Inkawthia Lake Project

Final Report

Similkameen Consulting

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9/30/2021

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Executive Summary

Similkameen Consulting has been contracted by the Spuzzum First Nation to conduct a desktop review and preliminary field reconnaissance (PFR) for a proposed retreat at the south end of Inkawthia Lake (the study area). Figure 1 illustrates the general location of the study area and access road. The Spuzzum First Nation is considering a modest, low impact, wilderness type retreat for use by community members.

Brenda Gould of Similkameen Consulting and Dimitri Hatzidimitriou of the Spuzzum First Nation completed an in-field reconnaissance of the proposed retreat site at Inkawthia Lake on July 12, 2021. While it was beyond the scope of this project to undertake a full pedestrian reconnaissance of the proposed road a visual reconnaissance was conducted via an all-terrain vehicle.

A single potential unrecorded archaeological site was located within the study area at the east end of Inkawthia Lake. This potential archaeological site consists of a buried feature comprised of a ring of stones of unknown age and function. No subsurface investigations were undertaken.

The following recommendations are provided:

It is recommended that areas planned to have subsurface impacts resulting from the development of the proposed retreat be subjected to an Archaeological Impact Assessment undertaken by permit issued under the Heritage Conservation Act.

It is further recommended that some areas along the access route that require substantial upgrading will also require an Archaeological Impact Assessment. If no upgrades to the access road are planned, then no further archaeological work would be required for the access road.

All archaeological sites, whether recorded or unidentified, are protected by legislation and may not be altered, damaged, moved, excavated in, or disturbed in any way without a permit issued under either Section 12.2 or Section 12.4 of the *Heritage Conservation Act.*

Credit Sheet

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Report Distribution

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I would also like to thank Spuzzum First Nation member Dimitri Hatzidimitriou for assisting with the field portion of this project and for his skilled navigation of the backcountry.

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Introduction

Background Information

The Spuzzum First Nation is looking to create a retreat for community members to allow for cultural and traditional activities and other retreat activities. There are no planned developments, and the nation is not planning on having any sewer or power infrastructure and keeping the development footprint to a minimum to provide basic shelter needs for gatherings. Minimum upgrades to the rough access trail may be required to keep it accessible by all-terrain vehicles but no plans to upgrade the road have been made to date. The purpose of this high-level archaeological review is for the Spuzzum Nation to consider archaeological sites and potential impacts at the earliest stages of planning.

Location Information

The study area is located on the east side of the Fraser River along the Inkawthia Creek watershed within the easternmost extent of the Coast Range. The biogeoclimatic zones present consist of a narrow band of the CWHms1 (Coastal Western Hemlock moist maritime southern) biogeoclimatic zone. Immediately above this is a narrow band of MHmm2 (Mountain Hemlock moist maritime leeward). Beyond this is the unforested CMAunp (Coastal Mountain heather Alpine undifferentiated parkland). This area represents the inland extent of coastal climate and environment and can be considered an ecotone where there are elements of both the coastal and interior environmental elements.

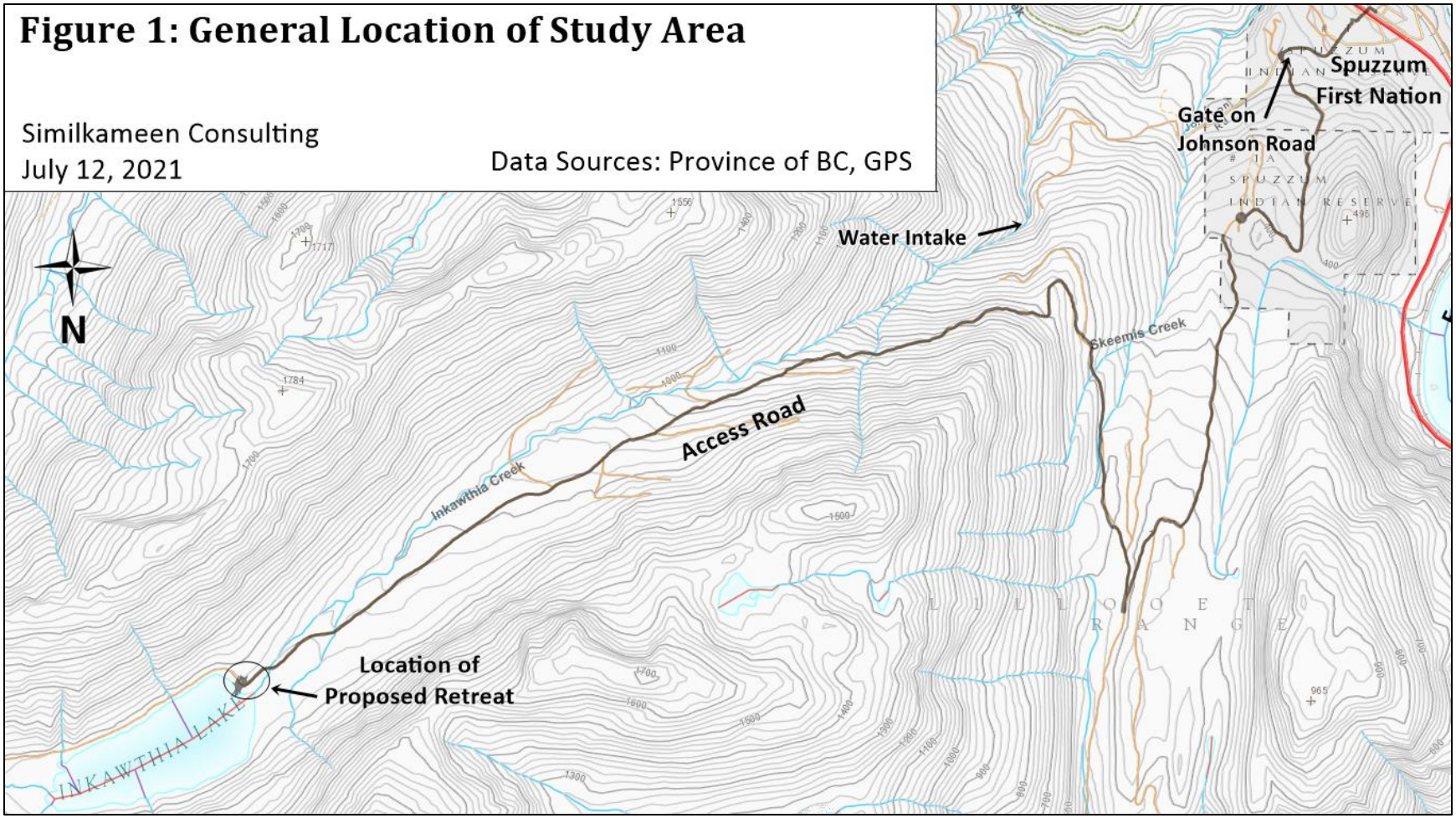
The study area is comprised of a small area (less than .5 ha more or less) just northeast of the outlet of Inkawthia Lake as well as the proposed access road (approximately 13km) from the Spuzzum First Nation along Skeemis and Inkawthia Creeks to Inkawthia Lake. The study area is illustrated in Figure 1. Inkawthia Lake is located approximately 8.25 km southwest of the village of Spuzzum in a 500m deep, cirque below Inkawthia peak at around 1,700m asl. Inkawthia Lake is located at 1180m asl and feeds headwaters of Inkawthia Creek which flows northwest into Spuzzum Creek which empties into the Fraser at Spuzzum village a short distance away. Inkawthia Creek also serves as the source for drinking water for the Spuzzum First Nation.

Development Details

While no specific development details were available the proposed retreat is expected to be largely left as a natural area with a few small low impact, modest facilities. There are no plans for power or sewer services on-site and it is expected that the development footprint will be light with only minimal ground disturbance expected in discreet areas.

Concerning the 14 or so km of existing access road there may be some modest upgrades required to continue to keep the road passable by all-terrain vehicles however should the nation wish to upgrade the road to be passable by four-wheel drive this will require some significant upgrades in some locations which will have the potential to impact both recorded and unrecorded archaeological sites, especially in the Skeemis Creek area.

Figure 1. Study Area Map Overview



Scope of Project

The scope of this project involved the following:

- Background Research: A review of relevant background information about documented pre-contact/historic period occupation or use of this area. This will include discussions with the Spuzzum First Nation.
- Analysis: Preliminary evaluation of the project high-level plans concerning potential impacts to archaeological and traditional use resources.
- A single field trip with members of the Spuzzum First Nation to the study area to discuss project planning, observe relevant landscape features.
- A final report that will briefly indicate the nature and location of obvious heritage concerns, identify specific areas with archaeological site potential, outline details for further archaeological impact assessment (AIA) and traditional use and occupancy mapping study (TUS/UOMS) work required. Appropriate management/mitigative strategies if any obvious archaeological/heritage concerns are identified will also be presented.

All archaeological sites whether they are previously recorded or not, intact, or disturbed are automatically protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act* and the provisions of this legislation apply whether the archaeological sites are located on Crown or privately held lands. Archaeological sites are automatically protected under Section 12.1 of the legislation and must not be altered or changed in any manner without a permit issued by the Province of British Columbia under the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

Other cultural heritage resources not protected under the *Heritage Conservation Act* are equally important to the Spuzzum First Nation but not automatically protected. Cultural heritage resources may or may not be associated with archaeological sites or areas exhibiting archaeological potential and can include specific traditional use areas, sites or features on the landscape. Examples include resource gathering areas, spiritual sites, culturally modified trees (CMT's), and/or ceremonial sites. These examples are part of a broader concept that considers not only the sites themselves but also the things that connect these areas - trails, legends, hunting and gathering areas, water, etc. Cultural Heritage Resources are provided for in Section 10 of the *Forest Planning and Practices Regulation, Forest, and Range Practices Act.*

Archaeological Potential Assessment

A predictive model layer for the study area is available on the Remote Access to Archaeological Data (RAAD) website and was consulted during the desktop review and background research. The predictive model output for the study area is illustrated in Figure 2 and references to it are made where necessary within the context of the report.

Archaeological predictive modelling is calculated based on a set of variables including slope, distance to water, aspect, proximity to known archaeological sites, proximity to existing settlement (towns), ungulate winter range, biogeoclimatic zone and old-growth forests. The process of constructing predictive models in the Province of British Columbia began in the early 2000s and continues to date. It was not until the late 2000's when the province began testing the accuracy and usefulness of predictive models using the Kvam statistical measure. While some models are particularly accurate others are of no use and can be misleading or result in inadvertent archaeological site destruction if not used as intended.

The envisioned use of predictive modelling is not to replace archaeology, nor is it intended to capture all areas of archaeological potential, predict new site types or further research-oriented goals. The model is only intended to impose archaeological potential on the modern landscape (about the past 5,000 years). Archaeological sites associated with the early Holocene (ca. 5-12,000 years ago) cannot be accurately modelled due to a lack of information regarding the changing environment and evolving landscapes during this time.

During background research, it was noted that the modelled areas of potential were scant throughout the study area and many of the previously recorded archaeological sites were in areas with no archaeological potential (See Figures 2-4). While it is expected for CMT sites (as they do not often conform to the standard variables), it was not expected for the lithic scatters. This is discussed in more detail in the results section of the report. For archaeological potential assessment modelling was considered and reviewed but not relied upon in any way due to the inconsistencies observed.

There are no previously recorded archaeological sites that intersect with the study area, however, there are eleven previously recorded archaeological sites located in areas nearby the access road, especially in the Skeemis Creek area where an Archaeological Impact Assessment was undertaken for BC Hydro's Interior to Mainland connector project. Table 3 provides a brief description of those archaeological sites recorded within the study area generally.

Figure 2: Modelled Archaeological Potential of Section 1 Spuzzum First Nation

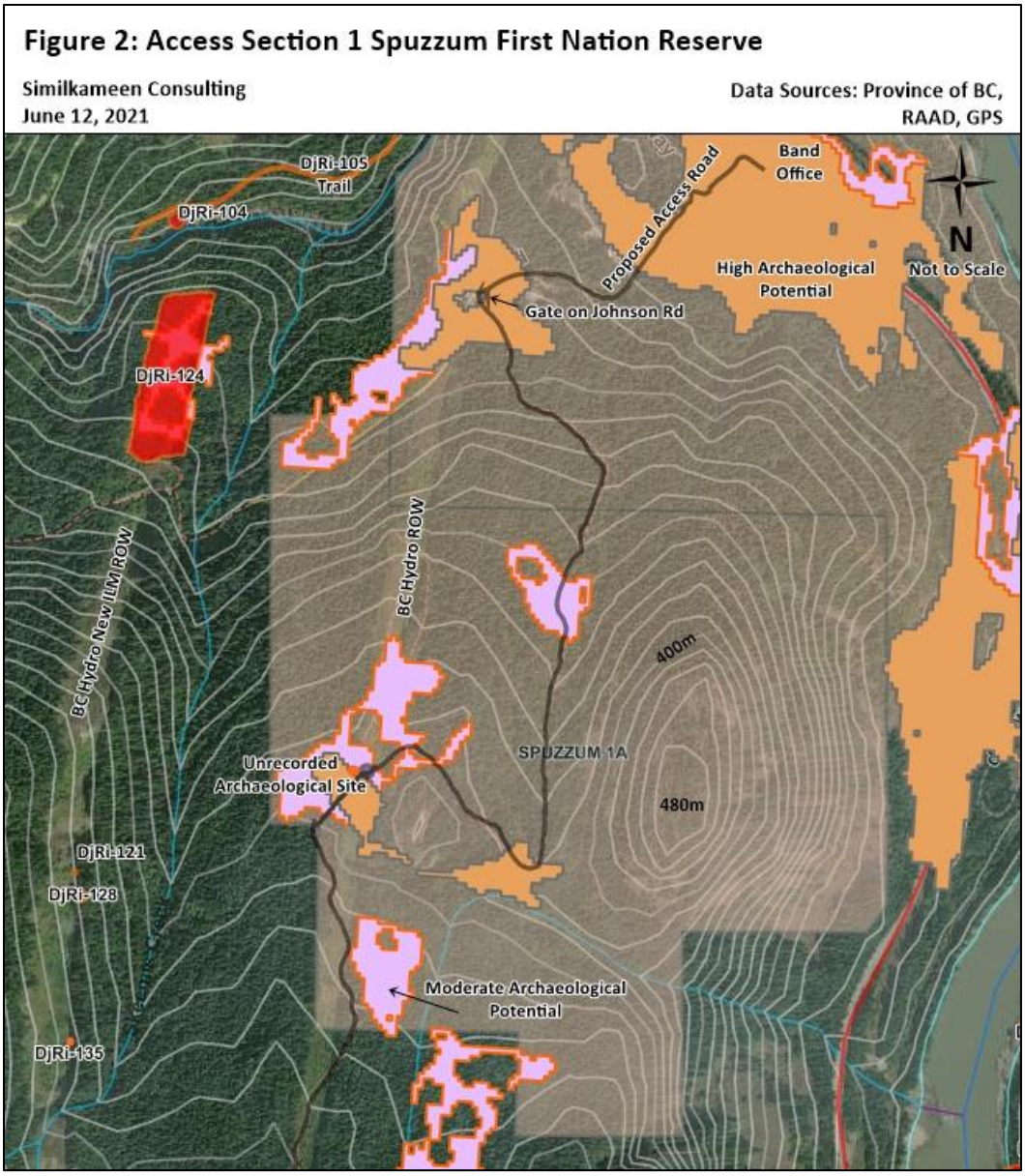


Figure 3: The modelled archaeological potential of Section 2 Skeemis Creek

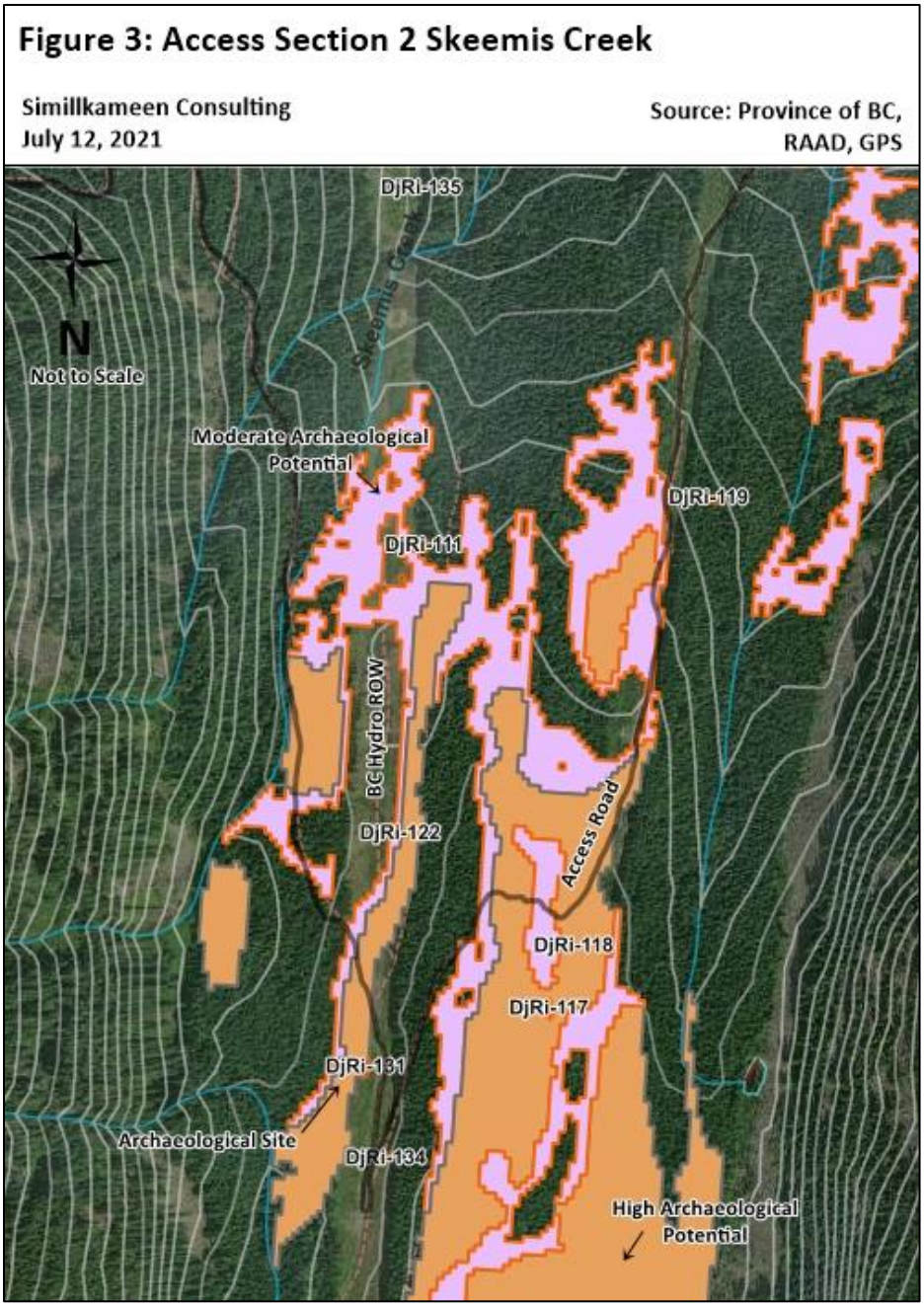
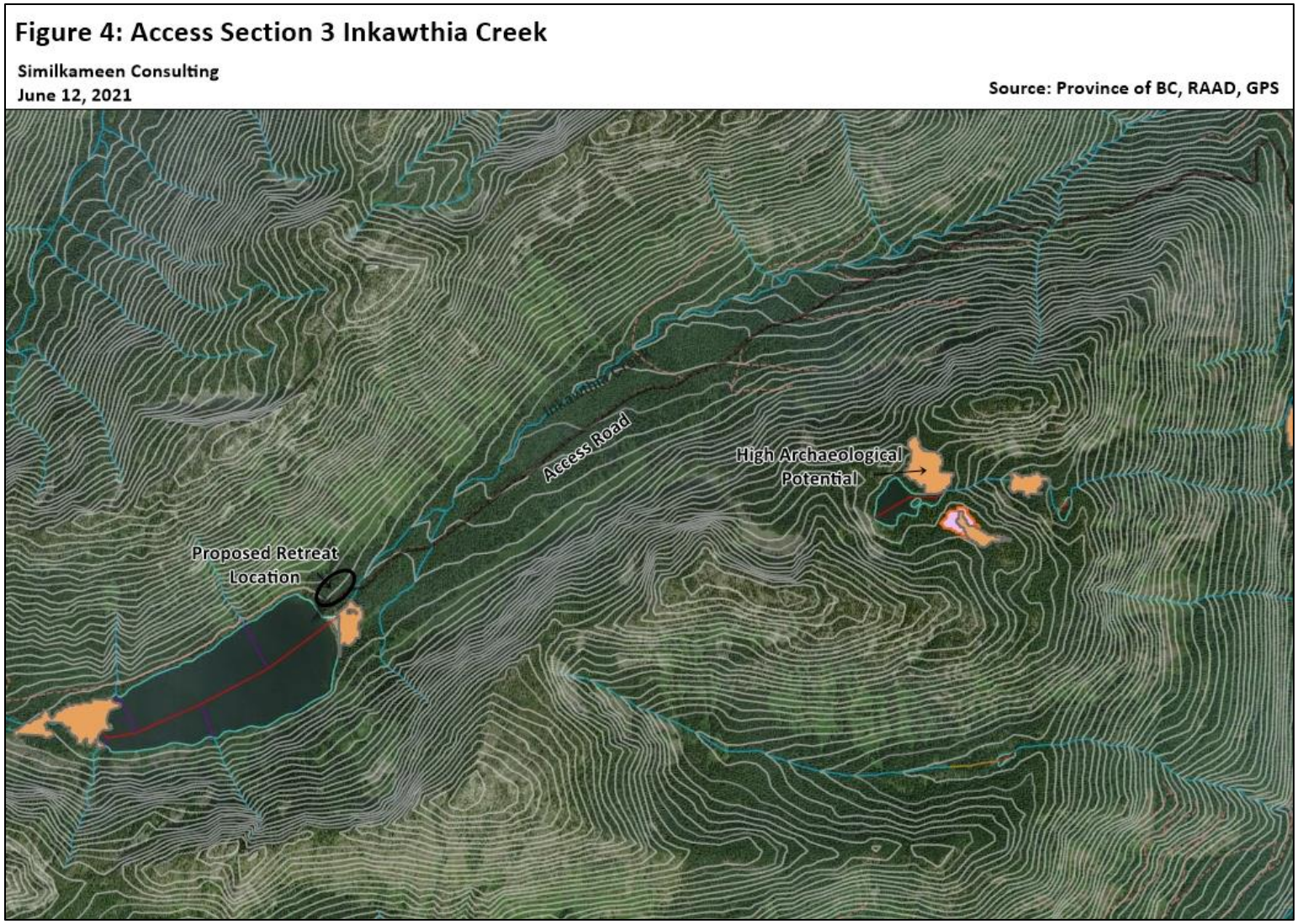


Figure 4: The modelled archaeological potential of section 3 Inkawthia Creek, Lake, and Proposed Retreat Location



Methodology

Background Research

Background research included a review of all previously recorded archaeological sites, their associated collections, and archaeological reports as available for the entire study area. The results of this review are presented in the sub-sections following. Background research also included an internet search and scan of available literature for the study area as well as a review of cultural heritage data held by OIB.

A predictive model layer for the study area was available on the Remote Access to Archaeological Data (RAAD) website and was consulted during the desktop review and background research but found to be unreliable.

Archaeological predictive modelling is calculated based on a set of variables including slope, distance to water, aspect, proximity to known archaeological sites, proximity to existing settlement (towns), ungulate winter range, biogeoclimatic zone and old-growth forests.

It should be mentioned that the intent of the modelling is not to replace archaeology, nor is it intended to capture all areas of archaeological potential, predict new site types or further research-oriented goals. The model is only intended to impose archaeological potential on the modern landscape (about the past 5,000 years) and does not consider the period between 5,000 and 12,000 years ago when the landscape and its associated resources were establishing and evolving during fluctuating environments and would have been much different.

Archaeological predictive models should adequately predict areas of a higher or lower likelihood of finding some archaeological sites. Although it is partially useful in identifying areas of cultural heritage significance as they are often associated with archaeological sites it is not so useful in that many of these sites are also found in other areas such as huckleberry patches and CMTs on steep slopes with nil archaeological potential. Some archaeological predictive models can be a useful tool for developers and land-use planners to have a “heads” up where archaeological potential may occur however, for this project this was largely not the case.

The archaeological predictive model layer is used along with other cultural heritage data to provide background information and assist the field crew in ensuring that areas with archaeological and cultural heritage potential are prioritized in the fieldwork.

An office review of the study area was undertaken to search for potential features of archaeological interest such as proximity to known archaeological sites, proximity to water, slope, aspect, forest cover, ungulate winter range and other variables known about the area specifically.

For this report, the access road and study area has been divided into three sections. The first section is the access road through the Spuzzum First Nation reserve lands (Figure 2), the second is that portion of the access road along Skeemis Creek (Figure 3), and the final section is that portion of the access road along Inkawthia Creek as well as the proposed retreat located at the east end of the lake (Figure 4).

Figures 2, 3, and 4 illustrate the archaeological potential along the access road and proposed retreat location along with previously recorded archaeological sites which are in proximity (i.e., within 500m) to the study area and access road. These sites are discussed in more detail in the Results section of this report.

Spatial Data

Google Earth Pro was utilized to examine aerial imagery of the study area before the commencement of the heritage reconnaissance survey to observe visible disturbances and to assess the area for access. The nature and extent of the visible disturbances were noted. The pedestrian survey was used to confirm the observed disturbances identified through the desktop review.

Topographic data and imagery available from Google Earth Pro were utilized along with spatial data from previous archaeological assessments and from previously registered archaeological sites were available through the Remote Access to Archaeology Data Application maintained by the BC Archaeology Branch.

Field Reconnaissance

The field reconnaissance was completed on July 12, 2021, by Brenda Gould of Similkameen Consulting along with Dimitri Hatzidimitriou of the Spuzzum First Nation.

The field reconnaissance for the access road was conducted via all-terrain vehicle as there was limited time and a pedestrian reconnaissance of this portion of the proposed development was beyond the scope of a single day. The proposed retreat location at Inkawthia Lake was systematically assessed in the field to determine the potential for archaeological materials and features and traditional use areas based on access to the study area.

Any archaeological sites or cultural features identified during the survey were marked with a handheld GPS. Archaeological sites containing cultural material were not labelled in the field with flagging to not draw attention to the area. Cultural features, such as CMT's cultural depressions and/or hearths, were marked with a handheld GPS and not labelled as well.

The expected site types of archaeological within the study area include habitation features (i.e., house pits), subsistence features (i.e., roasting pits or cache pits), hunting blinds, trails, rock art, culturally modified trees, human remains (i.e., rock cairn burials, talus slope burials, subsurface burials), and surface and subsurface scatters composed of lithic, faunal, or fire altered rock. Traditional use sites expected within the study area include place names, sacred locations, resource gathering and processing locations, and transportation routes.

Results

Background Research

Cultural Setting

The study area lies within the traditional territory of the Spuzzum First Nation as evidenced by both the archaeological record as well as the oral information provided in place names and other culturally significant data which is important for archaeologists in site identification and interpretation but even more important to the nation in terms of the preservation of language and cultural identity. The proposed retreat itself is intended as a mechanism to promote and ultimately preserve the language and cultural identity of the community.

Previous Archaeological Investigations

Background research revealed that there has been no permitted archaeological work undertaken in the Inkawthia Creek watershed or at Inkawthia Lake. A portion of the access road into the proposed retreat location, however, has been surveyed and shovel tested as part of the BC Hydro Interior to Mainland Transmission project and several archaeological sites were recorded in this area.

Table 1 summarizes the results of the background search of previously recorded archaeological sites within the vicinity of the study area and along the access road highlighting those which have the potential to intersect with the access road or future upgrades to the access road.

Borden #	Intersects with Study Area	Site Type	Date Recorded	Comments
DjRi-104	No, north of Spuzzum Creek	Lithic Scatter/Rock Shelter	2004	Recorded in an area modelled as having no archaeological potential yet it is a rock shelter with buried cultural deposits (see Figure 2).
DjRi-105	No, north of Spuzzum Creek	Trail	2004	Recorded in an area modelled as having no archaeological potential. Trails are often located in areas without archaeological potential (see Figure 2).
DjRi-111	No; east of Skeemis Creek	CMT (est. 1834AD) bark stripped cedar	2008	Recorded in area of modelled moderate archaeological potential (see Figure 3)
DjRi-117	No; south of access road on BC Hydro ROW	Lithic scatter	2008	Identified on the surface in road push piles; shovel testing in the area was negative; the site is within an area of modelled high archaeological potential (see Figure 3).
DjRi-118	No; south of access road on BC Hydro ROW	Lithic Scatter	2008	Identified on the surface in road push piles; shovel testing in the area was negative; the site is within an area of modelled high archaeological potential (see Figure 3).
DjRi-119	No; 80m east of access road	CMTs (2) (est. 1831AD) bark stripped cedar	2008	Both strips were identified on a single logged tree section and the associated stump was estimated to have been logged around 1958. The site was located in an

				area having no modelled archaeological potential (see Figure 3).
DjRi-121	No, 500m access road and west of Skeemis Creek	Projectile Point & CMT	200	A single complete Lehman Phase projectile point (ca. 4,500-6,000 BP) was recovered from a shovel test at approximately 60cm below the surface in an area modelled as having no archaeological potential. The site is in an area modelled as moderate archaeological potential. A cedar CMT was noted 50m to the SE (Figure 2).
DjRi-122	No, 500m from the access road	CMTs (2) (one est. 1670AD) – 344 yrs. Old	2008	Two CMTs in a remnant patch of old grow cedar in an area modelled as having high archaeological potential (Figure 3).
DjRi-124	No, west of Skeemis Creek	Lithic scatter and three cultural depressions	2008	A total of seventy-one artifacts, including retouched flake tools, a hammerstone, and a scraper; no diagnostic tools were identified. The site is located in an area of modelled moderate archaeological potential (Figure 2).
DjRi-131	No, approximately 25m from the access road	Lithic Scatter	2008	Small lithic scatter with surface and subsurface components on the edge of an area modelled as having high archaeological potential (see Figure 3).
DjRi-134	No, 45m south of access road under BC Hydro transmission lines	Lithic Scatter	2008	Small lithic scatter with surface and subsurface components in an area modelled as having no archaeological potential (see Figure 3).
DjRi-135	No, west side Skeemis Creek under BC Hydro transmission line	Lithic Scatter	2008	Small lithic scatter with surface and subsurface components in an area modelled as having no archaeological potential (See Figure 2).
DjRi-136	No, south of access road	Lithic Scatter	2008	Small surface scatters were observed in a road cut on BC Hydro transmission line access in an area modelled as having no archaeological potential (See Figure 3).

Previous research also revealed that the Skeemis Creek section of the proposed access route was likely in proximity to the Douglas Portage portion of the short-lived Hudson's Bay Brigade Trail between Yale and Spuzzum.

Field Reconnaissance

The fieldwork undertaken for this project was minimal and included a short all-terrain vehicle reconnaissance of the proposed access road followed by a more detailed ground-truthing of the area proposed for the retreat. A GPS track was collected for a more detailed post field office review of the terrain and archaeological potential.

Proposed Retreat Access Road

The proposed access road is approximately 13km in length and has been divided into three sections for this discussion. Generally, the road consists of a dirt track suitable only for an all-terrain vehicle. Many

sections are boulder pathways up steep grades. Much of the road was developed historically to access timber. Once the timber was removed the roads were deactivated and no longer maintained. The exceptions would be the first km through the reserve which is a well-maintained residential road and a few km along Skeemis Creek which is utilized as access to the BC Hydro transmission lines and maintained for four-wheel and all-terrain vehicle access only.

Section 1: Access through Spuzzum First Nation Reserve

Section 1 of the proposed access road commences at the Band office crossing Highway 1 onto Johnson Road to the gate. This section is a well-maintained residential road and is gated on Johnson Road to prevent trespassers from having access to the community's water intake which is located at the end of the road in the lower reaches of Inkawthia Creek approximately 500m from its confluence with Spuzzum Creek (Plate 2). The access road heads south through the reserve for approximately 2.5km and then follows an existing BC Hydro right-of-way through to the south boundary of the reserve. The length of access road crossing Spuzzum reserve land is approximately 3km in total.

A single previously recorded archaeological site was observed in this section of the proposed access road on the reserve at the point where it enters the BC Hydro right-of-way (Figure 2, Plate 3). This site was initially discovered along the existing power line during surveys for the BC Hydro Interior to Mainland transmission line. It was not investigated further as BC Hydro ultimately constructed the new corridor on the west side of Skeemis Creek and off the reserve. This archaeological site and others have been marked by orange plastic snow fencing to show their location.

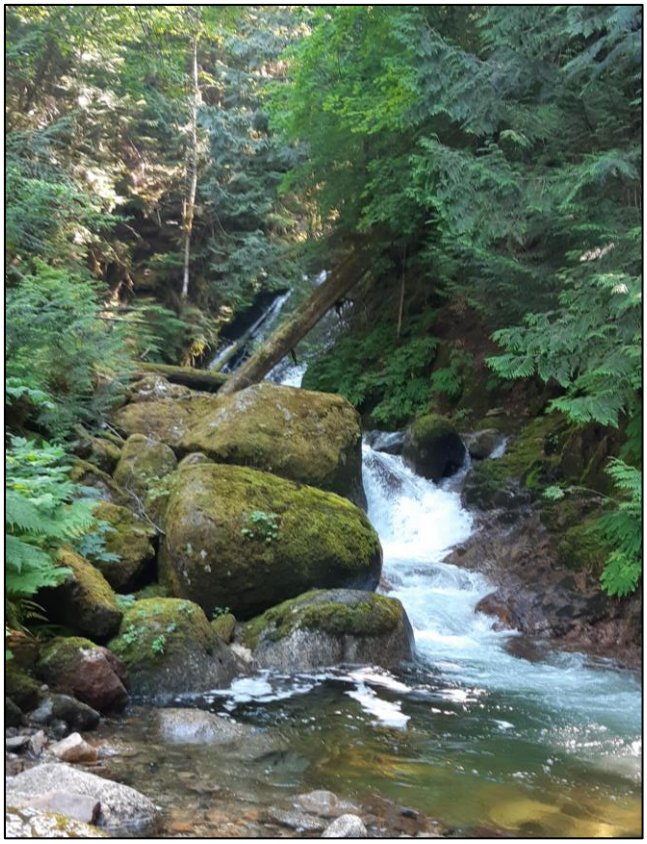


Plate 2: Typical canyon nature of the lower half of Inkawthia Creek

Plate 3: Previously recorded archaeological site along BC Hydro ROW on Spuzzum First Nation

Several previously unrecorded archaeological sites could likely be discovered along the proposed section of an access road through the Spuzzum First Nation reserve lands should the road right of way be subjected to a rigorous survey and shovel testing program. The types of archaeological sites which could be encountered include lithic scatters, especially in upland level areas and low elevation level areas near Spuzzum Creek. As well, based on background research and a review of archaeological site distribution in the immediate vicinity there is likely to be culturally modified trees and other traditional use resources as well as the potential for the study area to contain precontact transportation routes.

Because this section of the proposed road is located on an Indian reserve the provincial government does not have jurisdiction and a permit under the *Heritage Conservation Act* would not be necessary. Also, the Spuzzum First Nation could decide whether they wish to undertake archaeological work in this area before the development of this portion of the access road through the reserve.

Section 2: Access along Skeemis Creek

Section 2 of the proposed access road leaves the reserve and follows south to the headwaters of Skeemis creek; a small, unnamed tributary of the Fraser River is located east of the proposed access road which parallels a significant portion of this tributary. The access road stays within the exiting BC Hydro right of way for just over 1 km until it abruptly turns north following the right-of-way for the larger, newer, Interior to Mainland transmission corridor for 500m before turning northwest towards the ridge between Skeemis and Inkawthia Creeks; here the access road follows the 600m contour to the edge of the ridge. As both corridors have been subjected to rigorous archaeological survey and shovel testing (Golder 2008) there are several previously recorded archaeological sites along its length. These

archaeological sites are all located within the BC Hydro transmission corridor and are illustrated in Figure 3 and briefly described in Table 1.

The proposed access road crosses several areas of modelled moderate and high archaeological potential. This potential assessment is likely updated because of the archaeological impact assessment work undertaken for the BC Hydro ILM project (Golder 2008).

Section 3: Access along Inkawthia Creek

This section of the proposed access road initially climbs steeply from the 600m contour to 1000m in less than 3km. From there the road is less steep and the final two km is gentler rising only an additional 200m over 2km. Evidence of historic logging activities can be seen on both sides of Inkawthia Creek. The access road along this section was created to extract large old-growth trees from the watershed. Old clear cuts can easily be seen on the google earth image in Figure 4.

Proposed Retreat Location

The proposed retreat location is located on a small 1.5-2 hectare area of level to undulating terrain several meters above the present elevation of Inkawthia Lake. To the north is steep sub-alpine slopes that have been historically logged. A very old and overgrown logging road was observed extending along the entire north side of Inkawthia Lake. This old road was heavily grown by alder shrubs but can be seen on current Google Earth imagery (Figure 5).

The open canopy mixed mature forest hosted a thick understory of huckleberry shrubs was observed throughout the area (Plate 4).

A 1m diameter circle of buried cobbles was observed in a clearing at the very end of the access road and just before the small, steep trail down to the lake (Figure 5, Plate 5). The cobbles appeared to be encircling a small, shallow depression. On either side of the small clearing were piles of cobbles that had been recently piled. No sub-surface testing was undertaken to determine if this was, in fact, a cultural feature or simply an old hearth from logging/recreation activities.

A large log jam was observed at the outlet stream on the lake (Figure 5, Plate 6). The area beyond the log jam appears to be level and of some archaeological potential but it is not accessible due to the log jam and has not been identified in any way for development.

It is recommended that all areas planned for development be subject to an Archaeological Impact Assessment undertaken by permit issued under the Heritage Conservation Act.

Figure 5: Proposed Retreat Location

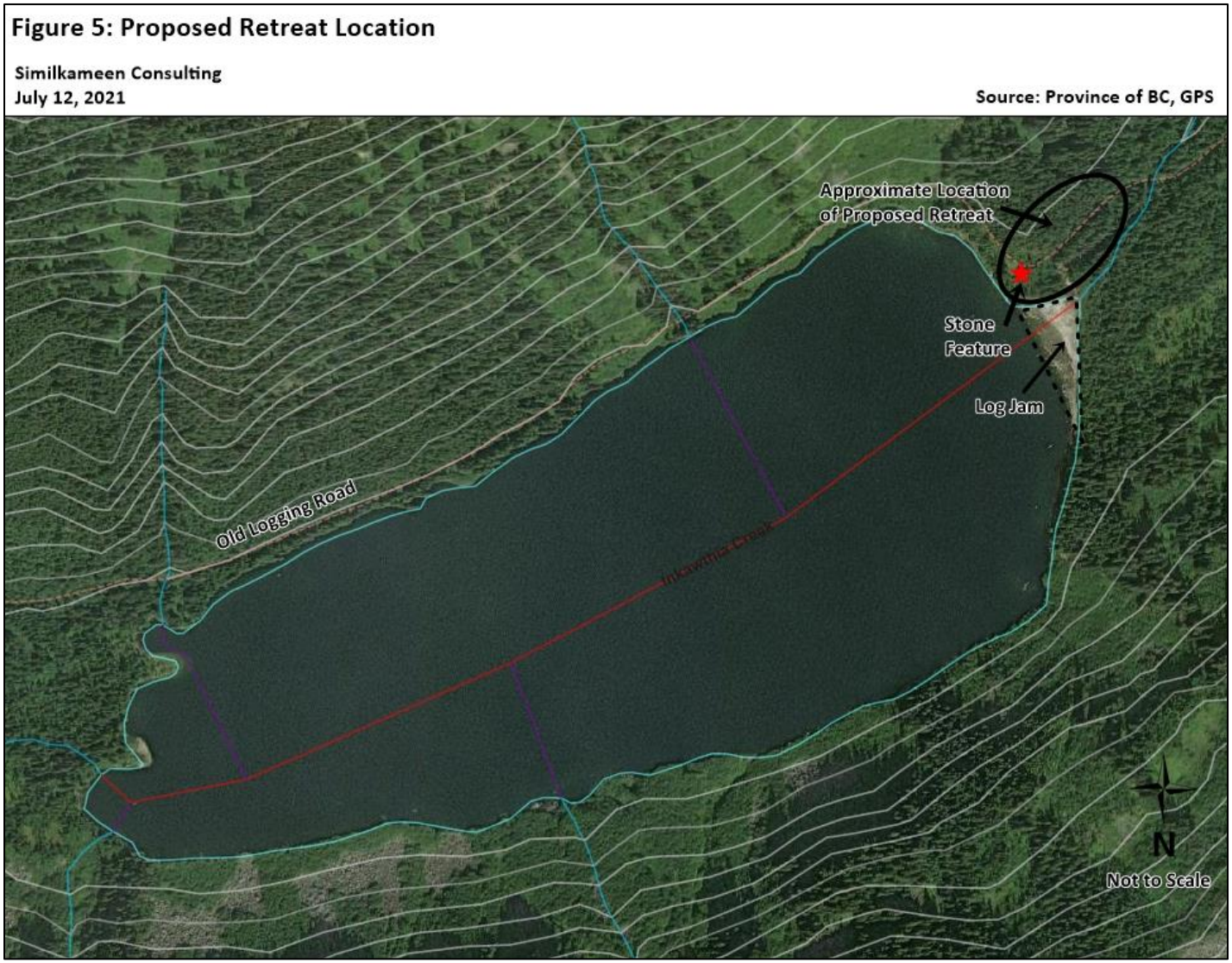


Plate 4: Looking southwest from the proposed retreat location

Plate 5: 1m diameter shallow depression with buried cobbles

Plate 6: Log jam at out let creek

Discussion and Recommendations

The majority of recorded/published oral historical information reviewed refers to the area to the northwest of the study area and the headwaters of Spuzzum Creek as culturally significant with little to no information on the study area directly (Laforet and York 1998).

The Skeemis Creek section of the proposed road had several previously recorded archaeological sites as well as CMTs from the era of the fur brigades when this area would have been briefly used by the Hudson's Bay and known as the Douglas portage.

While there are few previously recorded archaeology sites in conflict with the proposed access road it does not mean that they are not present. The density and distribution of archaeological sites in the Skeemish Creek watershed and along the BC Hydro right-of-way suggest that a systematic survey and shovel testing program along the length of Inkawthia Creek would likely yield a similar density and distribution of archaeological sites.

The following general recommendations are being made concerning the proposed concept of a community retreat. As there are no development plans it would be difficult to calculate costs and scope of work.

As such, it is recommended that areas planned to have subsurface impacts resulting from the development of the proposed retreat be subjected to an Archaeological Impact Assessment undertaken by a permit issued under the Heritage Conservation Act.

It is further recommended that some areas along the access route that require substantial upgrading will also require an Archaeological Impact Assessment. If no upgrades to the access road are planned, then no further archaeological work would be required for the access road.

All archaeological sites, whether recorded or unidentified, are protected by legislation and may not be altered, damaged, moved, excavated in, or disturbed in any way without a permit issued under either Section 12.2 or Section 12.4 of the *Heritage Conservation Act.*

Closure

This report was prepared for the exclusive use of the Spuzzum First Nation and Land Strategies. Any use or reliance on decisions made by third parties based on this report is the responsibility of such third parties.

The information contained in this report is not to be considered conclusive or all-encompassing as it relates to archaeological, cultural heritage or traditional use-values. Rather, it reflects the data collected within the time, budget and terms of reference provided. Archaeological and cultural heritage assessments rely upon an understanding of the past, present, and anticipated future exercise of Aboriginal Title and Rights which depends upon an evolving and developing information base.

This information is communicated in good faith however First Nations still claim title to the un-ceded lands and resources of British Columbia. By this First Nations have made it abundantly clear that they have not discharged the governments of British Columbia or Canada from their fiduciary obligations as the title to the land and resources is not yet settled. Recent court decisions such as the Tsilqot'in land claim have now proven aboriginal title exists on the land and that adequate consultation and accommodation of Aboriginal Title and Rights in the land and resources must be taken into consideration.

This study has been undertaken with the free, prior, and informed consent of the Spuzzum First Nation and is undertaken without prejudice to Aboriginal Title and Rights.

It is important to note that this assessment is intended to identify physical archaeological evidence of past human activity protected under the Heritage Conservation Act. The data contained herein does not address traditional land use or other concerns of the Spuzzum First Nation.

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