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Visioning refers to how we see these lands being protected, being used, and how we will preserve our history. We know it's where our people lived, and where our families had homes. My grandfather lived in Kaskatamagan and York Factory. He also trapped in Mistikokan Sipi. Our people had relationships to the land, having lived there long ago.

This project is really critical to our people to remain connected to our traditional territory on the coast. Even though there is no major development going on at the coast at this time, there's still activity going on that is regulated by government. We need to work together to protect our traditional territory.

Councillor Louisa Constant, YFFN



SHARING A VISION

“Kitaskeenan” means that it is “all of ours”. “Kitaskeenan Kaweekanawaynichikatek” means “the land we want to protect”. Visioning is something that we all must work together on. Once we have our vision together, it will be our guide for the rest of this project.

Flora Beardy, YFFN

This document contains the shared community vision for the Kitaskeenan Kaweekanawaynichikatek Indigenous Protected Area initiative. The vision has been guided by community members from the 5 Nations who have been part of conversations for this initiative so far, including members from York Factory First Nation, Shamattawa First Nation, Fox Lake Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, and War Lake First Nation. The words shared by community members to form this vision are featured in the following pages so that future generations can read about why protecting this area is so important to the Nayhenaway Ininewuk and all those residing on Askiy.

This project was guided by our Elders to ensure that preparing the vision was not rushed. Over two years were spent having conversations with community members of all ages about their vision for Kitaskeenan Kaweekanawaynichikatek. Many quotes were recorded, and those we obtained permission from are featured in this first edition of the Vision Document. We will continue to learn from community members as we move forward in protecting our shared lands.

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ISSINUMOWIN

Kayas, otay otanak, kapay ke paychimatisehekowuk aniskay otawemawuk, ooma kitaskeenan aye ke pimitisinayhakik tipinaway owanusowaywiniwow, okiskinohamakaywiniwow, ayekomenaIninewotisischikaywinewawuk. Keenanan, Nayhenaway Ininewuk, ki kiskaynitaynan ooma. Mache aye ke mamenischik kakinow otaniskay pimatisuk, mena otaniskay pimatisuk, ooma kiskaynitamowin. Kakinow kaykon ka itakok ootah uskeek ka-key-paywanustamakoyuk Kischi Manitou. Aye ko ke kanawaynitamok ooko aniskay otawemawuk. Ahsah ispano, kakinow keenanan anoosch ootah kapimatiseyuk kestanan ka ati kanawaynitamuk ooma uskey.

Ooma kitaskeenan, ka kemenokosiuk kichawasiminanuk ooschi, achemowin ustayo ka ke pimotahekokoyuk ootanak mena kah ooscheyuk. Ooma negani issinumowin wunastaniwun kapay ka kanawaynichikatek kitaskeenan



OUR VISION

Our ancestors for millennia have been sustained by Kitaskeenan – our land, following their traditional laws, teachings, and practices. We, the Nayhenaway Ininewuk – the Cree People – know this because this knowledge was passed down orally from generation to generation. Askiy and all that it holds is our legacy from the Creator and was cared for by our ancestors. It is now our turn to protect it.

Kitaskeenan is a gift to our children that carries their histories, language, and identities. Our vision is to protect Kitaskeenan Kanatenihtakwuk – our sacred land – by following the ways of our ancestors to conserve, preserve and honour all of Askiy that the Creator provided. Protecting this land will play a major role in the survival of our culture and language.

We will work together to create a protected area in our shared homelands. The Kitaskeenan Kaweekanawaynichikatek initiative will be Ininewuk-led, guided by traditional laws and the wisdom of our elders, youth, and knowledge keepers.

The Five Nations will have equal representation and responsibility in protecting Kitaskeenan Kaweekanawaynichikatek.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guided by our ancestors, Elders, and our lived experiences, we recognize the following main guiding principles:

◇◇◇ **THE LAND IS SACRED – IT SUSTAINS US**

Given to us by the Creator, we are stewards of the land and have responsibilities to protect Askiy and all that it holds; to live in reciprocity.

◇◇◇ **WE MUST WORK TOGETHER AS NAYHENAWAY INNINEWUK**

Originally one people, we unite to gain strength in protecting our shared homelands.

◇◇◇ **WE HONOUR OUR ANCESTORS AND ELDERS AND RECOGNIZE OUR YOUTH AS THE FUTURE**

Our young people must be prepared and empowered to protect Kitaskeenan.

◇◇◇ **WE ARE GUIDED BY OUR BELIEFS, VALUE SYSTEMS AND TRADITIONAL LAWS**

These are the original laws of this land that guide our responsibilities to it.

◇◇◇ **WE RECOGNIZE OUR ORIGINAL HISTORIES AND CREE LANGUAGE AS CENTRAL TO OUR IDENTITIES**

Our youth must learn who they are and where they come from.

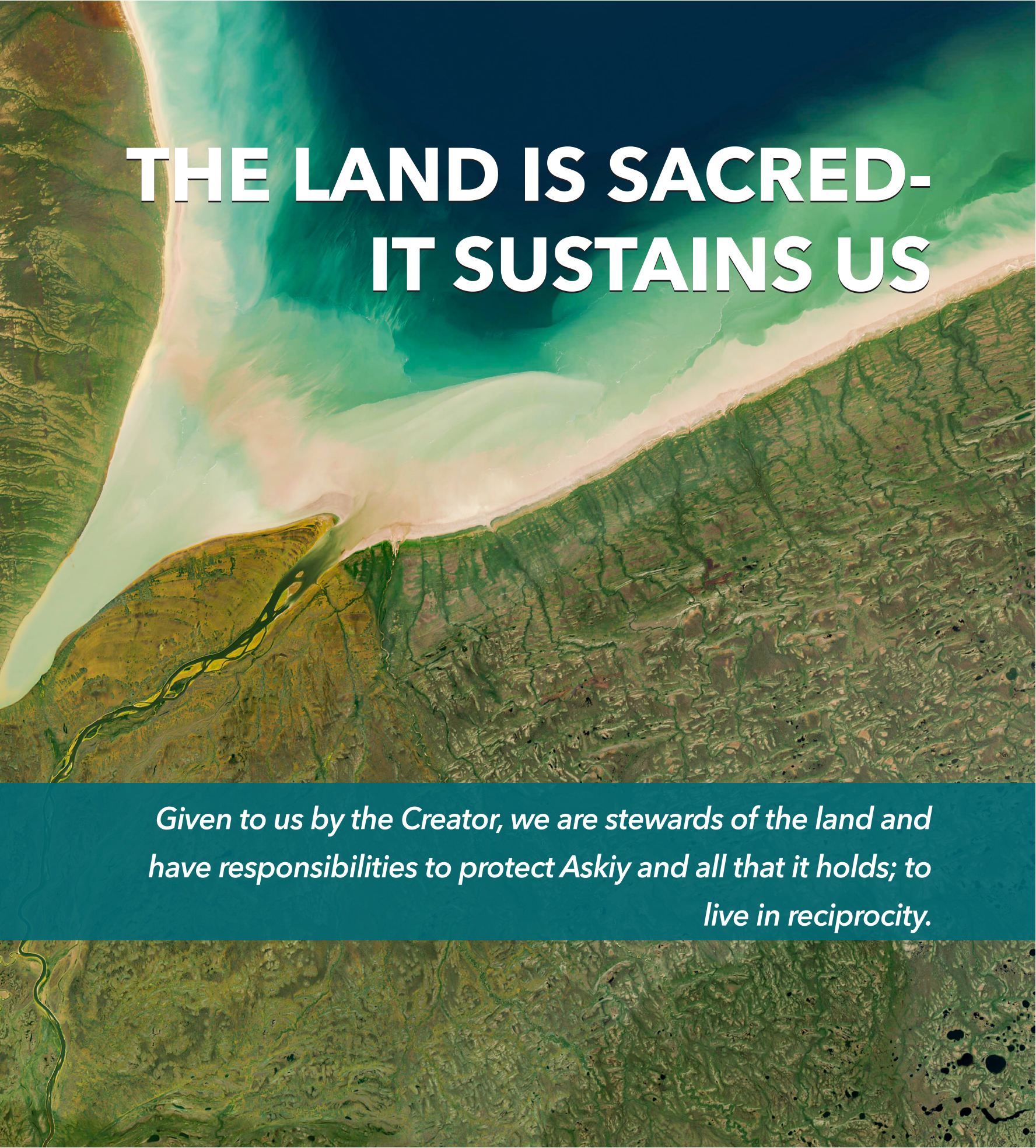
◇◇◇ **WE NEED TO BE/LIVE ON THE LAND TO KNOW IT**

Our presence and interactions on the land help us build relationship to Askiy and be its guardian.

◇◇◇ **WE HEAL WHEN WE CONNECT BACK TO THE LAND**

Going back to the land helps us connect with our ancestors and heal from colonization.



An aerial photograph of a river delta, showing a large body of water branching into smaller channels. The land is a mix of green and brown, indicating vegetation and bare earth. A semi-transparent teal overlay covers the top half of the image, where the main title is placed.

THE LAND IS SACRED- IT SUSTAINS US

Given to us by the Creator, we are stewards of the land and have responsibilities to protect Askiy and all that it holds; to live in reciprocity.





Askiy and all that it holds is our legacy from the Creator and was cared for by our ancestors. It is now our turn to protect it.

Flora Beardy, YFFN



In our treaty area, the Elders always told us **the land is sacred to every one of us**. That our people were put here to look after it, to keep it clean. The waters are sacred and give us life.

Mary Beardy, FLCN

When we don't use the land [for development], it means it's thriving. It's filled with animals. It's filled with our fish. And everything that we have is good. That is why we live here. People say 'how do you guys live in isolation?' And **we say 'this is our world'**. There we thrive. We may struggle with things but still, we are here. **We will always be here.**

Eli Hill, SFN



Ask the Creator to help guide us. **We have a responsibility to the Creator and the land.** We must share knowledge with each other. We need one voice for protection of territories. Sovereignty is important.

Bishop Isaiah Larry Johnson Beardy, TCN

Protect it so in the future there will be no world starvation and extinction.

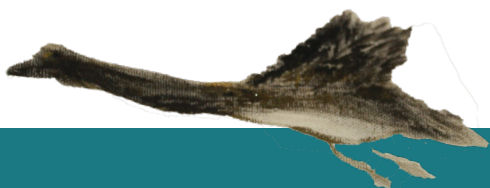
Daniel Beardy, 13, WLFN

The people and the land are one. We believe that we should protect the land.

Chief Morris Beardy, FLCN

We need to protect the lands and waters for the people. But not only people, for the animals, birds and fish we harvest. Plants also. **The survival of our people will depend on living off the land.** If there are no areas set aside for us, then why are we even bothering to pass the knowledge on to the next generations if they have no lands and waters to harvest and gather off.

Darcy Wastesicoot, YFFN







We have the caribou coming at times to the community. We have heard that people are going out hunting in the area. We shouldn't just be tracking herds in our resource area. Caribou are coming in from the North and from Ontario. We watch all resources that come to our area (not just in our resource area). We have to **protect the animals that are both inside and outside of our zone.**

Chief Betsy Kennedy, WLFN



Born at Kettle River, MB (East towards the Ontario border), I've lived off the land most of my life. **Our people in the past were sustained by this land**, by the food, water, medicines, clean air. I've lived and worked where I've seen destruction being done to the land. We need to protect it for future generations. The habitat has been destroyed by dams and other projects: mining and logging. This has to stop. I've seen the land when it was undisturbed, clean, pristine. I've canoed and drank water from the rivers. Today that is not possible. The fish are inedible where I live, a legacy left by Manitoba Hydro. **By all the Nations working together we can protect our land from further destruction.** In time the land will heal itself then the future generations can enjoy it.

Edwin Beardy, YFFN

Both of my parents were born in York Factory and relocated to Churchill in the 1950's. My father was a skilled hunter and trapper and my mother was very good at sewing and making mitts and mukluks from moose or caribou hides. From a very young age I was taught how to hunt and trap. **All my life I've been using the land** for a variety of things. I love the challenge of hunting; it's physically demanding but very rewarding. My son has learned the skill of hunting and my grandson is learning also. I hope it continues in a graceful sharing way. Fishing was also a big part.

Roy McPherson, Churchill (YFFN)





animals by water

The people and the land are one... My vision for our land is that there is no more destruction to our lands. I was born at Whitefish Lake (fish camp) many moons ago. Grew up in Shamattawa. I remember all our camping trips, living off the land. I was taught a lot of skills by my parents, grandparents. Today I still know how to clean the animals that my son traps and sells to fur auctions. I'm also teaching my great granddaughter to count to 10 in Cree, my children understand Cree but can't speak it.

Councillor Sophie Lockhart, FLCN





If I start developing there, my meat is not going to be there. My fish is not going to be there. That's why we are still here – and that is why we are still at this table – to protect our lands, our territories... As a hunter, I am not defined by where I can hunt. I go where the food is.

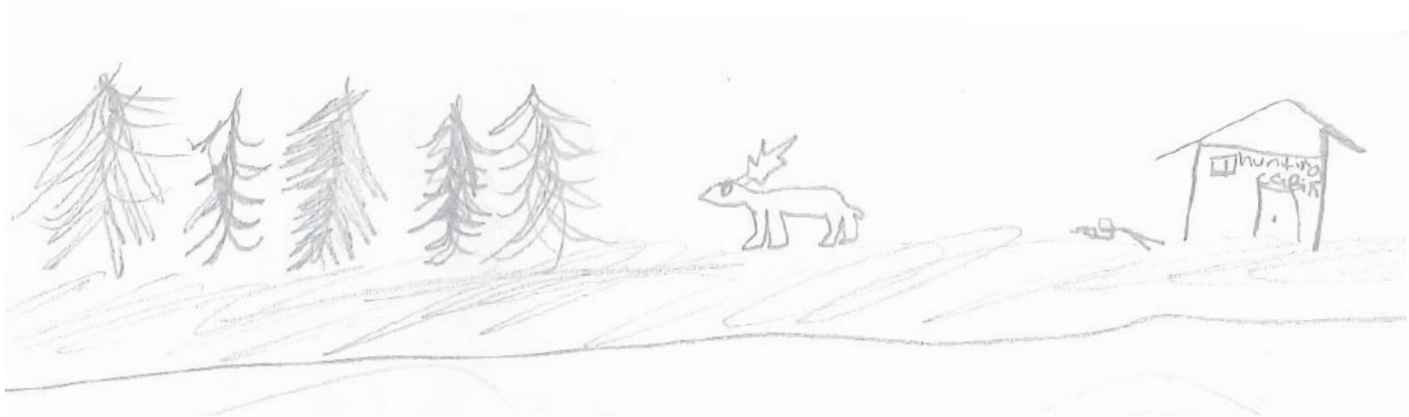
Eli Hill, SFN



Everything has a spirit (Askiy - all the land, water, wind, fire, plants, animals, life), and this is proved through our Ininewak language (animate/inanimate descriptions of our relations & environment). **We are stewards of the land and have responsibilities to Askiy...** We Indigenous people have an obligation to Mother Earth. We are known as Askiy Okanawaynichikaywuk: Keepers/stewards of the land.

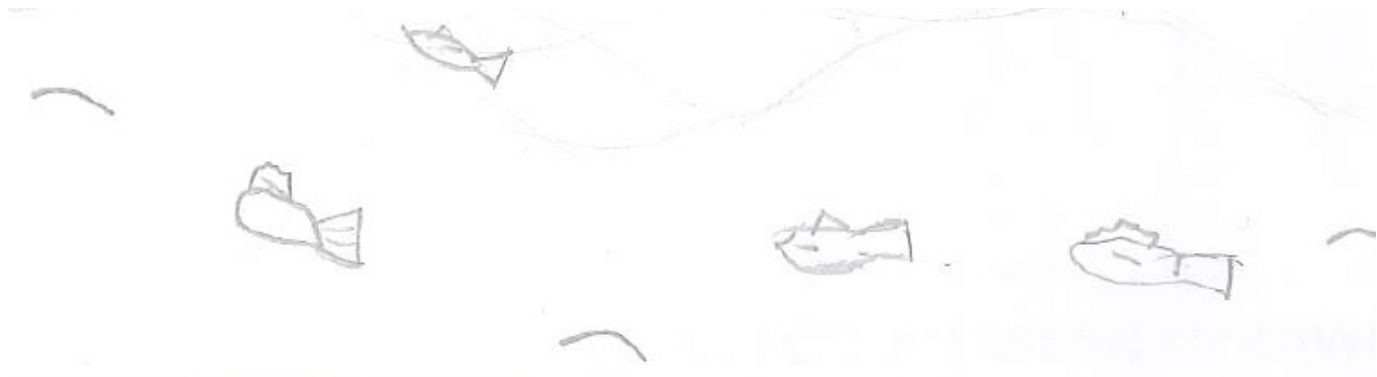


Flora Beardy, YFFN



“Looking after our land” is almost a mission statement. We have a mission statement for our Fox Lake Cree Nation Resource Management Area – **All the land** within the Fox Lake territory **is sacred and important** and should be preserved and protected for our future generations – so the generations that are to come can have a land base to use for their cultural activities.

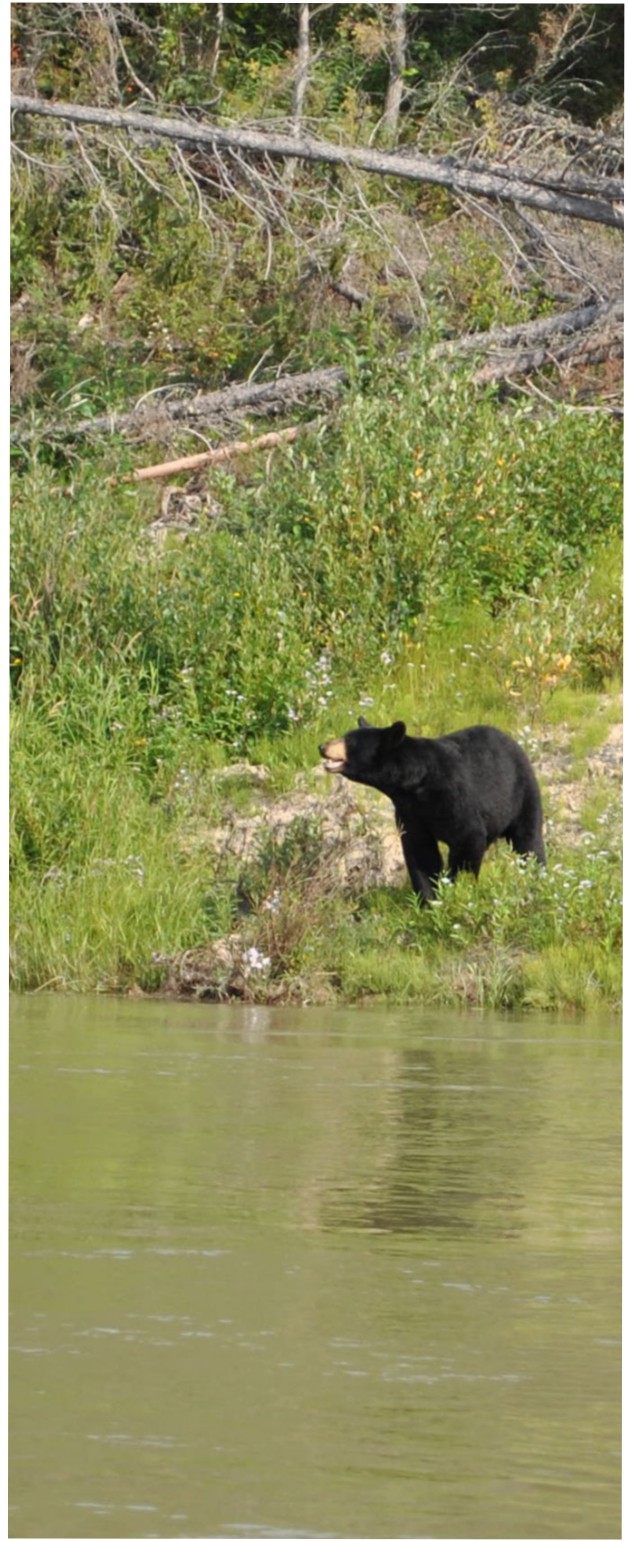
Mary Beardy, FLCN



I went into this lake, off the side of the river. And you should have seen the size of those Jumbos (jumbo whitefish). They were good fish. You can't find fish like that now. But the thing was, I've seen that. I experienced it. And I want the future generation to experience that, to have that. That's why I always protect the York Factory area. Not for economic development or any kind of development. **I want to protect it for the future Nation.**

Jimmy Beardy, YFFN

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Our cultures no longer move around on the land. For hunting, we usually fly in planes to get to locations and do not stay on the land for long periods of time. The way we relate to the land has changed. Our Elders knew how to go trapping for months, how to survive on the land. ***Our people never owned the land,*** but we need the land to survive into the future.

Dave Sanderson

We need to teach the young hunters the harvest techniques that are needed. There are many stories of over-kills. **Part of protection is protecting the animals.**



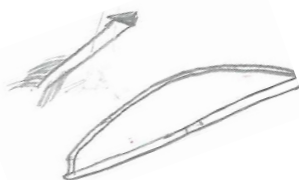
Mary Beardy, FLCN

My family used to travel all over and every place we camped, we didn't just leave, we cleaned up and burned the waste. And I know a lot of people just leave it like that... they don't clean up their camp.



Edwin Beardy, YFFN

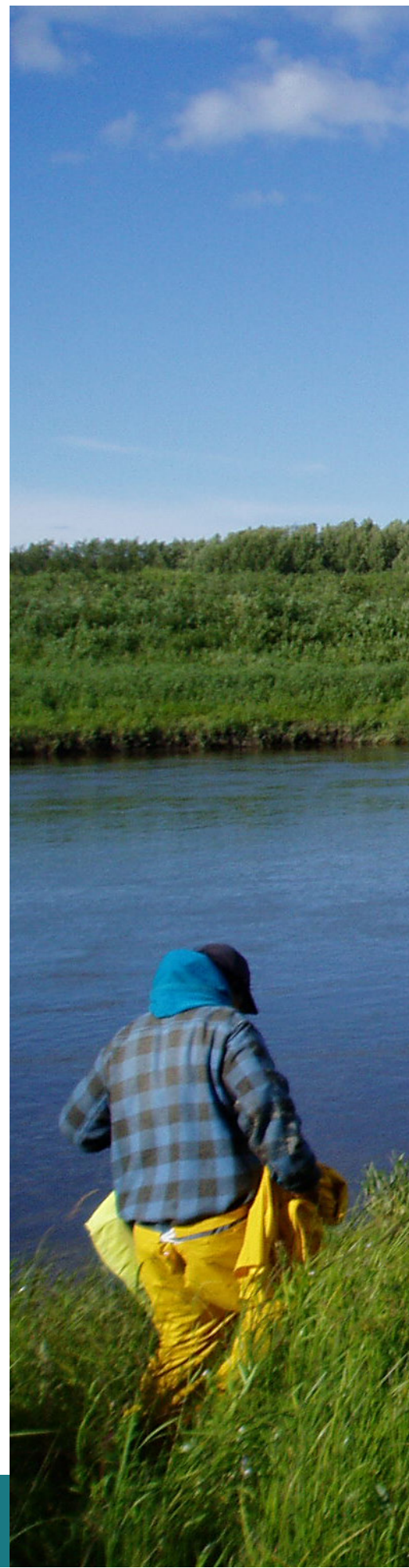
I seriously envision that **we have to give something back to the land for our future.** For those unborn - children and grandchildren.



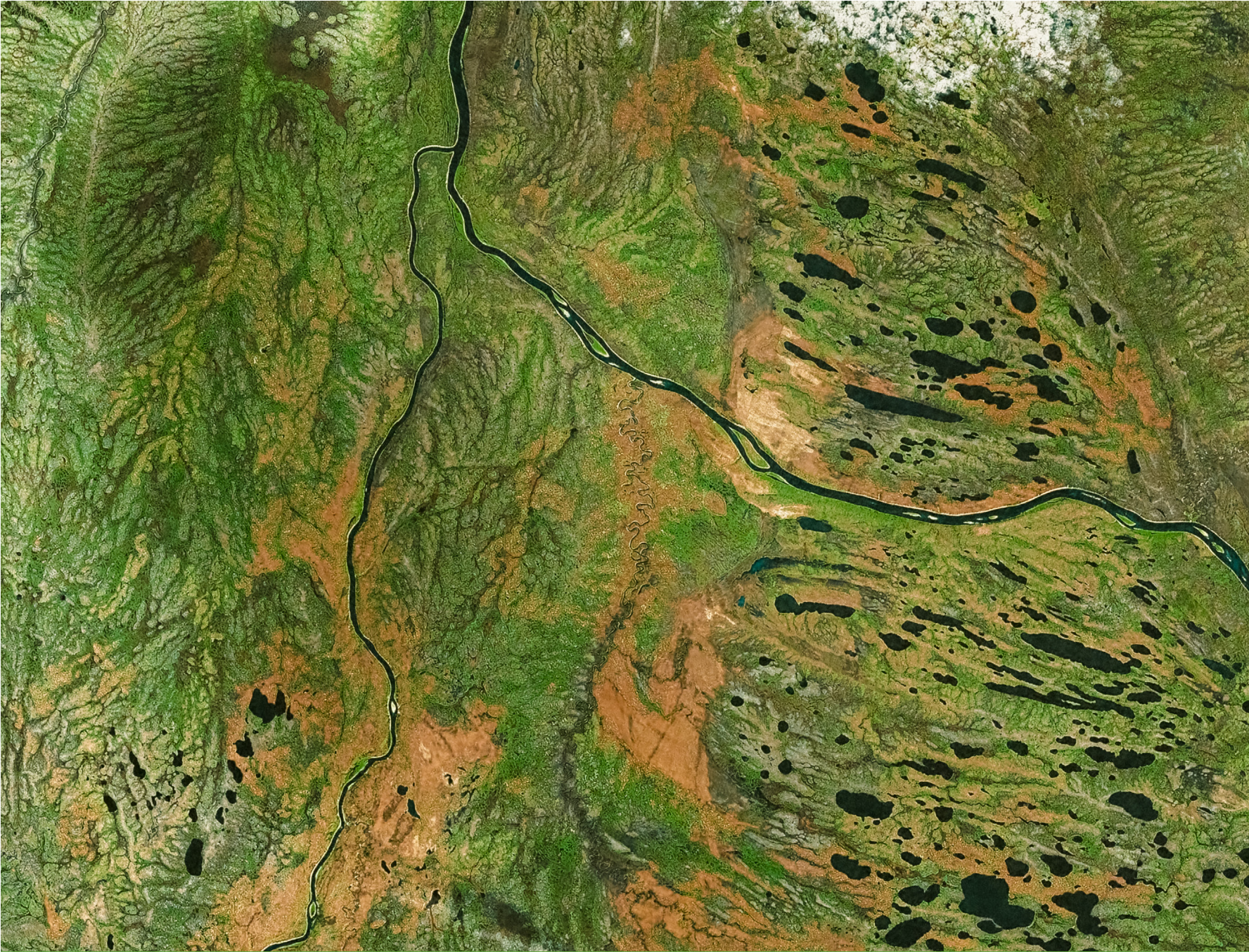
Chief Morris Beardy, FLCN

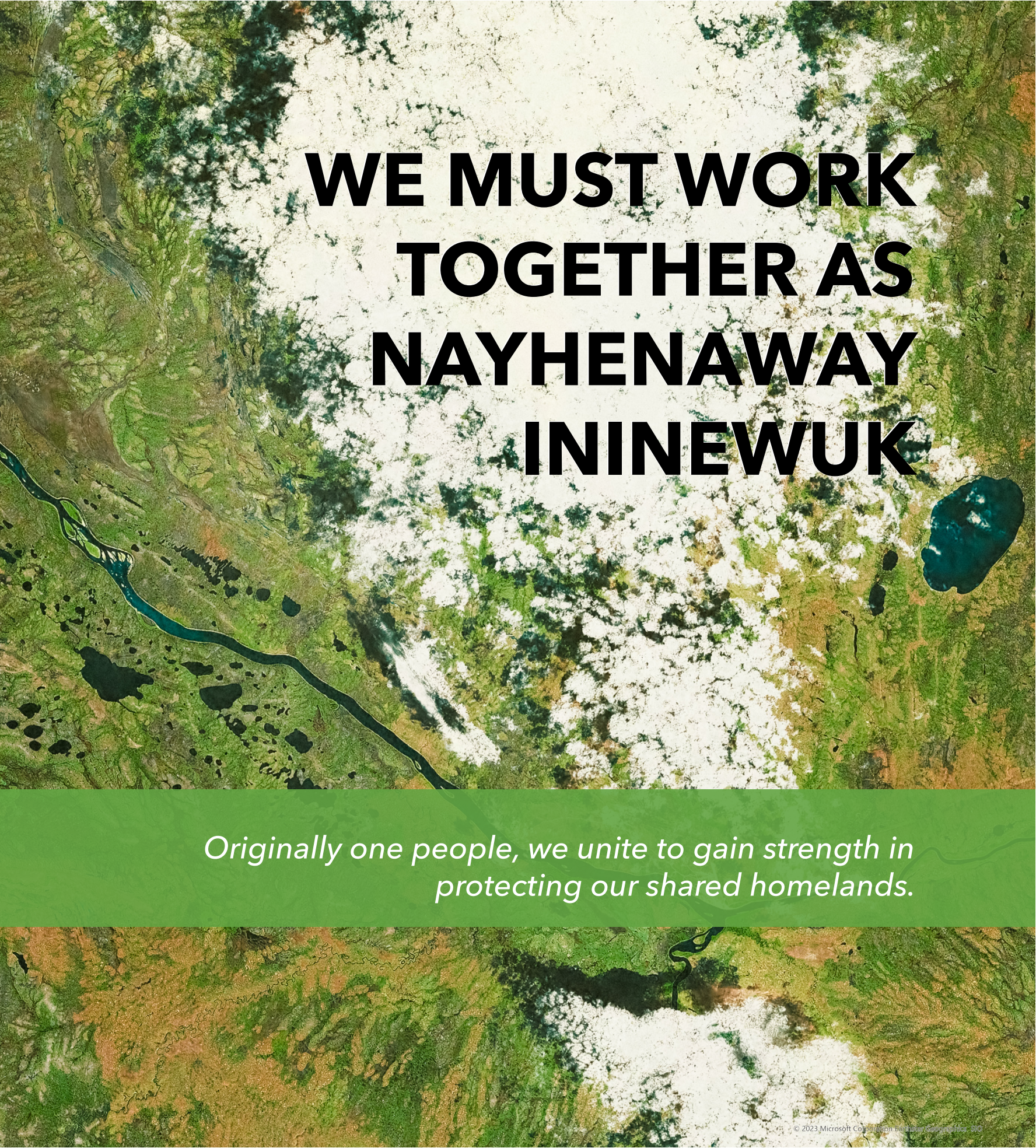
I think it's important that we protect as much as we can, because once it's gone, we'll never be able to get it back. **We need to let the area heal.** That means that we need to do our job as stewards of the land and protect it as our ancestors left it for us.

Conway Arthurson, FLCN








An aerial photograph of a lush, green landscape. A winding river flows through the center-left of the frame. To the right, there is a large, dark blue body of water. The terrain is a mix of vibrant green vegetation and lighter, possibly rocky or sandy areas. The overall scene is bright and natural.

WE MUST WORK TOGETHER AS NAYHENAWAY ININEWUK

*Originally one people, we unite to gain strength in
protecting our shared homelands.*





I was watching a documentary the other day: The Five Arrows...You got one arrow, you can break it easily... Five together is hard to break. I think we can work together on some of these issues that we have, but I thought about how there are five arrows and there are five of us Cree Nations. We put all of those arrows together, they can't break. I truly believe that ***if we work together, we can protect this area.***

Chief Morris Beardy, FLCN

Even though we are all divided by a treaty number, we're all coming together. ***We all have a [shared] history...*** our land is protection for the future.

Councillor Nathan Neckoway, TCN

We've got to figure our way as five First Nations... ***we can only do it by respecting each other, trusting each other, and working together.***

Flora Beardy, YFFN



I truly believe that, you know, if we continue to meet like this on a regular basis, we will make progress, we will become stronger. And we will be able to dictate, you know, who comes to our communities and when that happens. Any development that comes knocking on our door we all got to be involved. We have a set of protocols and we need to move forward in a collective way... **work together so that we can be stronger.**

Conway Arthurson, FLCN





Even though we are five First Nations, we should all come together at some point in the future as one Nation, rather than five individual Nations. We all have our territories, our traditional territories. We overlap each other's. **We should consider that we are all one Nation.** It's good that we are looking at protecting our territories.

Councillor Wayne Redhead, YFFN



We have such a vast territory that hasn't been touched. And we know that it hasn't been touched. And this is the area that we need to protect, this land we need to protect. And this is where we sit together and say 'No more!' Mistigosiwak cannot come into our area... on our land. We need to be **one mind, one body, one voice.**

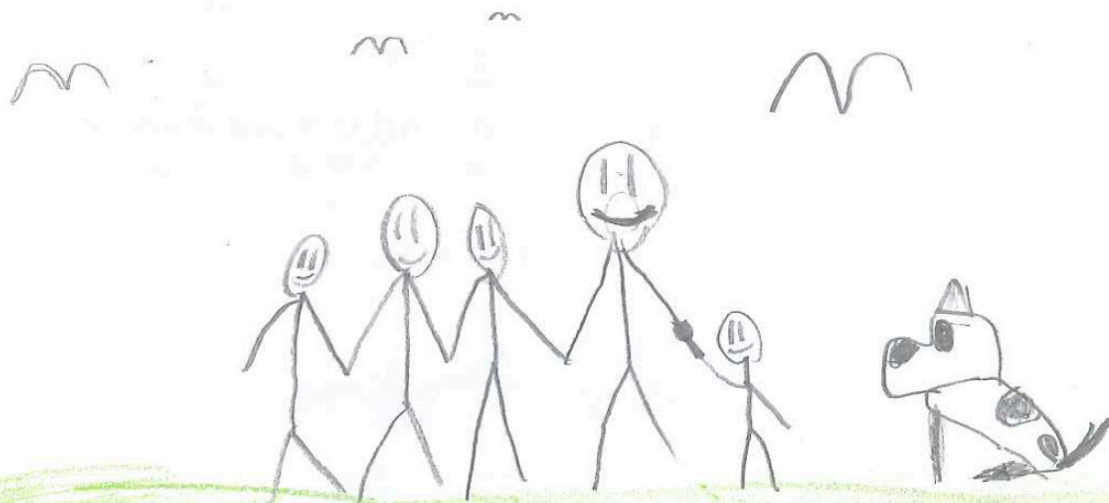
Councillor George Beardy, YFFN

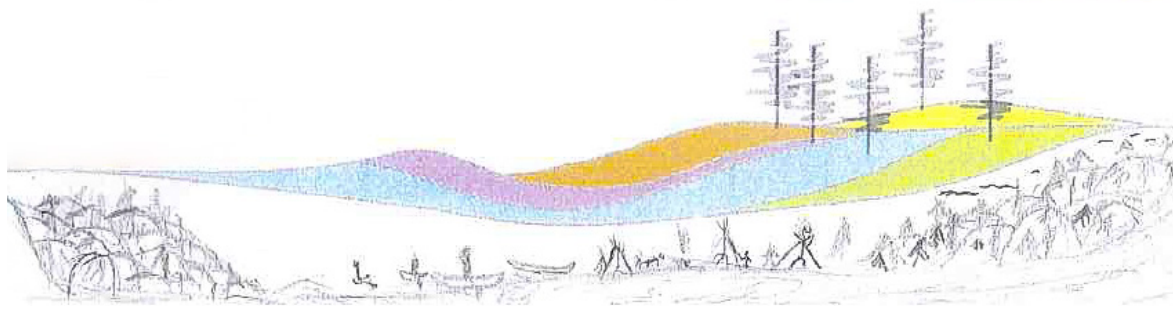




My vision is for the people to come together and work together. There is no place for future generations to provide for themselves, to follow the seasons. We need land-based healing and teachings, especially for children in a school setting. The caribou are being overkilled. I would like to see and teach respect for our food sources and save these teachings for the next generation.

Mary Beardy, FLCN





I'm hoping that we're able to support the unity approach to basically protect what we need to protect in the future for all our communities. ***If we come together as First Nations we can do more and implement more.*** We can be stronger.

Councillor Nathan Neckoway, TCN

I believe ***we could protect the whole area.*** Each Nation could take a portion of the protected area to look after.



Mary Beardy, FLCN

We have to think for our people. It doesn't involve just the leadership, ***it involves all of the people that we work for, we live with.***

Jimmy Beardy, YFFN





It was mentioned **everybody being related, and we are**, and it was government that separated us when we signed treaty.

Conway Arthurson, FLCN



We need to work together in order to move things ahead.

Bennet Redhead, SFN



In the past, we all advocated on our own for our Nations. Now **coming together to unite our Nations** to create a model to protect our area is very important.

Councillor Nathan Neckoway, TCN



I think it would be good if **all of our Nations compiled a list of areas of interest together** – maybe archaeological, fish, or any other studies they would want to engage in – and come up with a map with areas, and collect existing studies or redo the studies again.

The late Abraham Beardy, FLCN

We still hunt and trap and get food from the river, from the land. Right now, today, every day. And that's going to be affected when these developments happen. So I think that is why it's important for us to **get together and make a stronger voice** to stop these developments happening in our area.



William Miles, SFN

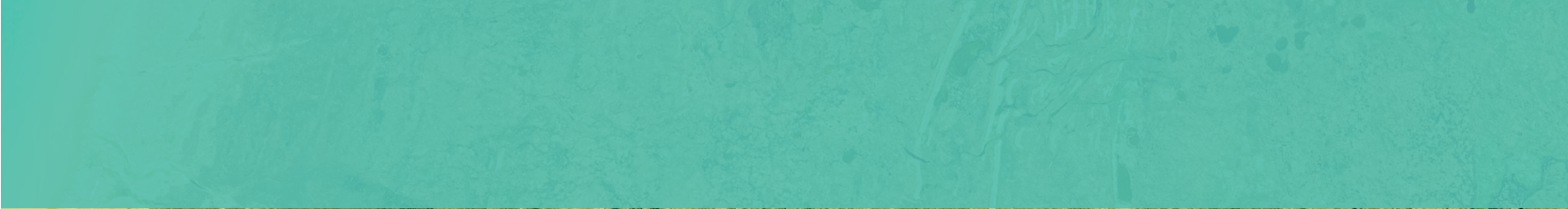
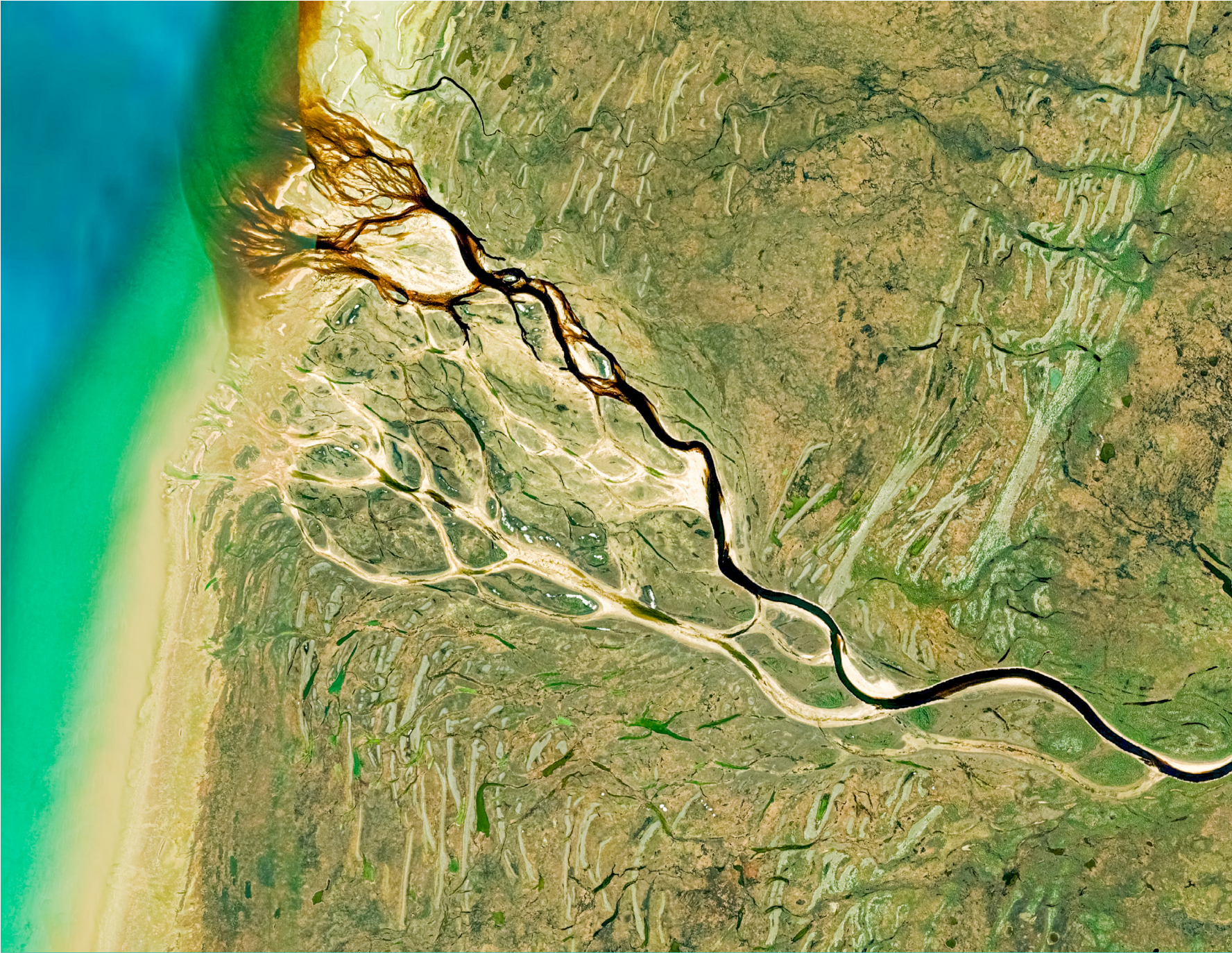


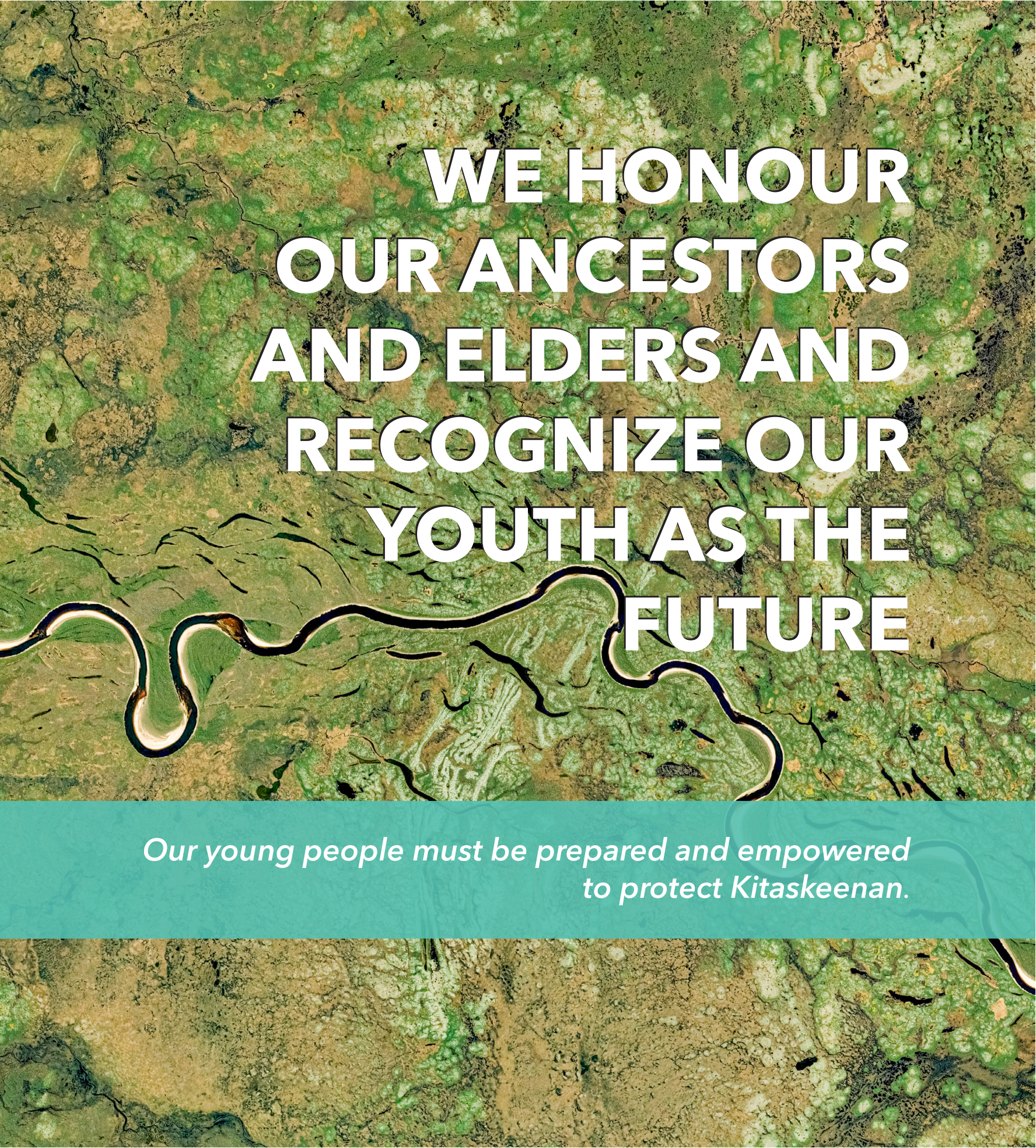
How can the Nations work together overall, to govern this land? If industry comes knocking at your door, you have a kind of body that can talk about those as a collective, because what happens in one piece of your land, doesn't necessarily not impact other parts.

Kirsten Earl McCorrister (KEM Consulting)







An aerial photograph of a winding river, likely the Kitsekeenan River, flowing through a lush, green, and textured landscape. The river is dark and meanders across the terrain, which is covered in dense vegetation and has a mottled appearance. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

**WE HONOUR
OUR ANCESTORS
AND ELDERS AND
RECOGNIZE OUR
YOUTH AS THE
FUTURE**

*Our young people must be prepared and empowered
to protect Kitsekeenan.*





Youth have been left out for too long from too many things. It's time to make them part of the work that we're doing because this project will take a long time. **The youth will be the ones continuing this work.** You'll be the stewards of the land one day. It's good to know that you're interested in protecting the land so that you will have something there for your children and your grandchildren.

Flora Beardy, YFFN

We need to protect our land for our children. To live in a better future than where we are now so that they are not forgotten. It is a better place to live than living in the city.

Verna Flett, WLFN



We have to teach the youth about the land, how to live off the land. All the stories of our ancestors. They need to know this for **the youth are the future guardians.**

Edwin Beardy, YFFN



Kanawaynichikewin – Keeping of the land, living with the lands and waters. The ceremony means **honouring & acknowledging the Elders that lived before us**. We have been in our territory for thousands of years. Individuals are kept by the people; people are kept by the land. We must be kind (kisewatisewin) to the land.

Dave Sanderson



As you know from our history the women are the caregivers of the community and they are the ones that picked the Chiefs and guided them and helped them and trained them to become leaders of their community. **The real experts [of traditional law] are the older women in each community.** They are the real experts and it's time we utilized them.

Mary Beardy, FLCN



We all need to look at and understand what our ancestors did in the past, and what we want to do together in the future. What do we want to protect, and what do we want to protect those lands from? We need to do our land-use planning, visioning, research, and governing. We will govern based on what our Elders (ancestors) used to do and integrate with already designated protections. We are doing this work for future generations.

Councillor Louisa Constant, YFFN

Our people have the knowledge needed to do this project. **We need to teach our children and grandchildren to be out on the land.** We need to teach them what big companies bring to the land: big projects bring big changes. First Nations need to be fully involved and informed on any big project activities or plans. Our youth want to go to York Factory and Churchill to learn the history.

Chief Betsy Kennedy, WLFN

All my life I wanted to protect that northeast territory for the future generation... I'm not here to open it up, **I'm here to protect it so our future generations can enjoy what we had.** Even as a young man I have always wanted to protect the York Factory area for the future generations.

Jimmy Beardy, YFFN







Little kids like three or four years old five years old at our gatherings, culture camps, goose camps and all that stuff, we take them for walks and they always have a lot of questions.



The late Abraham Beardy, FLCN

The land has family histories. There is spirit over there that we need to connect with. We need to connect with our ancestors, we need to connect with our histories. Learn about our responsibilities to land, water, animals, diversity.

Robben Constant, YFFN

Our elders have always told us not to rush into doing things – to take our time. Because if you do, there's bound to be mistakes that you can't correct... or that you can't even correct for a long time.

Flora Beardy, YFFN





I would like to encourage each one of you to keep up the fight, whatever little we have left. **Our great grandchildren are depending on you** people to fight for them, even though they don't know it yet.

Bennet Redhead, SFN



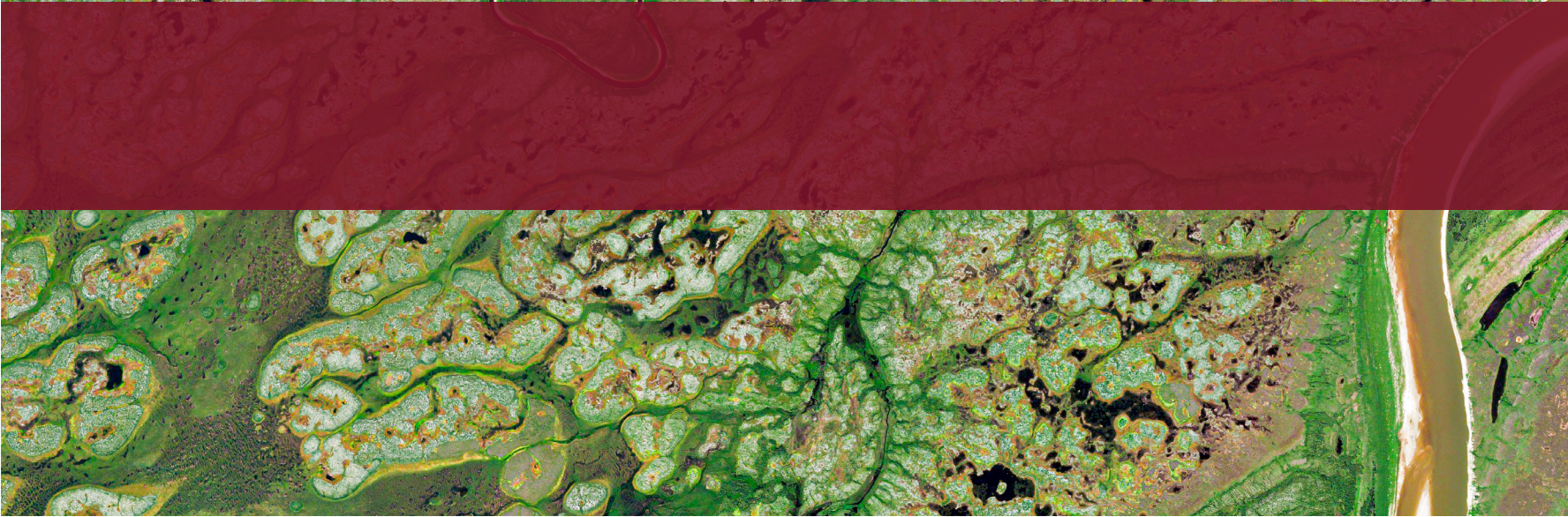
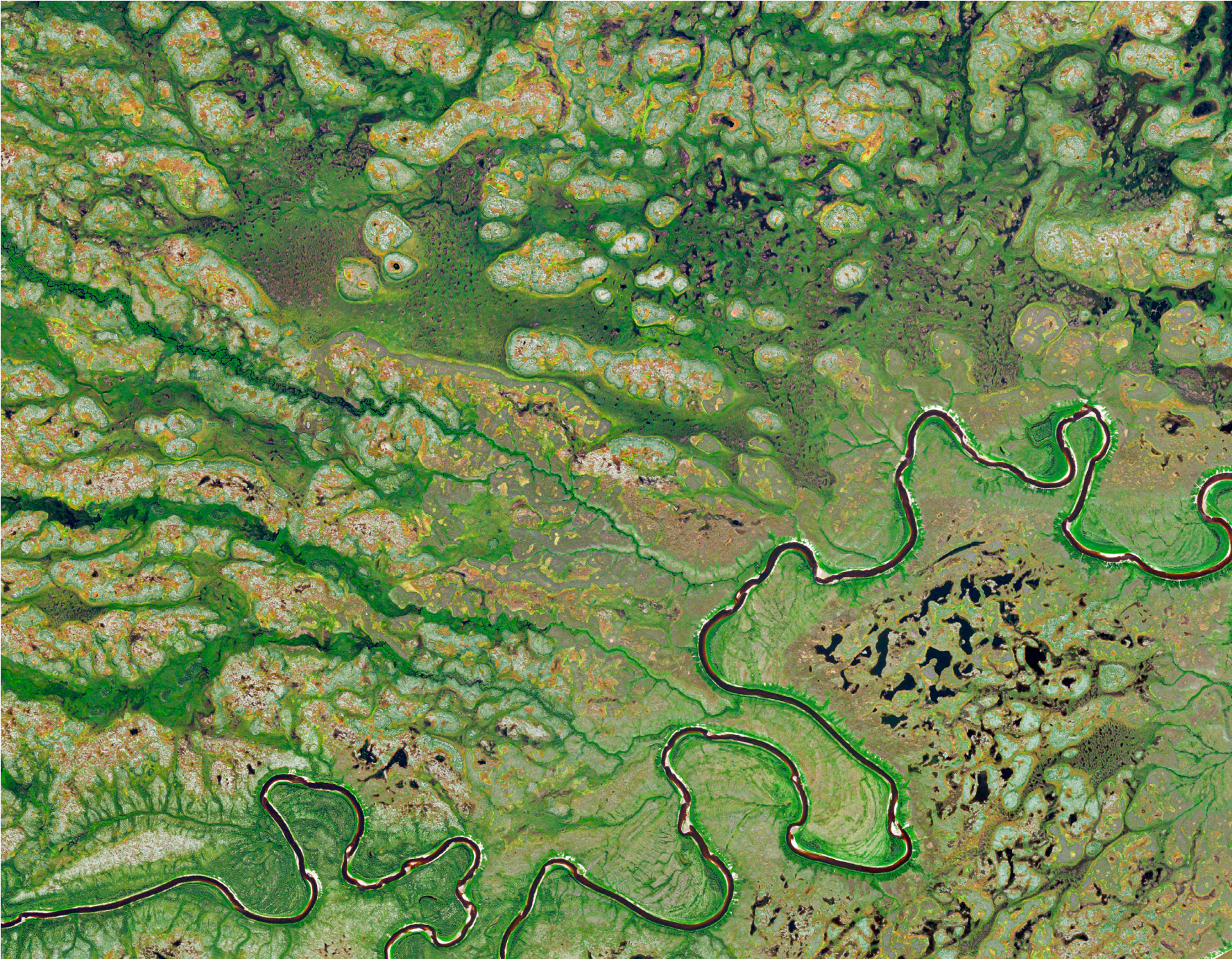
This is where our home is. **This will always be home even to the future generation.** My grandkids will be here. We must look after & protect it!

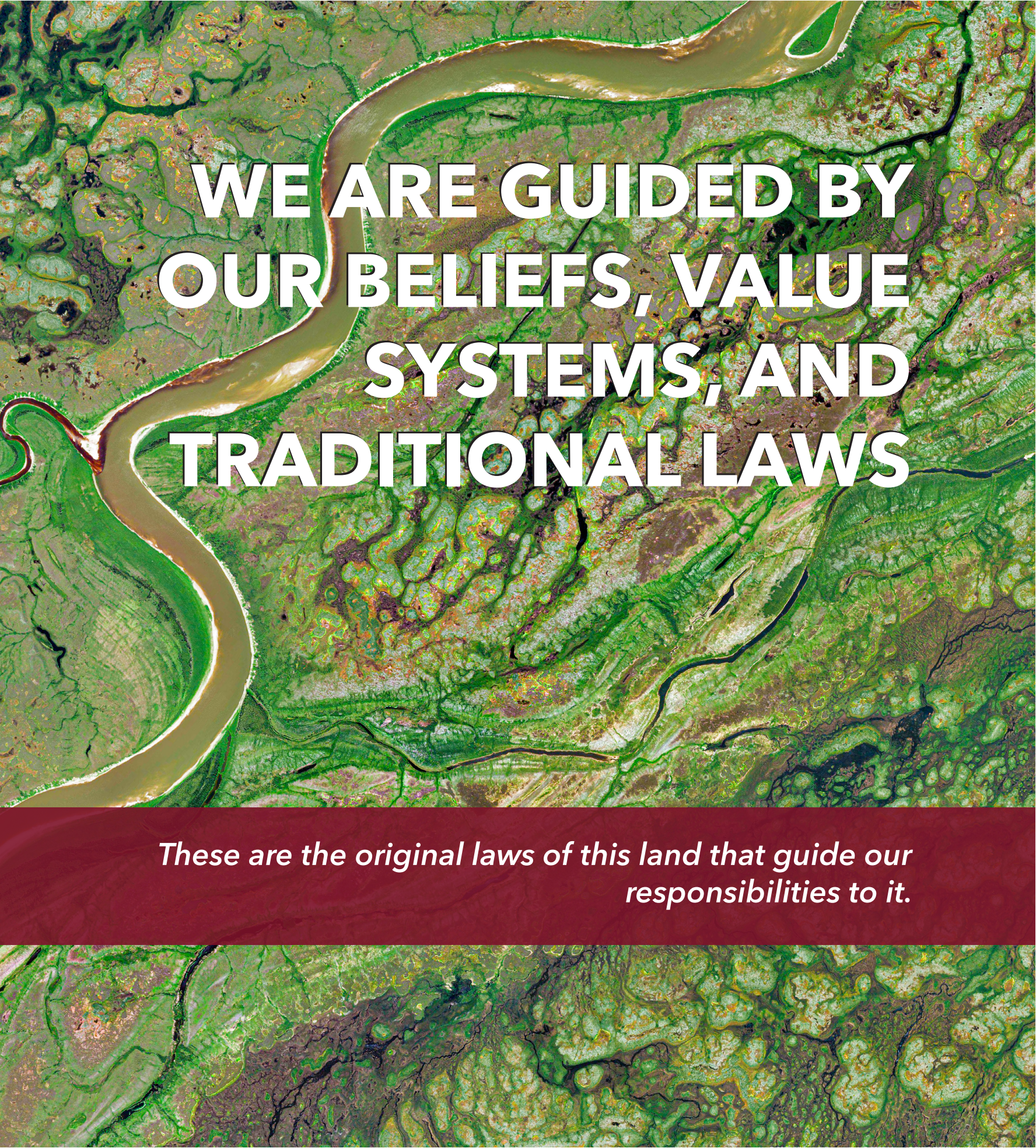
Elisa Redhead, YFFN

We are at the end of the water flow, with poisoned and contaminated waters coming from the south, which is why **we have to protect the territory to benefit the future.** I am very supportive of trying to protect these lands for the future of our children.



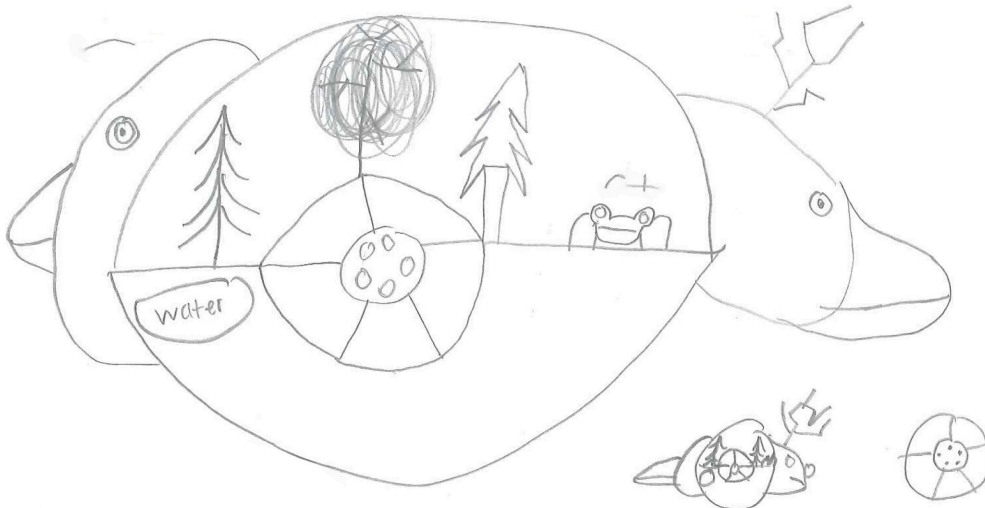
Councillor Nathan Neckoway, TCN



An aerial photograph of a wide, winding river with a light brownish-green hue, meandering through a dense, vibrant green forest. The terrain is uneven, with various shades of green and brown, suggesting a natural, undisturbed environment. The river flows from the top right towards the bottom left, with several sharp turns.

WE ARE GUIDED BY OUR BELIEFS, VALUE SYSTEMS, AND TRADITIONAL LAWS

These are the original laws of this land that guide our responsibilities to it.





I think the first part of our visioning should be ***our beliefs, value systems, and traditional laws.***

Mary Beardy, FLCN

We should govern with our own laws. We may need to seek legal advice. We need to develop a plan for handling sacred sites, burial grounds, and title to lands.



Bishop Isaiah Larry Johnson Beardy, TCN

I am happy and honoured to be a part of this. Protecting our people, culture, and land is very important to me. I am pleased to see this happening, for however long it takes.

Candy Laliberty, WLFN



We are honourable people, the Cree Nations.

We still honour what has been broken so many times. We still celebrate what has been broken, what has been lifeless, because we honor the Treaty – but the government has not.

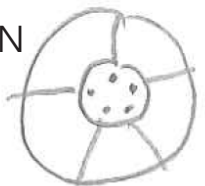


Eli Hill, SFN



The traditional teachings are laws: Laws in relationships (kinship) – how to look after animals, birds, plants, all life, and where they are; Laws with the lands, waters – harvesting properly. That’s how our ancestors ran their lives, and looked after the land and had knowledge of the land and resources.

Flora Beardy, YFFN

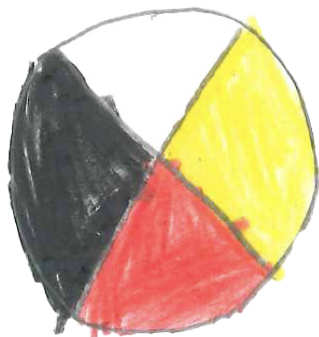


Jurisdictional issues and traditional laws are important, as our ancestors had a plan of living, they were not just nomads. They were able to live off the land. **Our laws have worked for thousands of years.** We are educated, able to plan, and are moving forward.



Conway Arthurson, FLCN





When we protect our land, we have to start first at the home base – our reserves and homes. We need to talk to the young people, the hunters, trappers, resource users not to over-kill. That's part of our natural laws. **Only take what you need, and share.**

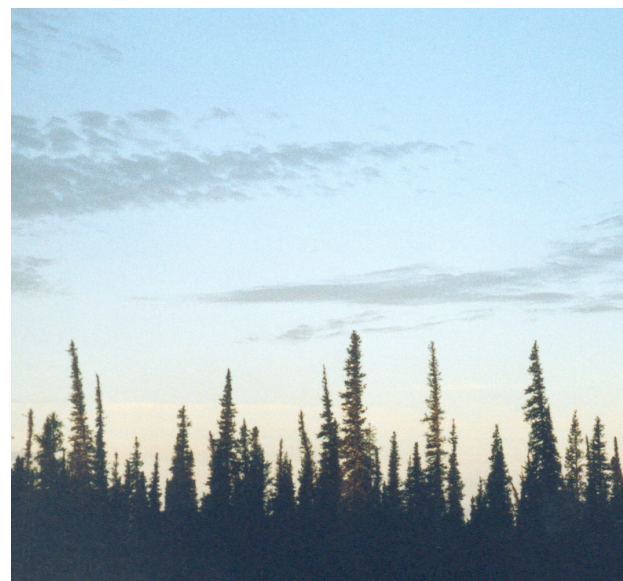
Mary Beardy, FLCN

We need a model for protection based on traditional use... We need to work on this now. We need to get youth and families accessing their lands again, to continue the practices.

Councillor Nathan Neckoway, TCN

We believe **everything on earth has a spirit.** Protection is very important, to keep what we have so future generations can experience and enjoy its beauty.

Flora Beardy, YFFN





Every community (the Five Nations) in here is governed by water. ***The water is protected by law...*** I take pride in my heritage (ancestry) and my culture.

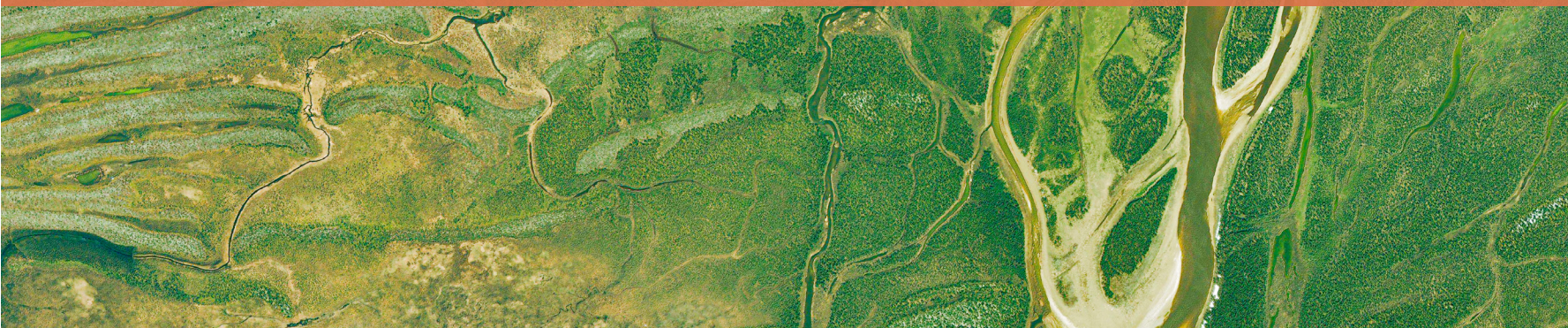
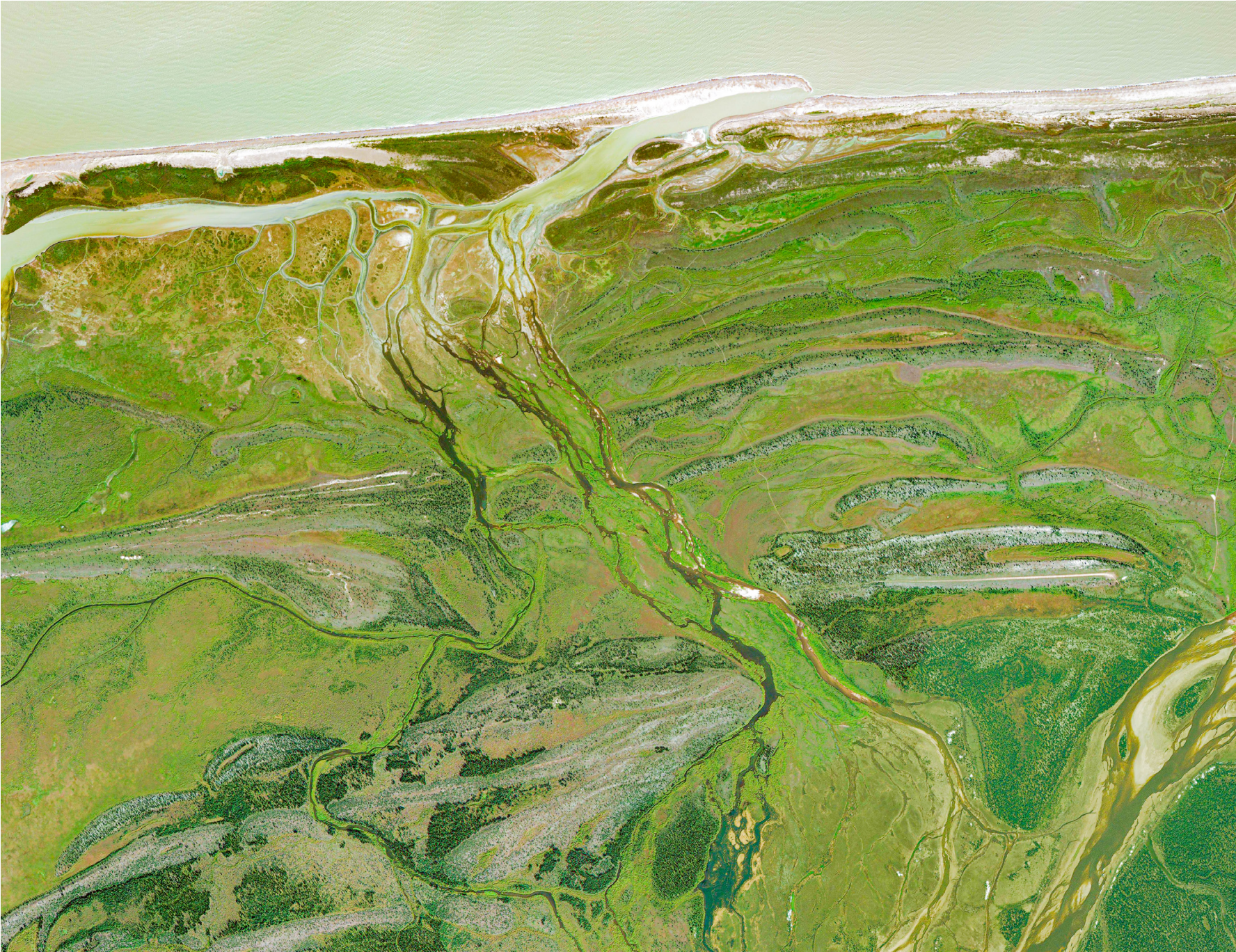
Darren Oman, Churchill (YFFN)

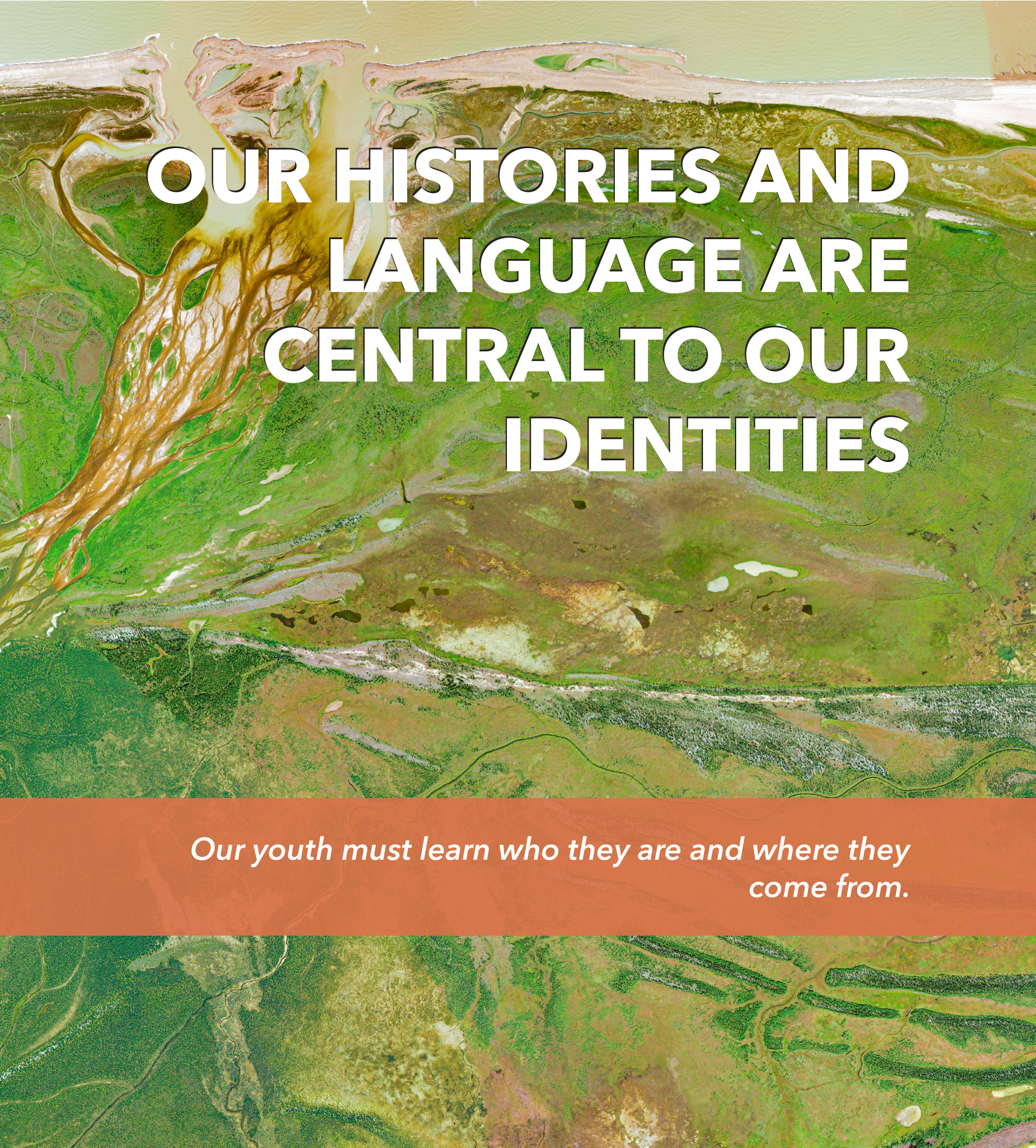


We want to be a sovereign Nation.

Chief Morris Beardy, FLCN





An aerial photograph of a river delta, showing a complex network of channels and distributaries. The water is a mix of vibrant green and earthy brown, creating a textured, organic pattern. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

OUR HISTORIES AND LANGUAGE ARE CENTRAL TO OUR IDENTITIES

*Our youth must learn who they are and where they
come from.*





The only way our claim to these territories will be strong is if we know our original history. **Canada has to know that history of where we (our peoples) come from.**

Daniel Redhead, SFN

The former Chief of TCN once said people were calling them Muskeg Cree, but he said we are 'Big Bay Cree/Wasahan Ininewak'. It reminds us **not to forget where we originated from.** Kischi Gamee is known as the Hudson Bay.

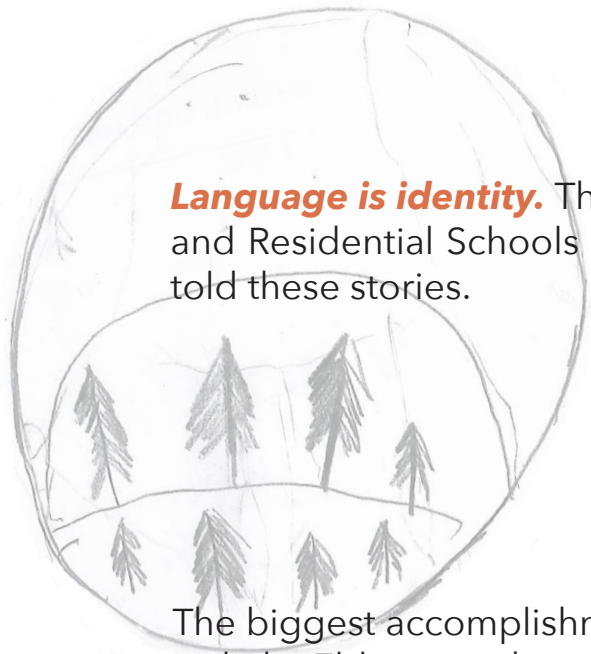


Bishop Isaiah Larry Johnson Beardy, TCN

In my opinion I think its most **important to have language and culture in our lives.** We need language to communicate with our elders who only know Cree. That why its most important to us young [Indigenous] people who need to learn about our culture and language.

Heather Nepitabo, 14, WLFN





Language is identity. The York Factory Relocation and Residential Schools - the children need to be told these stories.

Flora Beardy, YFFN

The biggest accomplishment for me from working with the Elders is picking up the language that I lost when I was going to school. **The Cree language, the Cree identity.**

Mary Beardy, FLCN

It is important to protect our collective history, culture, and knowledge and reclaim sovereignty over our traditional territories.

Councillor Louisa Constant, YFFN

An elder told me that we shared one Chief at one time. I'm glad to see all the people getting together again.



Councillor Kerry Miles, SFN





We have a powerful story and need to tell it internationally. **We know how to survive.** The world is hurting today. The world needs to hear our story of resilience and why we are still around. We need to educate all peoples on what happened to Indigenous peoples in Canada, many still do not understand our histories, even our own people.

Bishop Isaiah Larry Johnson Beardy, TCN



The title is IPCA, but it is really so much more, **it's about connecting everybody, tying up a lot of historic loose ends.**

Heather Botelho, FLCN



The Elders that are still alive today, **that is where we get our stories from.** Everything that they remember and know about. We have to gather those stories. We need all their information about the land, animals, and medicines. We will probably find out that we are all related.

Flora Beardy, YFFN



For the young people that are struggling with their identity we need to know where we come from – that is up on the coast, our ancestral lands where our past generations lived, roamed, made memories. We need to protect this land because it is who we are as a people. My late Chaban Dorothy shared many stories with me growing up of her life in York Factory and her face would light up. **How life on the coast was beautiful.**

Lateesha Redhead, YFFN



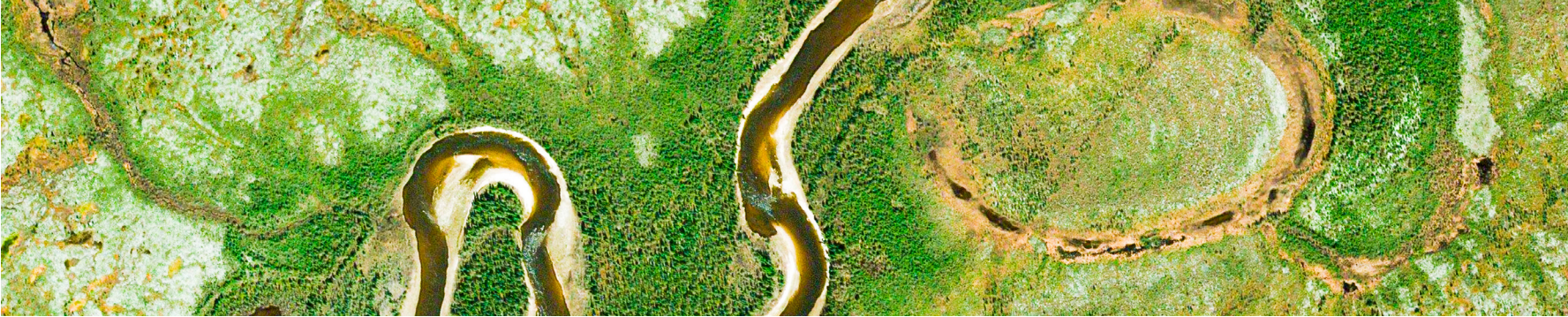
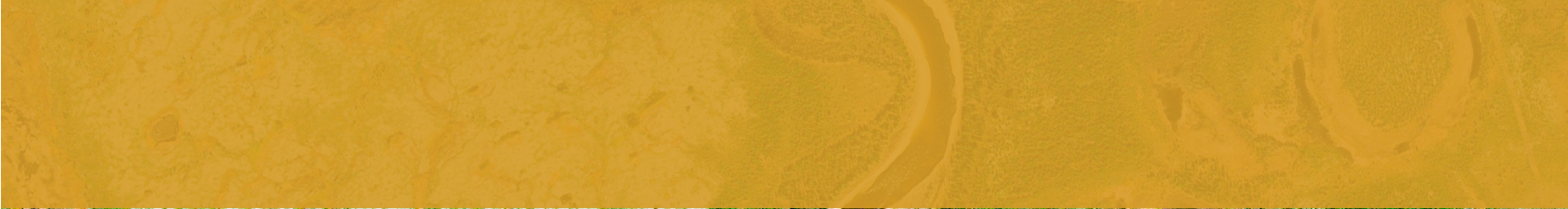
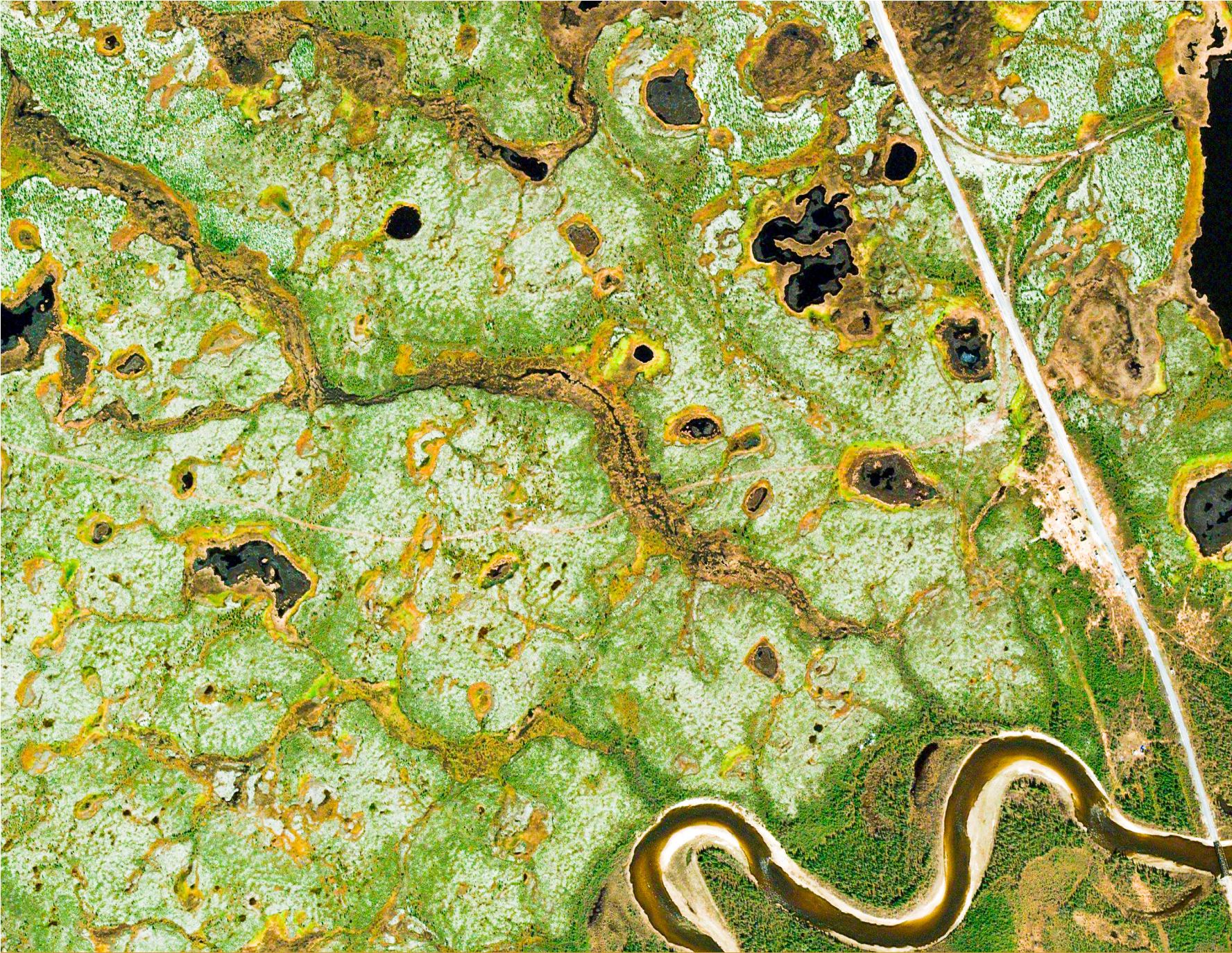
As a young man, I was taught the language of the land (Cree). **Trappers are like poets when heard in the language.** Our peoples communicate with each other at four levels. When you can understand (land/language), you can appreciate it. **We are not a lost culture; we just have to explore it.** Our focus should be on the land!

Dave Sanderson



Whatever area we choose to protect, **there is need for cultural survival, to revive our language, governance, identity, traditional knowledge, and history.** We need to teach the young people. We need to be able to exercise our Aboriginal & Treaty Rights. For the future, it is important to **follow our customary laws,** teachings, and knowledge. We need to be able to teach young people about stewardship. Our young people say they want to go to a place to learn about who they are, to feel good about themselves and who they are.

Councillor Louisa Constant, YFFN



An aerial photograph of a winding river with a sandy bed, meandering through a lush green landscape. The terrain is textured with various shades of green and brown, and several small, dark, irregularly shaped ponds are scattered throughout. The river flows from the top right towards the bottom left, with several sharp turns.

WE NEED TO BE ON THE LAND TO KNOW IT

*Our presence and interactions on the land help us
build relationship to Askiy and be its guardian.*



We need to bring Traditional Knowledge back to our youth – teach them in school, bring them onto the land. ***If we teach our young people to survive on the land, they will be able to live and survive for a lifetime.***



Daniel Redhead, SFN



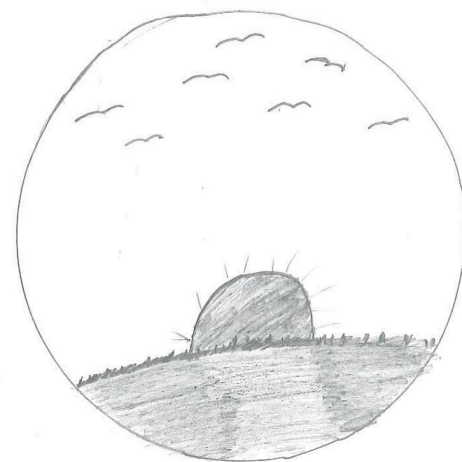
The majority of our members ***they go out on the land and they understand what is being done around our area.*** There are some children from Gillam... they go out on the land...they are knowledgeable about what's going on in the area.

Councillor Sophie Lockhart, FLCN



Students who have gone there have expressed a deep change in their connection to the Askiy.

Morgan Serger, former GSMS Principal



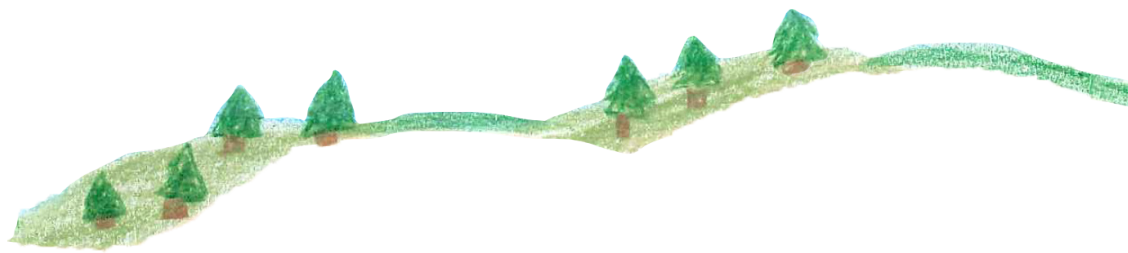


I want the youth engaged on the land, through learning trips. My daughter's dream is to make her way back to York Factory. **Our youth want to know their history at York Factory.** The Churchill youth need to know about York Factory.

Patricia Kandurin, YFFN

I was 10 or 11 when I went to York Factory. **It was such a special feeling and ever since then, I've wanted to go back.** Being in Churchill, there's a sense of not knowing where you're from. We aren't getting on the land in the same way: just go to school, sports, etc. It's important for us to be using our bodies. Our ancestors lived off the land and were active every day. It's so important for us to work against illness prevention. More than just western ways of working out, but to be active on the land to continue land-based traditions and have them carry on for generations to come."

Antonina Kandurin, YFFN







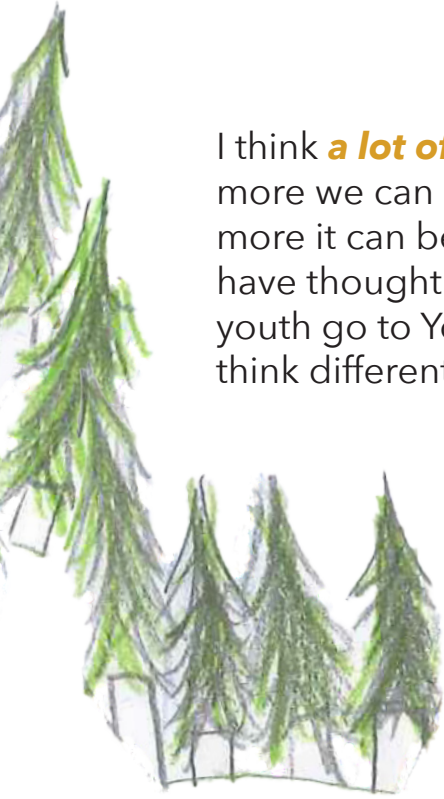
We need to continue forward for our future generations.
People learn more when they are on the land.

Chief Betsy Kennedy, WLFN

From my past work, the Elders used to say ***if we don't use the land, someone else will use it.*** We should use the waterways and lands as much as possible where others will see it. People will know that it is our territory to use. Using the land will strengthen our customs, and will allow our youth to explore other areas, to not be confined by boundaries. How many mosquitoes/fish are at a particular location? We should encourage the youth the opportunity to learn.

Dave Sanderson





I think ***a lot of the vision happens from being out there [on the land]***. The more we can get people out there to see the spaces and be on the land, the more it can be a permanent presence there. It may be a big dream, but people have thought about going back and living permanently on the land. We had youth go to York Factory. Had grade 9s at Ten Shilling. When they go out they think differently. Then they have a reason to protect it.

Morgan Serger, former GSMS Principal

Our ancestors knew every little change because they were so intertwined with the landscape.

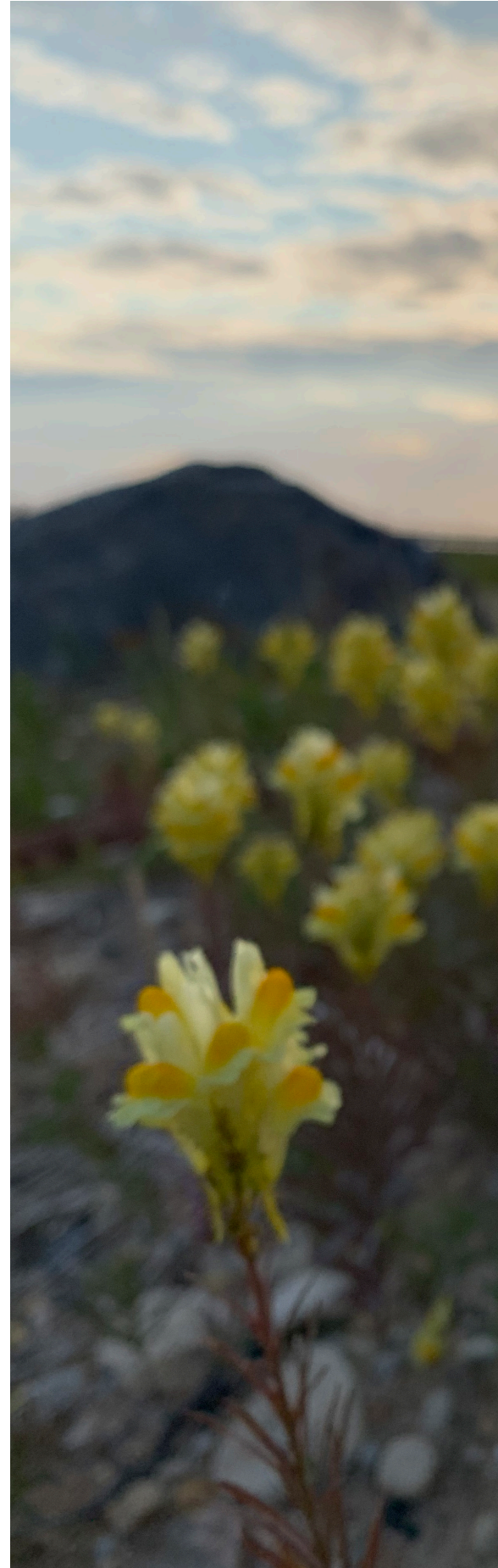
Flora Beardy, YFFN





One thing I've always wanted to see was us taking over instead of the province. The province has regulations on our traditional areas. It's either we take over or we work with them. The province sets regulations for sport hunting, sport fishing, ecotourism. **When are we going to have a say on what happens in our traditional area?** This is a good way to get at having more say on what happens in our traditional areas – like the Wildlife Management areas that the province has set up. We've got Churchill Wild and Kaska Lodge there. I see us already trying to make our presence on the land because we've been doing activities on the land at Nanuk like the moose harvest. It's good to see the presence on the land increasing out there. It's good that this is happening to strengthen our ties to the traditional lands out there.

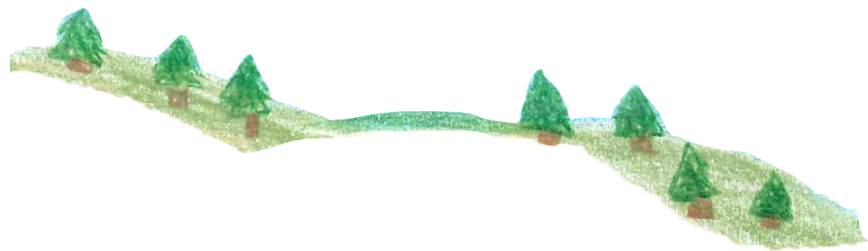
Darcy Wastesicoot, YFFN

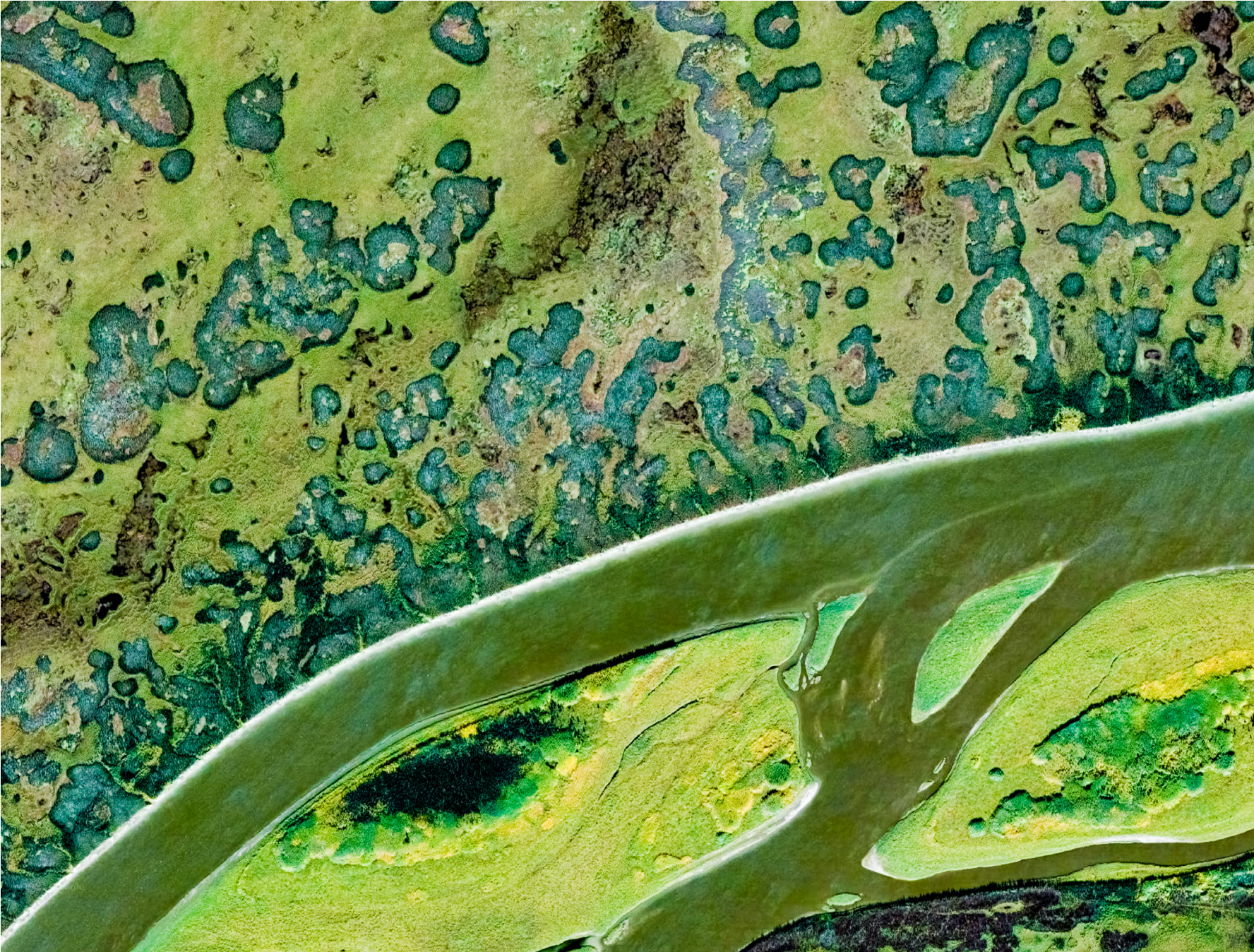




In TCN, ***we are trying to get more of our people on to the land.*** More children on the land. People are not exploring lands because assimilation is advancing. All of the technology and what white society is throwing at us takes us away from lands. We have 60% of young people in Split Lake who don't have the ability or opportunity to go out. It's a barrier. It's being expressed all across our province. We have the advantage of still having our lands – the lakes and forests. We need to find a force to protect that. We need to come together – share the data – and discuss what we want to protect.

Councillor Nathan Neckoway, TCN





An aerial photograph of a river delta, showing a network of channels and distributaries. The water is a vibrant, almost neon green, contrasting with the darker, more muted greens and blues of the surrounding land. The land appears to be a mix of marshland and agricultural fields, with some areas showing signs of erosion or natural patterns. The overall scene is a complex, organic pattern of water and earth.

WE HEAL WHEN WE CONNECT BACK TO THE LAND

*Going back to the land helps us connect with our
ancestors and heal from colonization.*



Inqinaw
Pimatisewiwit



My heritage comes from the land. That is what keeps me home and grounded.

Darren Oman, YFFN

There needs to be a strong healing component to this project. ***We heal when we connect back to the land.***

Conway Arthurson, FLCN

When you're out in the bush it heals you – your mind, body, and soul. You want to bring your children and grandchildren out there to share – to what you have experienced.

Candace Nabess, Mathias Colomb Cree Band,
YFFN

We're working on that today. We can work on healing. ***We need to decolonize. We need to heal.*** That's the work that we do in the ministry, and what our Elders tell us: we need to heal. One of the biggest missions we have is to heal.

Bishop Isaiah Larry Johnson Beardy, TCN

My story is about connection to the land. First, we landed by plane at Hayes River where we set up camp. At Ten Shilling Creek we stayed in tents... along the creek where the camp is now. I stayed in a tent with D. Massan. One night the tide came in. We were close to shore and the tide came inside our tent, so we had to move! One day in September we saw moose on one of the islands across and we got one of them. We skinned it and brought it back to hang the meat. A black bear showed up one night and started taking the meat. One night, D. Massan waited for bear to show up, and he shot the bear. Anyhow this is my short story. There is so much more to say.

Allen Spence, WLFN

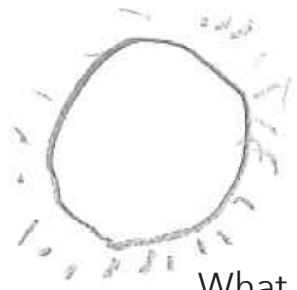




I used to hear people who moved here from the coast say that it was their homeland. They lived off of the homeland at the coast and it was very difficult for them to be on this land here. It was like they left a part of themselves there... sacred... ***They had a relationship to the land and it provided for them there on the coast.*** They were really lonely for the territory. That has passed on. Now when young people go up for gatherings they don't want to leave. ***I think it's that spirit of the land that they are connecting to.*** We need to protect it for the young people.

Councillor Louisa Constant, YFFN





What I love about the land is there's always places to go and enjoy the quiet... **The cool breezes in and the good comforts of Mother Nature.** I am a proud avid outdoorsman.

Delbert Saunders, YFFN

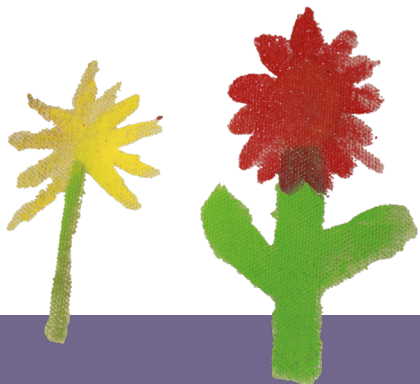


Our First Nations could **set up healing centers in the Treaty 5 area.** We would need more capacity and training, such as with Ininewuk traditional teachings, ceremonies and natural and spiritual laws.

Conway Arthurson, FLCN

I would like to see our culture regenerated and revitalized which would support healing. I would like to see revitalization of our language, **going out on the land** more often, recognizing the importance of traditional ceremonies and practices on lands and waters, and building capacity in those areas. I want to see all sorts of people (Elders, men, women, children) connecting to the lands, connecting to water and connecting to our ancestors.

Robben Constant, YFFN





The land, as we know, if it's left alone can heal itself. It can. And we, as Aboriginal people – or Indigenous people as we are called now – **know that the land is a big healer.** It is an excellent healer. I've experienced that myself.



Flora Beardy, YFFN

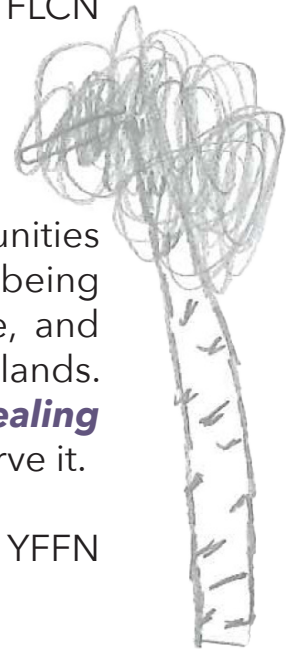


Land based healing is a big part of the program (NADAP). Last year, we used one of the mental health workers who **introduced land-based healing** to the men. They are suffering the most. They are broken because of what happened to them in the residential schools. I'd like to know if that can be part of this initiative.



Mary Beardy, FLCN

We have so many social issues in our communities from not knowing who we are, from not being trained on the land (on our history, culture, and language). We have to go back to our sacred lands. **We need Traditional Knowledge for our healing and survival.** It is our land, we need to preserve it.



Daniel Redhead, YFFN



I've been fortunate to visit York Factory a couple times, what I loved about being there was the presence, **you don't feel alone when you're there**, like you're being looked after; you're safe. The beauty of the land, to know you're looking at what generations and generations before you saw as well. Its also hard to explain but York Factory felt like home. I hope to share this with my son in the near future as well.

Lateesha Redhead, YFFN

Our community is deeply affected with colonization by society standards and our people are lost. I believe our people will benefit more by detoxing and being out in wilderness, to **feel, hear, see, and taste the medicines that we are rich in.**



Georgina Redhead, YFFN

I think protecting the land would help our people heal.

Mary Beardy, FLCN



The land is a healer. That is why we always feel so refreshed when coming to the land, our Elders always want to be there.

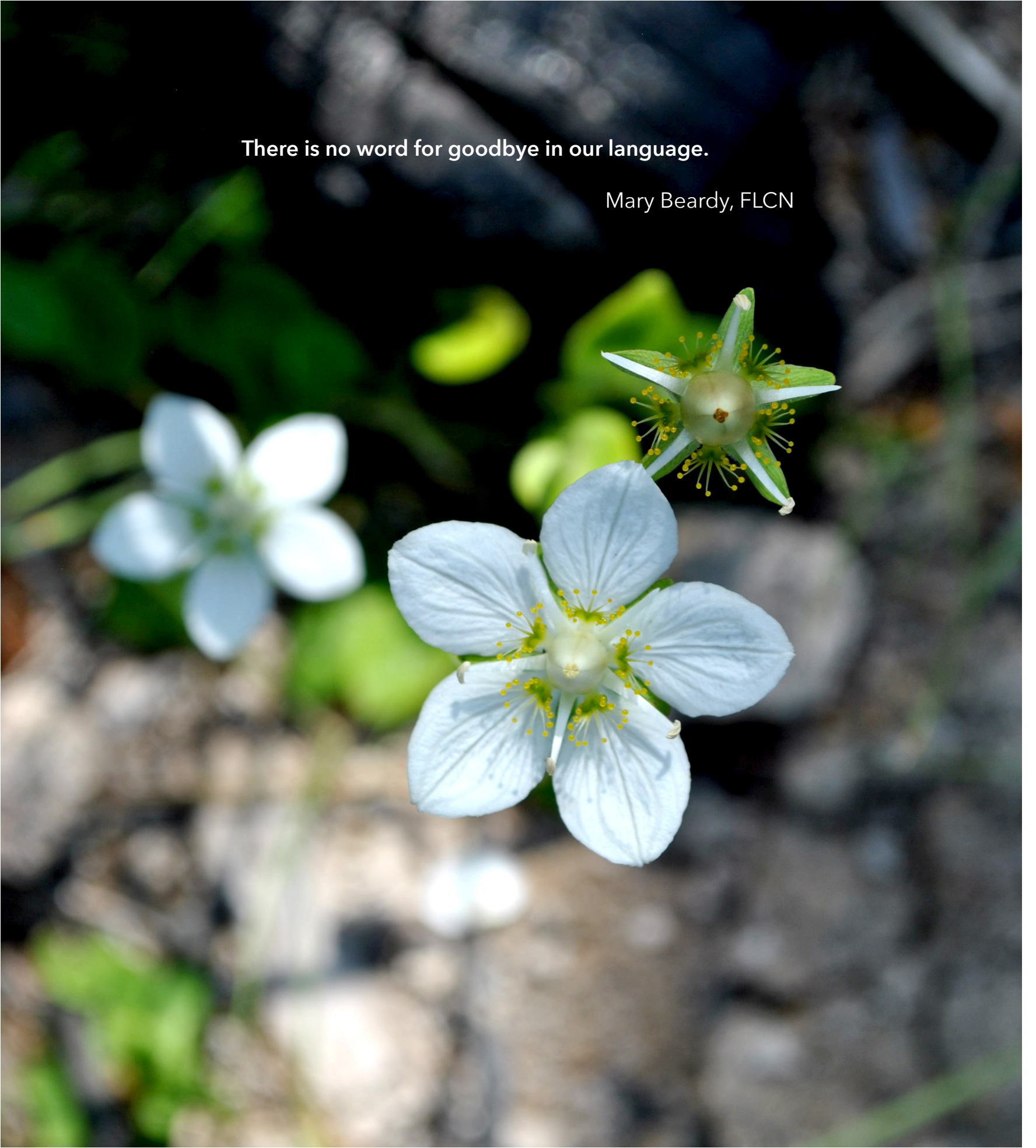
Flora Beardy, YFFN





There is no word for goodbye in our language.

Mary Beardy, FLCN



Thank you to York Factory First Nation and all the individuals who shared their photos and artwork for this document.

Kinanaskomitinawaw!

