



XENI GWET'IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



XENI GWET'IN FIRST NATION GOVERNMENT **JUNE 2024**



Xeni Gwet'in Wildlife Management Strategy

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PHOTO: LIA COLASACCO

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THIS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY LAYS THE GROUNDWORK FOR TODAY AND CREATES A PATHWAY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO LIVE ALONGSIDE AND MANAGE WILDLIFE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE XGCA IN THE T̂SILHQOT'IN WAY.



PHOTO: JAMES LULUA JR.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Wildlife are integral to Xeni Gwet'in culture and way of life. The healthier wildlife populations and their habitats are, the healthier and more resilient the Xeni Gwet'in community will be. Population stressors, including industrial disturbances (e.g., logging), species interactions (e.g., predation and competition), habitat degradation (e.g., forest encroachment), and now climate change (among other factors) are changing the suitability of habitats and persistence of wildlife throughout the Xeni Gwet'in Caretaker Area (XGCA). Xeni Gwet'in have always cared for their lands and wildlife. While provincial and federal governments have imposed land and wildlife management practices that have worked to undermine Xeni Gwet'in authority and responsibility with respect to the land and wildlife, Xeni Gwet'in continue to exercise their role as Caretakers.

In *Tsilhqot'in v. British Columbia* the Supreme Court of Canada recognized and declared Tsilhqot'in Aboriginal title to approximately 1700 square kilometers of land within the XGCA, known as the Declared

Title Area. As Aboriginal title holders, the Tsilhqot'in Nation and Xeni Gwet'in were recognized as holding the authority to manage the Declared Title Area. Building upon the momentum of the *Tsilhqot'in* decision, this Wildlife Management Strategy lays the groundwork for today and creates a pathway for future generations to live alongside and manage wildlife throughout the entire XGCA in the Tsilhqot'in way. The strategy aims to enable Xeni Gwet'in First Nation Government to exercise their responsibilities as Caretakers across the following three priorities identified by the community: *Wildlife Stewardship, Habitat Stewardship, and Wildlife and Habitat Governance*.

The wildlife stewardship, habitat stewardship, and wildlife and habitat governance priorities merge into one another to provide the foundation for what is Xeni Gwet'in-led wildlife management. In recent decades, the Xeni Gwet'in First Nation Government and community have already done much work in stewarding wildlife and habitat. This Wildlife



PHOTO: JAMES LULUA JR



PHOTO: JAMES LULUA JR

Management Strategy brings together the previous work, knowledge, and expertise that has been produced by or provided to the XGFN by the community, Knowledge-Holders, and external subject area experts on the wildlife and habitat within the XGCA.

This Wildlife Management Strategy — outlined here — contains goals, objectives, and actions that provide strategic direction for each of three priority areas:

PRIORITY 1: WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP pivots upon the responsible care for wildlife, with the goal of *establishing an abundance of keystone species to support food sovereignty, health, cultural use, and the sustainable wildlife economy for both current and future generations*. The objectives for wildlife stewardship include:

- Establish a wildlife planning and monitoring framework.
- Restore keystone species populations and/or maintain sustainable populations that meet community needs.
- Ensure that all consumptive uses of wildlife are sustainable.
- Establish a sustainable wildlife economy.

PRIORITY 2: HABITAT STEWARDSHIP is the responsible care of habitat, with the goal to *manage wildlife habitat for the characteristics and attributes that support ecosystem function and an abundance of keystone species for both current and future generations*. The objectives for habitat stewardship include:

- Establish a habitat planning and monitoring framework.
- Protect critical wildlife habitats.
- Restore degraded wildlife habitats.
- Maintain wildlife habitats with high suitability.

PRIORITY 3: WILDLIFE AND HABITAT GOVERNANCE reflects Xeni Gwet'in rights and responsibilities as the Caretakers for wildlife and habitat, with the goal of *community, leadership, and staff engagement in wildlife and habitat stewardship that exercises Xeni Gwet'in jurisdiction and supports informed decision-making, capacity building, and integration; and collaboration with other communities, companies, organizations, and governments that advances wildlife and habitat stewardship*. The objectives for wildlife and habitat governance include:

- Ensuring that Xeni Gwet'in knowledge, traditional use, and cultural values are used in coordination with science to guide wildlife and habitat stewardship decision-making.
- Increasing wildlife and habitat stewardship capacity through member participation, training, and involvement, along with direct investments and dedicated funding.
- Establishing wildlife and habitat stewardship roles, responsibilities, and strategic partnerships.
- Communicating wildlife and habitats stewardship initiatives, decision-making, and key issues to Xeni Gwet'in members and non-members.

This Wildlife Management Strategy is a step in the journey to restore the land and wildlife of the XGCA, and maintaining XG way of life, food sovereignty, and cultural uses tied to the land and water. This Wildlife Management Strategy, and in particular the action and implementation plan, will support the crucial work of the XGFN Government and Nenqay Department.



PHOTO: MAX NISHIMA



THE VISION FOR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

“ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY, RESILIENCE OF WILDLIFE AND HABITAT, ABUNDANCE OF KEYSTONE SPECIES TO SUPPORT TRADITIONAL USE, SELF-RELIANCE AND WELLBEING, AND THE CAPACITY FOR SELF-GOVERNANCE” *

Xeni Gwet'in have been the caretakers of their territory since time immemorial. As a part of Xeni Gwet'in caretaking, wildlife and habitat were managed to promote healthy ecosystems and cultivate an abundance of keystone species for food, crafting, and ceremony. Provincial land management has altered the habitat, wildlife abundance, and species composition, resulting in ecological and cultural impacts to the Xeni Gwet'in community.

Current political, economic, and land management decisions are made within the Caretaker tradition, in which Xeni Gwet'in are responsible for the stewardship and responsible use of wildlife and habitat within their territory. Xeni Gwet'in will continue to exercise their responsibility and rights to steward wildlife and habitat within the T̄silhqot'in Declared Title Area and XGCA. This includes protecting, maintaining, and, where necessary, restoring the human-ecological systems which support community culture, health, and well-being.

As an assertion of wildlife and habitat stewardship rights and responsibilities, Xeni Gwet'in have developed this Wildlife Management Strategy to enhance ecological integrity, resilience of wildlife and habitat, abundance of keystone species to support traditional use and self-reliance, and the capacity for self-governance. This Wildlife Management Strategy provides strategic direction for creating tangible benefits for wildlife, habitat, and people, in the short and long term.

* THE VISION FOR THIS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IS GUIDED BY THE CULMINATION OF EXISTING XENI GWET'IN WORK, INCLUDING VISIONS AND GOALS FROM THE XGFN COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026; XGFN COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN; XG WATERSHED PLAN; XG FOREST MANAGEMENT STRATEGY; XG COMMUNITY-BASED CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PLAN; AND COMMUNITY VISION AND MANAGEMENT GOALS FOR DASIQOX TRIBAL PARK.

DISCLAIMER STATEMENT

ON June 26, 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada rendered a historic judgement and declaration of Aboriginal title to approximately ~1700 square kilometres (the “Declared Title Area”) within T̓silhqot̓in territory and Xení Gwet̓in Caretaker Area. The Supreme Court of Canada judgement recognized the T̓silhqot̓in right to use, benefit from, and manage the Declared Title Area.

Following the 2014 T̓silhqot̓in decision, the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and Government of BC have been establishing a government-to-government relationship. Several agreements have been reached between the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and Government of BC as the two parties strengthen and clarify government-to-government relations and align their respective jurisdictions, including the Gwets̓en Nilt̓i Pathway Agreement, Nenqay Deni Accord, T̓silhqot̓in Stewardship Agreement, and Moose Co-Management Agreement (among others). As part of the previously noted agreements, the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and BC have established a bilateral Fish and Wildlife Panel, which is the primary source of joint strategic recommendations respecting fish and wildlife, including species recovery and harvest allocation.

The Wildlife Management Strategy is not a complete expression of Xení Gwet̓in rights, responsibilities, or authority with respect to land and wildlife within the Xení Gwet̓in Caretaker Area. The strategy does not define or replace any of the government-to-government dialogue or negotiations between the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and Government of BC, including the ongoing work of the T̓silhqot̓in-BC Fish and Wildlife Panel. This Wildlife Management Strategy is an expression of T̓silhqot̓in and Xení Gwet̓in Aboriginal rights and title, but in no way represents or defines the full extent of those rights, nor constrains, derogates, or limited those Aboriginal rights and title. The Xení Gwet̓in First Nation is one of six T̓silhqot̓in communities which also includes: Yunešit̓in, Tl̓'etinqox, T̓sideldel, ?Esdilagh, and Tl̓'esqox.



PHOTO: JEFF NISHIMA-MILLER



GUIDING PRINCIPLES¹

1 LONG-TERM THINKING

The Wildlife Management Strategy is future-oriented and adaptable to changing circumstances.

2 A BROAD SCOPE

The Wildlife Management Strategy considers the sustainability of ecological, cultural, and economic aspects of the community, wildlife, and habitat.

3 INTEGRATION

The Wildlife Management Strategy will build upon, link together, and be consistent with the objectives referenced within other community planning activities and work done in the Caretaker Area over the past several decades.

4 COLLABORATION

The Wildlife Management Strategy will provide a framework for partnerships and information sharing from all members and partners that form the Xeni Gwet'in community.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Wildlife Management Strategy will provide processes for ongoing and continuous community engagement in wildlife and habitat stewardship.

6 CAPACITY BUILDING

The Wildlife Management Strategy will help increase capacity within the Xeni Gwet'in community through member participation, training, and involvement.


7 IMPLEMENTATION

The Wildlife Management Strategy will identify actions that can help wildlife and habitat stewardship goal achievement.

8 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Wildlife Management Strategy will set measurable targets and methods for tracking results to celebrate progress and identify opportunities for improvement.

¹ The guiding principles for this Wildlife Management Strategy have been adapted from the XGFN Comprehensive Community Plan and the Forest Management Strategy 2020-2024.

A close-up photograph of a dirt path. The path is composed of dark brown soil and is marked with several sets of animal tracks, likely from a deer or similar animal. A single, smooth, light-colored rock is embedded in the dirt on the right side of the path. The surrounding area is covered with dry, brown pine needles and small, light-colored rocks. The overall scene suggests a natural, outdoor environment.

DECISIONS ABOUT THE LAND AND WILDLIFE ARE CONTINUOUS AND ONGOING. THIS WRITTEN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SUPPORTS THAT WORK IN RESPONSE TO MORE RECENT WILDLIFE AND HABITAT THREATS/CONCERNS.

PHOTO: JEFF NISHIMA-MILLER



SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

The development of this Wildlife Management Strategy is intended to provide the Xeni Gwet'in community, leadership, and staff with guidance for the management of wildlife and their habitat throughout their territory. This strategy focuses on species of wildlife and their habitats identified as priorities for management action.

Priority species have been identified as key food species and key commercial species—categories which can occur together simultaneously. Key food species are those which are integral to supporting Xeni Gwet'in dietary and cultural needs, including mule deer and moose. Key commercial species are those which offer potential to support a sustainable Xeni Gwet'in wildlife economy, such as bighorn sheep, mountain goat, and grizzly bear. Regardless of the species, dietary or commercial value previously mentioned, they are each considered to be cultural keystone species that have, and continue to shape, cultural identity and way of life for the Xeni Gwet'in. An ecosystem-based approach has been applied for considering the management of people and other species including black bear, cougar, wolf, and free-roaming horses alongside priority species.²



PHOTO: BRUCE LULUA

² The focus of this Wildlife Management Strategy is on key food and commercial species. A future planning priority may be to expand the scope of planning to include other culturally or ecologically important species (species-at-risk, furbearers, etc.).



PHOTO: JAMES LULUA JR



PHOTO: BRUCE LULUA



PHOTO: BRUCE LULUA

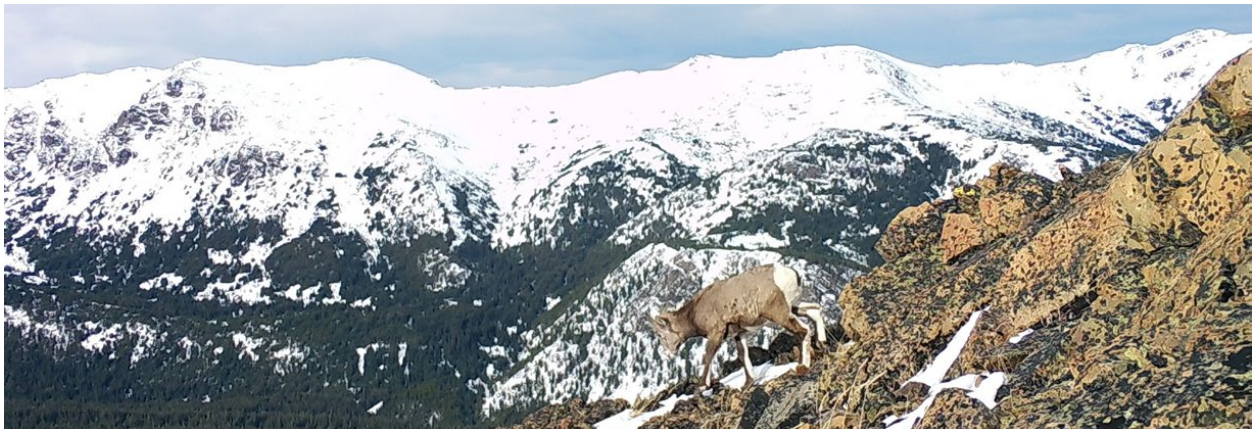


PHOTO: JAMES LULUA JR

This strategy contains a vision, principles, goals, objectives, and a wildlife management action plan, all of which come directly from reviews of Xeni Gwet'in First Nation's existing reports, work, and accumulated expertise in this area. This vision and principles are for guiding the pillars of wildlife stewardship, habitat stewardship, and wildlife and habitat governance. For each of the pillars, separate goals, objectives, and actions are provided.

- **GOAL** refers to the desired long-term outcome.
- **OBJECTIVES** are the outcomes contributing to the attainment of each goal.
- **ACTIONS** are the specific steps that will be implemented to achieving objectives within a specific timeline.



METHOD

The principles, goals, objectives, and actions included within this Wildlife Management Strategy were determined by reviewing existing Xeni Gwet'in work/reports. This method was used because the community has already, many times, expressed and contributed their priorities and ideas about wildlife and habitat—many of which are reflected in Xeni Gwet'in plans and reports written in recent decades. Provincial reports, wildlife inventory data, habitat data, and plans were also reviewed to support the identification of threats/concerns, assess knowledge gaps, and to help guide management recommendations. The documents reviewed that informed the content of this report are listed in Appendix A.

The creation of this Wildlife Management Strategy was an iterative, collaborative process overseen by a core advisory team consisting of Chief and Council, Nenqay manager and staff, and XGFNG managers and administrators. The advisory team engaged to guide the development and verification of overarching goals and objectives and reviewed each milestone in the development of this Strategy. As this strategy was in the development phase, the advisory team also provided updates and looked for community input and recommendations at World Café, Nenqay Advisory Group meetings, and other community planning events/meetings.

The development and implementation of the Wildlife Management Strategy includes 5 main phases (outlined below). Phases 1 and 2 support the development of this strategy document itself—including the vision, goals, objectives, and actions—while phases 3, 4, and 5 are tied to the implementation and monitoring of actions as well as the refinement of the strategy in the future.

1. ASSESS (DEVELOPMENT)

- Define the purpose of Xeni Gwet'in wildlife management and identify the project team.
- Review of 60 reports representing prior work completed by Xeni Gwet'in.
- Review of BC wildlife inventory data, habitat data, and biologist reports.
- Identify community concerns and critical threats to wildlife/habitat and assess the current wildlife and habitat governance situation.
- Define the vision, guiding principles, goals, objectives, and priorities for wildlife management.



PHOTO: JAMES LULUA JR

2. PLAN ACTIONS AND MONITORING (DEVELOPMENT)

- Review best practices from publicly available documents and information on other Indigenous wildlife management plans and strategies.
- Review best practices from wildlife management publications and articles.
- Select action recommendations to achieve wildlife management goals/objectives.
- Analyze and systematically rank and prioritize recommended actions.

3. IMPLEMENT ACTIONS AND MONITORING (IMPLEMENTATION)

- Develop action-specific indicators to track performance and achievement objectives/goals.
- Develop operational work plans for implementation of actions.
- Refine budget for actions and associated projects.
- Begin implementing and monitoring actions.



PHOTO: JEFF NISHIMA-MILLER

4. ANALYZE AND ADAPT (IMPLEMENTATION)

- Prepare Xeni Gwet'in Knowledge and monitoring data.
- Analyze results.
- Adapt strategy.

5. CAPTURE AND SHARE LESSONS AND RESULTS (IMPLEMENTATION)

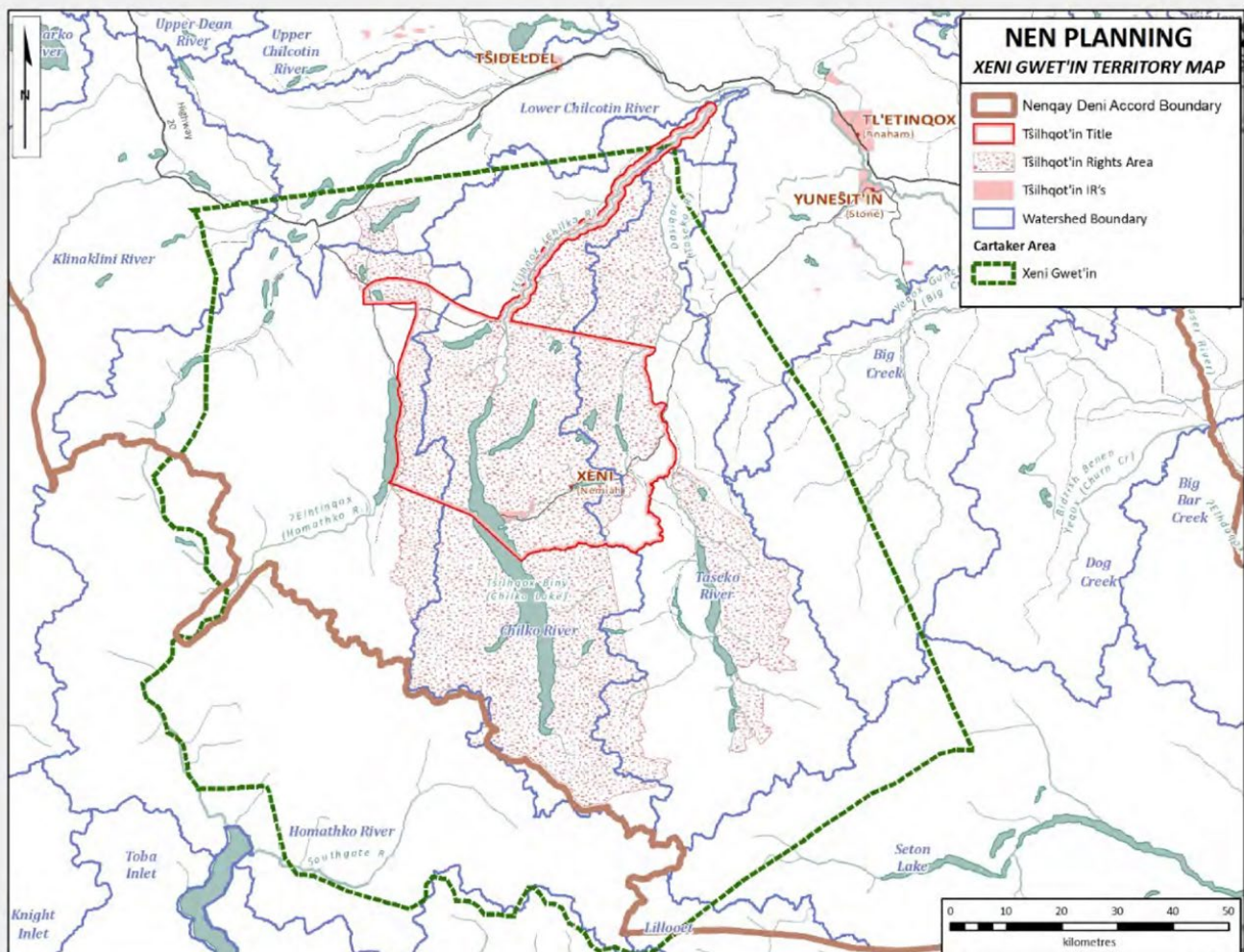
- Document lessons and results.
- Share lessons and results within the Xeni Gwet'in community, with other T̓silhqot'in communities, and other external partners.

The implementation this Wildlife Management Strategy will require extensive community collaboration and support, and therefore, additional community engagement should be used to help capture the depth of knowledge and value systems that are maintained by members of Xeni Gwet'in First Nation. Absence of data or information within this Wildlife Management Strategy does not mean absence of use, value, interest, or awareness. This report is a *living document* and is based on current understandings of existing community wildlife and habitat stewardship priorities for the XGCA. The information—including the vision, goals, objectives, and actions—may be updated as new information becomes available.



ECOLOGY AND GOVERNANCE OF THE XENI GWET'IN CARETAKER AREA: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The Xeni Gwet'in Caretaker Area (XGCA) is the ancestral territory of the Xeni Gwet'in First Nation. The XGCA contains the T̓silhqot'in Declared Title Area (DTA), which has been recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada as 1700 km² of land to which the T̓silhqot'in Nation holds “the exclusive right to decide how the land is used and the right to benefit from those uses” (*T̓silhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia, 2014*).



The XGCA includes 15,000 km² of land, encompassing a vast and intact area within the Chilko Forest Region in British Columbia, stretching across the watershed of T̓silhqox (Chilko) Lake and T̓silhqox River. The XGCA is situated at the intersection of two prominent physiographic regions in British Columbia: divided into the Chilcotin Ranges, while the north one-third falls within a portion of the Interior Plateau known as the Chilcotin Plateau. The Chilcotin Ranges include the Nemiah Valley, Potato Range, Taseko Lakes, and Tsuniah Lake, and small icefields found at higher alpine elevations. The Chilcotin Plateau encompasses the area north of Cheolquoit Lake and extends north of T̓silhqox (Chilko) Lake to the north tip of Taseko Lake.

The XGCA is physically and biologically diverse, including a host of native species such as mule deer, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, wolf, grizzly and black bear, and cougar. Free-roaming horses are also present. Mule deer, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, and grizzly bears are cultural keystone species for their food, ceremonial, and spiritual qualities. Although a non-native species, free-roaming horses have become imbedded within Xeni Gwet'in culture, and have grown into an important species for the community.

Wildlife are closely tied to Xeni Gwet'in culture and ways of life—and play a critical role in community nutrition and food sovereignty, cultural knowledge transfer, and well-being. The longstanding relationship peoples have with the land and wildlife closely tied to the principle of respect, and Xeni Gwet'in have managed their rights and responsibilities to their Caretaker Area accordingly. Xeni Gwet'in rights and responsibilities as Caretakers have always been informed by T̓silhqot'in teachings, the laws of nature, and a place-based knowledge system built upon the countless generations of being a part of the ecosystem. As Caretakers of the land and wildlife, Xeni Gwet'in have fought to protect their lands and wildlife against industrial interests, extraction, and overconsumption. The Xeni Gwet'in First Nation Government and community continue to protect the land and wildlife through means such as collective political action from negotiations, court action, and blockades.

The history of Xeni Gwet'in stewardship is reflected in part through various layers of conservation and protected area declarations that have been asserted by the community, including the Nenduwh Jid Guzitin (Nemiah) Declaration, ?Elegasi Qayus Wild Horse Preserve, and Nexwagwez?an (Dasiqox Tribal Park). In 1989, due to growing threats from industrial resource development, XGFN exercised its

Aboriginal Rights and Title to their Caretaker Area through the Nemiah Declaration. The Declaration designated the XGCA as the Nemiah Aboriginal Wilderness Preserve, stating that there would be no logging, mining, or commercial road building in the area. In 2002 XGFN established the ?Elegasi Qayus Wild Horse Preserve, which includes much of the same area outlined by the Nemiah Declaration to maintain Xeni Gwet'in cultural connections and management—including capture for domestic uses—of free-roaming horses. In 2014, Xeni Gwet'in First Nation and Yunešit'in



PHOTO: NENQAY DEPARTMENT

First Nation, alongside the T̓silhqot̓'in National Government, established Dasiqox Tribal Park within the Xení Gwet̓'in-Yunešit̓'in shared Caretaker Areas. Dasiqox Tribal Park was initiated as an expression of T̓silhqot̓'in governance, and as a vision for stewardship of land and water, to strengthen T̓silhqot̓'in culture, and as an opportunity for guiding a future for sustainable economic development. In addition to the Nemiah Wilderness Preserve, ?Elegasi Gayus Wild Horse Preserve, and Dasiqox Tribal Park, the spatial extent of the XGCA overlaps with several provincially designated parks, protected, and conservation tenure areas.

While the government of British Columbia (BC) has assumed their role as the managing authority for land and wildlife throughout BC, Xení Gwet̓'in First Nation has retained and continues to exercise their inherent responsibilities for the stewardship, protection, and responsible use of their Caretaker Area, inclusive of wildlife and habitat.

Decisions about the land and wildlife are continuous and ongoing. This written Wildlife Management Strategy supports that work in response to more recent wildlife and habitat threats/concerns. The threats/concerns are reflected through outright extirpation of elk and continual population declines of cultural keystone species including mule deer, moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat that support Xení Gwet̓'in traditional uses and way of life.



PHOTO: NENQAY DEPARTMENT



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The following situational analysis of the XGCA is a summary of the strengths/resiliency, threats/concerns, and opportunities that were articulated through community feedback, XGFNG documents, and BC wildlife/habitat data (see Appendix A for a full list of documents reviewed). The following summary are the analysis and results of community feedback, document/data review, as well as expertise within the Wildlife Management Strategy advisory group.

STRENGTHS AND RESILIENCY

The XCGA hosts **high degrees of ecological integrity**, linked to:

- XGFN's long term commitment to the protection of the land from industrial-scale development.
- Low residential footprint.
- Low resource road densities within the DTA.
- Limited human access to much of the high-elevation habitat within the southern half of the XGCA.
- Large spatial coverage of protected and conservation areas, including the DTA, provincial parks, Crown tenure conservation areas, and Nexwagwezʔan (Dasiqox Tribal Park).
- Refugia provided within the DTA for bighorn sheep and mountain goats, which is currently designated as a no-hunting area for both species.

Xeni Gwet'in **deep focus on and support for wildlife and habitat stewardship**, demonstrated through:

- Wildlife and habitat stewardship directly supports XG culture and way of life.
- High levels of XG knowledge and expertise about the land and wildlife.
- Increasing emphasis on and investments into wildlife/habitat knowledge and data generation within XGFN and TNG.
- Title Ranger skills and training.

- History of and experience in wildlife focused economic activities, including wildlife viewing, photography, and guide outfitting.
- Connections and relationships with universities for wildlife and habitat related research support.

XGFN ***governance capacity and success***, demonstrated through:

- Judicial recognition of T̓ilhqot'in Aboriginal rights and title within the XGCA.
- Strong partnerships with Crown governments via Nation-to-Nation Agreements.
- Collaborative relationships, cohesion, and shared priorities with other T̓ilhqot'in communities.
- International recognition and support garnered from Title win and Teztan Biny.

THREATS AND CONCERNS

Observed and anticipated ***shifts in species abundance and distribution***, including:

- Declines in mule deer, moose, mountain goat, and bighorn sheep populations—threatening XG harvesting, cultural uses, and way of life.
- Apparent increases in the abundance of cougars, wolf, black bear, and grizzly bear—which are amplifying predation pressures on ungulates.
- Apparent increases in some free-roaming horse groups—which are displacing native ungulates out of functional habitat as they are outcompeted by the horses.
- Ongoing risk of wildlife diseases, including M.Ovi in bighorn sheep, winter tick in moose, and chronic wasting disease in moose and mule deer, which if transmitted into the XGCA, may threaten the future viability of these species.
- Anticipated climate change impacts (e.g., increased wildfire and drought severity, and changes in precipitation/snowfall patterns) that may change wildlife occupancy within the XGCA.

Habitat degradation linked to:

- The intensity, frequency, and size of forest disturbances—including logging, wildfire, and mountain pine beetle—north of T̓ilhqox (Chilko) Lake and east of the Taseko River.
- Intensive logging and high road densities in the area east of the Taseko River.
- Large-scale changes to forest structure, age, and composition caused by forest encroachment.
- Decreased forage quality linked to overgrazing by free-roaming horses and domestic livestock, especially within ungulate winter range and grasslands.

Increased **access and public use of the XGCA**, magnifying issues related to:

- Illegal road and trail building for off-road vehicles.
- Liberal hunting seasons, overharvest, and people taking more than they need.
- Wildlife disturbances from recreational activity, including mountain biking, snowmobiling, and other backcountry activities.
- Conflict with non-T̓silhqot̓in hunters, wildlife viewers, and other recreationists.
- Climate change and wildfire.

Capacity limitations and knowledge gaps, including:

- Limited funding and resources for XG wildlife and habitat management, monitoring, and enforcement.
- Loss of youth connection to the land and wildlife within the XGCA, which risks the continuation of intergenerational knowledge exchange and future XG procurement for wildlife and habitat initiatives.
- Uncertainty surrounding the direct sources and magnitude of impacts driving observed shifts in species distribution and abundance.
- Discrepancies between BC wildlife inventory data and Xeni Gwet̓in Knowledge.
- Gaps in data and monitoring (e.g., habitat assessments, predator densities, seasonal range use and occupancy).
- Limited monitoring and enforcement by the BC Conservation Officers throughout the XGCA.

Lack of Crown recognition of and support for Xeni Gwet̓in and T̓silhqot̓in Nation decision-making and enforcement linked to:

- Crown governments have not amended their legislation to give full force and effect to T̓silhqot̓in Aboriginal Title.
- Lack of enforcement tools for Title Rangers or T̓silhqot̓in laws.
- Nexwagwez̓an (Dasiqox Tribal Park) lacks formal Crown recognition.
- Continued presence of provincially issued mineral tenures.
- Unclear wildlife and habitat management objectives used by BC and how they are applied in practice (e.g., to harvest regulations, species recovery efforts, habitat maintenance and restoration, cut block layout and design, etc.).

OPPORTUNITIES

Capacity building for initiatives and programming such as:

- Diversified wildlife driven economic initiatives owned and operated by XGFN (e.g., guide outfitting, viewing, photography, etc.).
- Xení Gwet'in employment in areas related to wildlife management (e.g., habitat restoration).
- Xení Gwet'in-led wildlife and habitat monitoring and data collection.
- Increased Xení Gwet'in youth participation, engagement, and education in wildlife and habitat stewardship.
- Increased community events, workshops, and on-the-land activities centred upon wildlife and habitat stewardship.

Coordination and integration of Xení Gwet'in wildlife and habitat stewardship goals and objectives with:

- TNG Stewardship Department initiatives, wildlife research, and staff capacity.
- Strategic engagements and negotiations between Xení Gwet'in/T̓silhqot'in leadership and senior staff.
- Other ongoing Xení Gwet'in-led planning and initiatives (e.g., forestry management, watershed management, climate change adaptation, and Nén planning).
- The knowledge, resources, and capacities of other T̓silhqot'in communities and First Nations.
- Collaborations and partnerships with groups and individuals on shared conservation values, projects, and advocacy (e.g., non-governmental organizations, non-T̓silhqot'in hunters, etc.).

Exercise of T̓silhqot'in and Xení Gwet'in rights through:

- Presence on the land and connection to wildlife through active stewardship.
- Increased recognition and support of T̓silhqot'in and Xení Gwet'in rights and decision-making authority.
- Furthering T̓silhqot'in and Xení Gwet'in rights and decision-making authority through the implementation of the T̓silhqot'in decision and government-to-government agreements.
- Openings for XGFN to implement their own specific, measurable, and binding wildlife management objectives that are applied to all resource sectors and land uses.
- Applied management of wildlife and habitat in the Xení Gwet'in way, according to the values, rights, priorities, knowledge, and methods of the community.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

There are three goals for this Wildlife Management Strategy, including one applied to each priority pillar of wildlife stewardship, habitat stewardship, and wildlife and habitat governance. The goals and corresponding objectives for each goal, were all directly informed by the Xeni Gwet'in document review of previous work relating to the XGCA and wildlife/habitat within it. The following goals and objectives are embedded within the guiding principles (stated above), as well as within technical or scientific advice where applicable.

GOAL 1: WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP

Establish an abundance of keystone species to support food security, health, cultural use, and the sustainable wildlife economy for both current and future generations.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Establish a wildlife planning and monitoring framework (Supplementary Files).
- B. Restore keystone species populations and/or maintain sustainable populations that meet community needs.
- C. Ensure that all consumptive uses of wildlife are sustainable.
- D. Establish a sustainable wildlife economy.³

³ The sustainable wildlife economy refers to Xeni Gwet'in First Nation owned and operated operations, including ecotourism (e.g., wildlife viewing), guide outfitting, and other wildlife related value-added economic initiatives such as lodging, photography, and habitat restoration/optimization services. etc. Within a sustainable wildlife economy, value added economic initiatives feed into and support broader goals for wildlife and habitat stewardship, and in essence benefit the land and animals. For example, economic activities may benefit the land and animals by generating funding for wildlife and habitat stewardship activities, growing wildlife management capacity, cultivating interest in wildlife and habitat, etc.

GOAL 2: HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

Manage wildlife habitat for the characteristics and attributes to support ecosystem function and an abundance of keystone species for both current and future generations.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Establish a habitat planning and monitoring framework (Supplementary Files).
- B. Protect critical wildlife habitat areas.
- C. Restore degraded wildlife habitats.
- D. Maintenance of wildlife habitat areas with high suitability.

GOAL 3: WILDLIFE AND HABITAT GOVERNANCE

Community, leadership, and staff engagement in wildlife and habitat stewardship that exercises Xeni Gwet'in jurisdiction and supports informed decision-making, capacity building, and integration;⁴ and collaboration with other communities, companies, organizations, and governments that advances wildlife and habitat stewardship.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. Ensuring that Xeni Gwet'in knowledge, traditional use, and cultural values are used in coordination with science to guide wildlife and habitat stewardship decision-making throughout the XGCA.
- B. Increasing wildlife and habitat stewardship capacity through member participation, training, and involvement, along with direct investments and dedicated funding.
- C. Establishing wildlife and habitat stewardship roles, responsibilities, and strategic partnerships.
- D. Communicating wildlife and habitat stewardship objectives, initiatives, and key issues to Xeni Gwet'in members and non-members.

⁴ Integration here refers to a streamlined approach to wildlife and habitat governance that is aligned and coordinated alongside the various Xeni Gwet'in and T̓silhqot'in-led initiatives and their priorities, goals, objectives, actions, and importantly, decision-making processes.



WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

This section summarizes a series of recommended actions for wildlife stewardship, habitat stewardship, and wildlife and habitat governance within the XGCA. The actions here were drawn from previous Xeni Gwet'in work and plans. In honouring the extensive work already completed by Xeni Gwet'in, a long list of ~230 actions from over ~60 reports were grouped and consolidated, then categorized according to the goals and objectives outlined in the section above. The original set of actions were then refined and guided by the expertise of the Wildlife Management Strategy advisory group. Refining the actions was also supported by the local knowledge of the Xeni Gwet'in community and through a best practice review from other wildlife management plans and the best available science. The refined actions were then organized and prioritized for this Strategy. To prioritize them,⁵ each action was ranked on a scale of 1 to 5 for the following criteria:⁶

1. Does this action further XG authority on wildlife/habitat related decision-making?
2. Does this action address the threats, concerns, or opportunities relevant to XG wildlife and habitat management context?
3. Is this action reasonably achievable in terms of XG capacity and human/financial resources?
4. Is this action reasonably achievable in terms of time to implement or complete it?
5. Are there any legal limitations or barriers for XG carrying out this action?

The resulting actions, ranked by the above five criteria, were grouped into three categories in terms of impact: moderate, high, and very high. The priority rankings have been assigned to assist in the implementation of actions s XGFN considers the time and resource (human and financial) to dedicate to each action. The priority ranking of 'very high' recommends that the action should be considered for immediate implementation (one to three years). The priority ranking of 'high' recommends that the action is considered for implementation in the medium term (three to five years). The priority ranking of 'moderate' recommends that the action is considered within the long-term and may require time and resource investments extending five years and beyond.

5 Priority rankings have been assigned to assist in the implementation of this Wildlife Management Strategy as XGFN Government considers the time and resource (human and financial) allocations provided to each action.

6 The method for action prioritization has been adapted from the Xeni Gwet'in Watershed Management Plan, which was prepared by Suzanne von der Porten.



The time, resources, capacity, and personnel needed to implement the recommended actions described here may change over time, and pressures or priorities related to wildlife management may also shift. Therefore, a living database has been provided to the Xeni Gwet'in Nenqay Department that included the action items and ranking criteria so that the assigned rankings can be reevaluated periodically as the Wildlife Management Strategy is updated or adapted.

To facilitate the integration of this strategy among other Xeni Gwet'in or T̓silhqot'in plans or initiatives — actions from this strategy that are cross-listed, akin, or support actions within other community or Nation-level plans have been referenced using endnotes and included within Appendix B.

GOAL 1: WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP

Establish an abundance of keystone species to support food security, health, cultural use, and the sustainable wildlife economy for both current and future generations.

OBJECTIVE 1A: Establish a wildlife planning and monitoring framework. ⁷		
Item	Action	Priority
1	Determine long-term wildlife population objectives defined by Xeni Gwet'in community needs and values, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Food sovereignty and dietary needs. ■ Cultural use. ■ Guide outfitting services and other non-member harvest. 	High
2	Develop procedures and protocols for Xeni Gwet'in-led baseline wildlife data collection, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ground-based surveys for mule deer, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat. ■ The methodology (e.g., aerial surveys) and scheduling for free-roaming horse monitoring. ■ The methodology (e.g., track counts) and scheduling for monitoring the distribution and density of predators (wolf and cougar). ■ Alternative/additional methods for monitoring moose that can be used as a comparison to the provincially utilized Stratified Random Block surveys. ■ Hunter harvest surveys (cross listed with item 10). 	High

⁷ See 'Supplementary Information: A Toolbox for Establishing a Wildlife/Habitat Management Planning and Monitoring Framework'.

Item	Action	Priority
3	<p>Define spatial units/boundaries for Xeni Gwet'in land use and management zoningⁱ (cross listed with item 15) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wildlife monitoring (including harvest inventorying). ■ Wildlife distribution mapping. ■ Habitat identification and mapping. ■ Habitat assessment. ■ Identification and prioritization of areas for cultural use and ecological value. ■ Human use and industry guidelines. ■ Shared Caretaker Areas for collaborative stewardship with Yunešit'in Nation and Tšideldeł First Nation. 	High
4	<p>Identify best management practices for species restoration and management, considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vital rate (i.e., adult female and juvenile survival) and demographic thresholds of key species to trigger when management intervention is required. ■ Population thresholds for free-roaming horses that compete with ungulates. ■ Sustainable harvest rates (i.e., Annual Allowable Harvest). 	High
5	<p>Coordinate monitoring with management interventions (work plans) to track performance (e.g., behavior, distribution, abundance, and trend).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop performance measures. 	High

OBJECTIVE 1B: Restore keystone species populations and/or maintain sustainable populations that meet community needs.

6	<p>Continue investigating the factors driving wildlife population declines or shifts in distribution.ⁱⁱ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emphasis on habitat degradation (including forest succession), predation rates, and competition. 	High
7	<p>Develop species restoration work plans for working toward the long-term population objectives for mule deer, moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assess options for managing predation on key wildlife species while preserving ecosystem function. Options may include targeted removals, liberal harvest regulations, or hunter incentivization. ■ Explore options for minimizing the adverse effects of competition between native ungulates, free-roaming horses, and livestock. Options may include livestock grazing rotations or restrictions, horse round ups or sterilizations, and fencing.ⁱⁱⁱ ■ Habitat restoration, protection, and enhancement actions (see Goal 2 objectives and actions). ■ Monitor and track performance (see item 5). 	High
8	<p>Determine the feasibility of elk returning to the XGCA.^{iv}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model and assess current habitat suitability for elk within the XGCA. ■ Identify source elk population to support translocations to the XGCA. ■ Assess options of reintroductions vs enhancing connectivity, and/or other measures that encourage natural recolonization from adjacent areas that hold elk. 	Moderate

OBJECTIVE 1C: Ensure that all consumptive uses of wildlife are sustainable.

9	<p>Assess the science-based sustainability thresholds and hierarchy of needs of the BC regulated hunting system, including allocation, season length, and age class.^v For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Options for changing mule deer ‘any buck’ season length and hunter age restrictions. ■ Assess population status/viability and quota system for reinstating the grizzly bear LEH. ■ Regulatory penalties/options and education materials that would discourage hunters from harvesting female mountain goats. ■ Wildlife population thresholds to guide when open seasons and LEH (e.g., mule deer doe and moose) may be authorized or prohibited. 	Moderate
10	<p>Develop and promote a community hunter harvest inventory program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider a system for monitoring wildlife harvest and locations that increases the availability of data while protecting the confidentiality of information. The hunter harvest inventory program should be designed to provide a cost-effective means for baseline data collection and assessing wildlife populations through harvest data. 	VERY HIGH

OBJECTIVE 1D: Establish a sustainable wildlife economy.

11	<p>Develop XG regulations/policies to guide the management of a sustainable wildlife economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop wildlife viewing guidelines (e.g., grizzly bear) that minimize disturbances.^{vi} ■ Consider a permitting system for cougar and bear hunting and/or guiding within Title Lands in a way that would support defined targets for predator management. 	High
12	<p>Develop a dedicated wildlife management funding model for the XGCA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For example, Xeni Gwet’in-led guide outfitting and wildlife viewing revenues are generated back into Xeni Gwet’in wildlife and habitat stewardship activities; and/or an excess tax applied to the licensing of non-Tsilhqot’in operators and hunters within the XGCA. 	High
13	<p>Create opportunities for value-added economic initiatives for wildlife and habitat stewardship. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Habitat restoration (e.g., prescribed burning, road deactivation, etc.) contracting. ■ Xeni Gwet’in owned and operated bear viewing lodge. ■ Wildlife photography. 	Moderate
14	<p>Improve conditions and opportunities throughout the Yohetta guiding tenure area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Trail maintenance. ■ Lodge maintenance. ■ Habitat enhancement. ■ Predator management. 	High

GOAL 2: HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

Manage wildlife habitat for the characteristics and attributes to support ecosystem function and an abundance of keystone species for both current and future generations.

OBJECTIVE 2A: Establish a habitat planning and monitoring framework. ⁸		
Item	Action	Priority
15	<p>Define spatial units/boundaries for Xeni Gwet'in land use and management zoning (cross listed with item 3) for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wildlife monitoring (including harvest inventoring). ■ Wildlife distribution mapping. ■ Wildlife and habitat mapping. ■ Habitat assessment. ■ Identification and prioritization of areas for cultural use and ecological value. ■ Human use and industry guidelines. ■ Shared Caretaker Areas for collaborative stewardship with Yunešit'in First Nation and Tšideldel First Nation. 	High
16	<p>Define best practices for habitat restoration and management,^{vii} considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Landscape level objectives for desired forest age class distributions that provide forage and cover; and road densities for limiting predation/hunting pressure. ■ Species-specific stand level objectives for the desired condition of habitat refuge, predator avoidance features, nutrition availability, thermal cover, etc. ■ Forestry and silviculture treatment guidelines, such as cut block design, habitat feature retention, cultural/prescribed burning, thinning, etc. 	High
17	<p>Develop procedures and protocols for Xeni Gwet'in-led habitat assessment and monitoring,^{viii} including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Methodology and scheduling for habitat suitability assessments. ■ Methodology for identifying and prioritizing critical wildlife habitat. ■ Habitat mapping. ■ Coordination of wildlife monitoring with habitat management interventions to track performance (cross listed with item 5). 	High



PHOTO: DALTON BAPTISTE

⁸ See 'Supplementary Information: A Toolbox for Establishing a Wildlife/Habitat Management Planning and Monitoring Framework'.

OBJECTIVE 2B: Protect critical wildlife habitat areas.

Item	Action	Priority
18	<p>Identify the spatial boundaries of areas (e.g., critical wildlife habitat, migration corridors, preferred harvest locations, sacred sites) needing further protection,^{ix} including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Areas that should prohibit all industrial activity, including road building. ■ Areas that should prohibit motorized access. ■ Areas that should restrict livestock grazing. ■ Consider options, where appropriate, for seasonal protections/prohibitions and disturbance buffers. 	High
19	<p>Secure protection of all critical wildlife habitats throughout the XGCA in the form of legislation, regulations, and other land designation tools.^x</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Secure desired level of protection for habitat within Nexwagwezʔan (Dasiqox Tribal Park). 	Moderate
20	<p>Establish standards to guide stewardship of key ecosystems (wetlands, grasslands, riparian areas, old growth forests, etc.) that align with the habitat management best practices (see item 16).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Apply the habitat stewardship standards to all sectors (forestry, mining, tourism, transportation, agriculture, etc.).^{xi} 	Moderate
21	<p>Review and consider access management options (e.g., motorized vehicle closures), focusing on the road networks east of the Taseko River.^{xii}</p>	Moderate

OBJECTIVE 2C: Restore degraded wildlife habitats.

Item	Action	Priority
22	<p>Identify and prioritize areas for habitat restoration.^{xiii}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collect Xeni Gwet'in community knowledge to identify areas where wildlife distribution and density has decreased. ■ Use habitat suitability assessments to identify and agree upon degraded wildlife habitats for restoration. For example, priority areas for habitat suitability assessments may include ungulate winter ranges and grasslands. 	VERY HIGH
23	<p>Develop habitat restoration work plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Select stand specific land management solutions. ■ Align with best practices for habitat management and restoration (item 16) to guide the implementation of restoration actions. ■ Monitor and track performance (item 17), including wildlife responses and availability of wildlife for Xeni Gwet'in. 	High
24	<p>Coordinate habitat restoration objectives with forestry-related fire mitigation/fuel reduction.^{xiv}</p>	High

OBJECTIVE 2D: Maintenance of wildlife habitat areas with high suitability.

25	<p>Establish standards to guide stewardship of key ecosystems (wetlands, grasslands, riparian areas, old growth forests, etc.) that align with the habitat management best practices (cross listed with item 20).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply the habitat stewardship standards to all sectors (forestry, mining, tourism, recreation, transportation, agriculture, etc.). 	Moderate
26	<p>Establish and enforce buffers around key habitat features (e.g., wetlands, riparian areas, thermal cover, etc.) for any land clearing activities (e.g., road building, clear cutting, salvage logging, etc.).^{xv}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align with best management practices (item 16). 	Moderate
27	<p>Identify options (land management solutions) for maintaining desired habitat condition (e.g., prescribed fire, selective removal, tree slashing, tree spacing, forage plant seeding, range fertilisation, etc.).^{xvi}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align with best management practices (item 16). 	High
28	<p>Confine current use of snowmobiles, dirt bikes, ATVs, etc., to trails and areas that avoid high quality habitat.^{xvii}</p>	Moderate
29	<p>Identify and maintain existing connectivity and movement corridors.</p>	High
30	<p>Coordinate habitat stewardship work with the ongoing climate change adaptation planning to consider the long-term resiliency of habitat to anticipated climate change impacts throughout the XGCA.^{xviii}</p>	VERY HIGH



PHOTOS: JAMES LULUA JR.

GOAL 3: WILDLIFE AND HABITAT GOVERNANCE

Community, leadership, and staff engagement in wildlife and habitat stewardship that exercises Xeni Gwet'in jurisdiction and supports informed decision-making, capacity building, and integration; and collaboration with other communities, companies, organizations, and governments that advances wildlife and habitat stewardship.

OBJECTIVE 3A: Ensure that Xeni Gwet'in knowledge, traditional use, and cultural values is used in coordination with science to guide wildlife and habitat stewardship decision-making.		
Item	Action	Priority
31	<p>Identify a group of Xeni Gwet'in citizens to inform and advise on the implementation of the actions recommended through this Wildlife Management Strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Objective setting (item 1). ■ Knowledge exchange and generation (items 22, 32, 33, and 37). ■ Wildlife/habitat work planning (item 7 and 23). ■ Youth mentorship and community outreach (items 32, 37, and 38). 	VERY HIGH
32	<p>Host events out on the land for Elders to come together with community members and staff at important cultural sites (e.g., traditional harvesting locations) to both celebrate and reinvigorate T̓s̓ilhqot'in ways of being with and language related to respect for wildlife.^{xx}</p>	VERY HIGH
33	<p>Weave Xeni Gwet'in knowledge and science to identify thresholds for management intervention, action recommendations, and performance measures.^{xx}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collect and document Xeni Gwet'in Knowledge of historic wildlife abundance and distribution, as well as traditional methods for wildlife/habitat stewardship. 	VERY HIGH
34	<p>Develop methods and indices for community-based wildlife monitoring.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a system for community-based collection of wildlife spatial data for the XGCA to support decision-making. ■ Consider the use of a wildlife monitoring app made available for community members and staff. 	High
35	<p>Coordinate wildlife and habitat priorities and decision-making with all Nenqay and XGFNG work such as: access management, land use planning, forestry, climate adaptation, tourism, and economic development.</p>	VERY HIGH
36	<p>Establish protocols and agreements with BC to, where possible, harmonize jurisdiction and decision-making for wildlife and habitat management.</p>	High

OBJECTIVE 3B: Increase wildlife and habitat stewardship capacity through member participation, training, and involvement, along with direct investments and dedicated funding.

37	Support young people on the land to connect them to the Xeni Gwet'in cultural and knowledge base through opportunities such as culture camps and youth programming with a focus on mentorship for traditional hunting and harvesting. ^{xxi} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> These opportunities should be designed to facilitate a progression into wildlife and habitat stewardship roles such as the Ranger Program and/or value-added economic activities (e.g., guide outfitting, wildlife tourism guides, etc.). 	VERY HIGH
38	Educate Xeni Gwet'in members about the T̓silhqot'in Wildlife Law. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a T̓silhqot'in hunter education program that is made available for youth. Host annual workshops for T̓silhqot'in members. Create Wildlife Law communication materials. 	VERY HIGH
39	Increase the capacity of Xeni Gwet'in community members and staff (i.e., hire and train) to monitor wildlife and habitat, including the collection and use of data to support decision-making. ^{xxii}	High
40	Increase the capacity Xeni Gwet'in community members and staff (i.e., hire and train) to undertake habitat restoration actions and other wildlife/habitat value-added economic activities. ^{xxiii}	High
41	Expand the scope of the Title Ranger program to include wildlife/habitat monitoring and stewardship activities. ^{xxiv} <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish additional Title Ranger positions to increase capacity and differentiate roles between compliance/enforcement and monitoring/stewardship. 	Moderate
42	Explore options for hiring auxiliary Title Rangers to increase capacity for predator and free-roaming horse management activities.	VERY HIGH
43	Develop a dedicated funding system to support wildlife and habitat stewardship activities (see item 12).	High
44	Identify and apply for provincial and federal grants available for support Indigenous-led wildlife and habitat stewardship initiatives.	VERY HIGH



PHOTO: MAX NISHIMA

OBJECTIVE 3C: Establish wildlife and habitat stewardship roles, responsibilities, and strategic partnerships.

Item	Action	Priority
45	<p>Build strategic partnerships to support wildlife and habitat stewardship initiatives, including assisting with training, contracts, project administration, funding, etc.^{xxv}</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish shared objectives and determine collaborative initiatives with other T̄silhqot̄in communities for wildlife and habitat stewardship. ■ Build strategic partnerships with other First Nations who are dealing with similar wildlife and habitat management issues for collaborative training and advocacy. ■ Build strategic partnerships with conservation organizations for collaborative initiatives such as habitat restoration, wildlife monitoring, and advocacy. ■ Continue to work on partnerships and agreements for collaboration on wildlife and habitat enforcement with the BC Conservation Officer Service, including designating Title Rangers with authority to enforce provisions of the Wildlife Act. ■ Continue to work on partnerships and agreements with the BC Wildlife Service for prescribed burning, thinning, and trail maintenance projects. ■ Leverage existing collaborative relationships with university institutions and researchers to support the development of the wildlife/habitat planning and monitoring framework (objectives 1a and 2a) and activities for wildlife monitoring/data analysis. ■ Develop MOUs and workplans with each partner. 	VERY HIGH
46	<p>Coordinate XG wildlife and habitat stewardship activities with TNG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coordinate stewardship with Yunešit̄in First Nation and T̄sideldel First Nation within shared Caretaker Areas. ■ Coordinate Title Rangers, Dasiqox/Yunešit̄in Guardians, and TNG on wildlife/habitat monitoring and baseline data collection. ■ Coordinate Xen̄i Gwet̄in and TNG for shared funding applications for wildlife/habitat stewardship. ■ Coordinate Xen̄i Gwet̄in wildlife/habitat objectives and protocols (e.g., best management practices) with TNG operations and decision-making tools (e.g., cumulative effects, impact assessment, government-to-government negotiations, etc.). 	VERY HIGH
47	<p>Delineate the roles, responsibilities, and collaboration points for wildlife and habitat stewardship between Xen̄i Gwet̄in First Nation Government, TNG, and the BC Government.^{xxvi}</p>	VERY HIGH
48	<p>Engage with BC Ministries and staff to develop programs and sustained funding for Xen̄i Gwet̄in-led wildlife and habitat stewardship.^{xxvii}</p>	High

OBJECTIVE 3D: Communicate wildlife and habitat stewardship objectives, initiatives, and key issues to Xeni Gwet'in members and non-members.

Item	Action	Priority
49	<p>Develop protocols and conservation rules for non-T̓silhqot'in visitors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate Xeni Gwet'in protocols and conservation rules to non-T̓silhqot'in members, including hunters, wildlife viewing operators, guide outfitters, campers, etc. 	High
50	<p>Enhance member and non-member communication and transparency.^{xxxviii} For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider publishing an annual wildlife newsletter for communicating and ensuring transparency of Xeni Gwet'in wildlife and habitat stewardship activities to both T̓silhqot'in and non-T̓silhqot'in members. Establish signage throughout the XGCA to communicate road closures, restorative initiatives, etc. 	VERY HIGH
51	<p>Work with BC-based mapping and hunting applications (e.g., IHunter BC and OnX maps) to update their spatial layers to include Title Land boundaries and the related laws/regulations attached to the T̓silhqot'in decision.</p>	High
52	<p>Consider and communicate options for decreasing hunting pressure without restricting non-T̓silhqot'in hunter opportunity completely (with relevance to item 9).^{xxxix} For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes to season length. Changes to sex/animal age-class restrictions. Motorized vehicle closure areas. Road deactivation. 	Moderate



PHOTO: SHANNON WOODS



IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS STRATEGY

This section includes guidance for supporting the identification of funding and budgeting, XG capacity and skills, external support, and other non-financial resources required for the immediate implementation of this Wildlife Management Strategy.

IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION TASKS

XGFN leadership and staff will define the roles, responsibilities, collaboration points, and external support requirements for the implementation of this Wildlife Management Strategy by considering:

- The roles, responsibilities, and collaboration points for wildlife and habitat stewardship between XGFN Government, other T̓ilhqot̓in communities, TNG, and the BC Government (item 47). Roles, responsibilities, and collaboration points should be considered for activities including:
 - Wildlife and habitat monitoring and analysis (see items 2, 5, 6, and 17).
 - Development and implementation of species specific and habitat restoration work plans and activities (see items 7, 23, and 46).
 - Establish protocols and agreements with BC to, where possible, harmonize jurisdiction and decision-making for wildlife and habitat management (item 36), including for industry guidelines (items 20 and 25), access management (items 21 and 28), conservation area designations (item 19), and hunting regulation changes (items 9 and 52).
 - Development of programs and sustained funding for XG-led wildlife and habitat stewardship (item 48).
 - Short and long-term staffing and contracting needs.
- Coordination of wildlife and habitat priorities and decision-making with all Nenqay and XGFN Government work such as: access management, land use planning, forestry, climate adaptation, tourism, economic development, and Nexwagwez̓an (Dasiqox Tribal Park) (item 35) for activities including:
 - Defining the spatial units/boundaries for Xeni Gwet̓in land use and management zoning (items 3 and 15).

- Identifying best practices for species and habitat restoration and management (items 4 and 16).
- Identifying and prioritizing areas for habitat suitability assessments (item 22).
- Species specific and habitat restoration work planning (items 7, 22, 23, and 46).
- Identifying the spatial boundaries of areas needing further protection (item 18).
- Identifying options (land management solutions) for maintaining desired habitat condition (item 27).
- Creating opportunities for value-added economic initiatives for wildlife and habitat stewardship (item 13).
- Increasing the capacity of XG community members and staff (i.e., hire and train) to monitor and implement restoration actions for wildlife and habitat (items 39 and 40).
- Development of protocols and conservation rules for non-T̂silhqot̂'in visitors (item 49).
- Enhancing member and non-member communication and transparency (item 50).
- Strategic partnerships to support XG wildlife and habitat stewardship initiatives, including assisting with training, contracts, project administration, funding, etc., (item 45). XGFN leadership and staff should determine the capacity support requirements that can be filled by hiring contractors for activities including:
 - Wildlife and habitat monitoring and analysis (see items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 17).
 - Identification of best management practices for wildlife and habitat restoration and management (items 4 and 16) and establishing standards to guide stewardship of key ecosystems that align with the best management practices (items 20 and 25).
 - Development of methods, procedures, indices, and protocols for Xeni Gwet̂'in-led baseline data collection (items 2, 10, 17, and 34).
 - Development of species-specific and habitat restoration work plans (items 7 and 33).
 - Identification of options (land management solutions) for maintaining desired habitat condition (item 27).

XGFN leadership and staff will define the budget allocations and funding opportunities for the short term (1-5 year) implementation of this Wildlife Management Strategy. In doing so, XGFN leadership and staff will:

- Identify and consider opportunities for increasing the capacity of XG community members and staff (i.e., hire and train) to monitor and implement restoration actions for wildlife and habitat (items 39 and 40).
- Identify and apply for provincial and federal grants available for supporting Indigenous-led wildlife and habitat stewardship initiatives (item 44).

- Determine budget for external contract support, including technical analysis and planning (action 45), and auxiliary Title Rangers (item 42).
- Determine budget for immediate species and habitat restoration activities (items 7, 14, and 23).

XGFN Government will identify a group of Xeni Gwet'in citizens to inform and advise on wildlife and habitat decision-making and the implementation of the actions recommended within this Wildlife Management Strategy (action 31). The Wildlife and Habitat Advisory Group be tasked with and/or be key contributors to activities such as:

- Identifying and prioritizing areas for habitat suitability assessments by collection Xeni Gwet'in knowledge to identify areas where wildlife distribution and density has decreased in recent decades (item 22).
- Identifying and prioritizing the spatial boundaries of areas (e.g., critical wildlife habitat, migration corridors, preferred harvest locations, sacred sites) needing further protection (item 18).
- Defining the spatial units/boundaries for Xeni Gwet'in land use and management zoning (items 1 and 15).
- Guiding the development of long-term wildlife population objectives defined by Xeni Gwet'in community needs and values (item 3).
- Providing Xeni Gwet'in Knowledge for identifying thresholds for management intervention, work plan recommendations, and performance measures based upon past wildlife abundance and distribution, as well as traditional methods for wildlife/habitat stewardship (item 33).
- Advising on and helping establish programs, starting as pilot projects in 2024, that support young people on the land to connect them to Xeni Gwet'in cultural and knowledge based through opportunities such as culture camps and youth programming with a focus on mentorship for traditional hunting (item 37).
- Advising on and helping establish events, starting as pilot projects in 2024, out on the land for Elders and Knowledge holders to come together with community members and staff at important cultural sites (e.g., traditional harvesting locations) to both celebrate and reinvigorate T̓silhqot'in ways of being with and language related to respect for wildlife (item 32).

XGFN Government will create a timeline, assign responsibilities, and establish work plans for implementing the actions included within this strategy in the short and long-term.

APPENDIX A: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED⁹

Year	Title
1989	Nenduwh Jid Guzitin Declaration
1997	Ts'il?os Provincial Park Master Plan
2002	Preliminary Conservation Assessment of the Rain Shadow Wild Horse Ecosystem, Brittany Triangle, Chilcotin, British Columbia, Canada
2004	Towards Culturally and Ecologically Sustainable Land Use in the Chilko River Watershed
2005	Proposed Access Management Plan for Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Caretaker Area
2005	Background Tourism Feasibility Study — Wild Species Viewing and Guidelines
2006	Xeni Gwet'in Human Use Areas Project
2010	An Independent Review of the Environmental Impact Documents for the Prosperity Mine [Terrestrial/Wildlife Component]
2010	Xeni Gwet'in Sustainable Agriculture Strategy
2010	Xeni Gwet'in Community-Based Climate Adaptation Plan
2010	T'silhqot'in National Government Final Submissions for the Prosperity Mine Federal Review
2010	Xeni Gwet'in Ecosystem-Based Conservation Plan User Guide
2011	Xeni Gwet'in Ecosystem-Based Conservation Plan
2011	A Preliminary Core Conservation Review of the Interior Dryland Grizzly Bear of Chilcotin Ranges in British Columbia Canada
2012	Teztan Biny Cumulative Impact Report
2013	Xeni Gwet'in Range Management Plan
2014	Xeni Gwet'in Land Use Guideline Development and Skills Training Initiative
2014	Inventory of Wildlife, Ecological, and Landscape Connectivity Values, T'silhqot'in First Nations Cultural/Heritage Values, and Resource Conflicts in the Dasiqox-Taseko Watershed, BC Chilcotin
2014	The Xeni Gwet'in Vision for Sustainable Development
2016	Xeni Gwet'in First Nation Comprehensive Community Plan
2016	Nenqay Deni Accord
	Dasiqox Tribal Park Forest Harvest Scenarios.
2017	Background Inventory, Identification of Key Issues, and Recommendations for a Xeni Gwet'in Grizzly Bear (Nunitsiny) — People Management Plan for Xeni Gwet'in Title Lands
2018	Nexwagweŷ'an Community Vision and Management Goals for Dasiqox Tribal Park
2018	Moose Co-Management Agreement
2019	Dasiqox Condition: Climate Change and Logging with Recommendations for Restoration and Management

⁹ For a list of the external wildlife data and studies consulted in supporting the development of this Wildlife Management Strategy, see Chelick (2020) Summary of Research Gaps Report: A Review and Inventory of Wildlife Data and Studies within Xeni Gwet'in and T'silhqot'in Territories.

Year	Title
2019	Xeni Gwet'in Nen Planning: Past Plans and Data Review
2019	Tsilhqot'in Nation Wildlife Law
2019	Tsilhqot'in Nation Hunting Order
2019	Tsilhqot'in Consultation Area Major Natural Disturbance History 1920-2018
2019	The Fires Awakened Us
2020	Xeni Gwet'in Forest Management Strategy 2020-2024
2020	Xeni Gwet'in Forest Management Strategy Appendix 2: Action Plan
2020	Xeni Gwet'in Forest Management Strategy Appendix 3: Forest Management Toolbox
2020	Xeni Gwet'in Forest Management Strategy Appendix 4: Wildfire History and Future Forest Condition within the Xeni Gwet'in Caretaker Area
2020	Forest Management Strategy Caretaker Area Analysis
2020	Forest Cover Densification Over Time (1965-2018) Nemiah Valley Sample Area, In Support of the Xeni Gwet'in Forest Strategy
2021	Tsilhqot'in Stewardship Agreement
2021	A Review and Inventory of Wildlife Data and Studies Within Xeni Gwet'in and Tsilhqot'in Territories: Research Gaps Summary Report
2021	A Review and Inventory of Wildlife Data and Studies Within Xeni Gwet'in and Tsilhqot'in Territories: Summary of Research Gaps
2021	Xeni Gwet'in Watershed Plan
2021	Tsilhqot'in in the time of COVID: Strengthening Tsilhqot'in Ways to Protect Our People
2021	Xeni Gwet'in Wildlife Management Strategy TOR
2022	Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Community Strategic Plan 2022-2026
2023	Xeni Gwet'in Strategic Benchmark Report
2023	Xeni Gwet'in Climate Change Adaptation Plan Project Summary [Working Draft]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government Bighorn Sheep M.Ovi. Testing and Collaring [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government Bull Moose Collaring [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government Cow Moose Collaring [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government Chilko River Grizzly Bear DNA Transect [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government Bear Collaring [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government Chilko Grizzly Bear Collaring [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government/Xeni Gwet'in SpayVac Feral Horse Management and Contraceptive Vaccination Trial [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government Roosevelt Elk Collaring [Project Proposal]
	Tsilhqot'in National Government/Xeni Gwet'in Alpine Focused Trail Camera Grids – Grizzly Bear Use Through the Seasons [Project Proposal]

APPENDIX B: INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION OF WILDLIFE AND HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

i Item 3 & 15: Define spatial units/boundaries for Xeni Gwet'in land use and management zoning.

Coordinate with broader N'en planning and forest and range management activities to avoid redundancy. In supporting updated land use and management zoning, data can be integrated from the Ecosystem-based Conservation Plan and Xeni Gwet'in Human Use Areas report. Within the spatial context of the Dasiqox Tribal Park, which is co-managed alongside Yunesitin First Nation, land use and management zoning for the area could be done collaboratively by XGFN and Yunešit'in.

Items 3 & 15 from this Wildlife Management Strategy are cross listed with action recommendations from the Comprehensive Community Plan, Forest Management Strategy, Range Management Plan, and Xeni Gwet'in Human Use Areas Report.

ii Item 6: Continue investigating the sources driving wildlife population declines or shifts in distribution.

The TNG Stewardship Department has several projects that are currently underway or in the planning phase that aim at investigating sources of wildlife population declines and shifts in distribution. Planned and/or current projects include:

- Bighorn sheep M.Ovi testing and collaring. Bighorn sheep collaring is being utilized to assess the life history, including habitat use, migration routes, timing of movements, rates of emigration and immigration, and potential competition with other species (e.g., free-roaming horses).
- Chilko grizzly bear DNA transect to provide baseline and trend data regarding the grizzly bears that utilize the Tšilhqox (Chilko) River area.
- Bear collaring (grizzly and black bear) to provide data for understanding habitat use, selection, and changes in habitat use; migrations and timing; denning areas; survival and mortality; and behavioral changes linked to the availability of salmon.
- North Chilcotin moose collaring to better understand moose habitat selection and competition with free-roaming horses. Note: moose collaring as a part of this project will not occur within the DTA.

iii Item 7: Explore options for minimizing the adverse effects of competition between native ungulates, free-roaming horses, and livestock (options may include livestock grazing rotations or restrictions and free-roaming horse round ups or sterilizations).

In March 2024, XGFN and the TNG Stewardship Department implemented the free-roaming horse SpayVac pilot project. As part of this project, a long-term birth control (SpayVac) has been applied and will be tested on free-roaming mares throughout the Nemiah Valley.

iv Item 8: Determine the feasibility of elk returning to the XGCA.

The TNG Stewardship Department has an elk collaring project designed to better understand the life history of elk in areas adjacent to the DTA (i.e., mountain areas south/west of the Nemiah Valley, including the Homathko-Tatlayoko areas). The primary goals of this project are to determine if the habitat selection of the collared elk is similar enough that they may be adaptable to the habitat conditions of the Chilcotin Plateau.

v Item 9: Assess the science-based and sustainability thresholds of the current regulated hunting system, including allocation, season length, and age class.

As an objective for hunting, fishing, and harvesting plants and animals, the Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision, and Management Goals lists “hunting pressure is reduced to restore sustainable populations of preferred wild food animals, moose in particular, in preferred harvesting areas”. As per the Nengay Deni Accord and Tsilhqot’in Stewardship Agreement, a Tsilhqot’in Nation-BC Fish and Wildlife Panel is the primary venue for negotiating and making recommendations to provincial decision-makers regarding regulated hunting allocations, seasons length, and age class guidelines.

vi Item 11: Develop wildlife viewing guidelines (e.g., grizzly bear) that minimize disturbances.

The development of wildlife viewing guidelines—in particular grizzly bear—is currently being supported in collaboration with the Tsilhqot’in National Government through the designation of a Wildlife Management Area located along the northern section of the Tsilhqox (Chilko) River.

Item 11 from this Wildlife Management Strategy is cross listed with action recommendations from the Watershed Plan, Proposed Access Management Plan, and Xenigwet’in Bear-People Management Plan.

vii Item 16: Define best practices for habitat restoration and management.

Objectives and actions for habitat restoration and management guidelines (item 16) are mentioned within the Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, Range Management Plan, Proposed Access Management Plan, and “The Fires Awakened Us” report—call to action 23. Defining best practices for habitat restoration and management should be coordinated closely alongside ongoing forest management planning and initiatives (e.g., standard operating procedures).

viii Item 17: Develop procedures and protocols for Xenigwet’in-led habitat monitoring and assessment.

Objectives and actions related to habitat monitoring and assessment (item 17) are mentioned within the Forest Management Strategy, Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals, and “The Fires Awakened Us” report—call to action 21. The Forest Management Strategy has actions aimed at forest analysis, including acquiring LiDAR, conducting Terrestrial Ecosystem Mapping, completion of a forest inventory, and landscape modelling. To avoid redundancy and ensure that Forest Management initiatives support goals for wildlife and habitat stewardship, the procedures and protocols for forest analysis should be coordinated to support habitat monitoring and assessment.

ix Item 18: Identify the spatial boundaries of areas (e.g., critical wildlife habitat, migration corridors, preferred harvest locations, sacred sites) needing further protection.

Identification of areas needing further protection (item 18) is mentioned as actions within the Watershed Plan and Range Management Plan.

x Item 19: Secure protection of all critical wildlife habitats throughout the XGCA in the form of legislation, regulations, and other land designation tools.

Item 19 is akin to objectives and actions within the Proposed Access Management Plan and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals.

- xi Item 20: Establish standards to guide stewardship of key ecosystems (wetlands, grasslands, riparian areas, old growth forests, etc.) that align with the habitat management best practices: Apply the habitat stewardship standards to all sectors (forestry, mining, tourism, transportation, agriculture, etc.).**

Establishing stewardship standards that are applied to all sectors (item 20) is cross listed within the Comprehensive Community Plan, Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, Range Management Plan, and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals. As item 20 proposes standards that are applied to all sectors, close coordination and continuity among planning, initiatives, and decision-making, related to forestry, mining, tourism, transportation, agriculture, etc., both at the community and Nation level is key to success.

- xii Item 21: Review and consider access management options (e.g., motorized vehicle closures), focusing on the road networks east of the Taseko River.**

As many of the road networks east of the Taseko River are within the spatial extent of Dasiqox Tribal Park, close coordination and collaboration with Yunešit'in First Nation will ensure success. Access management options (item 21), including deactivations and motorized vehicle closure areas, is cross listed within the Proposed Access Management Plan and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals.

- xiii Item 22: Identify and prioritize areas for habitat suitability assessments.**

Identification and prioritization of areas for habitat suitability assessments (item 22) is cross listed within the Forest Management Strategy, Range Management Plan, and “The Fires Awakened Us” report— call to action 21 and 23. To avoid redundancy, the procedures, and protocols for identifying and prioritizing areas for habitat suitability assessments should be coordinated with forest and range management planning and initiatives.

- xiv Item 24: Coordinate habitat restoration objectives with forestry-related fire mitigation/fuel reduction.**

Forestry-related fire mitigation/fuel reduction strategies (item 24) is emphasized within the Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, Xeni Gwet'in Community-Based Climate Change Adaptation Plan, and “The Fires Awakened Us” report. Where appropriate, fire mitigation/fuel reduction strategies should be carried out in areas and by achieving results that are beneficial for both wildfire mitigation and habitat enhancement in tandem. Therefore, wildlife habitat objectives should be coordinated alongside forestry management planning and initiatives.

- xv Item 27: Establish and enforce buffers around key habitat features (e.g., wetlands, riparian areas, thermal cover, etc.) for any land clearing activities (e.g., road building, clear cutting, salvage logging, etc.).**

Establishing buffers around key habitat features (item 27) is akin to recommendations provided within the Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, Proposed Access Management Plan, and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals.

- xvi Item 27: Identify options (land management solutions) for maintaining desired habitat condition (e.g., prescribed fire, selective removal, tree slashing, tree spacing, forage plant seeding, range fertilisation, etc.).**

Identification of land management solutions for maintaining desired habitat conditions (item 27) helps achieve objectives and supports actions within the Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, Range Management Plan, Xeni Gwet'in Community-Based Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Dasiqox Tribal Park

Community Vision and Management Goals, and “The Fires Awakened Us” report. Developing the preliminary overview of options for land management solutions should be coordinated alongside current watershed, forest, and range management planning and initiatives.

xvii Item 28: Confine current use of snowmobiles, dirt bikes, ATVs, etc., to trails and areas that avoid high quality habitat.

Confining current use of off-road vehicles (item 28) of cross listed with recommendations from the Proposed Access Management Plan. Off-road vehicle restrictions within the Dasiqox Tribal Park boundary should be created collaboratively with Yunešit'in First Nation.

xviii Item 30: Coordinate habitat stewardship work with the ongoing climate change adaptation planning to consider the long-term resiliency of habitat to anticipated climate change impacts throughout the XGCA.

Integrating habitat stewardship and climate adaptation (item 30) is cross listed within the Comprehensive Community Plan, Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, and Xeni Gwet'in Community-Based Climate Change Adaptation Plan (2010). It is recommended that the forthcoming (updated) Climate Change Adaptation Plan considers actions for managing habitat for attributes that increase resiliency to anticipated climate change impacts. Increasing habitat resiliency is relevant to and should be coordinated alongside watershed, forest, and range management planning and activities.

xix Item 32: Host events out on the land for Elders to come together with community members and staff at important cultural sites (e.g., traditional harvesting locations) to both celebrate and reinvigorate Tsilhqot'in ways of being with and language related to respect for wildlife.

Hosting events that support the celebration and reinvigoration of Tsilhqot'in ways of being with and language related to respect for wildlife (item 32) is cross listed within the Strategic plan 2022-2026, Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals. In executing item 32, it should be coordinated/combined (where possible) with existing programs and events that connect Elders, community members, and staff on the land.

xx Item 33: Weave Xeni Gwet'in knowledge and science to identify thresholds for management intervention, action recommendations, and performance measures.

Identifying thresholds for management intervention, action recommendations, and performance measures regarding habitat (item 33) is cross listed within the Forest Management Strategy. Habitat management, including thresholds and performance measures, should be coordinated alongside current forest management planning and activities. Weaving Tsilhqot'in knowledge with science for wildlife and habitat stewardship also supports objectives within the Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals.

xxi Item 37: Support young people on the land to connect them to the Xeni Gwet'in cultural and knowledge base through opportunities such as culture camps and youth programming with a focus on mentorship for traditional hunting.

Supporting young people on the land (item 37) aligns with objectives and actions within the Strategic plan 2022-2026, Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals.

xxii Item 39: Increase the capacity of Xeni Gwet'in community members and staff (i.e., hire and train) to monitor wildlife and habitat, including the collection and use of data to support decision-making.

Increasing capacity within XGFN to monitor wildlife and habitat (item 39) is cross listed with actions from the Comprehensive Community Plan, Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, Xeni Gwet'in Community-Based Climate Change Adaptation Plan, and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals.

xxiii Item 40: Increase the capacity Xeni Gwet'in community members and staff (i.e., hire and train) to undertake habitat restoration actions and other wildlife/habitat value-added economic activities.

Increasing XGFN capacity to undertake habitat restoration and other value-added economic activities (item 40) supports objectives with the Strategic Plan 2022-2026, Comprehensive Community Plan, Watershed Plan, Forest Management Strategy, and Xeni Gwet'in Community-Based Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Habitat restoration and other offshoots of habitat-related economic activities should be coordinated closely alongside the current work of and capacity building investments into the Tin Towh crew.

xxiv Item 41: Expand the scope of the Title Ranger program to include wildlife/habitat monitoring and stewardship activities.

Expanding the scope of the Title Ranger program to include wildlife/habitat monitoring and stewardship activities aligns with objectives and actions within the Comprehensive Community Plan and Watershed Plan.

xxv Item 45: Build strategic partnerships to support wildlife and habitat stewardship initiatives, including assisting with training, contracts, project administration, funding, etc.

Building strategic partnerships for wildlife and habitat stewardship initiatives (item 45) will support the achievement of objectives and implementation of actions across current watershed, forest, range, and access management activities.

xxvi Item 47: Delineate the roles, responsibilities, and collaboration points for wildlife and habitat stewardship between Xeni Gwet'in First Nation Government, TNG, and the BC Government.

Delineating the toles, responsibilities, and collaboration points for wildlife and habitat stewardship (item 47) supports objectives within the Comprehensive Community Plan. Likewise, item 47 supports ongoing work being done through the Gwets'en Nilt'i Pathway Agreement, Nenqay Deni Accord, and Tsilhqot'in-BC Stewardship Agreement. Delineating roles, responsibilities, and collaboration points with Yunešit'in First Nation will also be required for planning and work within the spatial extent of Dasiqox Tribal Park.

xxvii Item 48: Engage with BC Ministries and staff to develop programs and sustained funding for Xeni Gwet'in-led wildlife and habitat stewardship.

Engagement with BC Ministries and staff (item 48) is supported by the Nenqay Deni Accord, Tsilhqot'in-BC Stewardship Agreement, and Moose Co-Management Agreement.

xxviii Item 50: Enhance member and non-member communication and transparency.

Enhancing member and non-member communication and transparency (item 50) supports objectives and actions within the Comprehensive Community Plan, Watershed Plan, Forestry Management Strategy, Proposed Access Management Plan, and Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals.

xxix Item 52: Consider and communicate options for decreasing hunting pressure without restricting non-Tsilhqot'in hunter opportunity completely.

Considering and communicating options for decreasing hunting pressure without restricting non-Tsilhqot'in hunter opportunity completely (item 52) supports Dasiqox Tribal Park Community Vision and Management Goals stated objective of decreasing hunting pressure to support species recovery. It is important that some level of non-Tsilhqot'in hunting is maintained so that Xenigwet'in can retain guide outfitting quota. Communicating options for decreasing hunting pressure is supported by the Nenqay Deni Accord, Tsilhqot'in-BC Stewardship Agreement, and Moose Co-Management Agreement. As per the Nenqay Deni Accord and Tsilhqot'in Stewardship Agreement, a Tsilhqot'in Nation-BC Fish and Wildlife Panel is the primary venue for negotiating and making recommendations to provincial decision-makers regarding regulated hunting allocations, seasons length, and age class guidelines.



Xeni Gwet'in First Nation Government
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