

Mapping the Way



mapping the way

Mapping the Way is an initiative that celebrates and raises awareness about Yukon **First Nation** land claims and self-government.

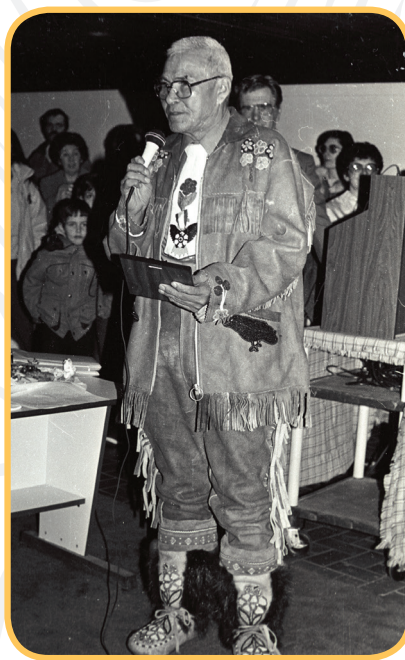
This initiative is a partnership between the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon, the Council of Yukon First Nations and all 11 Self-Governing Yukon First Nations. These 14 parties work together to implement land claims and self-government in the territory.

Settling land claims and self-government agreements in the Yukon involved decades of hard work, innovation and commitment by leaders and visionaries. This display shares some of the stories of the people and events that helped map the way to a new governance landscape for all Yukoners.

The term First Nation came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word Indian, which was considered offensive by some. The three Aboriginal peoples in Canada are First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

“The only way we feel we can have a future is to settle our land claim ... that will return to us our lost pride, self-respect and economic independence. We are not here for a handout. We are here with a plan...”

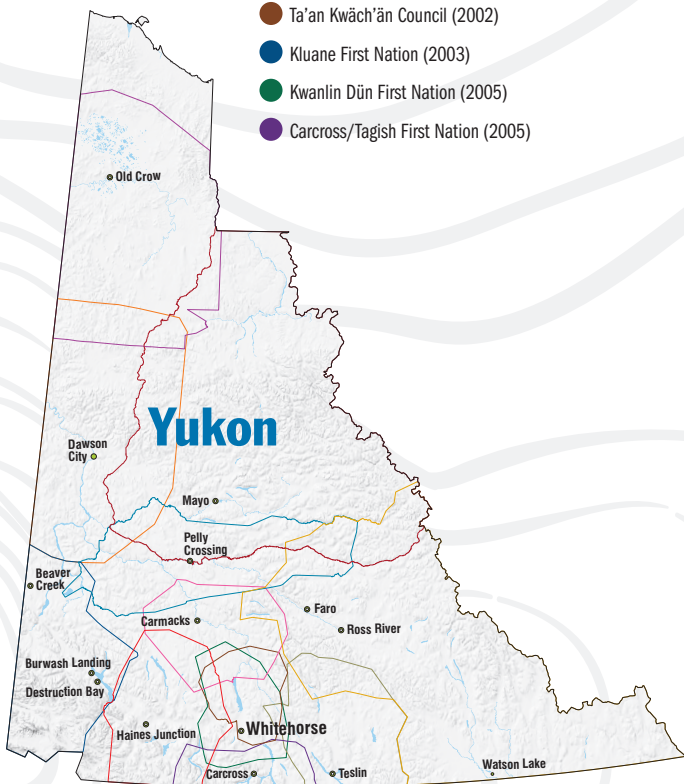
Elijah Smith in a speech to then Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1973.



Elijah Smith, 1987. Photo: Whitehorse Star

The Land

- Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (1993)
- First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (1993)
- Teslin Tlingit Council (1993)
- Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (1993)
- Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation (1997)
- Selkirk First Nation (1997)
- Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (1998)
- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (2002)
- Kluane First Nation (2003)
- Kwanlin Dün First Nation (2005)
- Carcross/Tagish First Nation (2005)



Traditional Territory is the land that a First Nation historically used and occupied. This land was determined by the First Nation and defined in its Final Agreement. **This map outlines the boundaries of Yukon First Nation traditional territories.**

First Nation use of its traditional territory began long before the Yukon's boundaries were established. The traditional territories of some First Nations extend west into Alaska, south into British Columbia and east into the Northwest Territories.

Although a First Nation does not own all the land within its traditional territory, the First Nation and its citizens do have a number of rights within their respective traditional territory, for example, the right to hunt and fish.

Settlement Land is the land that a First Nation owns and manages as defined by its Final Agreement.

The Journey



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First Nation people have lived in the Yukon for thousands of years.



Hà Kus Teyea Celebration. Photo: Government of Yukon

1876

The **Indian Act** comes into effect in Canada.

1898

The **Klondike Gold Rush** brings thousands of gold-seekers to the Yukon.

1902

Ta'an Kwäch'än **Chief Jim Boss** recognizes the effect that newly arrived settlers have on Yukon First Nations and writes to the Government of Canada requesting compensation for his people's loss of land and hunting grounds.



Jim Boss, 1910
Photo: MacBride Museum of Yukon History collection, 1989-58-1

"...the Indians are unable to subsist as they were formerly able to do... He [Jim Boss] says 'tell the King very hard we want something for our Indians because they take our land and our game.'"

From a letter Jim Boss wrote through lawyer T.W. Jackson to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, dated January 13, 1902.

1942

The **Alaska-Canada Highway** is constructed, further opening the Yukon to outside influences.

1968-1973

Yukon First Nations come together through organizations including the Yukon Native Brotherhood, the Yukon Association of Non-Status Indians and the Council for Yukon Indians.

1969

The Government of Canada puts forward the **White Paper**, which is rejected by First Nations and is a catalyst for them to work together for the recognition of their rights.

1973

The Supreme Court of Canada's decision in the **Calder case** prompts the Government of Canada to develop a new policy to address Aboriginal land claims.

Yukon land claim negotiations begin when Elijah Smith and Yukon First Nation leaders present **Together Today for our Children Tomorrow** to the Prime Minister of Canada.

1974-1979

Intermittent negotiations occur between the Government of Canada and the Council for Yukon Indians. The Government of Yukon joins the negotiation process in 1979.



Photo: Canada

"I could say I lived through a lot of the hardship. I lived through the Indian Act.... It took forever. It took a long time. And personally, I healed as I went through this whole process. I came out to be a stronger person, a driving force."

Judy Gingell, former Chairperson of the Council for Yukon Indians and a signatory to the **Umbrella Final Agreement**.

1984

An **Agreement in Principle** is negotiated. It is later rejected by Yukon First Nations due to several concerns, including the absence of a self-government component.

1993

The Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon and the Council for Yukon Indians sign the **Umbrella Final Agreement**.

1993-2005

11 Yukon First Nations sign **Final and Self-Government Agreements**.

Together Today for our Children Tomorrow

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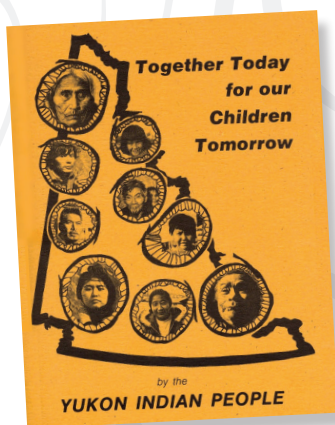
In the 1960s and 1970s First Nation people throughout Canada were finding a common voice and working together for the recognition of their rights. In the Yukon, the Yukon Native Brotherhood (YNB) was formed in 1968.

On February 14, 1973, the YNB, led by Elijah Smith, along with a delegation of Yukon First Nation leaders, presented *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow: A Statement of Grievances and an Approach to Settlement by the Yukon Indian People* to then Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau.



Yukon First Nation delegation in front of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, Ontario, in 1973
Photo: Yukon Archives. Judy Gingell collection, 98/74, 1

This ground-breaking document was developed in close consultation with Yukon First Nation Elders and community members. It laid out the past and present state of Yukon First Nations, and made recommendations for a better future, including land and cash settlements.



“This settlement is for our children, and our children’s children, for many generations to come. All of our programs and the guarantee we seek in our settlement are to protect them from a repeat of today’s problems in the future. You cannot talk to us about a bright new tomorrow when so many of our people are cold, hungry and unemployed. A bright new tomorrow is what we feel we can build when we get a fair and just settlement.”

Together Today for our Children Tomorrow, 1973

Prime Minister Trudeau accepted the statement on behalf of the Government of Canada, and *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow* became the basis for negotiating Yukon First Nation land claims.

“There’s all the 12 Chiefs from the Yukon, when that document was presented, *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*... on February 14. We laughed about it after a while—we gave Trudeau a nice Valentine’s present.”



Sam Johnston, Teslin Tlingit Council Elder, former Chief and former Member of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.
Voices of Vision: Yukon Aboriginal Self-Government podcast series.

In 1973, the Council for Yukon Indians was established to negotiate land claims. It brought together the Yukon Native Brotherhood and the Yukon Association of Non-Status Indians to represent all Yukon First Nation people and negotiate land claims on their behalf.



Meeting of the Council for Yukon Indians, “Together Today for our Children Tomorrow”, circa 1973-1975. Photo: 2006.23.1, Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in Archives

The Agreements



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Umbrella Final Agreement signing ceremony. Photo: Canada

In 1993, the Council for Yukon Indians, the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon signed the historic *Umbrella Final Agreement* (UFA).

The *Umbrella Final Agreement*, built on the principles introduced by *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*, was the first step in the Yukon's modern land claim settlement process. It acted as the framework for negotiating individual Yukon First Nation Final and Self-Government Agreements.

The *Umbrella Final Agreement* includes chapters that address land, compensation, self-government, and the formation of boards and committees to provide community-based input to government decision-making.

Between 1993 and 2005, 11 Yukon First Nations signed a land claim

(Final Agreement) and a **Self-Government Agreement** with the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon.

Final Agreements define the rights of a First Nation and its people to their Settlement Land and within their Traditional Territory. For example, these agreements include heritage, fish and wildlife, non-renewable resources, water management, forestry, taxation, financial compensation, economic development measures and the amount of land that a First Nation owns and manages. Final Agreements are modern-day treaties protected by the Constitution of Canada. They also ensure First Nation participation on the boards and committees outlined in the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

Self-Government Agreements define the power First Nations have to make laws and decisions that affect their Settlement Land and their citizens. These powers are similar to those of a Canadian province or territory. Examples include education, the administration of justice, health, adoption, zoning, training programs and First Nation languages.

“I really see this as the opportunity to move forward ... Self-Governing First Nations are very much comparable to provincial or territorial governments. They have jurisdictional authority to pass their own laws; to manage their own affairs.”



John Burdek, former Chairperson of Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (TKC) and signatory to the TKC Self-Government and Final Agreements.
Voices of Vision: Yukon Aboriginal Self-Government podcast series.

Self-Governing Yukon First Nations



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The Yukon is at the forefront of Aboriginal land claims and self-government in Canada, with approximately half of all such agreements in Canada.

The following 11 Yukon First Nations have settled their land claims and are self-governing. They are no longer administered by the *Indian Act*.

Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (1993)



Photo: Canada

First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (1993)



Photo: Canada

Teslin Tlingit Council (1993)



Photo: Canada

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (1993)

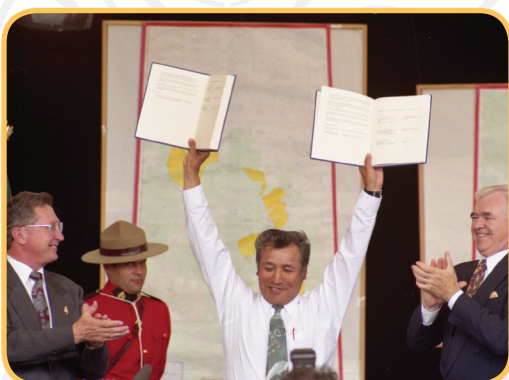


Photo: Canada

Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation (1997)



Photo: Canada

Selkirk First Nation (1997)



Photo: Canada

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (1998)



Photo: 2013.20.3.08, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Archives, Martha Kates Collection

Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (2002)



Photo: Canada

Kluane First Nation (2003)



Photo: Canada

Kwanlin Dün First Nation (2005)



Photo: Government of Yukon

Carcross/Tagish First Nation (2005)



Photo: Canada

Living the Agreements

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Yukon First Nation Final and Self-Government Agreements are being brought to life and implemented on a daily basis, to the benefit of all Yukoners.

The Kwanlin Dün First Nation Final Agreement provided for the development of the **Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre** on the Whitehorse waterfront. The centre symbolizes Kwanlin Dün's deep connection to the Yukon River.



Grand Opening of the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre on June 21, 2012. Photo: Fritz Mueller Photography



Air North plane displays the Mapping the Way logo in the sky above Whitehorse. Photo: Air North, Yukon's Airline/Simon Blakesley

The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Final Agreement made it possible for the First Nation to acquire a 49 per cent interest in **Air North, Yukon's Airline**. This investment provides economic sustainability for the First Nation and its citizens and a lifeline to Old Crow, the Yukon's only fly-in community.

Final Agreements provided for the protection of special areas such as **Tombstone Territorial Park**, which is a result of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Final Agreement.



Tombstone Territorial Park Government of Yukon - Fritz Mueller Photography

Da Ku, Our House in Southern Tutchone, recognizes and celebrates the cultural contributions and way of life of Champagne and Aishihik First Nations' (CAFN) peoples. The **Da Ku Cultural Centre** highlights the CAFN connection to the land. The Centre is located in Haines Junction on CAFN Settlement Land.



Da Ku Cultural Centre floor map of CAFN traditional territory. Photo: Champagne and Aishihik First Nations

Singletrack to Success is a project of Carcross/Tagish First Nation to develop a network of world-class mountain biking trails on its traditional territory. The trails are on land that was specifically selected during the First Nation's land claim negotiations and defined in the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement.



Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation is investing in its future generations. The First Nation has worked diligently with its Elders and other Northern Tutchone First Nations to develop books, school curriculum and lesson plans that preserve and honour **Northern Tutchone stories and knowledge** of traditional governance and laws.



As a result of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* (UFA), certain **Boards and Committees** allow Yukoners to provide input to decision-making. For example, the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, whose members are nominated by UFA signatories, is responsible for assessing impacts of proposed projects throughout the Yukon.



Archaeologists assess a proposed development site. Photo: Government of Yukon

Thank you

The Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon, the Council of Yukon First Nations, and all 11 Self-Governing Yukon First Nations gratefully acknowledge the leaders and visionaries, individuals and organizations, and Elders, youth and community members who came together to make Yukon First Nation land claims and Self-Government a reality for all Yukoners.



For more information about *Mapping the Way*, please visit: www.mappingtheway.ca

