

Partnering for Sustainable Resource Management

Newsletter 4
Spring 2006



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Dear Readers,

The year 2006 marks our third year of CURA funding. In this time, we've been making progress on both community and academic outcomes. Since 2004, we have employed eleven Tl'azt'enne as research assistants, and seven UNBC undergraduate students. We currently have three CURA funded graduate students who expect to graduate this summer, and plan to add five new students this September. We have also attracted additional funding for projects related to CURA and hired new researchers to work on them. CURA research is bringing information about Tl'azt'en history and values to a range of UNBC classes, including Aboriginal Geography, and Natural Resources Management Planning and Field Camp. CURA researchers have presented at a number of conferences, including the Aboriginal Education Research Forum in Winnipeg, the Western Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers, the National Aboriginal Forestry Association, and many more. We've published an academic article in *Forestry, an International Journal*, and a popular article in LINK. We will be delivering a community presentation this May to return our results to Tl'azt'enne. We look forward to producing more community-based research in the years ahead! See our website, <http://cura.unbc.ca> for more details.

~The CURA team

Community View

by Margaret Duncan, Tl'azt'en Research Assistant, *Improving Partnerships Stream*
John Prince Research Forest (JPRF) History Project

I've been working for CURA for 6 weeks and I have learned a lot during that time. The work I've been doing is very interesting and I have learned a new task everyday. During my time here I have learned how to index and archive documents. I hope to continue working on this project and I look forward to learning more about forestry and the JPRF.

The idea for JPRF got started in 1993, but it was not until 1999 that it was established as a research forest. Umit Kiziltan and the late John Prince worked together on the project. It is very interesting to see how the

JPRF came to be where it is at in the year 2006. It would be interesting to interview more people who knew exactly what was being said and done on the project in the early stages. I have spent many years working as a receptionist or secretary, but this kind of working is very new and interesting to me. I am hoping to work out in the field this summer with students, or maybe at the Cinnabar Resort teaching traditional values to the youth. There is so much out there for



kids to learn.

See page 8 to read more about the JPRF History Project...

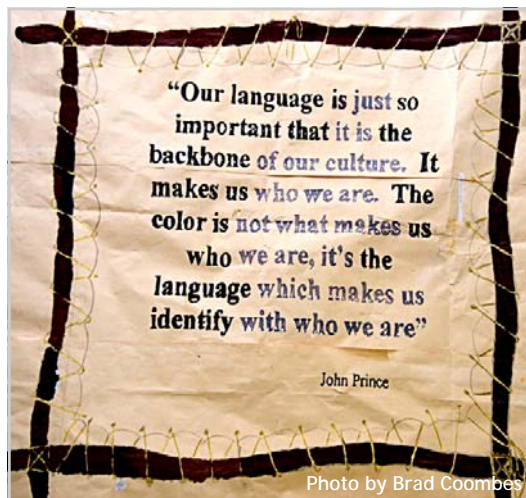
Navigating through place-names: the role of Dakelh geographical terms in water travel*

Karen Heikkila

Father Morice, one of the first missionaries to come to Dakelh (Carrier) country, described the land as “*par excellence* a land of lakes.”¹ The aptness of this statement is apparent from a quick look at the maps for this region. Journeying through the land, one is faced with its ‘aliveness’ and complexity — rivulets, creeks and rivers crisscross the land, feeding into or draining lakes and ponds of various sizes. Since water is such a boundless entity in Dakelh territory, it is perhaps not surprising that it plays a prominent role in survival and identity for the people of the Stuart-Trembleur Lakes region. People have fished in streams and lakes, as well as hunted and trapped along shorelines.² They have also depended on water for transport to other communities. Furthermore, water has played a symbolic role in people’s lives. Hydronyms (names of water features), usually of river mouths and

lake outlets, are used along with the suffix *-whut’enne* (meaning “people of a certain place”) to describe the different Dakelh communities.³ Nak’azdli whut’enne and Tache whut’enne are examples of ethnonyms that define as well as distinguish the groups of Dakelhne living by the outlet of Nak’al koh (Stuart River) and at the mouth of Duzdli koh (Tachie River). As bodies of water have been a means of sustenance, passage and social life for the Dakelh people, the significance of water in their worldview is appreciable from understanding the names given to places on or along water bodies as well as the water bodies themselves.

My CURA TEK stream research on place-names focused on a small portion of Tl’azt’en traditional territory, namely the John Prince Research Forest (JPRF), which is co-managed by Tl’azt’en Nation and UNBC. Part of the research was based on assembling Dakelh traditional knowledge associated with a sample of ten place-names from within and around the JPRF land base. This process required studying the geographical terms expressed in place-names and documenting the topographic, biotic, and cultural use descriptions for each place. The result was a discovery of patterns in the gathered information that were indicative of the logic behind place-naming. One pattern, in particular, concerns the role of referents in lake place-names as orientating devices for water travel.



*Dakelh spellings used in this article follow: Yinka Dene Language Institute. 1998 *Nak'albun/Dinghubun Whut'en Bughuni (Stuart/Trembleur Lake Carrier Lexicon)*. CLC Writing System version compiled by William Poser (Vanderhoof, BC: YDLI)

1 Morice, A.G. 1933 'Carrier Onomatology'. *American Anthropologist* 35, 632-658

2 Hudson, D. 1983 *Traplines and Timber: Social and Economic Change among Carrier Indians of Northern British Columbia*, PhD dissertation, University of Alberta

3 Kobrinsky, V. 1977 'The Tsimshianization of the Carrier Indians' in *Problems in The Prehistory of the North American Subarctic: The Athapaskan Question* eds J. Helmer, S. Van Dyke and F. Kense (Calgary: University of Calgary), 201-210

Geographical terms in toponyms that act as navigational aids are the place-name suffixes, *-che* and *tizdli*. These terms indicate whether a stream is flowing into or out of a lake, and in doing so, determines the direction of flow. The term *-che* signals the entry of a river into a lake system, while *tizdli* designates the start of a stream, that is, the point where waters flow out of a lake to become a creek or river.

Because TI'azt'en settlements are generally located at downriver sites, a movement downstream (with the flow or current) would indicate travelling towards 'home'. In contrast, a movement upstream (against the flow or current) would indicate travelling away from 'home', perhaps further inland to distant territories. The origin of the term *-che* seems to suggest the point where a stream empties into a lake. When functioning as a suffix, *-che* can be interpreted as 'tail', and as a geographical term in place-names, suggests the 'tail-end' or termination of streams upon their entry into lakes.

Tache, one of the TI'azt'en settlements located on the upstream of Nak'al bun (Stuart Lake), designates the place where Duzdli koh (Tachie River) pours into the lake at three different spots. The prefix, *ta* meaning 'three', and the suffix, *-che* meaning 'tail', simultaneously refer to Duzdli koh having three tails (or three mouths in the English idiom) when it flows into Nak'al bun.

The etymology of *tizdli* also hints at water flow but as a nominalized verb (a verb made into a noun), it does not merely designate a lake outlet but describes the

state of water at this particular end of the lake. All in the economy of one term, *tizdli* vividly demonstrates the outpouring of water from a lake, indicating the downstream pull of current as water streams out of a lake and begins existence as a river or creek. Nak'azdli, the settlement located on the downstream of Nak'al bun, designates the place where Nak'al koh (Stuart River) leaves the lake. Nak'azdli is the contracted form of `Utnak'a bulh *tizdli*, referring to the story of a battle between the people of Nak'azdli and the dwarves who lived in Nak'al (Mount Pope). As the story goes, the dwarves attacked with such a tremendous volley of arrows that a river began to flow, carrying the arrows downstream with the current of the outlet.

Knowledge of the *-che* and *tizdli* parts of lakes, together with knowledge of other geographical features (i.e., hills and peaks in the horizon, bays, headlands, etc.) that landmark these parts, can guide a traveller on water to both up- and downstream places. There is no real distinction between 'river' and 'creek' in Dakelh riverine place-names. The referent for stream in Dakelh toponyms, *-koh*, can indicate either a river or creek, the difference between the two only becoming apparent when it is known whether the stream is entering or exiting a lake. This knowledge is suggested in the terms *-che* and *tizdli*, which convey geographical information pertaining to direction, distance and conditions of waterways. These terms contextualize the particulars of places with regard to travel and subsistence, and more importantly, demonstrate the timeless importance of places to people such as the Dakelhne, whose way of life is strengthened and upheld by places on the land.

Karen will be defending her thesis on TI'azt'en place names this summer at UNBC. This presentation is open to everyone. Karen will also present her results to the community in Tache. Contact one of the research coordinators for more information, or visit our website at: <http://cura.unbc.ca>

⁴ Pierre John and Walter Joseph, Sr., CURA TEK Place-Names Interview, 2 June 2004

⁵ When *tizdli* is used as a geographical referent in place-names, it is sometimes contracted to *-dli*; however, standing alone as a geographical term, the full rather than the contracted form of *tizdli* is used (Catherine Coldwell, CURA TEK Place-Names Verification Session, 6 January 2006)

⁶ Catherine Coldwell, CURA TEK Place-Names Interview, 25 June 2004

How Do Tl'azt'enne Measure Co-management Success?

By Sarah Parsons

Introduction

This was one question I have been investigating as a graduate student on the Improving Partnerships stream of the CURA. I was most interested in one result from the IP stream's previous work: that people from Tl'azt'en Nation, UNBC and the Fort St. James area feel that the John Prince Research Forest should provide social-cultural benefits to Tl'azt'enne. My thesis work looks at how Tl'azt'enne assess progress towards the provision of these benefits.

To learn about this concept, I needed to ask two different research questions:

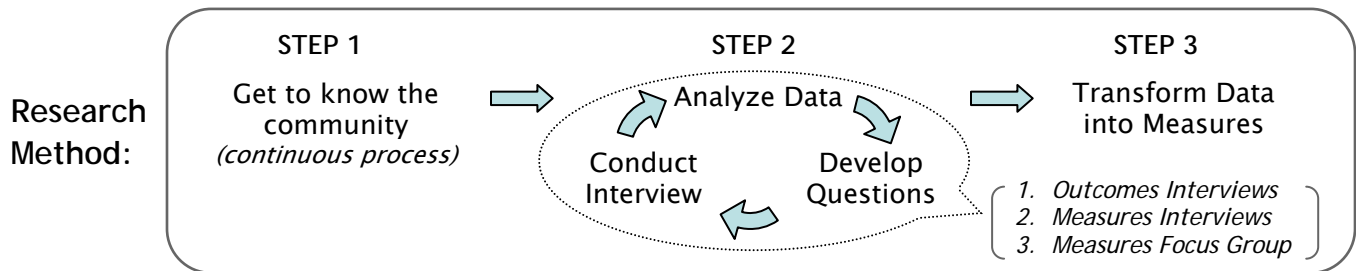
Question 1: What measures of JPRF success do Tl'azt'enne recommend for the social-cultural benefits of co-management?

Question 2: What are the characteristics of these measures?

Research Method

To answer these questions, I developed a process for working with the community based on previous work with Tl'azt'en Nation and ideas from literature.

I was fortunate to be able to work with Tl'azt'enne through research in the year previous to beginning this project, which helped me understand Tl'azt'en values, how the research works in the community, and how a researcher should conduct herself. The data collection process was iterative, so I had a lot of back-and-forth between myself and participants between interviews. Finally, I transformed the many community ideas into a list of 52 measures. I did this using the characteristics list as guidelines for what Tl'azt'en measures should look like. Throughout this process, I collaborated with the Tl'azt'en research coordinator, Beverly Leon.



Question 1 Results: Tl'azt'en measures of co-management success for social-cultural outcomes

Theme	Example measure
1: Use of Dakelh language and place names	Number and/or percentage of maps and signs produced by JPRF that are bilingual or primarily use Dakelh, by type
2: Respect for traditional governance	Satisfaction of Keyoh holders on JPRF's approach to consultation and information sharing
3: Tl'azt'en Involvement	Description of how JPRF has worked with elders
4: Use of research to preserve traditional culture	Presence of a policy that requires all JPRF documentation of Elders' knowledge to be shared with Tl'azt'en Nation
5: Use of education to preserve traditional culture	Amount and description of JPRF cultural curriculum and materials, by topic
6: Support for cultural activities	List of JPRF facilities and supplies for cultural activities
7: Well-being of traditional culture	Opinion of Tl'azt'en youth about the importance of education on traditional culture and language

Question 2 Results:**Characteristics of Tl'azt'en Measures**

By looking at other measures, particularly those led by First Nations, I was able to suggest some guidelines for Tl'azt'en measures. During the focus group, I presented these ideas to community members, and together we tailored the guidelines to fit Tl'azt'enne.

Below are the ideal characteristics of Tl'azt'en measures of success:

- Measures must be developed with the community
- Measures must assess community expectations for co-management
- Quantitative (numeric) *and* qualitative (descriptive) measures should be used
- Measures should have a positive focus, looking at what should increase rather than what should decrease
- Measures should use both technical and lay-person terminology to help build capacity in community members
- Measures must be valid, so they clearly relate to identified outcomes
- Measures have to be reliable so that we can be confident in the data
- Measures have to be realistic so that they can be implemented without wasting time and money

Thank you
Tl'azt'enne for your
participation!

These guidelines were used at the beginning of the measures creation process (STEP 3) to refine, blend and eliminate preliminary measures. The guidelines were also used at the end of the process to ensure the overall measures list matched the characteristics as much as possible, and to identify where trade-offs were necessary.

Discussion

This work fits into the Improved Partnerships stream's research, *Criteria & Indicators (C&I) of Sustainable Forest Co-management*. While this work focuses on perspectives and values of Tl'azt'enne, experiences here can inform other forest management evaluation programs that involve First Nations.

C&I have been used for monitoring, evaluation and certification by forest companies, by model forests, and provincial and federal governments. Elements of forest

management C&I relate to benefits for First Nations, often despite limited Aboriginal participation.

Participation works! Some C&I initiatives have had difficulty in developing measures that reflect First Nations values, citing lack of technical skills. This method demonstrates that participatory processes can be effective without imposing a great burden on participants. By combining interviews with a set of guidelines, I was able to develop a rigorous, community-based set of measures. With training, community members could lead this process themselves.

Partnership is key! Other methods have not stressed the importance of building a solid relationship with the community. It was critical in my work to make sure the participants know that I am working for their interests, and I know how to conduct myself properly as a researcher. Working with a community research coordinator (Beverly Leon) made all the difference to this research, as she was able to steer me in the right direction, and answer questions in the community.

Aboriginal Measures are Unique! Other C&I programs use different measures guidelines, which result in different types of measures. Most C&I frameworks have fewer opinion-based measures because they are concerned less about integrating community perspectives, and more concerned about biases. Distinctions like these mean that non-Aboriginal organizations need to consider Aboriginal values *and perspectives on measures* to increase effectiveness for communities.

There's More Work to Do! For my thesis, I looked at social-cultural measures, but research is also needed to measure other aspects of co-management success. In particular, spatial-cultural measures are needed for use of traditional knowledge and protection of culturally important areas. It is likely that a different, field-based method is needed for identifying these types of measures, however, the guidelines may be informative.

Community-Based Research in Practice

By Dr. Jane Young - Co-Leader, Traditional Ecological Knowledge Stream

Gathering community input before embarking on a research project is of utmost importance in a community-based research project such as CURA. Listening to concerns and interests of community members can only direct research more clearly and eventually to a

result that is the most beneficial for the community. An example of this type of community involvement was highlighted last year. Laura Hoskin, a UNBC biology student, was hired as a research assistant in the CURA TEK-Stream, co-supervised by Beverly Bird and me. Her research goal was to understand how to restore and maintain culturally important plant gathering sites. Laura was also involved in an undergraduate research thesis at UNBC (I was her supervisor on this) where she was

investigating the material uses of cattail and how the uses related to the form and structure of cattail leaves and stems. Since she was already studying the cattail plant, Laura and I wondered if this topic would be of interest to the TI'azt'en Elders. In the spring of 2005, Laura and I were invited to a meeting with TI'azt'en Elders where Laura made a presentation about cattails and asked Elders about their interest in this plant. There was some discussion about this, but it became apparent the birch tree would be more appropriate to study as it was culturally important to the TI'azt'en members for material uses. It was won-

derful to receive this feedback and Laura and I very much appreciated meeting with the Elders and learning about what is important to them. Laura's research subsequently focused on the TI'azt'en plant uses of birch and birch bark gathering areas. After data was collected, it was also wonderful to hear a TI'azt'en CURA Steering Committee member applaud the above process as an example of authentic community-based research, as it demonstrated responsiveness in studying a topic of concern to TI'azt'en Elders, instead of our original proposal. As I carry on my research in the CURA TEK-Stream, I hope that the invitation will stand to hear from Elders before finalizing future research proposals. Their input is invaluable. Please let me thank the TI'azt'en Elders again for their generous contribution to our project.



Beverly Bird (left) and Laura Hoskin at Cinnabar Resort on the John Prince Research Forest.



Photo by Laura Hoskin

JPRF Historical Geography Project

Donna Atkinson and Gail Fondahl

In 1999, Tl'azt'en Nation and UNBC celebrated the founding of the John Prince Research Forest (JPRF), the first co-managed research forest of its kind in Canada. The JPRF is situated in north-central British Columbia, in an area simultaneously claimed by the Tl'azt'en Nation as traditional territory and by the provincial government as part of its 'unallocated' Crown Land. Its creation was both innovative and complex. In January 2006, Donna Atkinson and Gail Fondahl began to document the history of the JPRF's formation, including the

various reasons behind its conception, the nature and scope of the negotiations process, and the key players who helped bring it to fruition. The project, titled "Remaking Space in North-Central BC: The John Prince Research Forest, 1993 to 1999," draws on a variety of sources from newspaper articles and archival documents, to newsletters and oral interviews. By the end of March, Donna had conducted sixteen interviews with key players from UNBC, the Tl'azt'en Nation and the Ministry of Forests.

The JPRF history project is supplementary to the CURA and is funded by the Real Estate Partnering Fund of BC and the JPRF. In-kind professional expertise and research support is provided by CURA's Improved Partnership (IP) Stream members including Beverly Leon, Erin Sherry, Sue

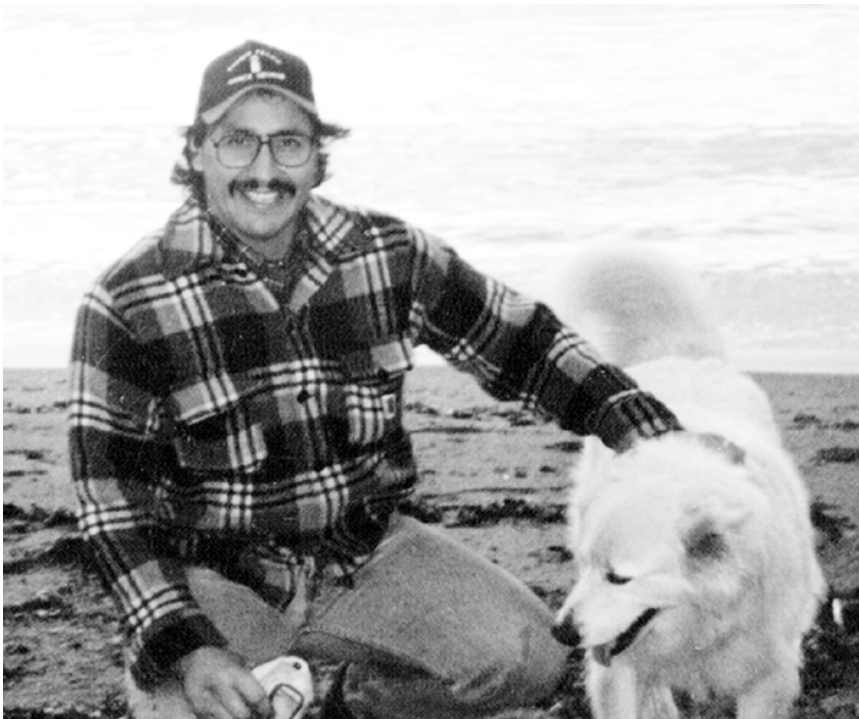


Grainger and Sarah Parsons. CURA's Improved Partnerships Research Stream also provided the salary for our new Tl'azt'en research assistant Margaret Duncan. Margaret is assisting Donna in archival research work in the Tl'azt'en Band Office, and in conducting interviews with Tl'azt'en participants in Tache. (See page 1)

We hope that documenting the JPRF's history will expand our knowledge of the political, socio-cultural, and economic factors underlying the creation of a successful co-management partnership. To this end, we plan to share our research findings with both the Tl'azt'en and academic communities. We will be presenting our preliminary findings at the upcoming CURA Community Open House, and producing a JPRF History brochure. Information will also be available through the CURA website, and we hope to produce at least one academic article. So far, we have presented a description of the research project at the Western Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers Conference in Kamloops (March 10-11, 2006) and UNBC's Natural Resource Institute Annual Conference (March 2006). The poster we presented can be found on the CURA website:

<http://cura.unbc.ca/comanagement>

.....
:If you played a role in the making of the
:JPRF and would like to share your story
:or photos with us, please contact Donna
:Atkinson at atkinsod@unbc.ca or call
:the CURA office at 960-5166. We would
:love to hear from you!
.....



John Prince played a key role in establishing the research forest partnership between Tl'azt'en Nation and UNBC. The forest is named in his honor.

Community Update

Presentations in Tache

We will be holding a CURA open house in Tache in mid-May. This will give us an opportunity to share research results, give updates on our work, introduce new graduate students, and get feedback on our research topics, methods, and findings. We will be providing coffee, snacks, and lunch. We will be posting notices in the community with the date and location. Hope to see you there!

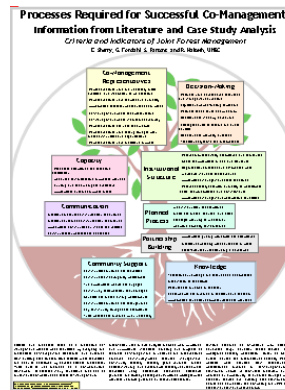
CURA Review

This summer, the TI'azt'en-UNBC CURA is being reviewed by its funders in Ottawa. They would like to know how TI'azt'enne feel about the CURA, and what benefits CURA has brought them so far. If you have any comments you would like to share on the CURA (positive, negative, or neutral), please contact Bev Leon at 996-0028. All comments will be kept anonymous to the CURA reviewers.

Here are some photos and posters from our previous community presentations...



In 2004, we presented results from the Improving Partnerships study on Criteria and Indicators of Sustainable Forest Co-management.



In 2005, the CURA research team presented some information on the progress of our various research projects on Aboriginal Day. Thanks to the community for inviting us to participate in Aboriginal Day festivities!

