

# **MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA**

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA USE AND OCCUPANCY STUDY**

**A Métis Use and Occupancy Study for the BC Hydro Site C Dam Clean  
Energy Project**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) would like to present strong evidence based on recent data gathered to dispute BC Hydro's assertion that:

“Based on the assessment undertaken by BC Hydro and set out in Volume 3 Section 19 Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes, it is BC Hydro's understanding that the Project will have no adverse effects on the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes of the Métis Nation British Columbia. Métis Nation British Columbia has indicated use of the Peace River valley in a general sense, but has not provided sufficient specific information on use within the Local Assessment Area (LAA) to enable an effects assessment. Should additional information regarding current and reasonably anticipated future use of lands and resources within the LAA be received from Métis Nation British Columbia, BC Hydro will consider and incorporate it in the EIS, as appropriate, during the EIS review phase. Consultation is ongoing between BC Hydro and the Métis Nation British Columbia, and may yield additional information on the Métis Nation British Columbia's current and reasonably anticipated future use of lands and resources that may potentially be affected by the Project. Should Métis Nation British Columbia provide additional information to BC Hydro, it will be considered and incorporated in the effects assessment during the EIS review phase and prior to submission of the EIS to the Joint Review Panel” (BC Hydro, Site C EIS, 2013).

The data collected during our recent study clearly shows there is the potential for adverse effects on Métis due to the project. Due to the limited funds available, only a

small number of respondents were interviewed. As such, this is an incomplete picture of Métis land use as data saturation was not reached.

### **1.1 Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this Métis Traditional Knowledge Study for the BC Hydro Site C Dam Clean Energy Project (the study) is to report on Métis land and resource use in the vicinity of the proposed Site C Clean Energy Project (the project) area. BC Hydro and the Métis Nation BC finalized a supplemental Letter of Understanding which provided capacity funding to support Métis Nation BC's completion of a Land Use Research Project, which included the following components:

- A review of existing literature regarding Métis traditional knowledge, traditional land use activities, harvesting data and Métis history in the Fort St. John area;
- One on one interviews with 10 individual Métis traditional knowledge holders to document information regarding hunting, trapping, fishing and plant gathering practices, as well as other historical land use activities;
- The creation of detailed site mapping based on interviews with Métis traditional knowledge holders, including the identification of significant sites; and,
- A summary report, including mapping products, to provide to BC Hydro in order to inform the assessment of the Project.

## **1.2 Organization of this Report**

This report is divided into six sections. Section 1 outlines the scope and objectives of the study. Section 2 discusses the methodology developed and utilized for the study. Section 3 provides a brief overview of the historical presence of Métis in the study area. Section 4 presents aggregated MTK data. Section 5 describes the anticipated impacts of the proposed pipeline on Métis land uses. Recommendations for next steps are outlined in Section 6.

## **1.3 Protocol governing the use of this report**

The Métis Nation of British Columbia Ministry of Natural Resources Guidelines and Métis Traditional Knowledge Policy define Métis Traditional Knowledge (MTK) as Information contained in this final report remains the sole property of MNBC. Citation, use or reproduction of any information contained in this final report is permissible only with the written consent of MNBC.

# **2 METHODOLOGIES**

## **2.1 Research Design**

After receiving budgetary approval from BC Hydro to proceed with the research in late November 2012, the research design and interview methodology was developed, participants solicited, and interviews were arranged. The BC Métis Assembly of Natural Resources (BCMANR) was consulted for approval, direction and feedback, as was the MNBC Regional Director for the Northeast, and the community office in Ft. St. John.

Work was initiated in December 2012. Emails were also sent to the local chartered communities.

### **2.1.1 Study Area**

The Study Area was identified to provide a basis for assessing the effects of the proposed project on Métis traditional land uses in the region. Maps of UTM, NAD 83, Zone 10 at a scale of 1:75000 were used to cover the area along the Peace River as well as the areas north and south. This stretched from West of Hudson's Hope to the Alberta boarder and from Pink Mountain in the North to Toms Lake in the South.

### **2.1.2 Temporal Parameters**

MNBC understands MTK as the body of information, values, beliefs and practices passed from one generation to another by oral means or through land-based experience that pertains to the identity, culture and heritage of the Métis people and their respect for the land and its resources. The use of land and resources for traditional purposes is one aspect of MTK. The temporal parameters of the study include the personal use of the study area by British Columbia (BC) Métis throughout their lifetime i.e. living personal experience.

Participants interviewed for the study were asked to discuss their personal use of the study area. Consistent with standard techniques in land-use and occupancy mapping (Tobias 2010), personal use encompasses land and resource use during a respondent's lifetime.

### **2.1.3 Study Population**

The study population began with a list of Harvesters from MNBCs Harvesting Card Registry. Purposeful sampling of Harvest Card holders in the Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John areas were balanced by known harvesters from Prince George, Mackenzie and the Lower Mainland. By including harvesters who live away from the Peace River but who harvest resources and have potential rights along the peace demonstrates the need for a larger survey to ensure the best information possible is provided to the proponent. The few respondents from the local area revealed tremendous use of the area effected by the project and showed the need for further data collection. Key knowledge holders were also identified through conversations with local harvesters from the Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope Métis communities. MNBC maintained sole responsibility for verifying individual eligibility for participation in the study prior to undertaking the interviews. In total, ten (10) individuals identified by MNBC participated in use and occupancy interviews for this study.

### **2.1.4 Review of Existing Data Sources**

Since 2007, MNBC has compiled the following MTK databases that document traditional land use and knowledge of the BC Métis community:

- Dr. Evans Interviews with Elders (2004-2006)
- BC Métis Land Use Study (2007-2009)
- Northern Gateway Pipeline Study (2009-2010)
- Caribou Study (2009)

- Species at Risk Survey (2009-2011)
- MNBC Harvester Database (2010-2013)
- Alaska Pipeline Project (2011-2012)
- MTK Study for the Kyklo and Komie TransCanada pipeline Projects (2012)

While the existing data MNBC possesses does show Métis land use in the region, it does not conform to best practices within the discipline and is not detailed enough.

### **2.1.5 Site C BC Hydro and MNBC Consultation Meeting**

On June 5, 2012, BC Hydro met with representatives of MNBC (President, Director of Industry, and Consultation Coordinator). BC Hydro advised that BC Hydro, as the proponent, had been delegated by the CEA Agency to consult with Métis Nation BC, and expressed interest in understanding how and where Métis people used the land and exercised their asserted rights. BC Hydro indicated that it was prepared to provide Métis Nation BC with funding to support work related to the assessment of potential effects of the Project on its asserted rights. BC Hydro explained that Métis Nation BC would be consulted with and given an opportunity to comment, and have input into, the EIS. BC Hydro provided a Project overview which addressed BC's energy gap, supply and demand, general Project information, 2011-2012 field work, potential Project opportunities in the areas of education and training, and the Integrated Resource Plan process. With respect to harvesting, Métis Nation BC showed BC Hydro a Métis citizenship card and a harvesting card. Métis Nation BC indicated that the Métis citizenship card is required before a harvesting card is granted, and anyone who has

identified as Métis may apply for a citizenship card. Métis Nation BC described its relationship to other Aboriginal groups including the Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, the BC Métis Federation and Project area First Nations. Métis Nation BC presented information regarding its history, organizational structure, elections, and charter communities and explained the concept of Métis identity. BC Hydro inquired whether the Métis Nation of BC would come forward with a view on the Project, or whether it would be left to the individual Métis communities. Métis Nation of BC confirmed that it would be mostly the latter, with Métis Nation BC representing its constituent communities

#### **2.1.6 Site C Use and Occupancy Mapping Interviews**

MNBC researchers undertook interviews with four Métis harvesters in Hudson's Hope, two in Fort St. John one in Mackenzie, one in Prince George, and two in the Lower Mainland. Interviews were carried out during December 2012 and January 2013. The average interview lasted three hours. Although interviews were based on a standardized questionnaire designed to meet study objectives, the format was conversational, permitting community interviewers to pursue interview participants down useful tangents. However, the Interviewers maintained control and directed the flow of the interview at all times. Map data were collected using 1:75,000 scale maps, and based on standard techniques (Tobias 2010). Interviews were recorded using standardized interview data capture forms and audio recorders. Each interview was guided by a standardized questionnaire to collect data that was locally specific, and based on personal use. All data points for animals were based on use as food only by

the respondent, their family, or others in the Métis community. All other sites were based on use by the respondent personally and resources were either used by the respondent or their family directly.

### **2.1.7 Data quality control, processing and storage**

Attribute data for each mapped feature was captured using Area Data Capture forms and entered into a web-based, spatially enabled and searchable database by MNBC Ministry of Natural Resource staff. MNBC staff reviewed this data for accuracy and consistency. Ambiguities were addressed through discussions with community interviewers and by careful reviews of the original audio recordings.

### **2.1.8 MNBC review and approval of Final Report**

The MNBC Ministry of Natural Resources and the British Columbia Métis Assembly of Natural Resources (BCMANR) is responsible for all natural resource issues under the authority of the *MNBC Natural Resources Act (the Act)*. The *Act* designates the BCMANR Captains Assembly as the committee responsible for reviewing and approving the use of MTK in research projects involving Métis knowledge-holders. This includes the MTK collected and published in this final report.

## **2.2 Limitations of the Study**

The limitations to this study are based on MNBC's capacity and level of funding. An unfortunate event that had implications on MNBC's ability to collect data from respondents in Dawson Creek was the funeral of a Métis elder and leader in the community at the time of scheduled interviews. There were a handful of respondents' who MNBC was unable to interview and would like to in the future.

### **2.2.1 Funding and Capacity**

MNBC has no steady stream of revenue to support the questions and requests of industry and government. MNBC is the only organization in British Columbia mandated to find and communicate with Métis people who may be affected by a potential project. The funding provided by BC Hydro enabled MNBC to build its capacity to connect with its citizens as well as MNBC's ability to do research on Métis use and occupancy. The collection of data also builds capacity of the database of information MNBC has about its citizen's use of resources and locations.

### **2.2.2 Funeral in Dawson**

After MNBC researchers arrived in Fort St. John they learned of the passing of a prominent Métis elder and leader. This caused difficulty with the interviews scheduled for the Métis communities of Dawson Creek and Pounce Coupe. MNBC would like to return to Dawson Creek to interview those who were unable to participate in the earlier sessions if more funds become available. The passing of a knowledge holder stresses the importance and need for timely data collection in order to maintain and document MTK.

### **3 OVERVIEW OF THE MÉTIS IN BC**

The following is from MNBC's previously submitted 'Site C Clean Energy project Report'. The following section provides context to the historic presence of Métis in the study Area. This section is based on published literature and community sources provided by MNBC. It is neither comprehensive nor exhaustive and many gaps exist. Additional research is needed to fully describe the historic footprint of the Métis in the study area. At a minimum, this would require undertaking a comprehensive ethnohistorical analysis of church records (marriage, baptism and death registrations compiled by the Oblates), vital statistics (marriage, birth and death registrations compiled by the BC provincial government), provincial government trap line registrations and fur-trade records (post journals, account books, lists of servants and reports on districts for Fort Nelson and nearby Hudson Bay Company (HBC) forts from the HBC Archives in Winnipeg, M.B).

#### **3.1 Who are the Métis?**

According to Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution, 1982, which replaced the British North America Act, 1867, the Métis are one of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. Section 35 reads: "(1) the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed. (2) In this Act, 'aboriginal peoples of Canada' includes the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada." Métis means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation. To be exact, the Métis National

Council's definition of Métis, adopted on 27 September 2002, reads: 'Historic Métis Nation' means the Aboriginal people then known as Métis or Half-Breeds who resided in the Historic Métis Nation Homeland; 'Historic Métis Nation Homeland' means the area of land in west central North America used and occupied as the traditional territory of the Métis or Half-Breeds as they were then known; 'Métis Nation' means the Aboriginal people descended from the Historic Métis Nation, which is now comprised of all Métis Nation citizens and is one of the "aboriginal peoples of Canada" within s. 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982 (Métis National Council 2008). Prior to Canada's national formation the Métis people emerged from the relationships between First Nations women and European men. While the initial offspring of unions were individuals who possessed mixed ancestry, the gradual establishment of distinct Métis communities, outside of First Nation and European cultures and settlements, as well as the subsequent intermarriages between Métis women and Métis men, resulted in the genesis of a new Aboriginal people - the Métis.

### **3.2 MNBC**

Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) currently represents over 8200 Powley compliant Citizens (1000+ more/year) in British Columbia, with a large number residing in the Northeast part of the province. There are many citizens in the region around the proposed project residing in Fort St. John and other neighboring communities. The Métis have had an established community in the BC Northeast for more than 200 years and still use the land and resources for traditional purposes. Utilizing the MNBC Traditional Harvesting Database and preliminary Métis Traditional Knowledge (MTK)

research confirms that Métis Nation BC citizens, from adjacent Chartered Communities and nearby smaller communities, are exercising their Aboriginal right to harvest (hunt, fish, trap, gather plants) within the proposed Project's footprint. The construction and operation of the proposed Site C Dam project could put local Métis Aboriginal rights and traditional land-uses at risk. Métis harvesters who rely on the direct and surrounding area for sustenance, social and ceremonial purposes could see negative impacts from the construction and operation of the proposed Site C project. Because there is current traditional harvesting (hunting, fishing, and plant harvesting for foods and medicines) occurring in the proposed project area, there is Métis traditional knowledge and land use information activities that could be negatively impacted.

### **3.3 Background Historical Documentation of Métis Use in the Study Area**

The history of the Métis in Northern British Columbia has not been very well documented and has only recently begun to receive scholarly attention. A lack of government recognition, demonstrated by the fact that Half-Breed Scrip was never issued, although initially offered in British Columbia (Scrip Officer failed to show up) , as well as the relative isolation of the Peace River from the rest of the province, left the northeast communities to slip through the historical cracks (Dolmage 2010). The communities in the northeast developed differently than communities in central and western British Columbia. Fur trade Posts such as Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope developed as part of the Peace River district, as opposed to Kamloops or Fort St. James, which were connected to the Columbia River fur trade. Fort St. John was administered from Edmonton and Winnipeg, not from Fort Vancouver, Fort Langley

or Victoria. Several records cover the Northern Peace River fur trade, but only few deal explicitly with the Métis who settled there. The book *Prophecy of the Swan: Upper Peace River Fur Trade of 1794-1823* (1995) provides an overview of the historic Peace River fur trade, but deals very little with the presence of the Métis in the Peace River. The book mentions the early presence of Métis in the area, noting “[s]uch names as Bouche, Brunoche, Dejardin, Lafreniere, Perriard, Connoye, D'Allair, Gagnon, and Cardinal indicate the dominance of French Canadian and/or Métis employees in the North West Company” (Leonard 1995). However, it does not discuss the Métis roles as early settlers in British Columbia (Edwards 1999). Jean Barman and Mike Evans have looked at the issue of Métis ethnogenesis in BC by comparing fur trade families that settled south of the Peace River in New Caledonia, what is now central British Columbia (Edwards 1999).

The area around what is now Fort St. John has been inhabited for approximately 10,500 years (Burley et. al 1995). In 1793, when Alexander Mackenzie first travelled through the Peace River looking for an interior route to the Pacific he remarked, “this magnificent theatre of nature has all the decorations which the trees and animals of the country can afford it: groves of poplars in every shape vary the scene; and their intervals are enlivened with vast herds of elks and buffaloes: the former choosing the uplands, and the latter preferring the plains” (Mackenzie, 1963).

During this time the Peace was inhabited by two First Nations, the Sekani and the Beaver. The Beaver, who call themselves *Dunne-za* (the real people), and the Sekani *Tsé-kéh-ne* (people on the rocks or mountains) remain in the area to this day and are both speakers of northern Athapaskan languages (Burley et. al 1995). Crees had been

moving west into what had traditionally been Beaver and Sekani territory throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a result, altercations between the Beaver, Sekani and the Cree effectively moved the Beaver and Sekani even further west. The name of the area “The Peace River” was taken from a truce forged between the Beaver and Cree at what is now known as Peace Point, near where the Peace River meets with Lake Athabasca. Burley notes, “hostilities between Beaver and Cree and Sekani groups continued and heavily influenced the development of the fur trade in the Peace River Valley” (Burley et al 1995).

The fur trade began in the Peace River in the early 1800s. Mackenzie and his partners in the North West Company saw the Peace River as an ideal place for both trade and provisioning, and to that end Mackenzie established Rocky Mountain Fort in 1794 (Burley et. al 1995). The fort ran from 1794-1804 and was then replaced by Rocky Mountain Portage House, which was established in 1804 by John Stewart MacDougall at what is now Hudson’s Hope. Fraser and MacDougall additionally established a new post farther south at McLeod Lake in 1805 effectively opening the fur trade in what came to be known as New Caledonia (Burley et al 1995). However, both Rocky Mountain Portage and McLeod’s Lake were located in Sekani territory, and made it difficult for the Beaver to trade so St John’s was established in 1806 at the mouth of what is now known as the Beatton River. Trade was flourishing in the North Peace, and provisioning this trade was possible due to the abundance of wildlife (Burley et. al 1995).

It was this plentiful stock of furs that led the Hudson’s Bay Company in 1815 to attempt to enter the Athabasca trade. This move by the Hudson’s Bay Company, led by Colin

Roberson and John Clarke, to establish forts along Lesser Slave Lake, the Athabasca River and on the Peace River exacerbated the tensions between the HBC and the North West Company. The Hudson's Bay Company efforts were initially disastrous and interference by the North West Company led to many of the Hudson's Bay Company men starving to death because of the lack of provisions (Burley et. al 1995). The Hudson's Bay Company continued to try to make inroads in to the new district and met with some moderate successes in 1817 and 1818. The Hudson's Bay Company's luck in the area took a turn when the new Governor of the Northern Department, George Simpson, took charge of the company's activities in the area. James Murray Yale was sent to build a post in October 1820 directly opposite to St John's at the former location of Rocky Mountain Fort. This put the HBC and NWC posts next to one another. However, in 1821, everything changed when there was a merger of the two rival companies. The new Hudson's Bay Company, led by Simpson, now owned a virtual trade monopoly in Western North America (Hurley et. al 1995).

It was not just the local Beaver and Sekani who traded at the posts; as in other areas, the HBC and the NWC encouraged the employment of freemen at the posts. According to Nicole St. Onge between 1763 and 1821 the NWC hired over 9,000 voyageurs and explorers for its northwest trade. About half of these men worked as winterers in the remote areas of the northwest. With the 1804 merger of the NWC and the X Y Company there was an influx of new freemen. This prompted numerous complaints from wintering partners angry that French Canadians and Iroquois employees were becoming freemen and were now roaming the interior with their native-born wives and mixed race children (St. Onge 2007). In the Peace River areas many of the freemen were Métis, as well as

Quebecois and Iroquois. Common names that appeared in the area, and are still prevalent are Calihoo, Testawits, Monkman, Cardinal, Lafleur, and Gladue (Leonard and Lemieux 2003). The Fort was re-opened in 1860, under the name Fort St. John, just in time for the influx of miners and trappers on route to the Klondike. Many of the prospectors such as Henry John Moberly, Alex Mackenzie, and the legendary “Twelve” Foot Davis came through the Peace River as a land route and shared their time prospecting in the summer and trading in the winter. H.J. Moberly, a trader and miner, describes the arrangement he made with two Edmonton prospectors: “Cust and Carey persuaded me to join their enterprise. I invested twelve hundred dollars but refused to take an active part in the trade, preferring to hunt and trap. After looking the country over I decided to make my home fifteen miles south of the portage on a lake which now bears my name on the maps... no Indians frequented the spot, and I had a hunters paradise all to myself” (Moberly, 1952). This influx of miners led to a semi-permanent settlement pattern along the Peace River, as the Métis and Iroquois freemen, alongside the newcomers began to settle along the river and the south lakes (Leonard and Lemieux 2003).

The land-use histories of Métis families with links to Fort St. John are also contained in the records of the Hudson Bay Company (HBC). Post journals from Fort St. John written by Frank W. Beatton provide a detailed account of Métis use of the study area by the Beatton family. Beatton’s wife, Emma Shaw, was the Métis daughter of William Shaw, an HBC factor. Together they had 12 children, 5 of whom born in Fort St. John (HBC Archives Filename: Beatton, Francis Worth (1865-1945), JHB December 1991 (Revised 1995). As, demonstrated in the journals, and consistent with other families of the historic

Métis Nation, their livelihood came from a mixture of subsistence harvesting activities directed by seasonal rounds and the commercial production of furs, fish and game (journal entries available at: [http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/cssej/publishing/Frank Beaton the Fort St John Fur Trade.html](http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/cssej/publishing/Frank_Beaton_the_Fort_St_John_Fur_Trade.html)) . Beatton's sons are noted in the journals as active hunters and trappers who lived and relied on territory extending from Fort St. John to Fort Nelson. The legacy of this family is commemorated in the river valley that bears their name.

Traditional harvesting activities provide opportunities for generations of Métis to connect with one another, “to carry things on,” in other words. Through these activities, out on the land, young people learn about Métis traditions, foods and culture. Family harvesting sites are often bridges between past, present and future generations of Métis people. As such, these sites are important to Métis people for their ability to heal, to ground and to remind them where they came from. Traditional land use is integral to Métis kinship networks and harvesting is an important way to ensure the continuity of Métis traditional knowledge (MTK).

Although Métis historical presence in the Site C project area is documented in archives, archeology reports and other writings from 1790 to present (Dolmage, 2010, Burley et al. 1995), historians note “that primary documents relating to this period are few, and confusion exists over the origins and location for the sites” (Burley et. Al 1995). This is particularly so for the earliest post, Rocky Mountain Fort; a number of provincial histories have failed to recognize it, suggesting lack of data or marginalization (Burley and Hamilton 1991). In fact, David Burley and Scott Hamilton suggest most evidence for Rocky mountain Fort comes from basic site data and that little is known about “the

impact of the fur trade on local animal populations, the degree to which Indian peoples had become dependent on European technology, and the dynamics of the social interaction between the officer and his men in a fur trade hinterland” (Burley and Hamilton 1995). Marginalization may have occurred due to the transient nature of the posts and the Métis people. Providing direct evidence is difficult due to purposeful marginalization in four key areas. First, Aboriginals were not engaged until non-aboriginal settlers arrived and the government realized it had to ‘come to terms’ with Métis in the area (Burley et al., 1995). Second, the BC government refused to acknowledge Métis in Treaty 8; however, the Métis people of the Athabasca area received scrip (Collections Canada 2012). Third, Métis are not mentioned directly but can be found through derogatory and marginalizing comments such as half-breeds, French Canadian engage, mixed ancestry and Canadians (Burley et al.1995).

Forts, fur trade, guides, voyageurs and the women who supported them, strongly suggest indirect evidence of historic Métis presence in the proposed project area (Burley et al., 1995). Hudson Bay Company documents such from post records at Fort Dunvegan, Connolly Post, Hudson Hope/Rocky Mountain Fort (Portage) and Fort St. John show common Métis surnames such as; Shaw, Forsyth, Dumas, Beaton, Taylor, Becher and Coutoreille in the employee records at Fort St. John. Métis may not have been referred to directly, however, many common Métis surnames can be found in church registries and Hudson Bay Company account books (Treaty 8 Commission). Documents also provide further indirect evidence through reference to activities. Berry picking, and knowledge of the role pemmican played in fueling the fur trade is evident and could be considered an industry (Fladmark 1985). Of particular note is a man

named Lafrenier, who was employed in wood working and canoe manufacture in both the 1799-1800 and 1822-23 seasons (Beaton 2012) at both Fort St. John and Rocky Mountain Fort. The Métis people's connection to the fur trade is well documented, however, the scale and extent of this industry goes well beyond trapping. The enterprises Métis engaged in after the decline of the buffalo and fur trade would have been broad, and ranged from canoe building, ranching and even some farming. Canadian National Livestock Records show that some of the Métis who began to settle the Peace country in the very early twenties were seriously interested in permanent settlement and gainful enterprise other than trapping (Calverley 2012). It is important to see that the Métis people who were the children of the fur trade and buffalo hunt would have taken up other activities as these activities declined. The two watersheds that cover the project area, Upper Peace River (UPCE) and the Pine River (PINE), represent one of the most prolific Métis harvesting regions in the province of British Columbia. Métis harvest large quantities of deer, elk, moose, fish, medicinal plants, berries, small game (including trapping), as well as timber and firewood. Métis harvesters also hunt significant quantities of bear, birds, bison, caribou and sheep. As such, Métis are truly concerned about the negative impacts on fish, wildlife and bird populations the proposed project may cause. Another concern is that the proposed project will flood and destroy a documented historic Métis community Rocky Mountain Fort dating back to 1794. This was a Northwest Company fort established to trade furs and provision the Athabasca/Peace fur trade. A journal entry from the winter of 1799-1800 documents twelve Métis patronyms, and speaks to the women and children at the fort. The fort site was the focus of an Archaeological survey in the 1970s where

evidence of extensive harvesting of big game was documented. Hydro dams have already destroyed several Métis historic sites including Finlay Forks (under Williston Reservoir) as well as Boat Encampment and Dalles des Morts (under Kinbasket Reservoir) without any acknowledgement or consultation with the Métis. It is important to ensure cultural continuity through the ability of current and future generations to practice traditional activities. In this regard Métis would like to have future sites use and access addressed for ceremony, celebration, and other traditional activities.

#### **4 MÉTIS USE OF THE STUDY AREA**

This section presents aggregated data for Métis harvesters in the Study Area. The past and continued importance of the Study Area for the meaningful practice of Métis traditional land-use is clear from the responses of these participants. Métis relationships to the land are based in cultural practices. Annual harvesting of traditional foods, fuel and medicine remains a central, material part of this relationship.

During the interviews, participants noted that land-based harvesting was most often conducted with family and other Métis or First Nations. One respondent mentioned he would float the river in a local spring beaver hunt with a local First Nations group.

Another family group with multiple generations showed that although use and locations may vary there was a sharing of knowledge. This was central for the transmission of cultural values and traditional knowledge about the land and its resources. Participants emphasized that language was taught, stories were shared and food preparation techniques were learned during time spent on the land hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering.

There is growing recognition that the mobility of the Métis, based on spatially extensive family networks and economies, was the foundation of their harvesting traditions. The seasonal movements of harvesters identified in this research indicate that mobility is also a core feature of contemporary Métis harvesting practices recorded in the study area. It was valuable to get an account of the use of harvesters who lived in communities away from the project. Harvesters used and occupied a vast area together with their families according to a seasonal round directed by the availability of resources. Métis harvesters still return to and seasonally occupy many of these areas according to annual harvesting patterns. In fact the timeline of this study coincided with family time but also work related to harvesting activities such as logging or snow removal.

#### **4.1 Resources of importance to MNBC – Métis Traditional Knowledge**

Aboriginal people are very diverse and generalization about their communities and cultures cannot be easily made. Economic, practical, spiritual, political, and historical relationships to homelands are unique to each indigenous community (Turner et al. 2000). Therefore, Aboriginal knowledge, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), is not a uniform concept across all indigenous people (Smith 1999, Pidgeon and Hardy Cox 2002, Ball and Simpkins 2004). Aboriginal knowledge is so much a part of the clan, band, community, and the individual that it cannot be separated from the possessor to be codified into a single definition (Battiste and Henderson 2000). This

knowledge is not only elaborately tied to place and location, but also relationships and ways of being over time (Ball and Simpkins 2004).

The MNBC Ministry of Natural Resources Consultation Guidelines and Métis Traditional Knowledge Policy define Métis Traditional Knowledge (MTK) as the body of information, values, beliefs and practices that is passed from one generation to another by oral means or through land-based experience that pertains to the identity, culture, and heritage of the Métis people and their respect for the land and its resources. This definition is based off of the following definition of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) “a cumulative body of knowledge, practice and belief, evolving through adaptive processes and handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environment”(Berkes et al. 2000, 1252). It has also been described as the knowledge and insights acquired through extensive observation of an area or species (Huntington 2000). The definition of MTK, and TEK, demonstrate that there is a component of local observational knowledge of species and other environmental phenomena, a component of practice in the way people carry out their resource use activities, and a component of belief regarding how people relate to resources and ecosystems (Colding et al. 2003). Participants reported harvesting a diverse range of aquatic and terrestrial resources for food, medicinal, spiritual and other purposes (Table 1).

Table 1: Métis traditional land use resources and activities in the Site C/BC Hydro proposed project area.

<b>Mammals</b>	<b>Birds</b>	<b>Fish</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Beaver	Ducks	Arctic greyling	Berries	Birth sites
Bison	Geese	Char	Drinking water	Burial sites
Black bear	Grouse	Lake trout	Earth materials	Campsites
Caribou	Owl	Pike	Firewood	Death sites
Deer		Rainbow trout	Food plants	Landmarks
Elk		Whitefish	Medicine plants	Cabins (log and frame)
Moose			Wood	
Muskrat			(construction and specialty)	
Porcupine				
Rabbit				

#### **4.1.1 Food uses**

Métis harvesters interviewed for this study rely on harvested foods for sustenance and as a central component of a healthy traditional diet. The Métis place a high-value on harvested foods and harvesting activities. Participants engaged in the study also harvested a variety of upland game birds as well as waterfowl from rivers and lakes. Harvested fish include northern pike, whitefish, pickerel, grayling and trout. Berries and other food plants were harvested during the spring and summer months and while

camping or on big game harvests. The aggregated data indicates that the Métis are not strictly hunters; they harvest a diverse range of resources to supplement their diets.

#### **4.1.2 Medicinal and Spiritual Uses**

In addition to the various food plants used for subsistence, participants reported their use of a number of plants for medicinal and spiritual purposes. These plants include balsam pitch and birch bark and are some of the key plants used by the harvesters. The harvesting activities for all they entail, including the harvested foods and medicines, represent more than biomedical health, they are an aspect of the right- and well-lived life. For the Métis being out on the land engaged in harvesting activities with family and friends is the realization of “minopimatisiwin” or being alive well. For the Métis who live with this understanding of wellness, harvested foods are important to all facets of life. There is no other term that comes close to capturing all that harvesting encapsulates.

#### **4.1.3 Distribution of Harvested Resources**

The distribution seemed to be grouped by harvester or family preferred areas. Those rural residents harvested close to home. Those who lived away had preferred campsites or friends houses that they would return to. Most resources harvested occurred close to where they stayed and shared the same way. Distributing harvested resources within Métis family networks is an important part of traditional Métis harvesting protocols still practiced today. All of the Métis interviewed for the study reported sharing harvested food with family and other Métis. Participants identified designated harvesters who provided harvested foods for elders, families in need, community feasts and social

gatherings. These networks are historically rooted and reflect interconnections between families traversing a broad geographical area.

#### **4.1.3.1 Continuity of Traditional Knowledge**

Evidence of MTK knowledge being passed on through traditional methods was evident from a young Métis harvester. He possessed a vast amount of information about resource use that he obtained from his Elders and family. Through these activities, out on the land, young people learn about Métis traditions, foods and culture. As one participant noted, family harvesting sites are often bridges between past, present and future generations of Métis people. As such, these sites are important to Métis people for their ability to heal, to ground and to remind.

This is consistent with other Aboriginal communities in Canada. Before the arrival of written or electronic media in Aboriginal communities, TEK was passed on verbally to younger generations from older generations (Brant-Castellano 2000, Turner et al. 2000). It drew upon the shared experience of a common environment and history over many generations (Brant-Castellano 2000). Narratives told over and over to children and adults were an important mode of communicating TEK (Turner et al. 2000). This method of listening to stories about personal experience was, and is, a very effective way to learn as it allows the channels of communication to remain open and the flow of information can remain undistorted (Brant-Castellano 2000). Verbal teachings of this sort were intrinsic with the development of interpersonal relationships between the teacher and pupil. The teachings focused not only on the intellectual content, but also

the emotional quality of the relationship. Through these traditional methods, younger generations were able to gain practical experience and knowledge through assisting and listening to Elders, or experts, and in the gathering and management of traditional resources and were also socialized into the culture of their community (Turner et al. 2000). Sharing MTK can be used as a way for younger generations to learn about their people's way of knowing, and to be involved in the intergenerational transmission of MTK and wisdom. Although the traditional way for a young Métis to learn about MTK was through verbal teachings, due to lack of access to MTK holders and fragmented communities, written documentation now plays a larger role in their learning. To a lesser extent this mapping interview study helped provide a continuity of knowledge for the Métis people of BC. MNBC is proud to be the custodians of this knowledge for future generations.

## **4.2 Recorded Territory**

Due to the small sample size of this study, the data may not represent broader use trends among the Métis who are active in the study area but have not been interviewed. Subsequent interviews with a more representative study population may reveal higher incidences of use within areas impacted directly by the proposed project.

### **4.2.1 Burial Site**

Participants mentioned that Lynx Creek and Ferrell Creek are used to pay respect to Métis community members whose ashes have been sprinkled at those locations and for

spiritual and ceremony purposes. There were also several important burial sites mapped.

## **5 ANTICIPATED PROJECT SPECIFIC IMPACTS**

This section outlines the anticipated impacts of the proposed pipelines on Métis cultural practices and traditional land-use. Recommendations are designed to structure an approach for incorporating Métis Traditional Knowledge (MTK) into the long-term management and planning of the study area and to minimize project-specific impacts. These concerns are derived from interviews with a small population of Métis harvesters living within the study area.

To reiterate, the small population sample was the direct result of both the limited funds and the accelerated timeline of the study. Interviews with a larger population of Métis harvesters may identify other concerns for species and habitat areas within the area of the proposed dam. A more comprehensive study, however, requires a broader timeline and additional funding. For now the results are limited to a small sample population of Métis Harvesters. Nevertheless, these harvesters articulated concerns with project-specific impacts to the following species and/or species habitat areas: food security, Métis ability to practice tradition and culture, and cumulative impacts.

### **5.1 Food Security**

Traditional land and resource use, such as harvesting, is still a core component of Métis economies in the northeast region; an area where, because of the historical presence of Métis, kinship networks are strong. Harvesting activities take place within these kinship

networks and are integral to them. Métis harvesters also expressed concerns about their ability to access and obtain adequate amounts of nutritious and safe harvested foods within the study area. These culturally acceptable food sources are vital to Métis health (physical, mental and spiritual), traditional knowledge and social practices.

## **5.2 Métis Ability to Practice Tradition and Culture**

Continued support for collecting contemporary harvest information on a resource-basis and recording harvesting by species (big game, medicinal plants, berries, fish, etc.).

## **5.3 Cumulative Impacts**

Cumulative impacts may have an effect on the Métis people's ability to carry on traditional practices due to loss of natural resources. There are many proposed projects in the area that represent significant cumulative impacts. MNBC is in a unique position, from First Nations groups, to be involved in EA's throughout the province and may be more aware of cumulative impacts from projects throughout the province.

## **6 RECOMENDATIONS**

MNBC provides the following recommendations based on experience with Aboriginal issues within the regulatory review process and discussions with the BC Métis community during the study.

1. Fund further Traditional Land Use studies to collect data from those missed.
2. Consider cumulative impacts on the Métis use and rights or the area in light of the large number of proposed projects in the area.

3. MNBC would like to continue engagement with BC hydro on the project and into monitoring.
4. BC Hydro and MNBC are both provincial organizations and it is hoped that similar studies and capacity building agreements can be reached on other projects throughout the province.

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## 8 Maps

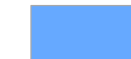



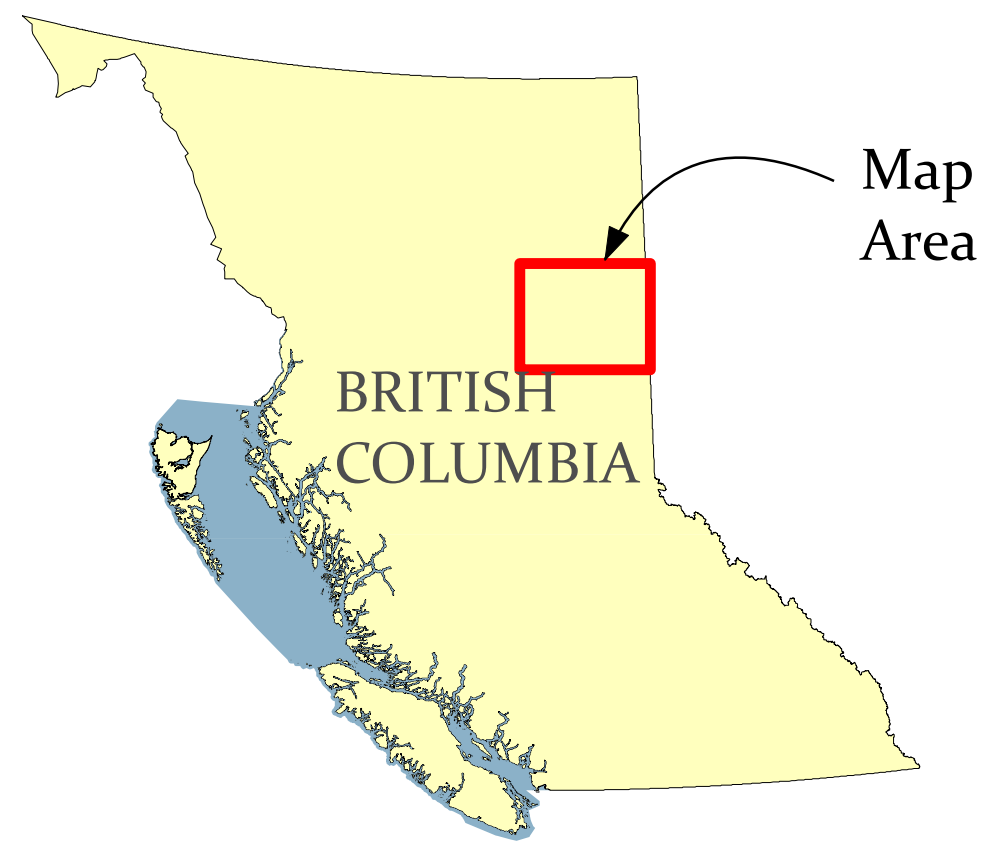


# MÉTIS NATION BC 2012 USE AND OCCUPANCY STUDY

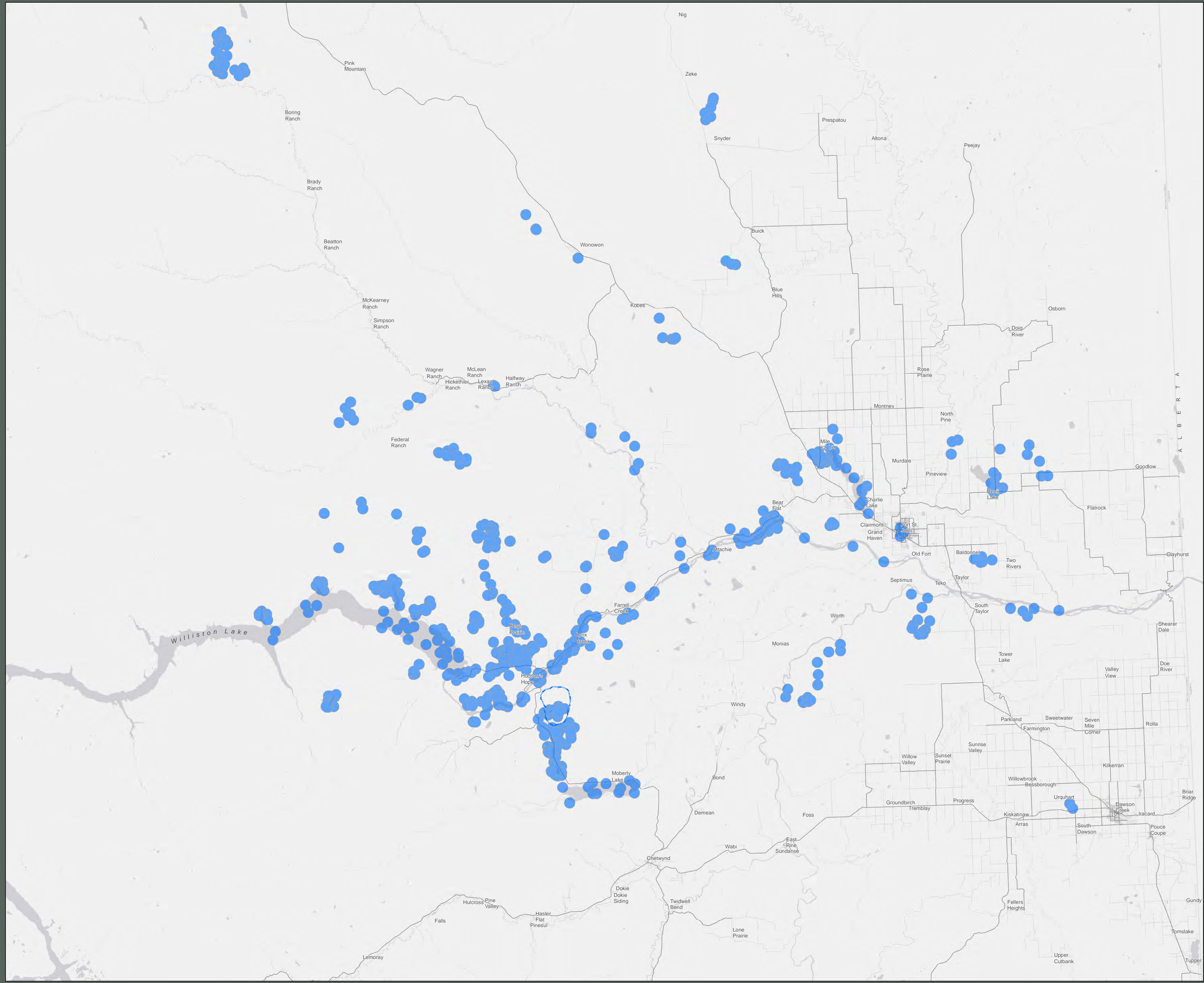
## ANIMALS CATEGORY MAP

### Legend

-  Use and Occupancy Site (Randomized within a 1000m buffer)
-  Use and Occupancy Line



Map Area



0 12.5 25 50 Kilometers

This map is a living document and is intended to be amended and refined over time. The data used to produce this map originate from many sources and are presented without prejudice. Map Produced May 2013 by Inlailawatash ([www.inlailawatash.ca](http://www.inlailawatash.ca)). Projection: UTM, NAD83, Zone 10. Map Scale: 1:350,000; Provincial Overview Map Scale: 1:13,000,000; Data sources: Métis Nation BC, Government of Canada, Province of British Columbia, ESRI, Delorme, NAVTEQ.

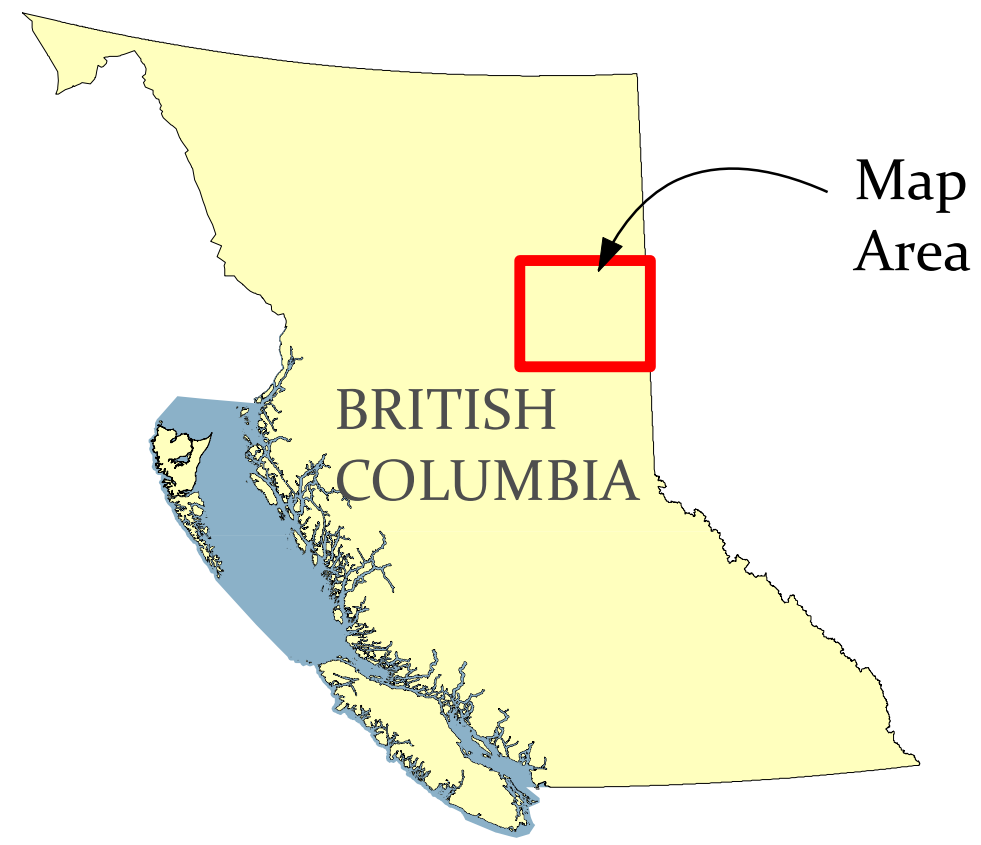


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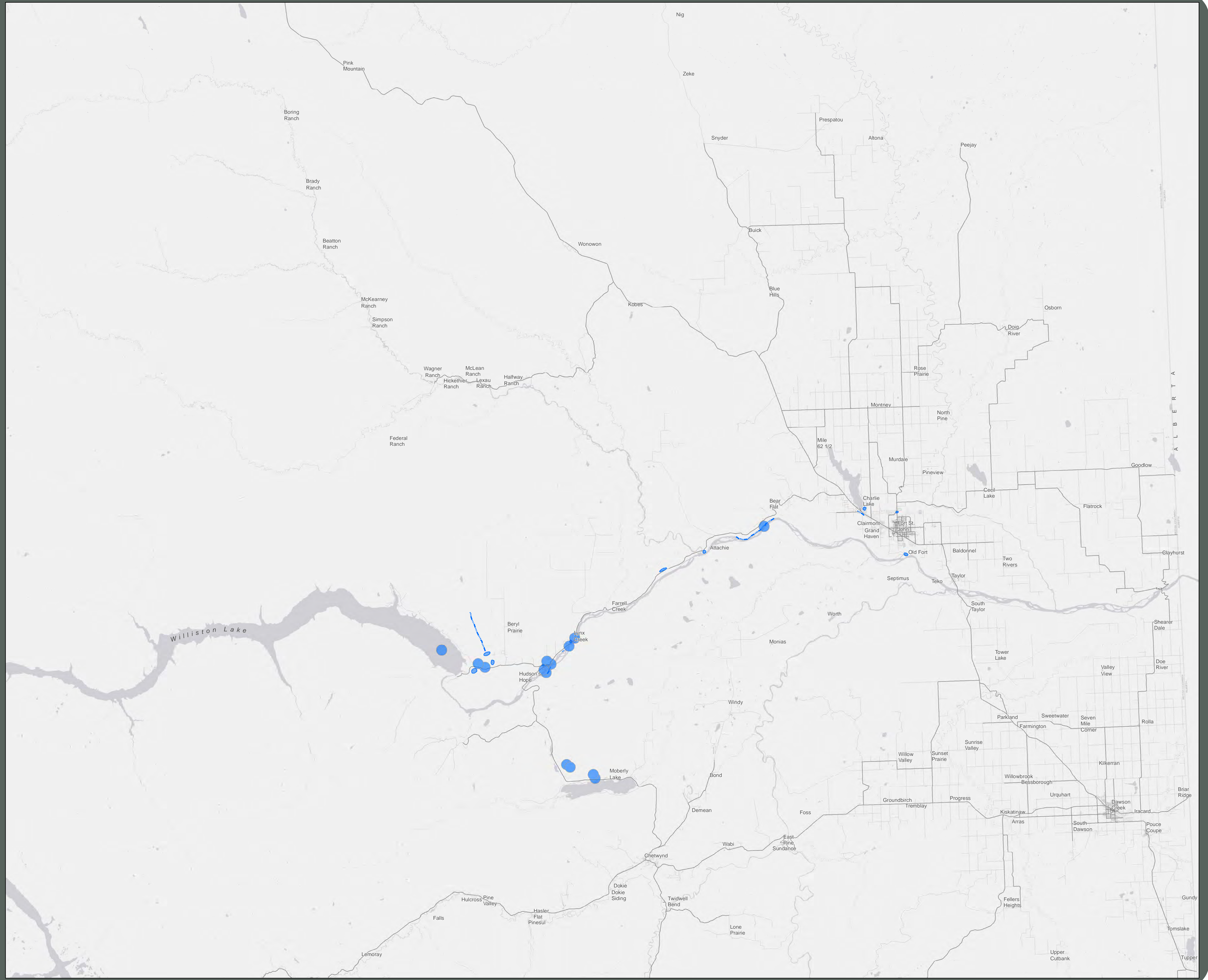
## CULTURAL SITES CATEGORY MAP

### Legend

- Use and Occupancy Site (Randomized within 1000m buffer)
- Use and Occupancy Line
- Use and Occupancy Polygon



Map Area



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# MÉTIS NATION BC 2012 USE AND OCCUPANCY STUDY

## PLANT, WOOD, AND EARTH MATERIAL CATEGORY MAP

### Legend

- Use and Occupancy Site (Randomized within 1000m buffer)
- Use and Occupancy Line
- Use and Occupancy Polygon

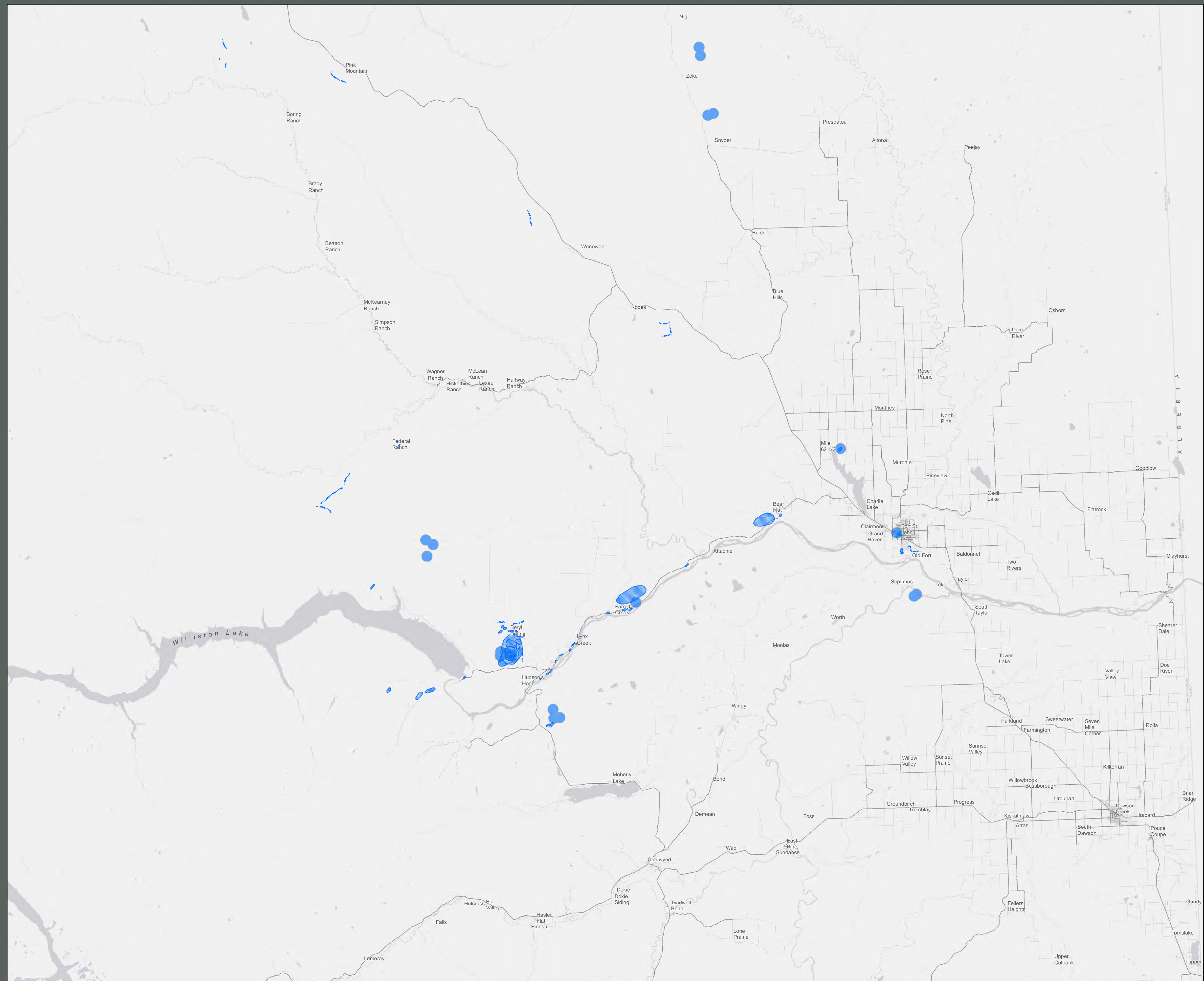


Map Area



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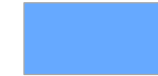




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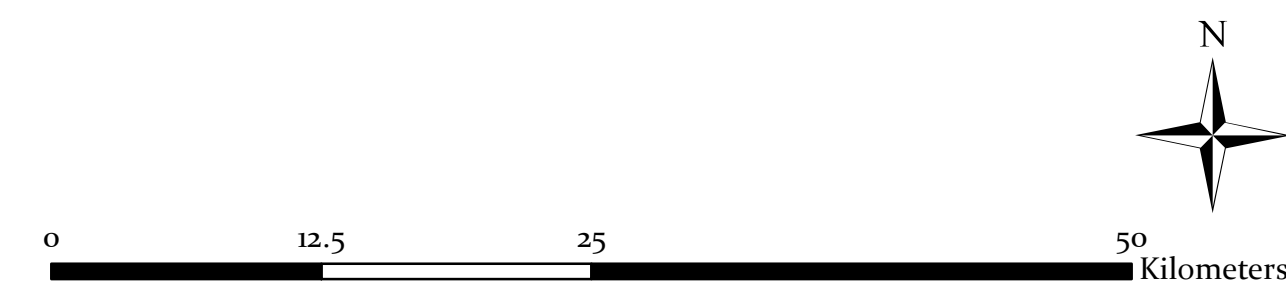
## OVERNIGHT SITES CATEGORY MAP

### Legend

 Use and Occupancy Site (Randomized within 1000m buffer)



Map Area



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