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# 2013

## VOICING HERITAGE VALUES: Report on Community Workshops in Northeast BC



**ALASKA HIGHWAY**  
HERITAGE

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## Executive Summary

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The BC Heritage Branch in partnership with the Alaska Highway Community Society (AHCS) held a series of Community Heritage Values workshops during the week of March 4<sup>th</sup> to March 8<sup>th</sup> in Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John, BC. Each workshop included an evening orientation session and a full-day workshop facilitated by Ursula Pfahler and Pam Copley, Community Heritage Planners, BC Heritage Branch. April Moi of the AHCS and Northern BC Tourism, and heritage consultant Julie Harris of Contentworks, facilitated the module focused on the Alaska Highway Heritage Project.

An important principle that was underscored in each workshop was the need to approach cultural heritage from the perspective of community values. In the past, heritage in many places was often defined by experts using criteria such as “finest”, “oldest”, or “last of its kind”. Now communities are encouraged to consider everything that contributes to a greater understanding and appreciation of historic contexts as potential heritage resources. Communities are given the responsibility for determining what should be protected by weighing opportunities, benefits and risks for present and, to the best of their ability, future generations.

The Fort Nelson workshop was attended by 13 participants, including a large turn-out from Fort Nelson First Nation, as well as numerous local heritage keepers. The Dawson Creek workshop had 24 participants, with strong representation from the nearby communities of Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge. The last workshop, in Fort St. John, enjoyed a turnout of 41 participants, including a large number of representatives from Fort St. John, Taylor and other surrounding communities, and individuals from Treaty 8 Tribal Association, Doig River, Halfway River and Prophet River First Nations.

The workshops allowed participants to discuss their community's heritage, gain an understanding of frequently used heritage conservation tools and initiatives already underway in their area, and exchange ideas about additional ways of celebrating their local heritage. They also served as an opportunity to update communities on the Alaska Highway Heritage Project and to seek input on themes and places of significance.

Participants were very supportive of the nomination project. Ideas came forward about names for cultural landscapes, places that need protection, ways to engage visitors and residents, and opportunities to improve tourism offerings. Major themes emerging from the workshops center on the need to tell the "whole story" of the Alaska Highway, acknowledging how the different histories in the region are connected. Participants believe that recognizing the value of shared and complex First Nations and settler histories would enable a more effective interpretation of the region's heritage. This theme was closely connected to discussions surrounding tourism. Participants constantly reiterated the need to develop connections between communities, local businesses and organizations in the region to generate opportunities for community and regional collaboration. There was also a very strong interest in bringing local history into schools. Participants believe that passing knowledge onto future generations is paramount in ensuring the continued protection, conservation, and celebration of their community's heritage.

The workshops were a success in terms of the number of participants, the scope of discussions, and the ideas generated about heritage potential in communities. They also demonstrated strong support for the Alaska Highway Heritage Project, as well as solid understanding of challenges in communicating the value of heritage to communities and leveraging the nomination toward real benefits for the tourism, cultural and education sectors. Participants highlighted numerous heritage resources among the physical legacies of the Alaska Highway that communities believe are worthy of protection and interpretation without interfering with the operation and upgrading of the contemporary road. Connections were continuously made to the role that the promotion of the Alaska Highway's cultural landscape could make to tourism opportunities, thereby reinstating the potential value of the nomination to the area.

## Key Messages

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The underlying themes that emerged throughout the workshops are:

- The lack of a sustainable funding mechanism to protect and celebrate local heritage presents a challenge;
- Showcasing local history and heritage will benefit all residents, including the tourism sector;
- First Nations involvement is critical, their stories are important and many community members want to contribute and collaborate;
- Opportunities currently exist for youth to be engaged in local history initiatives;
- Multiple historical narratives exist in the landscape and woven together, tell a story of nature, human endeavour and community values that are legacies for the future; and
- The Alaska Highway's history is central to understanding the region's past, present and future.

Key messages specifically related to the Alaska Highway Heritage Project are:

- The nomination of the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site of Canada has strong support;

- Steps that local governments, groups and individuals should take to support the nomination must be clearly articulated;
- The project can be the foundation for greater collaboration among all communities in the corridor to share historical knowledge and develop tourism opportunities;
- The benefits, costs and opportunities associated with the conservation and interpretation of the Alaska Highway's cultural heritage need to be demonstrated; and
- Yukon needs to be fully involved in the project.

## Acknowledgements

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### Funding and In-Kind Contributions

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The Peace River Regional District has been the primary funder for the project in BC. Additionally, the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, the Province of BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and the City of Dawson Creek are providing in-kind and financial support.

The following organizations also contributed to the successful completion of the Community Heritage Values workshops:

- Heritage Branch, BC Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resources Operations
- Northern Rockies Regional Municipality
- Tourism Dawson Creek
- Woodlands Inn, Fort Nelson
- Quality Inn Northern Grand, Fort St. John
- Super 8 Motel, Dawson Creek
- Driving Force, Fort St. John

### Alaska Highway Community Society Board Member Representation

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The following Alaska Highway Community Society Board Members participated in the workshops:

- Bud Powell, AHCS Chair & Appointed Representative (City of Dawson Creek)
- Fred Jarvis, Mayor (District of Taylor)
- Laura Weisgerber, Councillor (District of Chetwynd)
- Darryl Johnson, Councillor (District of Hudson's Hope)
- Kelly Miller, Councillor (District of Hudson's Hope)
- Karen Goodings, Area Director & Chair (Peace River Regional District, Electoral District B)
- Sue Popesku, Alternate Director (Peace Liard Regional Arts Council)
- Roger Gregoire (City of Fort St. John)

Regrets:

- Larry Fynn, Mayor (Village of Pouce Coupe)
- Bob Nicholson, Councillor (District of Chetwynd)
- Trish Jacques, Councillor (District of Mackenzie)
- Doug McKee, Councillor, Tourism & Parks Portfolio (Northern Rockies Regional Municipality)
- Wayne Hiebert, Area Director (Peace River Regional District, Electoral District D)
- Audrey Sam, Executive Director (North East Native Advancing Society)
- Pauline Cassleman, Director (Peace Liard Regional Arts Council)



## Community Members

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In addition to thanking everyone who attended the workshops, the organizers would like to specifically acknowledge the contributions of:

- Audrey Sam, Executive Director (North East Native Advancing Society)
- Bev Vandersteen, Executive Director (Fort Nelson & District Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Centre)
- Jaylene Arnold, Economic Development and Tourism Officer (Northern Rockies Regional Municipality)
- Samantha Gibeault, Tourism Development Coordinator (Tourism Dawson Creek)
- Joyce Lee, Manager (Tourism Dawson Creek)
- Alaska Highway First Nation Story Collecting Project Story Collectors:
  - Denise Menard
  - Mimi Needlay
  - Maisie Metecheah
  - Crystal St. Pierre
  - Annette Davis
- Danny and Val Pawalchuk (Fort Nelson)



## Introduction

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The BC Heritage Branch in partnership with the Alaska Highway Community Society (AHCS) held a series of Community Heritage Values Workshops from March 4<sup>th</sup> to March 8<sup>th</sup> in Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek and Fort St. John, BC. Each workshop included an evening orientation session and a full-day workshop facilitated by Ursula Pfahler and Pam Copley, Community Heritage Planners from the BC Heritage Branch. April Moi of the AHCS and Northern BC Tourism, and heritage consultant Julie Harris of Contentworks, facilitated the section focused on the Alaska Highway Heritage Project.

The workshops allowed communities in the North Peace, South Peace and Fort Nelson areas to explore what they value about their community's heritage and identify significant historic places of value to their communities. Participants also gained an understanding of some of the most frequently used heritage conservation tools, learned about initiatives already underway in the area, and exchanged ideas about additional ways of celebrating local heritage.

General themes and places of heritage interest relating to the Alaska Highway Heritage Project were also discussed. The importance of interpretation and conservation to the future National Historic Site designation was reinforced, and participants were encouraged to share their interest in the history and heritage of the Alaska Highway's cultural landscape and to provide feedback about whether the nomination should go forward.

This report provides a brief description of the orientation session and workshop agenda, followed by a breakdown by location of what was heard from the participants at each workshop, and the lessons for the Alaska Highway Heritage Project. Additional information about heritage policies, programs and initiatives is included at the end of this report, as well as an appendix of workshop participants.

## Workshop Organizers

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### ***Facilitators***

- Pamela Copley, Community Heritage Planner, BC Heritage Branch
- Ursula Pfahler, Community Heritage Planner, BC Heritage Branch
- April Moi, Community Development, Northern BC Tourism and Administrator, AHCS
- Julie Harris, Heritage Consultant/Historian, Contentworks Inc.

### ***Note-Taking and Reporting***

- Natascha Morrison, Historian, Contentworks Inc.

### ***Support***

- Bud Powell, Chair, Alaska Highway Community Society

## Workshop Goals

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The workshops provided participants with general information about the meaning of the term “heritage” and the tools available to local governments and community groups to identify, protect and celebrate heritage places. The workshops also served as an opportunity to update communities about the Alaska Highway Heritage Project and to collect information about the places and experiences of significance to communities, including heritage relevant to the nomination of the Alaska Highway’s cultural landscape as a National Historic Site of Canada.

## Who Attended

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The Fort Nelson Workshop was attended by 13 participants, including the former Chief, Kathi Dickie, various individuals from the Fort Nelson First Nation, and representatives from the Fort Nelson Library and the Fort Nelson Heritage Museum. Individuals representing a tourism and development focus from the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality also attended.

The Dawson Creek workshop was well attended by 24 participants. This included representation from the Chetwynd Chamber of Commerce, and heritage keepers from the nearby community of Tumbler Ridge. Councillors for the City of Dawson Creek, various Dawson Creek tourism operators, and numerous local historical society representatives also attended.

The Fort St. John workshop enjoyed a tremendous turnout of 41 participants, including various local and regional tourism operators, museum and historical society representatives, and heritage keepers from Taylor and other surrounding communities. Councillors for the City of Fort St. John and Hudson’s Hope, as well as individuals from Treaty 8 Tribal Association, Doig River, Halfway River and Prophet River First Nations also attended.

## Discussion Topics and Activities

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Each community visit consisted of an evening orientation session followed by a full day workshop. The same agenda and activities were carried out in all three communities. Details on the results of the activities will be provided in the individual location discussions below.

An important principle that was underscored in each workshop was the need to approach cultural heritage from the perspective of community values. In the past, heritage in many places was often



defined by experts using criteria such as “finest”, “oldest”, or “last of its kind”. Now communities are encouraged to consider everything that contributes to a greater understanding and appreciation of historic contexts as potential heritage resources. Communities are given the responsibility for determining what should be protected by weighing opportunities, benefits and risks for present and, to the best of their ability, future generations.

The evening orientation session included a brief presentation defining ‘heritage’, ‘cultural landscapes’, and ‘archaeology’. Participants were also invited to share heritage resources of personal importance to them and to their communities.

The full-day session began with a discussion of heritage values and historic places. Working in groups, participants were asked to describe heritage values that were important to them and to their community. A discussion of the different types of heritage values and a mapping activity followed that encouraged participants to identify significant heritage resources on maps and describe the values (historical, scientific, spiritual, cultural, social, aesthetic, environmental, and economic) associated with each resource.

April Moi led a discussion on heritage tourism and the results of recent studies that demonstrate the importance of heritage experiences for travellers along the highway and within the northern BC region. Participants were then invited to share their vision of what heritage should be in their community 50 years from now. This was followed by a group “SWOT Analysis”. Here participants were asked to brainstorm about the community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (concerns) with regard to celebrating community heritage. As a group, major themes were drawn out and articulated by the facilitators. A similar approach was used to discuss strategies that could be used to make heritage more relevant to communities.

During the second half of the workshop, Pam Copley provided information on the heritage provision of the *BC Local Government Act* and tools that can be used to formally identify and protect heritage places, especially buildings. She also spoke about the lack of implementation of Section 4 of the *Heritage Conservation Act* for recognizing and protecting historic places on First Nations’ lands, and about the potential of using “Notations of Interest” to identify places of special interest on BC Crown Land. Notations of Interest are a form of note on provincial reference maps that can identify historic places on Crown land. Informal strategies were discussed as part of an activity where participants were asked to brainstorm and identify strategies and the various roles involved in carrying each one out.

The remainder of the workshop focused on the Alaska Highway Heritage Project. Julie Harris began by providing an overview of the project’s goals and parameters, and the important role that communities must play for the nomination to succeed. A discussion of scope followed, noting the need to recognize the many themes associated with the highway and the development of the region to demonstrate the national significance of the Alaska Highway as a cultural landscape. Participants asked very important questions concerning the physical scope of the nomination, the impact on the highway as a transportation route, and the potential for related, off-highway resources, such as Old Fort Nelson, to be considered (or not) as places relevant to the nomination. The need for the nomination to clearly state which discrete resources (e.g. bridge, building, landscape element, etc) have heritage value, which can be protected, and which will be protected was discussed. The participants generally agreed that most of the heritage value of the Alaska Highway lies in its landscape and in the experience of driving the highway, rather than in individual buildings or engineering works.



Participants were then asked to break into groups and identify what the “Alaska Highway” story means to them and to share what themes they feel are important to their communities. This was followed by asking participants to look back on the resources identified in the earlier mapping activity and consider which resources reflect or represent the themes they had identified. Participants were also given the opportunity to add to the list of identified resources at this time. The workshop was concluded by reviewing the next steps for the nomination project.

## Activity Descriptions

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### ***Orientation Activity***

Participants were asked to name a heritage site or resource of particular personal importance to them.

### ***Heritage Values Activity***

In groups, participants were asked to brainstorm responses to five posters placed around the room. Each poster included a partial phrase and participants were asked to complete the sentence. The phrases included:

- 1) “Our art, design and building styles are important because...”
- 2) “The science of our way of life is important because...”
- 3) “Our cultural and social traditions are an important part of our heritage because...”
- 4) “Our spiritual beliefs and traditions are important to who we are because...”
- 5) “We value our history because...”

### ***Mapping Activity***

Participants were asked to place small stickers on maps provided showing the approximate location of heritage resources of importance to their community. Participants provided the name of each site and its related heritage value on provided paper. It is important to note that this activity was not limited to resources specific to or associated with the Alaska Highway. Participants were encouraged to identify any resources of importance.

### ***Vision Activity***

People were invited to brainstorm where they wanted to see their communities in 50 years with regard to celebrating heritage.

### ***SWOT Analysis***

In groups, participants brainstormed what their community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (concerns) were with regard to promoting and protecting heritage.

### ***Informal Strategies Activity***

People were asked to brainstorm ideas for informal strategies to celebrate and promote local heritage.

### ***Alaska Highway Heritage Scope Activity***

In groups, participants brainstormed and shared what stories were important to them and their communities when talking about the history and heritage of the Alaska Highway Corridor.



## What We Heard

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### Fort Nelson (March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>)

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Held at the Northern Rockies Recreational Centre, the Fort Nelson workshop was attended by 13 participants. We were pleased to have a strong representation from the Fort Nelson First Nation and Northern Rockies Regional Municipality office, as well as knowledgeable local community history and heritage keepers.

#### *Orientation Activity (Fort Nelson)*

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The various heritage resources shared by participants during the orientation session are organized below under themes assigned for this report:

Theme	Resource Examples
<b>Museums and Cultural Centres</b>	Fort Nelson Museum
<b>Heritage Landscapes</b>	Old Fort Nelson, historical trails, Ross Bay Cemetery, Airport town site
<b>Alaska Highway Heritage</b>	HME Hill, Mile 300, Trutch
<b>Cultural Traditions</b>	Aboriginal practices, fur trade and trapping, traditions of caring
<b>Environmental</b>	Wildlife, pristine wilderness

### ***Heritage Values Activity (Fort Nelson)***

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Within groups, participants highlighted the importance of heritage in defining their communities and providing insight into their own history. They emphasised its ability to bring people together and connect individuals through culture and traditions. The need to continue sharing knowledge and to always learn from and listen to the past was emphasised throughout this activity.

Original Statement	Participant Responses
<p><b>“Our art, design and building styles are important because...”</b></p>	<p>They are historical monuments that tell stories. They are functional/cultural landmarks. They provide insight into our own backgrounds and histories.</p>
<p><b>“The science of our way of life is important because...”</b></p>	<p>First Nation’s medicinal plants took generations to develop. This knowledge helped develop medicines used today. It allowed First Nations to live in balance and ‘tread lightly’ on mother earth.</p>
<p><b>“Our cultural and social traditions are an important part of our heritage because...”</b></p>	<p>They tell a visual history of a people. They bring us together; they help connect different cultures/traditions. They are a way to pass on knowledge to future generations. They are our link to the past and our future.</p>
<p><b>“Our spiritual beliefs and traditions are important to who we are because...”</b></p>	<p>They are the ‘oxygen’ of all history. They show the evolution of things (how we got here). They shape our values and our children. They feed into our relationships which are crucial for present and future generations. It tells children where they come from and helps define who they are.</p>
<p><b>“We value our history because...”</b></p>	<p>It is based on amazing people doing amazing things that allowed us to be born. It shows us lessons learned, and we learn from our past.</p>

### ***Mapping Activity (Fort Nelson)***

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The following sites and heritage resources of importance to participants’ communities were identified during the mapping activity. They are listed in no particular order.

Place Name	Description	Heritage Values (if identified)
HME Hill	Location of a Highway Maintenance Establishment (HME) Camp; now a community sledding hill (Fort Nelson area).	<i>Historical, Cultural</i>

<b>Old airport town site</b>	Old school, hospital, curling rink, baseball diamond, and various foundations still visible (Fort Nelson area).	<i>Historical, Social, Cultural</i>
<b>Summit graves site</b>	A medicine man is buried here (near Summit Lake).	<i>Historical, Spiritual</i>
<b>Cave at Moose Lake</b>	Located at Moose Lake.	<i>Spiritual, Unique</i>
<b>United Church</b>	Used to be at the airport; was a non-denominational church before it was moved into town (Fort Nelson area).	<i>Historical, Cultural, Spiritual</i>
<b>Mile 419</b>	Along the Alaska Highway, east of Muncho Lake Provincial Park.	<i>Historical, Cultural</i>
<b>Old Fort Nelson</b>	Location of the old town site (people still live there); also has First Nation history (Fort Nelson area).	<i>Historical, Cultural, Social</i>
<b>Nelson Forks</b>	Traditional settlement site; site of an old Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) post; link to construction of the Alaska Highway (fork of Liard and Fort Nelson rivers).	<i>Historical</i>
<b>Muncho Lake School</b>	Location of an old school (Muncho Lake Provincial Park).	<i>Historical, Social</i>
<b>Toad River Hot Springs</b>	Burial site; gathering place for animals (Toad River area).	<i>Historical, Cultural, Social, Environmental, Spiritual</i>
<b>Liard Hot Springs</b>	Traditional cleansing spot for First Nations; Alaska Highway construction associations (Liard River Hot Springs Provincial Park).	<i>Historical, Spiritual, Scientific</i>
<b>Old Catholic Church</b>	Located at HMP 295.	<i>Historical, Spiritual, Scientific</i>
<b>Old Sikanni Ferry</b>	Location of an old barge that transported people from Old Fort Nelson to the airport (Fort Nelson area).	<i>Social, Historical, Economic</i>
<b>Fontas Village</b>	Includes the burial ground of Fonda (Fort Nelson area).	<i>Historical, Cultural, Spiritual, Economic</i>
<b>Old HBC Trading Post</b>	Fort Nelson area.	<i>Historical, Economical, Cultural</i>
<b>Kle-cho-tenah</b>	An old horse trail (southeast of the Fort Nelson area).	<i>Economic, Social, Historical, Cultural</i>
<b>Trading Post at Fontas</b>	Southeast of the Fort Nelson area.	<i>Social, Historical, Economical</i>
<b>Kledo Creek</b>	Location where Streeper & Sons operated a sawmill and the launching point for a barge (main	



	carriers of supplies to the Old Fort and beyond) (west of the Fort Nelson area).	
<b>Snake River/Nadode</b>	Village on the Fort Nelson River (north of Fort Nelson).	
<b>6 Mile Fish Camp in Tahltan County</b>	No description provided.	
<b>Kotcho Village Site</b>	This site has many stories and a lot of history (Kotcho Lake).	
<b>Clark Lake</b>	Traditional gathering area for First Nations (Southeast of the Fort Nelson area).	
<b>Beaver River</b>	Traditional First Nation community (Northwest of Fort Nelson Forks).	
<b>Wildlife</b>	Stone Mountain Provincial Park.	
<b>Telegraph Trail</b>	Stretches from southern BC to Atlin, though Telegraph Creek.	<i>Historical, Scientific, Economic, Cultural</i>
<b>Klee-go-cheh</b>	Fort Nelson First Nation traditional settlement and trail to another settlement area (Maxhamish Lake Provincial Park and Protected Area).	
<b>Liard River</b>	Transportation route.	<i>Historical, Cultural, Social, Economic, Scientific</i>
<b>Peterson Canyon</b>	Old section of the Alaska Highway; now a hiking trail.	<i>Historical, Aesthetic, Cultural</i>
<b>Trail and site of old maintenance camp</b>	Located off the north side of the highway, includes remnants of an old maintenance building and various materials (trucks, parts, windows) (East of Stone Mountain Provincial Park).	
<b>Trutch</b>	Historically the highest point on the Alaska Highway; viewpoint.	
<b>Steamboat</b>	Associated with the construction of the Alaska Highway; viewpoint (West of the Fort Nelson area).	
<b>Mile 442</b>	Associated with guide Charlie MacDonald; where he lived (family still there).	

### ***Vision Activity (Fort Nelson)***

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Participant’s visions continuously emphasised the importance of ecotourism and the need to celebrate traditional ways of life through maintaining connections to the land and knowledge of traditions, language and place names. The importance of clear interpretation and preservation programs, as well as an active sharing of knowledge through youth and community education initiatives was also reiterated throughout the discussion.

Many participants emphasized that it was important to tell the “whole story” and to acknowledge the different cultures and ways of life reflected in their community’s history. Recognizing how the different histories of the Fort Nelson region are connected will enable a more effective interpretation of the region’s heritage. Participants constantly expressed the desire to see more active engagement among youth in community heritage initiatives. It was thought that this would help ensure their community’s heritage continues to be communicated and shared with future generations of residents and visitors alike.

***SWOT Analysis (Fort Nelson)***

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats (Concerns)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Community involvement</li> <li>• Human resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of knowledge</li> <li>• Remoteness</li> <li>• Oil and gas development</li> <li>• Lack of funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecotourism</li> <li>• Indigenous museum</li> <li>• Visitor programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil and gas</li> <li>• Red tape</li> <li>• Aging storytellers</li> </ul>

**Strengths:** Participants identified the area’s pristine wilderness and opportunities for outdoor activities as well as its established museum and cultural centres as some of the community’s key heritage attributes. People believed that the success of various festivals and community events reflected the level of passion and commitment amongst community members to be involved in promoting and communicating their interest in celebrating community heritage. The human resources, which consist of local heritage champions as well as dedicated community members, and a willingness to collaborate, were also considered to be key strengths.

**Weaknesses:** Discussions of weaknesses focused on the need to incorporate youth into the promotion and celebration of community heritage in order to share and pass knowledge to younger generations. Challenges associated with the area’s remoteness, cost of living, and lack of interpretation in place for visitors to learn about what the area has to offer were also noted. Oil and gas development was identified as being in competition with the development of ecotourism, and responsible for creating the reputation of Fort Nelson as a highway town known for its large number of transient workers. Connecting all of this were the challenges posed by a lack of funding to develop heritage interpretation and preservation initiatives.

**Opportunities:** Participants reiterated the opportunity to develop ecotourism. Many also expressed that there was an opportunity to build upon current museums as well as develop new museums to tell the various stories and histories of Fort Nelson. People also spoke about the need to take advantage of the large number of visitors and workers that pass through the community. Through the development of a visitor program that would include clear interpretation about the history and heritage of the area, these people could help promote and spread the word about the value of the area beyond its oil and gas contributions while contributing to the promotion of the community’s tourism potential.

**Threats (Concerns):** Oil and gas development overshadows other development opportunities, such as tourism and heritage. Many participants noted that the turnover in local populations makes it difficult to sustain interest in multi-year projects and to target activities and opportunities to a group that often arrives with little interest or awareness of local history. The number of people who have direct experience with the settler history of the area is decreasing; their stories need to

be collected soon. The lack of youth engagement is a problem, especially when it appears that youth are interested in the cultural and historic contexts of their communities.

### ***Informal Strategies Activity (Fort Nelson)***

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The following informal strategies were identified as potential ideas for promoting and celebrating community heritage:

Strategy	Description
<b>MOU</b>	Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between Fort Nelson First Nation and the Northern Rockies Regional District to facilitate heritage planning and the protection of heritage resources.
<b>Doors Open</b>	(Following the Ontario strategy – see Web Resources for more information) This will be a way for local residents, including youth, to learn more about local heritage and community resources.
<b>Heritage Showcasing</b>	Develop, display and promote ongoing exhibits and events at the Fort Nelson Library, community centre, local schools and other high traffic, public venues. This will help to showcase local heritage and spread an awareness and understanding of the value of the community’s history.
<b>Youth Engagement</b>	Actively encourage youth participation in the planning and development of local heritage activities (for example the production of exhibits). Develop partnerships between local schools and post secondary institutions. Utilize existing youth programs such as BC Heritage Fairs (See Web Resources for more information).

### ***Alaska Highway Heritage Scope Activity (Fort Nelson)***

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The following themes were noted as important to consider when telling the story of the Alaska Highway Corridor cultural landscape:

- Employment trends and economic aspects
- Development, opening up of the North, connecting communities, changing landscapes
- Social issues and impacts (2 sided)
- Layers of history (military, social, economic, environmental)
- Aboriginal connections

Participants reiterated the importance of recognizing and acknowledging the many layers of history involved in understanding the heritage of the Fort Nelson area. The connecting theme throughout the discussion was “change over time”. Participants also noted the importance of Yukon involvement in the project in order to represent the “whole story” of the Alaska Highway.

### **General Themes that Emerged (Fort Nelson)**

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#### ***Importance of Aboriginal History and Heritage***

Participants continuously expressed the need to identify the value in telling the “whole Story”, to celebrate traditional ways of life, pass on knowledge of traditions, language and place names, and acknowledge the different cultures reflected in their community’s history. Recognizing how the different histories of the Fort Nelson region are connected will enable a more effective



interpretation of the region's heritage. People spoke about the need to encourage more cooperation between municipal levels of government and local First Nation groups.

### ***Ecotourism***

The area's remoteness, pristine wilderness and potential for ecotourism were reflected throughout all of the activity discussions. Participants believe that the expansion of ecotourism in the area would not only complement, but facilitate true celebration of the many layers of Fort Nelson heritage. Concerns were voiced over the need to counter the impacts of oil and gas development in 'branding' the community of Fort Nelson in the eyes of visitors and local residents.

### ***Importance of Youth***

The matter of passing knowledge to future generations and ensuring the continued protection of Fort Nelson's community heritage also emerged throughout the workshop. Participants recognized the need to incorporate youth into heritage initiatives in order to balance the potential for loss of knowledge among aging storytellers and heritage keepers. Numerous ideas were shared on how to encourage more youth engagement and interest in local history and heritage.

## Dawson Creek (March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>)

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Held at the Super 8 Motel, the Dawson Creek workshop was well attended by 24 participants. We were pleased to have a strong representation from the nearby communities of Chetwynd and Tumbler Ridge, as well as a number of Councillors and knowledgeable local community history and heritage keepers.

### *Orientation Activity (Dawson Creek)*

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The various heritage resources shared by participants during the orientation session are organized below under themes assigned for this report:

Themes	Resource Examples
<b>Museums and Cultural Centres</b>	Dawson Creek art gallery, Pouce Coupe Museum, Northern Alberta Railway (NAR) Park and Dawson Creek Station Museum
<b>Heritage Landscapes</b>	Walter Wright Pioneer Village, Tomslake Cemetery
<b>Alaska Highway Heritage</b>	Mile 0 Milepost
<b>Community</b>	Rolla Pub, Swan Lake Cabins, Old barns on farms

### *Heritage Values Activity (Dawson Creek)*

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The notion of community and its connection to history and heritage was strongly emphasised, with participants reiterating how a community relies on the recognition and celebration of heritage to grow and evolve over time. At the same time, participants discussed the idea of history being active in defining and moulding individuals and communities alike. A sense of ownership and pride with regard to their heritage exists throughout the participants' responses.

Original Statement	Participant Responses
<b>"Our art, design and building styles are important because..."</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They integrate our unique cultural differences.</li> <li>They make us think about how form and function are linked.</li> <li>They reflect our values and who we are.</li> <li>They show an evolution of things.</li> </ul>
<b>"The science of our way of life is important because..."</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It can be passed on to future generations.</li> <li>It documents the past in a way to help the future.</li> <li>It shows the importance of protecting wildlife and ecology.</li> <li>They help create a shared sense of active history.</li> </ul>
<b>"Our cultural and social traditions are an important part of our heritage because..."</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They create unity of place and community.</li> <li>They make us who we are.</li> <li>Families can pass them from generation to generation.</li> <li>They showcase evolution and constants, and help us deal with change.</li> </ul>

**“Our spiritual beliefs and traditions are important to who we are because...”**

They are part of us and the foundation for our behaviour, unity and community.

They build unique traditions and history.

They make for a stronger community.

Knowing what came before, paves the way to the future.

It creates pride.

**“We value our history because...”**

If you do not know where you came from you cannot/do not know where you are going.

### ***Mapping Activity (Dawson Creek)***

The following sites and heritage resources of importance to participants were identified during the mapping activity. Some resources are outside the immediate vicinity of the participants’ communities, but still within northeastern BC, because they are generally associated with the history of the Alaska Highway and their community’s heritage. They are listed in no particular order. Note that participants provided very little descriptive information, and heritage values were only discussed in association with select sites due to time constraints.

<b>Place Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Heritage Values (if identified)</b>
<b>Fire Towers</b>	An example of early heritage (e.g. 109 Fire Tower).	
<b>NWMP Trail</b>	(Northwest Mounted Police)	
<b>Dinosaurs</b>	In Hudson’s Hope and Tumbler Ridge.	
<b>Monkman Pass</b>	Located southwest of Tumbler Ridge.	
<b>First Nation Stories</b>		
<b>Swan Lake Provincial Park</b>	Located southeast of Dawson Creek.	
<b>Tomslake Cemetery</b>	South of Dawson Creek.	
<b>Fish ponds</b>	Dug out/borrow pits that were stocked with fish.	
<b>Dawson Creek Art Gallery</b>		
<b>Kiskatinaw Bridge (Historic)</b>	Located west of Dawson Creek in Kiskatinaw Provincial Park.	<i>Aesthetic, Cultural, Social, Scientific</i>
<b>Wind Park/Farm</b>	Southwest of Dawson Creek, near Bear Mountain.	
<b>Pouce Coupe Wooden Train Trestle</b>		
<b>Shearer Dale</b>	North of Dawson Creek.	
<b>Eikert’s Store</b>		



<b>WAC Bennet Dam</b>	Located on the east point of Williston Lake, near Hudson’s Hope.	<i>Scientific, Economic, Controversial</i>
<b>Sudetan Heritage Park (Provincial Park)</b>	Located south of Dawson Creek.	
<b>Pouce Coupe Museum</b>		
<b>Pouce Coupe Park</b>		
<b>Hart Hotel</b>	Located in Pouce Coupe (see Pouce Coupe Village).	<i>Historical, Social, Cultural, Unique</i>
<b>NAR Park</b>	Located in Dawson Creek.	
<b>Old Post Office</b>		<i>Cultural, Historical, Aesthetic</i>
<b>Rotary Lake and Park (Part of Mile 0 Park)</b>	Man made lake with a grandfather clause to prevent any changes being made (located in Dawson Creek).	<i>Scientific, Cultural, Social</i>
<b>Liard Hot Springs</b>	Provincial Park.	
<b>Charlie Lake</b>		
<b>Fort Nelson</b>		
<b>Contact Creek</b>		
<b>Kruger Flats</b>	Private ranch; 1930s mink farm along Monkman Trail; predates Alaska Highway.	<i>Historical</i>
<b>John Terry Ranch</b>	Located in the Tumbler Ridge area.	
<b>Hobies (Hobys) Cabin</b>	Located along the Monkman Trail.	<i>Social, Historical, Cultural, Scientific</i>
<b>Chetwynd Cenotaph</b>		
<b>Little Prairie Heritage Museum</b>	Located west of Chetwynd.	
<b>Moberly Lake Cenotaph</b>		
<b>Twin Sisters Mountains</b>	Traditional First Nation territory (west of Moberly Lake & Moberly River).	
<b>Dawson Creek Station Museum</b>		<i>All values</i>
<b>Pouce Coupe Village</b>	Museum, train station, trestle, old wooden structure, Hart Hotel, old watering hole, Pouce Coupe hospital, government buildings and RCMP barracks.	
<b>Walter Wright Pioneer Village</b>		

**Grundy Caves**

**McQueen Slough** Located northeast of Dawson Creek.

**Moberly Lake**

**Rolla United Church**

**Rolla Pub**

***Vision Activity (Dawson Creek)***

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Workshop participants emphasised the need to develop and implement community and youth outreach programs in order to encourage more local involvement and ensure future generations recognize the value of celebrating their community’s heritage. Many people shared their vision of seeing more local history in school curriculums.

Numerous participants also want to see an expansion in heritage tourism initiatives and emphasised the importance of government support and investment, and the need to maintain a capacity for heritage conservation. More collaboration between both organizations and nearby communities was also discussed. Participants also remarked on the potential value of larger scale collaboration with Yukon.

***SWOT Analysis (Dawson Creek)***

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<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats (Concerns)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uniqueness</li> <li>• Community collaboration</li> <li>• Stable economy and developed infrastructure</li> <li>• Human resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of support and direction</li> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Lack of community engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage younger generations</li> <li>• Community collaboration</li> <li>• Tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of youth involvement</li> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Environmental threats</li> </ul>

**Strengths:** One of the main strengths discussed was the existing concept of Dawson Creek as a transportation and communications hub. As the starting point for the Alaska Highway, people remarked that the community’s ability to capture its uniqueness was essential to celebrating its heritage. The security provided by the current economic boom and the area’s diversified resources were recognized as aiding opportunities to develop the community and area’s heritage tourism potential. The current collaboration already underway with surrounding communities and the willingness to build upon it was also highlighted. Participants expressed pride in their enthusiastic and dedicated heritage champions and acknowledged the vital role they play in celebrating and promoting community heritage.

**Weaknesses:** One of the major weaknesses identified by participants was the current lack of support and direction, especially with regard to funding. Concern was expressed over the deteriorating downtown core and lack of support to maintain and conserve heritage places. This was also tied to the lack of direction as participants recognized the need for proper evaluation procedures and planning. General community engagement and interest in community well being (that participants linked to community heritage) was also emphasised with the specific issues of

outside management of local businesses, local residents willingness to go elsewhere for shopping and entertainment, and the general lack of interested and experienced volunteers being identified.

**Opportunities:** Participants expressed the importance of encouraging (and ultimately increasing) youth engagement through the use of new technologies and the incorporation and/or showcasing of local history in schools. It was remarked that the strong presence of dedicated and enthusiastic heritage champions in the community provided the opportunity to push for and develop heritage programs geared towards targeting youth. Participants emphasised the value of current community collaboration and the opportunity to expand current networks that many believe would encourage the success of local and area wide festivals/events that celebrate heritage. All of this would ultimately feed into the opportunity to promote and expand heritage tourism, geotourism and ecotourism initiatives.

**Threats (Concerns):** Once again, the issue of youth involvement was raised as participants stressed the importance of passing knowledge on to younger generations in order to ensure that their community continues to recognize the value of its heritage. Many people expressed their opinion that the lack of education and awareness of local history was connected to the current apathy existing in the community. Issues of funding and sustainability were also brought up in association with the region’s potential for economic instability. Environmental threats were also highlighted, with specific references made to the impacts of natural deterioration, vandalism and pollution on heritage assets.

### ***Informal Strategies Activity (Dawson Creek)***

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The following informal strategies were identified as potential ideas for promoting and celebrating community heritage:

Strategy	Description
<b>Heritage Branding</b>	Develop partnerships and strategic branding for the area that will help connect communities and increase the opportunity for heritage tourism (for example tourism/visitor passports).
<b>Doors Open</b>	(Following the Ontario strategy – see Web Resources for more information) This will be a way for local residents, including youth, to learn more about local heritage and community resources.
<b>Heritage Showcasing</b>	Actively commemorate anniversaries, orchestrate homecomings, and showcase local heritage through community events. Develop, display and promote ongoing exhibits and virtual theatre at high traffic public venues. This will help to showcase local heritage and spread an awareness and understanding of the value of the community’s history.
<b>Youth Engagement</b>	Actively encourage youth participation in the planning and development of local heritage activities (for example, family history school projects).
<b>Use Technology</b>	Develop a virtual heritage presence (for example, virtual photograph contests).

### ***Alaska Highway Heritage Scope Activity (Dawson Creek)***

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The following themes were noted as important to consider when telling the story of the Alaska Highway Corridor cultural landscape:

- The people
- Both sides of the story (the positive and negative impacts)
  - Social impacts
  - Cultural impacts
  - Environmental impacts (development and exploitation)
- The role of natural resources and the environment
- Development, opening up of the North, connecting communities
- Social history and its connections to family history
- Changing landscape
- International, national and local stories

Participants put emphasis on the need to tell the history of the people; the First Nations who first inhabited the region, the pioneers and settlers, the soldiers (Canadian and US) and the civilians who came to construct the Alaska Highway, the workers that stayed after the highway was constructed, and those that continue to stay even today.

## General Themes that Emerged (Dawson Creek)

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### ***Importance of Education***

The matter of passing knowledge to future generations and ensuring the continued protection of local heritage emerged throughout the workshop. Participants continuously expressed the need to increase the prevalence of local history in schools in order to encourage more youth engagement. People also believe that the level of apathy toward celebrating heritage could be countered by directing more attention toward developing approaches to educate the general public on local history in the communities.

### ***Tourism Connections***

The need to develop heritage tourism, ecotourism and even geotourism in association with the development of local heritage initiatives was shared by many participants. Participants consistently noted the value of their community's proximity to others who share similar visions and concerns, and the opportunity to develop these connections. For many people, the celebration and protection of community heritage is closely tied to the development of local tourism initiatives. However, participants noted on several occasions the need for direction and support (financial and administrative) in determining a unifying direction with regard to heritage and tourism development. Participants also remarked on the value of developing opportunities to collaborate with Yukon, and the importance of Yukon involvement in the Alaska Highway Heritage Project.

## Fort St. John (March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>)

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The Fort St. John workshop was held at the Quality Inn Northern Grand Hotel and enjoyed a tremendous turnout of 41 participants. We were pleased to have a large number of representatives from the Fort St. John and Taylor memory projects, numerous surrounding communities, as well as representatives from Treaty 8 Tribal Association, Doig River, Halfway River and Prophet River First Nations.

### *Orientation Activity (Fort St. John)*

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The various heritage resources shared by participants during the orientation session are organized below under themes assigned for this report:

Themes	Resource Examples
<b>Museums and Cultural Centres</b>	North Peace Historical Society, Fort St. John North Peace Museum, Dawson Creek Art Gallery (Grain Elevator)
<b>Cultural Traditions</b>	Farming, native crafts, forestry, family history, Beaver language teaching, hunting, medicinal remedies, connection with the land, drying meat
<b>Alaska Highway Heritage</b>	Historical Kiskatinaw Bridge, transportation (air, river, road), Camp and Mile 533 (Coal River)
<b>Heritage Landscapes</b>	Heritage trails, Peace River, Prophet River, Cameron River (ranching), cemeteries

### *Heritage Values Activity (Fort St. John)*

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The value of heritage in connecting people and creating a sense of belonging and community permeated throughout the responses. Many participants believe that heritage has played and continues to play a strong role in defining who we are and how our communities have come to be. People also highlighted the importance of heritage in providing insight into their history, stressing the need to understand where you have been in order to know where you are going.

Original Statement	Participant Responses
<b>“Our art, design and building styles are important because...”</b>	They are reflective of the land we live on. They tell people where they came from. They represent the uniqueness of our heritage and history.
<b>“The science of our way of life is important because...”</b>	It teaches our younger generations. It describes best how and when changes have taken place. It reflects the glacial design of our valley. They provide a sense of belonging.
<b>“Our cultural and social traditions are an important part of our heritage because...”</b>	They show how life has evolved over periods of time. They dictate what is important and what should be remembered. They define who we are.



**“Our spiritual beliefs and traditions are important to who we are because...”**

They have helped and continue to help us grow mentally, physically and spiritually.

They help form a vibrant community and help us to be good citizens.

They help create our identity.

**“We value our history because...”**

The past can teach younger generations, and you need to understand your past in order to understand the present and move into the future.

It represents our story to share with the world.

It is the story of our communities and our way of life.

### ***Mapping Activity (Fort St. John)***

The following sites and heritage resources of importance to participants’ communities were identified during the mapping activity. They are listed in no particular order. Note that heritage values were only discussed in association with select sites due to time constraints

<b>Place Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Heritage Values (if identified)</b>
<b>Peace Island Park</b>	Confluence of Peace and Pine rivers; located near Taylor.	
<b>Charlie Lake Caves</b>	Date back over 10,000 years; located in Beatton Provincial Park; now owned by First Nations.	<i>Spiritual, Scientific, Aesthetic, Economic</i>
<b>Mile 222 (Camp ground and airstrip)</b>	Near Prophet River Wayside Provincial Park.	
<b>Twin Sisters Mountains (includes Dancing Lady Lake)</b>	Traditional First Nation territory (west of Moberly Lake & Moberly River). It is a site of healing and refuge, where people come when times are tough. This site is important to many different cultural groups who have their own sacred sites here (it is co-managed).	
<b>North Peace Regional Airport</b>	Located at Fort St. John.	
<b>Peace River Landing</b>		
<b>Sikanni Chief Bridge</b>		
<b>Sacred site near Sikanni Chief</b>		
<b>Charlie Lake Engineers Camp</b>		
<b>Fort D’Epinette</b>		
<b>Fort St. John HBC Post (Old Fort)</b>	Location includes a memorial for old pioneers.	



**Charlie Lake Monument**

<b>Monica Storrs Pioneer Chapel</b>	Located at Fort St. John North Peace Museum.	
<b>Alcan Camp</b>	West of Fort St. John.	
<b>Condill Hotel</b>	Built during the construction of the Alaska Highway at Fort St. John.	
<b>Coal River</b>	One of many historical stopping points along the Alaska Highway.	<i>Cultural, Economic, Environmental</i>
<b>Liard River Hot Springs</b>	Used by soldiers and workers during the construction of the Alaska Highway (military associations noted only).	
<b>Skook’s Landing</b>	Provides access to Kechika Rivers (the only access).	
<b>Contact Creek</b>	Meeting of two construction parties during the construction of the Alaska Highway.	
<b>Pine River</b>	Site of the first non-aboriginal settlement in mainland BC (early origins of Fort St. John).	
<b>Pioneer Cemetery</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>D.A. Thomas Landing</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>Dudley’s Cabin</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>Mackenzie Trail</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>Portage Trail</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>Steam Vents</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>Gething Mine</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>RCMP Trails</b>	Located in the Hudson’s Hope area.	
<b>Church of the Good Shepherd</b>		
<b>Old Hill’s Store</b>	Also a traditional stopping place.	
<b>Hackney Hills</b>	Aboriginal associations.	
<b>Betsa River</b>	A very important place for Prophet River First Nation; associated with legends and medicine men.	
<b>Halfway River</b>	A traditional Aboriginal site.	
<b>Prophet River</b>	Connected with Aboriginal legends and stories.	
<b>Grand Haven Hall</b>	Built in 1930s as a meeting place.	<i>Historical, Social, Aesthetic</i>

**Cecil Lake Log Church**

**Hudson’s Hope Log Church**

**Dad’s Ranch Log Barn** Located at North Pine.

**North Pine Church** Located at the North Peace Fall Fair Grounds.

**Archie Ferguson Home** Located at Grand Haven.

**Old Kiskatinaw Bridge** Located in Kiskatinaw Provincial Park.

**CANOL Pipeline** Very important in opening up access to natural resources.

**NWSR Airfields**

**Teetering Rock** Located between Steamboat and Watson Lake.

***Vision Activity (Fort St. John)***

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Many participants want to see more commemoration of events and anniversaries designed to involve the whole community in celebrating local heritage. An increase in collaborative efforts between organizations and communities was also discussed. Many pointed out the opportunity to take advantage of the close proximity of other communities who share similar visions, with some participants noting the importance of Yukon involvement as well.

A number of people also emphasised the importance of encouraging more youth involvement in local heritage initiatives and expressed a desire to see more local history in schools and more effort to incorporate new technologies into showcasing community heritage and history. Emphasis was placed on the need to make the experience of learning about one’s heritage fun and engaging. People also pointed out that by using new technology, such as social networking sites or developing websites, a larger population could be reached and encouraged to participate in heritage initiatives, events and activities.

***SWOT (Fort St. John)***

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<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats (Concerns)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Region of historical significance</li> <li>• A lot of history</li> <li>• Peoples connection to heritage</li> <li>• Heritage champions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of volunteers</li> <li>• Lack of unified direction</li> <li>• Lack of support</li> <li>• Social issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand inter-community connections</li> <li>• Heritage and ecotourism</li> <li>• New technologies</li> <li>• Large youth population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of resources</li> <li>• Divided focus</li> <li>• Oil and gas development</li> </ul>

**Strengths:** Participants particularly highlighted the region’s historical significance as a strength. The communities’ connections through the various activities, events and people that make up the area have created a rich and diverse heritage. Many people also noted the strong association that

residents have with their community and the degree to which this connection expresses itself through passion and dedication to protecting and celebrating local history and heritage. Other strengths included: the rich cultural landscape; numerous relics, archaeological sites and heritage resources; devoted heritage champions; and the many established museums, cultural centres and historical societies in the area.

**Weaknesses:** The lack of support through funding, no unified direction and a general shortage of volunteers were listed as some of the primary weaknesses impacting local heritage initiatives. Participants remarked that, at times, the sheer amount of history and the different cultures and heritage that make up the area resulted in a divided focus. With the limited resources available (human and monetary) this impacted the community’s abilities to work effectively at promoting and celebrating local heritage. Social issues associated with the large transient workforce in the area were also discussed.

**Opportunities:** Participants once again emphasised the opportunity to develop connections with surrounding communities, while also encouraging more collaboration with government institutions as well as local businesses. Many said that the richness of the area’s heritage and the region’s affinity for outdoor and wilderness adventure translated to potential to expand both heritage tourism and ecotourism initiatives. Participants specifically noted the opportunity to develop different types of tours (canoe/river rafting, hiking, etc) and a living heritage centre. At the same time, participants affirmed the need to take advantage of the large youth population. Individuals believe that by reaching out to them through the use of new technologies to showcase the values of local heritage, youth will realize their connections to their community’s history. Most people expressed that fostering interest among younger populations to become more involved in heritage initiatives would only help ensure the continued celebration and promotion of local history and heritage among future generations.

**Threats (Concerns):** Issues of funding and lack of human resources were once again reiterated as threats. In addition, participants believe that the divided focus of various groups working towards their own agendas was hindering the effective promotion of local heritage and encouraging competition rather than collaboration. Many people remarked that oil and gas development was also in competition with developing local heritage opportunities, and that having a large transient population was tied to the lack of interest in or commitment to celebrating and protecting the area’s history.

### ***Informal Strategies Activity (Fort St. John)***

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The following informal strategies were identified as potential ideas for promoting and celebrating community heritage:

Strategy	Description
<b>Youth Engagement</b>	Develop programs and projects that appeal to youth while encouraging participation in the promotion of local heritage. Specific examples included a video and/or photograph documenting project and information sharing between Elders and youth. Utilize existing youth programs such as BC Heritage Fairs (See Web Resources for more information).
<b>Doors Open</b>	(Following the Ontario strategy – see Web Resources for more information) This will be a way for local residents, including youth, to learn more about local heritage and community resources.

**Community  
Engagement**

Develop (or revive) commemorative events like Rendezvous and celebrate anniversaries related to local heritage. This will help to showcase local heritage and spread an awareness and understanding of the value of the community's history.

### ***Alaska Highway Heritage Scope Activity (Fort St. John)***

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The following themes were noted as important to consider when telling the story of the Alaska Highway Corridor cultural landscape:

- Related sites (CANOL and the Northwest Staging Route – the role of transportation)
- Development (economic, opening up of the North, new frontier, access to natural resources)
- Both sides of the story (the positive and negative impacts)
  - Social impacts
  - Cultural impacts
  - Environmental impacts (development and exploitation)
- Changing landscapes
- Community connections
- Life before the highway

Participants reiterated the importance of recognizing and acknowledging the evolution of the Alaska Highway, including the communities, people and places that make up the Corridor. It is important to the communities involved that their stories are told, taking special care to include what life was like before the highway was constructed.

### ***General Themes that Emerged (Fort St. John)***

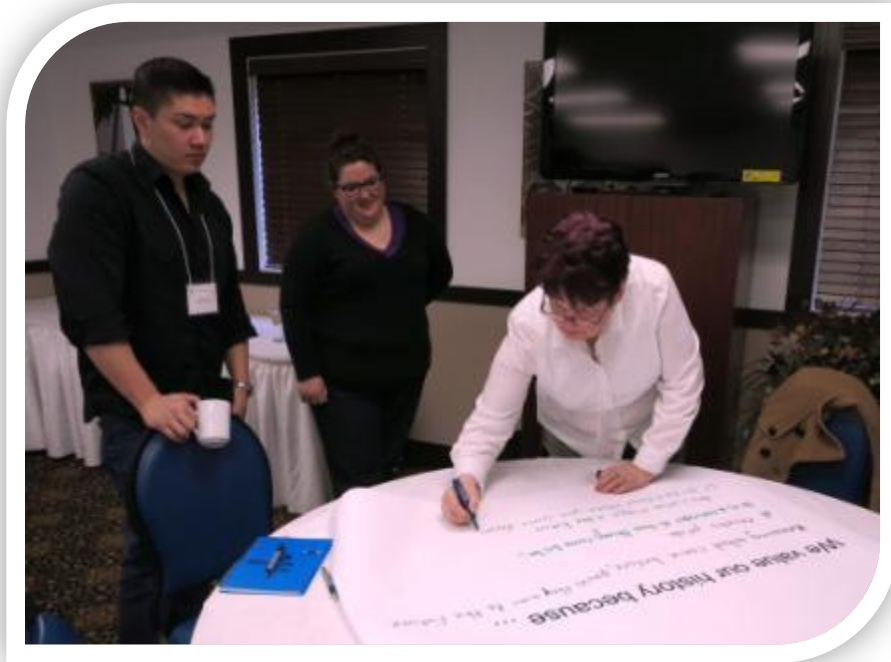
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#### ***Youth Engagement***

Throughout the workshop, participants consistently emphasised the relationship between their history and heritage, and their identity and their community's identity. This fed into the importance placed on making sure the younger generation is educated and encouraged to participate in the celebration of local heritage as they play a vital role in ensuring its protection and continuance for future generations. Creating connections for information sharing, the use of technology, and established youth heritage programs (like BC Heritage Fairs) were suggested as ways that young people could become more integrated in local initiatives.

#### ***Connections and Collaboration***

Participants also stressed the importance of developing connections with other nearby communities, as well as local businesses and organizations in the region in order to generate more opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. However, participants noted on several occasions the need for direction and support (financially and administratively) in determining a unified direction with regard to heritage and related tourism development. Many people believe that, currently, there are too many different organizations working towards their own agendas and this has created a sense of competition rather than cooperation.



## Lessons for the Alaska Highway Heritage Project

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The nomination of the Alaska Highway as a National Historic Site of Canada was considered to be a worthwhile initiative by the people attending the workshops. They provided important insight into issues that need to be addressed for the project to succeed. Questions and discussions indicated, for example, that the AHCS needs to articulate the benefits of commemoration more clearly and demonstrate the steps that local governments, groups and individuals must take to support the nomination. The potential value and importance of Yukon involvement was also noted.

The workshops were purposely structured to ensure that the focus was placed first and foremost on what matters to communities in respect to all types of heritage. In all the workshops, however, it was clear that there are heritage resources among the physical legacies of the highway that communities think are worthy of protection and interpretation. Connections were continuously made to the role the Alaska Highway cultural landscape would play in developing heritage tourism opportunities, thereby reinstating the potential value of the nomination to the area.



## Web Resources Highlighted in the Workshops

### BC Heritage Branch Resources

#### ***BC Heritage Branch***

The BC Heritage Branch has numerous fact sheets available through their website as well as links to important documentation such as the Heritage Conservation Act and other useful websites.

[www.for.gov.bc.ca/heritage/about.htm](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/heritage/about.htm)

#### **BC Heritage Branch Fact Sheets**

<b>Heritage Conservation: A Community Guide</b>	<a href="http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/HC_guide.pdf">www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/HC_guide.pdf</a>
<b>Celebrating Historic Places in Your Community: Getting Started</b>	<a href="http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/Celebrating_Historic_Places-Getting_Started.pdf">www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/Celebrating_Historic_Places-Getting_Started.pdf</a>
<b>Local Government: Beginning Heritage Conservation</b>	<a href="http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/Local_Government-Beginning_Heritage_Planning.pdf">www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/Local_Government-Beginning_Heritage_Planning.pdf</a>
<b>Community Heritage Values</b>	<a href="http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/Community_Heritage_Values.pdf">www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/Community_Heritage_Values.pdf</a>



**BC Register of Historic Places and Canadian Register of Historic Places**

[www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/BCRHP\\_and\\_CHRP.pdf](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/web/BCRHP_and_CHRP.pdf)

**Notations of Interest: Recognizing Heritage Values on Crown Land**

[www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/Web/Notations%20of%20Interest-Recognizing%20Heritage%20Values%20on%20Crown%20Land.pdf](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/ftp/heritage/external/!publish/Web/Notations%20of%20Interest-Recognizing%20Heritage%20Values%20on%20Crown%20Land.pdf)

## Other Resources

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### ***Alaska Highway Heritage Project***

Our website will provide you with more information on the nomination of the Alaska Highway Corridor as a National Historic Site of Canada and how you can get involved.

[www.ouralaskahighway.com](http://www.ouralaskahighway.com)

### ***Heritage BC***

[www.heritagebc.ca](http://www.heritagebc.ca)

Heritage BC is a not for profit organization that advocates for important issues concerning heritage conservation in British Columbia. Its website provides a wealth of resource materials and links about heritage conservation, publications, guides and educational resources.

### ***BC Heritage Fairs***

[www.bcheritagefairs.ca](http://www.bcheritagefairs.ca)

The BC Heritage Fairs Society is dedicated to promoting awareness and understanding of Canadian history and heritage among school-age students. Visit their website to learn more.

### ***Atlas of Canada, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan)***

[atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/index.html](http://atlas.nrcan.gc.ca/site/english/index.html)

This site can be used to view maps and confirm official place names. It is worth exploring.

### ***Doors Open Ontario***

Doors Open was discussed in all three workshops as a possible informal strategy to encourage the celebration of local heritage.

[www.doorsopenontario.on.ca](http://www.doorsopenontario.on.ca)



# Appendix A: Workshop Participants

## Fort Nelson (March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>)

Allison Tubman	Jennifer Coupe	Renee Jamurat
Bev Vandersteen	Kathi Dickie	Sylvia Bramhill
Denise Menard	Marilyn Norby	Theresa Fincaryk
Jasmine Netsena	Marl Brown	
Jaylene Arnold	Mimi Needlay	

## Dawson Creek (March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>)

Anne Haycock	Jill Earl	Roz Golinsky
Bert Goulet	Joyce Lee	Samantha Gibeault
Charles Kux-Kardos	Kit Fast	Tab Young
Cheryl Shuman	Larry White	Thomas Clark
Colleen Groat	Laura Weisgerber	Tim Bennett
Duncan Malkinson	Lauranne Saffran	Tonia Richter
Janet Stevens	Nathan Chiles	Wayne Janowski
Dwight Stevens	Pat Martin	

## Fort St. John (March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>)

Allen Pratt	Evelyn Sim	Lorelei McKenzie
Alveena Acko	Fred Jarvis	Maisie Metecheah
Annette Davis	Gary Oker	Marion Ewasiuk
Barbara Godberson	George Barber	Marylene Lizotte
Brenda Shewfelt	Gilbert Loucks	Mimi Needlay
Bryant Bird	Jean Palmer	Norman Carlson
Cheryl Erickson	Jean Von Hollen	Roger Gregoire
Connie Carlson	Jennifer Moore	Rose Green
Crystal St. Pierre	Joan Patterson	Stephanie Peters
Darryl Johnson	Karen Goodings	Tony Von Hollen
Denise Menard	Karen Aird	Vic Brandl
Dick Van Nostrand	Kelly Miller	Walter Green
Donna Rogers	Larry Evans	Zylpha Alexander
Elinor Morrissey	Lloyd Cushway	