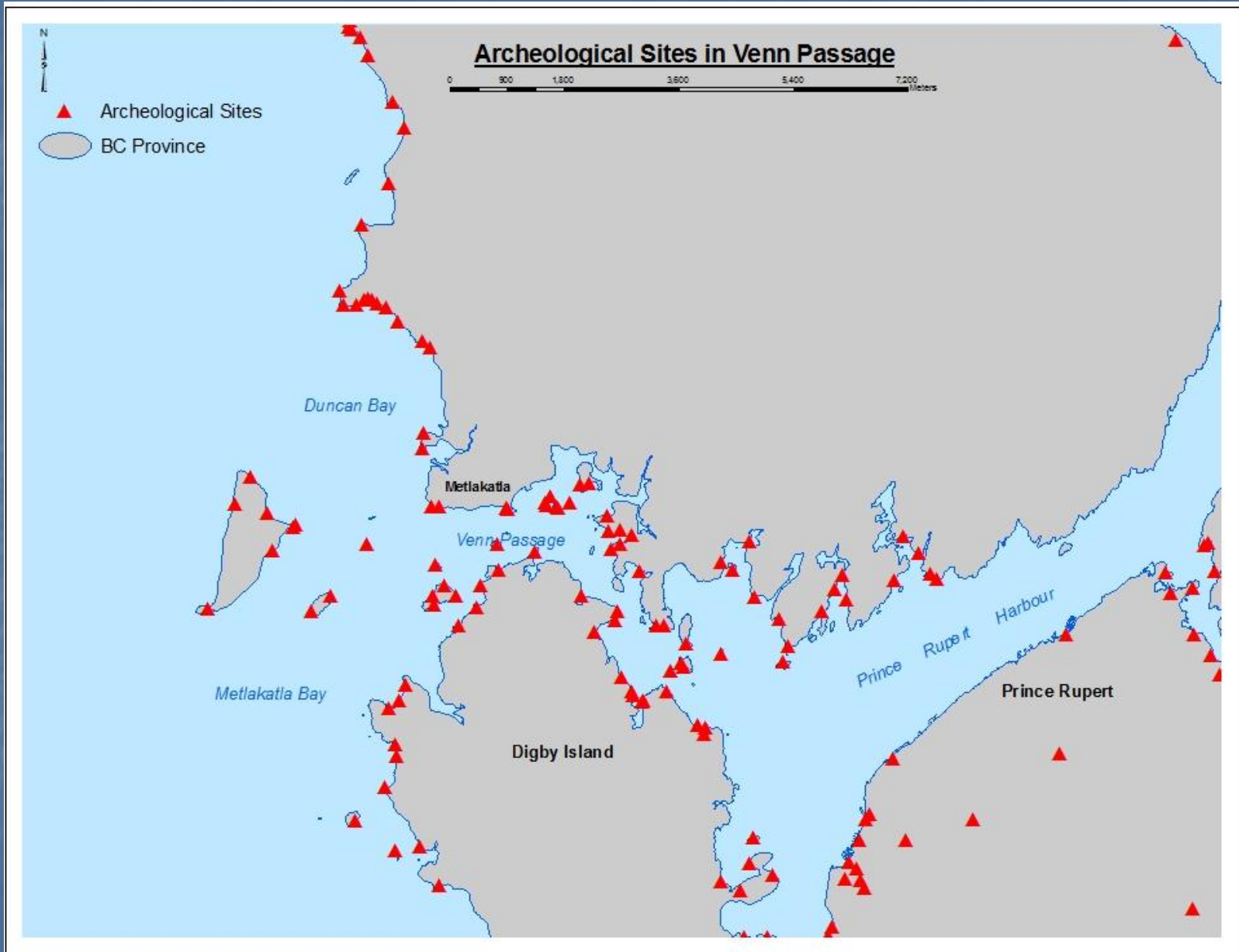


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HEARTLAND OF THE COAST TSIMSHIAN



Archeological Sites in Venn Passage



Boardwalk Site Excavation 1970s



"The Man Who Fell From Heaven" *Petroglyph*

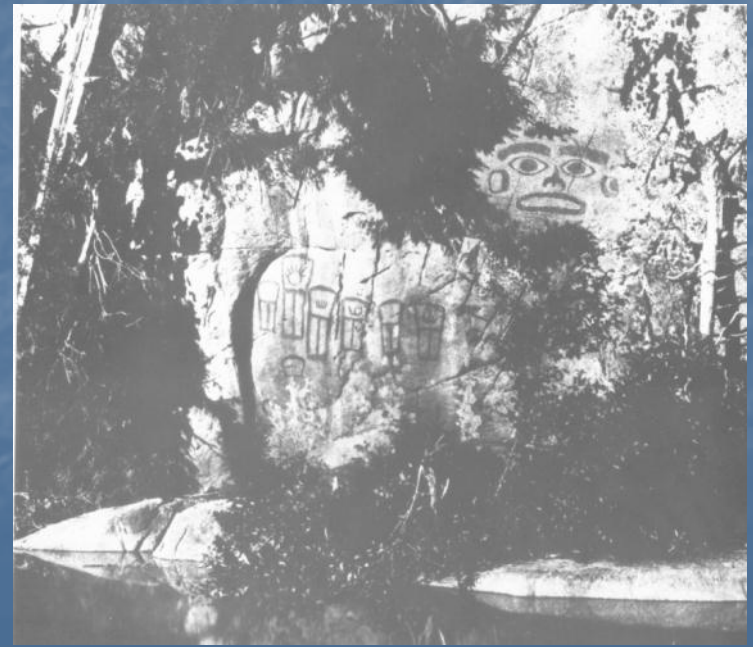
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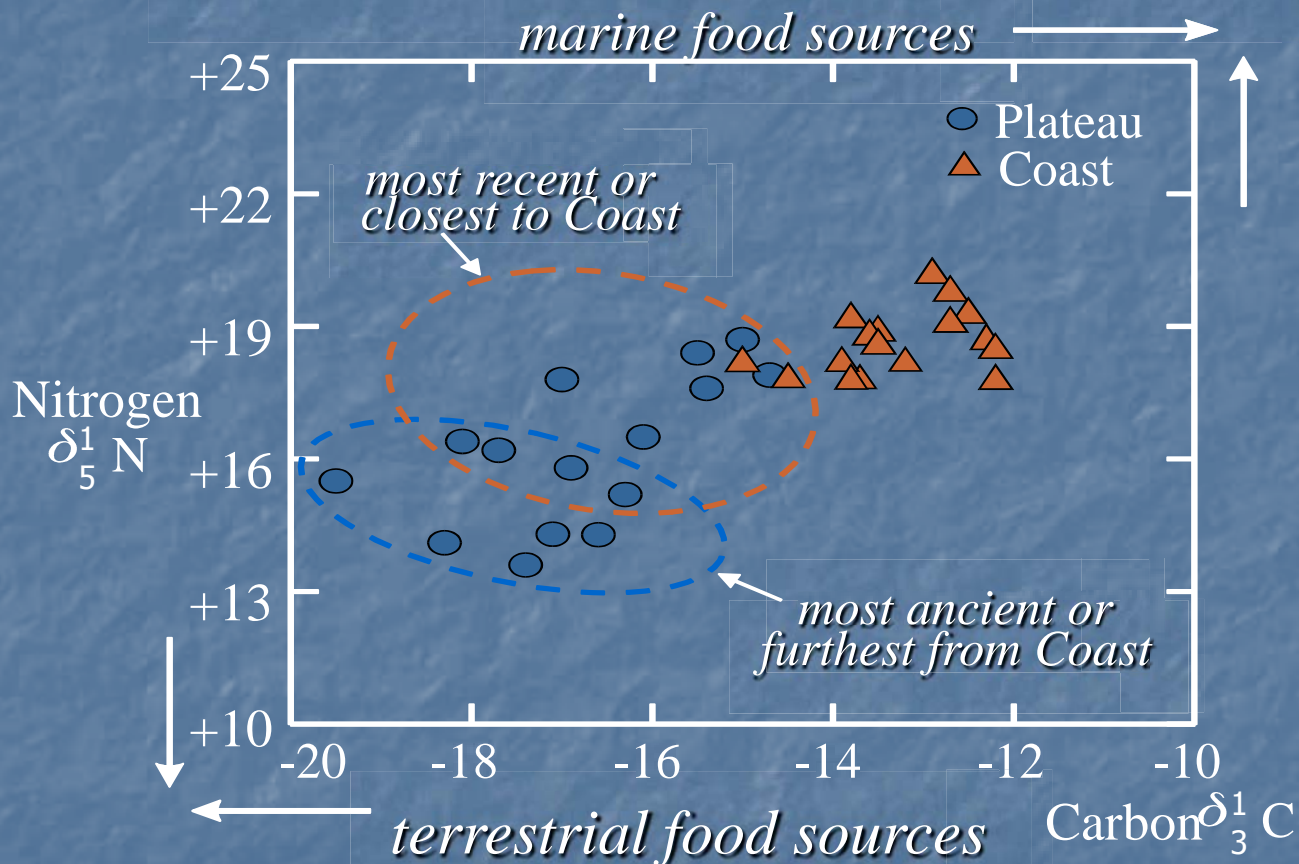
"The Tsimshian story associated with this carving describes how a young initiate in search of a spirit guardian returned to Metlakatla after the appropriate period of fasting and seclusion with an account of his experiences in the spirit world on high. As proof of his supernatural journey he led the townspeople to the spot where he landed back on earth after falling through a hole in the sky, on a rock shoal that bore his life sized imprint." G.F. Macdonald, October 1972.

Metlakatla is participating in a multi-year DNA analysis study conducted by the University of Illinois in conjunction with the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the University of BC.

This DNA project is looking at the genetic links between modern Metlakatla members and ancient human skeletal remains excavated from archaeological sites in the Prince Rupert Harbour area.



Stable Isotopes = Dietary Protein



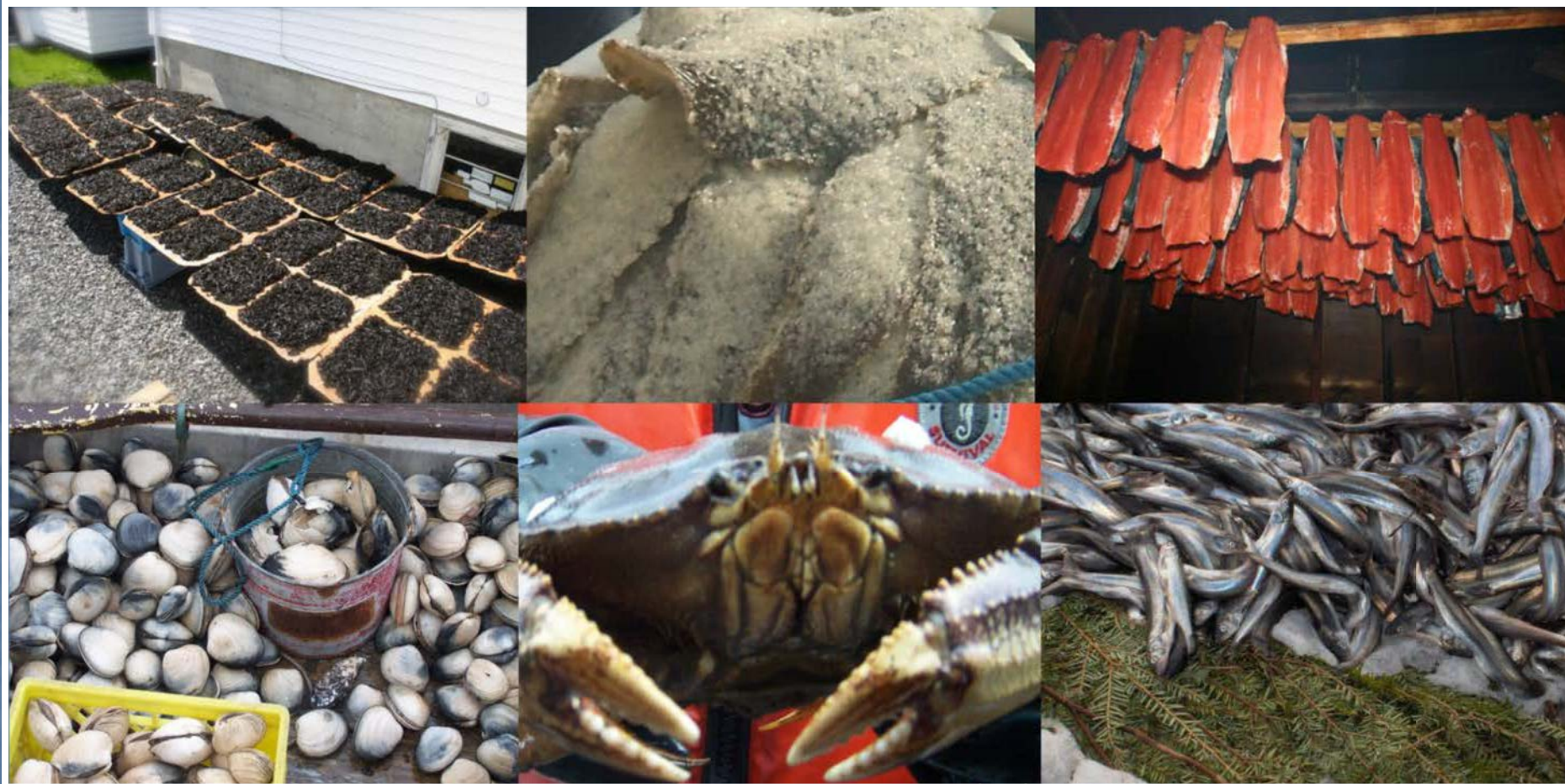
March 2007

Research shows that Metlakatla's marine use and adaptation continues from the 10,000 year old sites in the Dundas-Melville area to the 8000 year old site on Lucy Island and through to the 6000 year old site to the 1000 year old and present day sites in the Prince Rupert Harbour and Metlakatla Pass.

This archaeological research is extremely important to Metlakatla because it uses modern technology to verify thousands of years of our adawx.

Metlakatla members continue to harvest the same resources found in these ancient sites in the present day and want to continue to do so in the future.

Examples Of Metlakatla Traditional Foods



Metlakatla Today

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- Metlakatla Village is located 7 km NW of Prince Rupert
- 840 members on and off reserve



METLAKATLA GOVERNING COUNCIL - VISION STATEMENT

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“Metlakatla First Nation is a progressive community recognized as a leader in improving the lives of its members while strengthening its Tsimshian identity and culture. Metlakatla is celebrated for being pro-active in meeting community needs, for making decisions that lead to a healthy, sustainable future and for having positive relationships with others. ”



- Metlakatla is governed by the Metlakatla Election Code
- Metlakatla Governing Council 7 Members:
 - 3 Council Members Elected On Reserve
 - 3 Council Members Elected within the territory
 - Chief elected from Total Membership
- Twenty-one Reserves totaling 7183.606 hectares



Metlakatla Reserves Summary List

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Metlakatla Only:

- Tsimpsean 1/2 South
- Tugwell Island
- Tuck Inlet
- Rushton Island
- Avery Island
- Squaderee
- Shoowahtlans
- Wilnaskancaud
- Kloiya Bay
- Edye

Shared (Lax Kw'alaams):

- Willoclough
- Dashken
- Kshaoom
- Meanlaw
- Point Veitch
- Khyex
- Kilcutseen
- Khtahda
- Scuttsap
- Red Bluff
- Lakelse

Most of these reserves are nearby the pipeline or shipping route, or have the potential to be impacted by cumulative impacts and accidents associated with the proposed Enbridge project.

Metlakatla reserves are spread throughout the territory from the Eastern part on the Lakelse Lake down along the Skeena River to its Estuary, north to the mouth of the Nass River and to the outer Islands of Stephens, Rushton, Avery, Triple and to the South of the Stephens Island at Edye Island.

All of these reserves were set aside for the purpose of harvesting salmon, shellfish and all other marine and terrestrial resources for the Metlakatla people. Metlakatla members still regularly access these reserves for resource use and harvesting.



Metlakatla's wellbeing (food, livelihood and health) is inextricably tied to the wellbeing of the natural environment. The Metlakatla people continue to rely on the natural resources abundant in our coastal and riverine territories.

In our culture, we do not separate humans from the ecosystem. To sustain our existence as Coast Tsimshian people, we must sustain and protect the existence of the resources we rely upon.



Metlakatla is also working to realize our existing rights to use, access, and sustainably manage all locations and resources in their territory.

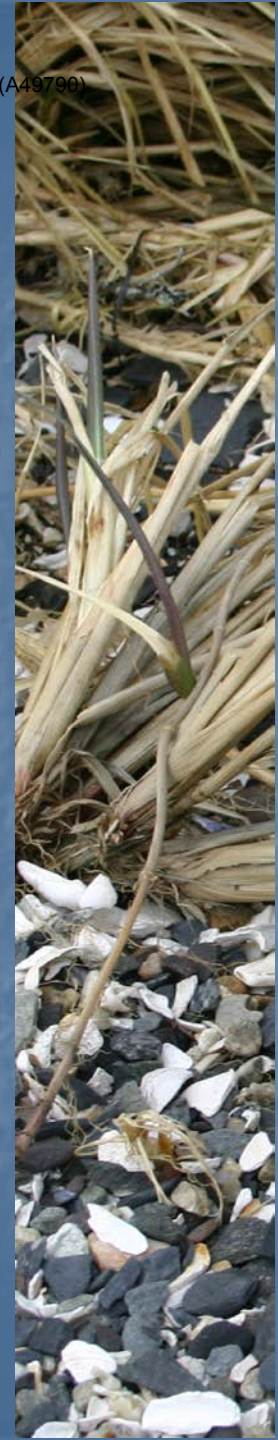
Metlakatla is a signatory to a number of agreements with BC and Canada, including:

- Ongoing: Treaty Negotiations, Marine use Planning
- Dec 10, 2009: Reconciliation Protocol: Official recognition of Metlakatla's Aboriginal Rights and Title
- Oct 18, 2007: Protected Area Collaborative Management Agreement
- June 07, 2006: Strategic Land Use Planning Agreement
- 2006: Land and Resource Protocol Agreement





*"Governments
need to
recognize
Metlakatla
authority and
jurisdiction
over our
territories".*



"Our people speak about how important hunting, fishing, and harvesting activities are to Metlakatla, and emphasize these activities as being central to our identity as Metlakatla people".



METLAKATLA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (A49790)

- VISION STATEMENT

"Metlakatla Development Corporation is a major economic force in Northwest British Columbia supporting growth of the community, the prosperity of its citizens and the maintenance of Tsimshian culture through its numerous businesses. Sustainable development principles addressing social, cultural, economic and environmental factors are applied to all businesses/investments"

"Stepping forward with the smallest environmental footprint"



METLAKATLA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

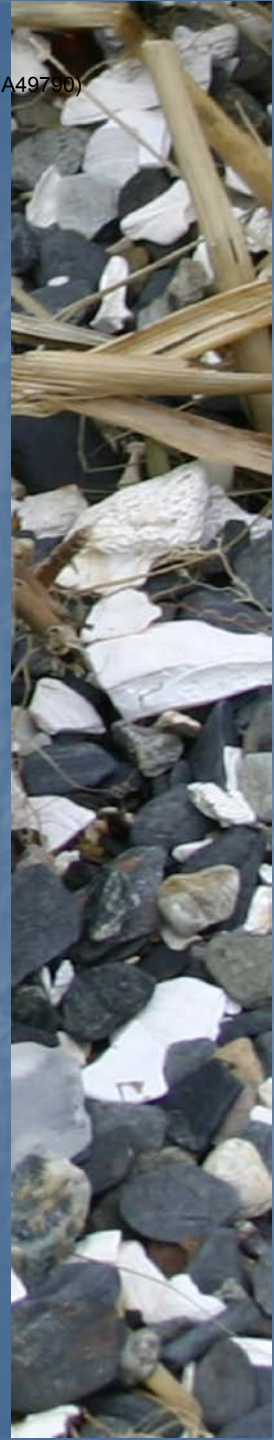
Successful Commercial Marine Ventures:

- Seashore Charters Tours
- Herring Roe-on-Kelp
- Coastal Shellfish
- Metlakatla Trail



Remainder of the presentations:

1. Traditional use of Metlakatla territory and resources with a focus on the marine locations near to the shipping route
2. Metlakatla's current use and reliance on a healthy marine environment and experiences on the land and water
3. The cultural and community importance of a healthy environment
4. Present day processes and visions for the future
5. Closing comments



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22/08/2007



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