

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

Hà t_átgi hà khustìyxh sítì

*Summary of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation Vision
and Management Direction for Land and Resources*



Atlin Lake

Doug Milek

Front Cover Photos: Taku River Landscapes, Kim Heinemeyer and
Raymond Ward (Crow Clan/Dog Salmon House), Doug Milek
Back Cover Photos: Chief Taku Jack (Wolf Clan), Atlin Museum

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Published with assistance from the Brainerd Foundation, Bullitt Foundation,
David and Lucille Packard Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Weeden
Foundation and the Wilburforce Foundation.

Design and production/Trent Alvey Design. Cartography/Rick Tingey.
Printing/WesternPrinters and Lithographers Ltd, Vancouver. Cover printed on
Reincarnation Matte 100% recycled (50% pcw and 50% post commercial waste,
process chlorine free). Insides printed on New Life Opaque 30% post consumer waste.

Additional copies may be obtained by contacting the Land and Resources Office
of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation. The book may be downloaded from the
Taku River Tlingit First Nation web site (<http://www.trtfn.com>) or from the web
site of Round River Canada (<http://www.roundrivercanada.org>).

Hà t_átgí hà khustìyxh sìtí

Our Land is Our Future

Respect was taught at an early age to everybody. Many times we've heard parents telling their children when they are looking at a moose, or looking at a lynx, or lookin' at a beaver, or lookin' at a caribou, or a grizzly bear, talk to them, wish them "good day", wish them "good luck." Tell them that you don't mean no harm to them. And throughout my life, anyways, I've learned that when I'm talking to that animal, I know it's coming from within me, within my heart, that I truly wish that animal the best. I truly wish that mountain the best, that stream, because, after all, that's what makes our life. That's respect for me. Respect is to accord other species a rightful place, and to accept and acknowledge their rightful place in the cycle of life.

Andrew Williams

We, the Taku River Tlingit, are moving forward as responsible stewards of the lands and waters within our territory. Our territory covers over 40,000 square kilometers (10 million acres) and includes areas of what is now known as British Columbia, Alaska and Yukon. Our territory contains high mountains, expansive forests rich with wildlife and salmon-filled wild rivers. As responsible stewards, we are embarking on a course necessary to ensure the preservation of our lands and the conservation of its wildlife and fisheries. This will assist us in ensuring the preservation of what is Tlingit.

Our ancestors named the Taku River and still today we identify ourselves with this life-sustaining river. Over many millennia, our way of life has become intertwined with our lands and waters, so that we are now inseparable from these very same lands and waters. Through time our people have ensured that our land, with its animals, fish and plants, was sustained as a healthy place. These lands have, in turn, provided for our survival as a People and as a Nation. We have fulfilled this stewardship role for centuries, even though others have not always acknowledged this. It is now time for the Taku River Tlingit to reclaim our historical responsibility as stewards of our territory and for us to provide an opportunity for others to work



Artin Museum

alongside us to ensure our land is respected for generations to come

For the Taku River Tlingit, responsible stewardship requires us to exercise our leadership in all aspects of caring for our lands. This is very important because our social wellbeing and sustainable livelihood, as well as those of our neighbors, are inseparable from the health of our lands and waters and from the decisions about how we all live on and use these lands. We would be abandoning our responsibilities to our ancestors, to our children, and to those who live here now, if we did not actively exercise our responsibility in the area of conservation and land use planning.

As Taku River Tlingit, we recognize that all people need to belong to a place, a home, and to provide food and shelter for their family. There must be opportunities provided for all that live in our territory to earn a sustainable livelihood. A sustainable livelihood flows from working hard together in activities that provide benefits to our community without having detrimental impacts to our land, water and resources. A sustainable livelihood is not something that can be given or taken away by those from outside the territory, whether in boardrooms or government offices, but comes from within us who live here. As we strengthen ourselves, we increase our capacities to sustain livelihoods here in our territory and the certainty of livelihood for this generation and future generations of Tlingit and non-Tlingit alike.

Our ancestors have provided us a beautiful and healthy territory. To ensure our territory continues to provide for our children, we, the Taku River Tlingit, are planning for the sustainable use of our lands. To produce the most robust plan possible, we have sought out both our Elder's

traditional ecological knowledge and the principles and methods of western science.

We the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN), are therefore pleased to present this summary of Hà t_átgi hà khustiyxh sítì: TRTFN Vision and Management Direction for Lands and Resources. The completion of this document, and its acceptance at our Joint Clan Meeting on May 24, 2003, represents a significant milestone for our Nation. The plan represents the culmination of much hard work, studies, and extensive dialogue within our community, including interviews with our Elders, hunters and citizens, community meetings, clan meetings, and open houses.

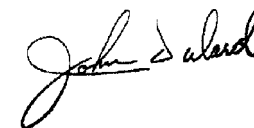
Through this document, we, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, once again affirm our aboriginal title to the lands and waters that constitute our Nation's traditional territory, as well as our rights to the resources of these lands and waters, and our inherent right to self-determination. The Vision and Management Direction document represents one way in which we are exercising our responsibilities and jurisdiction as a Nation.

Our Nation will implement and adhere to the directions outlined in the Vision and Management Direction document and will not take actions which are fundamentally inconsistent with this it. We also hope that others will see this document as an invitation to join with us in a spirit of mutual respect to move forward in new ways that will benefit everyone. We therefore call upon other levels of government, development proponents, private interests, our local neighbors, and other citizens to honour the management direction contained in the Vision and Management Direction document and work with us to see that it is implemented.

Implementation of this Vision and Management Direction document would be done most effectively through co-operative, government-to-government working relationships with the Federal Government of Canada and the Provincial Government of British Columbia, as both have responsibilities and jurisdictions that overlap with those of the TRTFN. We will continue to invite governments to work jointly with us. In the interim – and until other governments are prepared to work jointly with us to protect and properly develop the resources of our territory necessary to preserve our way of life – we will continue to take the steps necessary to protect Tlingit land and our way of life.

The following is a summary of the document. Copies of the full document can be obtained by contacting the TRTFN government offices in Atlin, BC or on our website (www.trtfn.com) or on the website of Round River Canada (www.roundrivercanada.org). If you have any questions, please contact the TRTFN Land and Resources Manager, at 250-651-7900.

Gunalchish,



John D., Ward, Spokesperson



Bryan Jack, Wolf Clan Director



Thomas J Esquiro, Crow Clan Director

Our Purpose



Melvin Jack.

Campfire talk at 5-Mile with Elders, Edward Jack, Richard Johnson, Johnny Taku Jack, Antonio Jack and Elizabeth Nyman

The purpose of Hà t_átgi hà khustìyxh sìti: TRTFN Vision and Management Direction for Land and Resources is to describe our vision for the future of our traditional territory. The document describes how we want to see our land and natural resources used, managed, and protected for the benefit of present and future generations.

The document also provides a foundation for sustainable economic development and capacity building within our Nation. We want to manage our land and resources wisely while also providing jobs and economic benefits for our Nation and our citizens.

My vision is to have unity first. I can envision working towards that, so that we're feeling so close together again that we camp with one another again, so that we go back to our traditional values of sharing and caring for one another... I can't see us going back to the old ways exactly, I think we could learn to walk together with the non-native people and strive for the best interests of all of us.

June Jack

How was the document developed?

Mandate from our Nation: Direction from our citizenship to develop and implement a land plan was issued to our Leaders at a Joint Clan Meeting on January 31, 1999. Under the direction of our Leaders, a Land Planning Initiative was led by the TRTFN Citizens Caucus and by TRTFN staff, with technical advice provided by consultants.

Conservation Area Design: Early in our planning process we recognized that the science of conservation biology and the production of Conservation Area Designs (CAD) have become key components for land planning throughout the world. The British Columbia government itself has recently commissioned similar designs for the Central and North Coast and the Muskwa Kechika

If we can get into harvesting resources or gathering bottled water from our glaciers, trees from our land or minerals from the earth, that we get a share of it all, or that we get a business, and that it sustains our culture and our lives. If you have culture on one hand and a good job on the other hand, you do well. It seems to be the way.

Wayne Carlick

regions of our province. A CAD provides a science-based framework for identifying and prioritizing areas for conservation, based upon biological values, threats, and opportunities for implementation. The CAD produced for our territory utilizes available provincial data sets, as well as information obtained from our hunters and elders and from our own field studies.

Community Values and Priorities: Our TRT citizens were engaged through a variety of means at each step in the development of this document, so that the document fully reflects their values and priorities. These steps included developing the CAD, participating in workshops and community meetings, involvement in a traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) study, and participating in a land plan interview process, all of which are described in more detail in the full document.



King Salmon Lake

Doug Milek

Scope of the TRTFN Vision and Management Direction document

Some of the principal sections of the document are highlighted in this summary.

Management Authority

The Vision and Management Direction document affirms our jurisdiction as a Nation over our whole traditional territory and clarifies that the results of this planning process are without prejudice to negotiations under the treaty process and do not constitute an abrogation of, or derogation from, Taku River Tlingit aboriginal rights or title.

Community Perspectives

A summary of our citizens' concerns and perspectives on land and resource management is also included in the document. This summary is based on information contained in TRTFN documents, the results of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) interviews conducted with TRTFN Elders and harvesters, and from community interviews undertaken as part of the land planning process. Interviews with TRTFN citizens were conducted in Atlin, Whitehorse and Vancouver.

We use quotes from TRTFN citizens extensively in the document, as well as photos and text excerpts from historical documents, to show the range of community perspectives and to ensure



TRTFN Youth: Jon, Doug Jr., and Gloria Rae Jack at Nàkina á

Ali S. Carlick

that this document speaks clearly through the voice of our citizens' voices as much as possible.

Management Direction

The Vision and Management Direction document describes what we are trying to achieve (goals and objectives for land and resources), and how we will go about it (strategies). The document provides management direction for each of the following:

Access management: The document enables access to be created for economic development without compromising wildlife and traditional resources. TRTFN approval of access management plans will be required prior to approval of roads or other linear developments, or the issuance of tenures and development permits.

Biodiversity and Wildlife: Building on the conservation area design (CAD) for our traditional territory, this section of the document

directs us to develop land use zones and wildlife management guidelines to ensure that habitat is protected for wildlife. The document also proposes the establishment of a TRT Wildlife Conservation Department to undertake enforcement, research and monitoring, that will be assisted by a proposed non-profit society, the Taku River Conservancy.

Hunting, Trapping and Guide Outfitting:

This document reaffirms our rights to hunt, trap and fish, and calls for the revitalization of our traditional wildlife management systems. It also calls for guidelines to ensure that any commercial hunting is sustainable, and conducted in accordance with Tlingit customs and values.

Fish and Fish habitat: In this document we state our intent to develop guidelines to protect fish and fish habitat, shift to stock-by-stock management, and develop appropriate TRT permits for sport fishing in our territory. Our plan also seeks measures to ensure the protection of water quality, and proposes the appointment of a qualified TRT fisheries officer, and other capacity building measures.

Culture and Heritage Resources: The document proposes additional information gathering and protection of our cultural and heritage resources. It also calls for the construction of cabins, development of curriculum materials, and the establishment of a TRTFN Heritage Centre.

Plants for Food, Medicine, Spiritual and Cultural Uses:

The document states our intent to ensure continued opportunities for TRT traditional practices, and the protection and restoration of important gathering areas.

Recreation and Tourism: The document states our support for economic development from commercial recreation and tourism in specific areas to be identified by our people. It also calls for the development and implementation of guidelines to manage and enforce the level and intensity of this recreation, and for education for visitors to our territory.

Forestry: The document provides opportunities for small-scale, ecologically based forestry- in areas where wildlife, cultural and other values will not be degraded - to support local value-added businesses.

Mineral and Energy Resources: The document allows mining in our territory under strict guidelines, and where assessments show that impacts are acceptable to us, and that significant economic benefits can be provided to the local community. The plan also calls for restoration of areas already impacted from past mining activities.

Land Use Zones

We are working towards the identification of land use zones. These zones will describe what resource development activities can occur where in our territory. A proposed framework for these zones is included in the Vision and Management Direction document. Further work with our citizens will be conducted to identify and map these zones across our traditional territory.

Economic Development

The Vision and Management Direction document is the foundation upon which a regional economic development strategy is currently being developed. This work will include detailed economic planning, including business feasibility studies and business cases in specific sectors.

The fish to our people is one of our lifelines. And not only that it's so sacred to our people. It's a food that represents us as Tlingits. It's one of our signs. When I think of the Taku fish, I think of it as coming from the heart of Tlingit country. Fish is something I take great pride in. It represents being proud and strong, and I would like to keep it that way. We should take care of them and watch over them with our lives. To restore and bring back those fish in their natural form. Not to tinker with it in any way. There's very few places left in the world where you can find that quality of inland salmon.

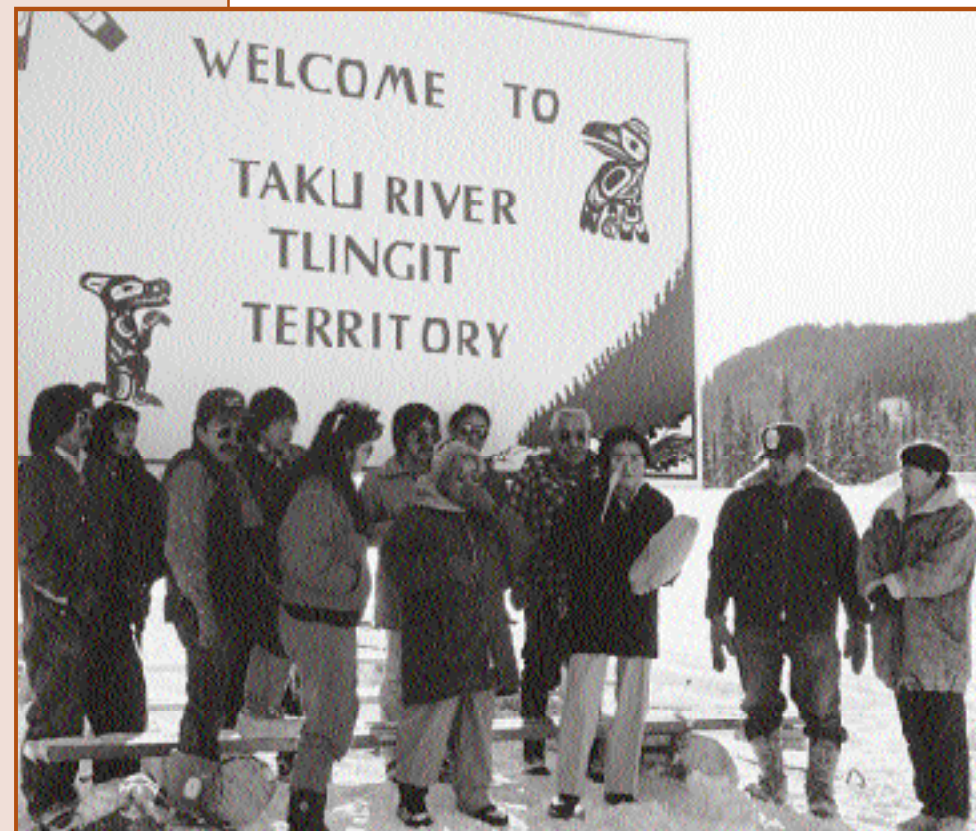
Terry Jack

Vision Statement and Guiding Principles

In addition to the TRTFN Constitution—which guides all the work we do—this planning document contains a statement of our vision for the future of our land and resources, and proposed guiding principles for land planning and management.

Our vision for the future of Hà t_átgi hà khustiyxh (“our land and way of life”) and for how others coming to our territory will work with us for the future, includes the following:

- We are a strong and capable Nation, exercising ownership, sovereignty and jurisdiction over our territory by living up to our sacred responsibility to govern our own actions as citizens and affect control over the actions of others within our territory.*
- We are a confident people who welcome others to our territory, secure in the knowledge that visitors will respect the laws of our land and culture, and that we are willing to accept new ideas that will strengthen our ability and commitment to sustain our resources and people.*
- We are a people grounded in our knowledge and respect for our Taku River Tlingit culture and values Hà khustiyxh (“our way of life”), rooted in Hà t_átgi (“our land”), actively engaged in working together, and guided clearly by our Constitution, by the knowledge of our Elders, and by our respected leaders.*
- We are a people who are healing from the damage from past injustice, committed to sharing and caring, who enjoy the respect, friendship and cooperation of others, confident and creative in managing our territory for the benefit of present and future generations.*
- Many individuals spend time on the land, are familiar with its peaks, rivers, forests, valleys, special places, and sacred values, and that travel its trails and rivers unimpeded.*
- There is a productive natural environment with diverse and abundant animal, fish and plant populations, that reflects the rhythm of natural ecological cycles and change, and that provides opportunities for harvesting and gathering and other activities that we have depended upon for countless generations.*
- Our territory is managed so that Taku River Tlingit sacred places and cultural heritage sites are revered and protected, and so that the traditions of our ancestors are continued for our children and grandchildren for ever.*
- Use of our territory respect Tlingit land ethics and ensure wild areas and other special places remain rich, intact and un-fragmented.*
- There is a supportive, secure and healthy community enjoying the peace and beauty of its natural surroundings and a sustainable quality of life within our territory.*
- There is diverse and vibrant economic activity, that is led by capable Tlingits, and that respects our land and its bountiful gifts, and provides creative and enduring opportunities for employment while ensuring ecological and social sustainability.*
- There is protection and support for traditional lifestyles based on historical culture and methods.*



Joan Jack

*Commemoration Ceremony of TRTFN's
Welcome Sign at Como Lake Reserve*

About the TRT Territory Conservation Area Design



Wolf Clan Director, Bryan Jack, points out important wildlife movement areas.

In 1999, we partnered with Round River Conservation Studies to assist us with the development of a Conservation Area Design for our territory. Round River is an international research and education organization that has completed conservation designs both for the British Columbia government and for non-governmental organizations.

A Conservation Area Design (CAD) is a science-based

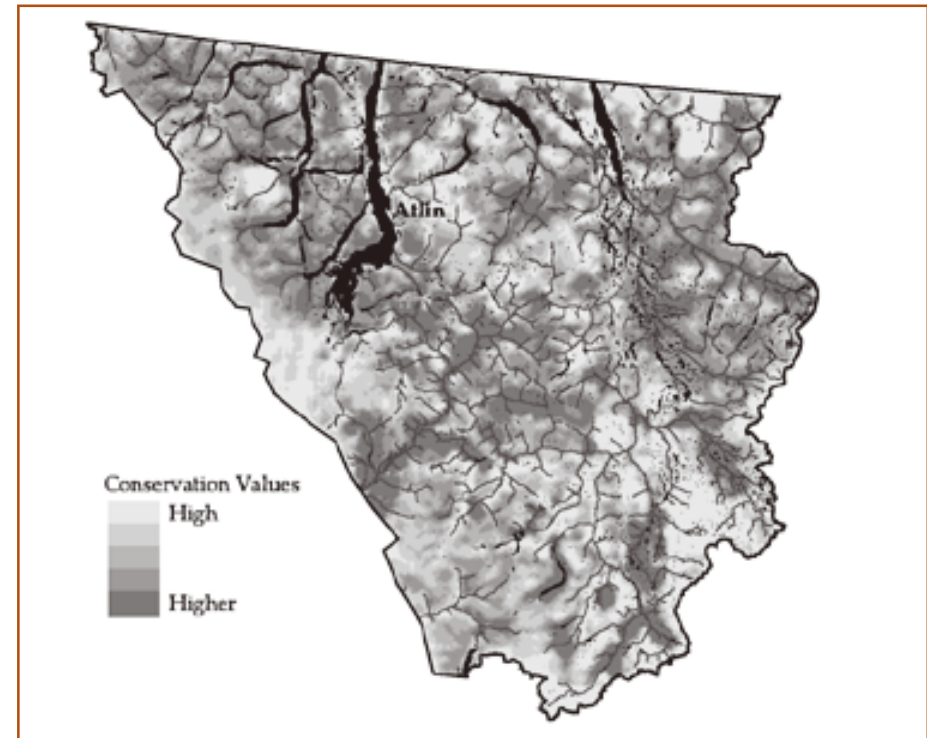
modeling and mapping tool for identifying and prioritizing areas for conservation based on biological value, threats, and opportunity for implementation. A CAD assists conservation planning by delineating habitats across a landscape that are necessary to sustain healthy populations of fish and wildlife.

The Taku River Tlingit Territory CAD depicted on the following page represents a powerful combination of our indigenous ecological knowledge and the analyses methods and theoretical understandings of conservation science. The development of the CAD was motivated partly by the lack of any similar regional ecological assessments for our territory. Our territory has low human population numbers, limited industrial developments, and vast, relatively unaltered ecosystems. The intact nature of our territory, the wildlife and fisheries that it supports, and our values indicate that all lands within our territory should be managed carefully to ensure the maintenance of its ecological richness and integrity. With this understanding and to inform land-planning efforts, the CAD identifies areas across our territory that should be considered for the highest level of conservation planning. The Wildlife Priority/Conservation Core and Connectivity Areas represent areas that support high value wildlife and fisheries habitats, represent the diversity of ecological

communities in our territory, and provide a connected ecological network of these key systems across our territory.

In addition to the Core and Connectivity Areas, the CAD map depicts some additional fisheries and wildlife habitats that should also receive special management consideration. These include known salmon spawning habitats, potential woodland caribou wintering habitats and Stone's or Fannin sheep habitats. As the identification of these areas are refined additional special management areas may need to be included as additional information becomes available.

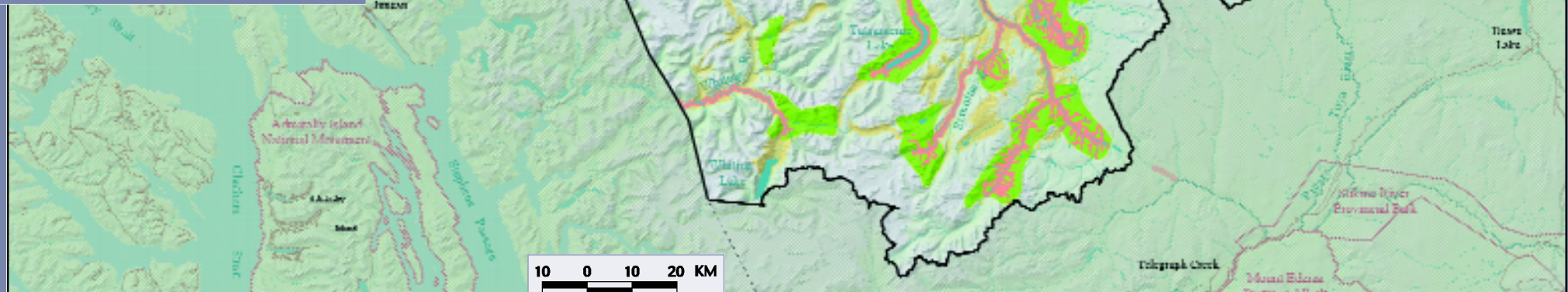
A full report of the methods used to develop this CAD is available on request. Additional research will also be completed over the next two years to better refine this conservation design and to assist us in our land planning efforts.



Taku River Tlingit Conservation Area Design



-  TAKU RIVER TLINGIT TERRITORY
-  CORE AREAS
-  CONNECTIVITY AREAS
-  SALMON WATERSHED SMA
-  WETLAND HABITAT SMA
-  THINHORN SHEEP SMA
-  WOODLAND CARIBOU WINTER HABITAT SMA
-  SALMON DISTRIBUTION AND SPAWNING AREAS
-  PROTECTED AREAS
-  INTERNATIONAL BORDER
-  ROADS



"My vision for the future is that my people do not have to worry what could happen to the land, or what outside interests might do to it. The land is such a big part of our being Tlingit. We wake up every morning, walk out into the bush. The future is so unknown, I know the young people will take care of the land just like we do. The most important thing to me is that we belong to the earth and the earth doesn't belong to us. The earth belongs to the animals. Once this land is gone for the animals, you can't bring it back. They say extinction is forever. Mother nature has a plan, and it's what we see out our window to day."

Jerry Jack



Chief Taku Jack

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