

The NWT Protected Areas Strategy

Working together to Protect the Land

Northwest Territories
Protected Areas Strategy

Outcomes

It is expected that students will learn about the Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy.

Curricular links

Grade 7 Dene Kede:

In the 4th module of the Grade 7 Dene Kede curriculum, My People, My Identity, the students are to demonstrate their understanding of who they are, the importance of the land to their culture and how to protect their land.

Grade 7 Science:

In Unit A: Interactions and Ecosystems with a social and environmental emphasis the students must:

- Describe the relationships among knowledge, decisions and actions in maintaining life-supporting environments;
- Identify intended and unintended consequences of human activities within local environments (e.g., changes resulting from habitat loss); and
- Analyze personal and public decisions that involve consideration of environmental impacts, and identify needs for scientific knowledge that can inform those decisions.

Grade 7 Social Studies: The Land: Places and People

Students will consider contemporary and historical issues related to land and resource use, survival and adaptation to the environment.

- 7-V-L-009: Demonstrate willingness to support the principles of stewardship and sustainability.

If we remember and live by the teachings and we take the signs set on the land for us as our symbols, we will survive as a nation.

George Blondin, Sahtu

Aboriginal rights:

In any area protected under the Protected Areas Strategy the rights of Aboriginals to hunt and fish and continue their traditional way of life do not change.

If we take care of the land, the land will take care of us.

Activity set up

There are four main tools to assist in the activities in this lesson including:

1. Video: Protecting our Special Places
2. Audio: Radio broadcast with Stephen Kakfwi
3. Map: NWT Protected Areas
4. Assessment (Cruncher)

Each of the first three tools can be found on the DVD. As you set up the lesson you could do each activity as a class or split into groups and design stations that groups rotate through.

Timing:

| | |
|--|--------|
| Activity 1 (Video: Protecting our Special Places) | 30 min |
| Activity 2 (Audio: Radio file with Stephen Kakfwi) | 15 min |
| Activity 3 (Map: NWT Protected Areas) | 15 min |

Split your class into 3 groups. The numbers in groups 2 and 3 should equal the number in group 1. After 30 minutes, groups 2 and 3 move together to activity 1 and group 1 splits into two groups to do activities 2 and 3.

Once students have participated in all the activities, hand out the assessment tool which is the PAS 'cruncher' or 'fortune teller'. Completing the cruncher will help you to assess if your students have comprehended the material.

The purpose of this brief lesson is:

- To help your students become aware of the NWT Protected Areas Strategy;
- To help create dialogue about all sides of the development debate during this very exciting time in NWT history.
- To ensure the students know that they have regional and community representation on the PAS and that their voices are important;

Materials

Video: Protecting our Special Places

Map

Audio file

Handouts for each

PAS cruncher

Background for the teacher¹

The Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy helps NWT communities protect special areas of land for the long term.

The Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) was developed by:

- Regional Aboriginal organizations;
- The federal and territorial governments;
- Environmental non-governmental organizations; and
- Industry representatives.

These groups understand the importance of land to communities. They worked in partnership to develop the PAS so communities lead the process and are able to benefit from both development and conservation.

One goal of the NWT PAS includes protecting special natural and cultural areas of the NWT. This includes the land and water we need for our wildlife, our economy, our culture and our values. Examples of these special natural and cultural areas include:

- Important habitat;
- Harvest areas;
- Cultural areas;
- Special land features; and
- Recreation and tourism areas.

Another goal of the PAS is to protect a sample area of each ecoregion in the NWT of which there are 42.

Communities decide:

- What special areas of land should be protected?
- Why does the land need to be protected?
What kind of protection does the land need?
- Is the PAS the best way to protect this special area?

A balanced approach

The PAS involves all people and groups with an interest in the land. It promotes a balanced approach to land use decisions by including the best available traditional, ecological, cultural and economic knowledge. With the best information, communities are able to make decisions that are right for present and future generations.

¹ Mackenzie Valley Five Year Action Plan (2004-2009) which was prepared by the NWT PAS Secretariat.

Ecoregion:

An area with a unique mix of plants, animals, climate, water and ground types.

There are 42 different ecoregions in the NWT.

A core representative area represents all habitats, communities, species, or other natural features in an ecoregion, and thus deserves the highest level of conservation protection.

Why do we need an Action Plan for the Mackenzie Valley?

Few areas in the Mackenzie Valley are protected for the long term, and there is a lot of potential for new development. The proposed Mackenzie Gas Project, if approved, will directly or indirectly affect 16 different ecoregions in the Mackenzie Valley. The pipeline will bring other development as well, including feeder lines to communities and all-weather roads. As development proceeds, it will become more difficult to protect important areas and connect them to form a network of protected areas.

Communities, with support from the PAS partners, need to take action now to work towards their long-term conservation goals in the Mackenzie Valley.

Lesson Plan

Opener: Fun with acronyms

To begin the lesson, ask your students if anyone has heard of the PAS. Don't tell them what it stands for. Give them a few minutes to try and come up with what they think it could mean. For example, one student could guess "Parents Against Students". Have some fun with the acronym. After a few minutes tell them about the Protected Areas Strategy using the background information provided.

Connector: Incredible shrinking island

To teach the concept of sharing the land with other interests and planning, use the following activity.

1. Place a large tarp or blanket on the floor and invite all the students in your class to stand on the tarp. It should be large enough that they have no trouble doing so.
2. Explain to the class that the tarp represents the entire available habitat to a caribou herd, including forest, eskers, tundra, wetlands, hills and valleys. (You may have to review the definition of "habitat" with the class.)
3. Tell them that someone just built a mine on their habitat. The class must get off the tarp and fold it in half. Ask them to stand on the tarp again. This time they should still all be able to stand but are closer together.
4. Ask them to name something else that could affect caribou habitat (such as a road, a number of exploration or hunting camps, a town, a pipeline or a new gravel pit). Again shrink their habitat and invite them to stand again.
5. Continue playing until their habitat has shrunk so much that they can no longer stand on the tarp. This will represent the capacity of the tarp (or habitat) to sustain the population. Some of the caribou will have to "die."
6. Ask students to name the essential components of habitat (food, water, shelter, space) and to note that when any of these components are affected, the caribou populations become stressed.
7. In any well-thought-out land use plan the region will ensure that critical habitat is protected first and that the other areas are open for development.
8. The Protected Areas Strategy is one tool that communities and regional organizations can use to reach their conservation goals.

Habitat:

Components that organisms need to survive including food, shelter, water and space.

Activity 1: Protecting Our Special Places

The Protected Areas Strategy produced the video [Protecting Our Special Places](#). It contains messages from Elders from around the North discussing the importance of the land. Some of the Elders are speaking in their Aboriginal language and subtitles are provided. The video also describes the Protected Areas Strategy in plain language.

1. Hand out a copy of the [Protecting Our Special Places](#) worksheet to each student.
2. As a class or group, view the video and have the students answer the questions.
3. Discuss as a group.

Activity 2 : What's on the map?

The DVD that accompanied this package contains a map of the NWT with the proposed protected areas and other areas of interest. Allow time for your students to use the map to answer the questions in the accompanying question sheet.

Note: It is very important that students note the differences between what is currently protected and what areas are proposed under the PAS. Their understanding will be evident in their answers.

Activity 3: Stephen Kakfwi speaks out

The DVD contains an audio file of Stephen Kakfwi speaking about his position on protected areas now and thirty years ago when he was part of the Indian Brotherhood (now called the Dene Nation). Hand out a copy of the assignment and allow time for your students to listen to his three minute piece to answer the questions. They may need to listen more than once.

Assessment: PAS cruncher

1. Hand out the PAS "cruncher" to each student in your class. Photocopy one if you don't have enough. Keep one for making copies at a later date.
2. Read through the folding instructions with your class so that they know how to fold their PAS cruncher.
3. The cruncher was designed to assess what they learned throughout all the activities you have done with them on this topic. Have them work with a partner to answer each of the eight questions. Some questions have a definitive answer while others are more open-ended.

Reflection

1. Have the students complete the following sentences.

- Today I learned that the PAS is...
- I think the Protected Areas Strategy is...
- In 100 years the land around my community will look like...

4. Encourage your students to bring their cruncher home to see if their parents are aware of the PAS.
5. Encourage a class discussion on what special places they would like to see protected in their communities or if they think protection is necessary. All opinions are equal, the goal is the dialogue.

Follow up activity:

Go to the Northern News Services website and do a search for Protected Areas Strategy or the Mackenzie Gas Project.

Have your students complete an article review.

Have them read the article and write a summary of what the article states. Do they agree with it or not? Encourage them to underline the words or phrases that they do not understand and to work together to make sense of the article.

Additional resources

Provided below are some ideas of how you could research with your students to follow up on the PAS or the issues related to development in the NWT.

For more information contact:

1. The PAS website (www.nwtpas.ca) will take you to a full page of web links where you can find more information.

Protected Areas Strategy
Secretariat
Environment and Natural
Resources
Government of the NWT
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9
Tel: (867) 920-3179
Fax: (867) 873-0293

Protected Areas Strategy
Secretariat
Indian and Northern Affairs
Canada
P.O. Box 1500
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2R3
Tel: (867) 669-2685
Fax: (867) 669-2701

2. Contact your local Band Office or phone your regional representative.
3. Websites of other groups that are working on the PAS:

www.cpaws.org/grassroots-chapters/nwt.html

www.y2y.org

www.ducks.ca

www.wwfcanada.org

www.capp.ca

4. Other teaching resources include:

Ernie's Earth - Room to Roam

In these (3) 30 min videos, well-known northern author and ecologist, Jamie Bastedo, is Ernie, the candid and enthusiastic interpreter. Ernie delves into the The Myth of Superabundance- (the belief that there is unlimited natural space out there)- and looks at how all kinds of human land uses gobble up habitats, often quite unknowingly.

The Land is Our Storybook – 10 book series (not all books available yet) including the books We Feel Good Out Here by Julie-ann Andre and Mindy Willett and The Delta is My Home by Tom McLeod and Mindy Willett and Living Stories by Therese Zoe, Philip Zoe and Mindy Willett

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Prize opportunity

Follow the directions to win a great prize.

Protecting Our Special Places (Video)

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Describe at least three reasons the Elders want to protect special places.

2. Raymond Taniton says:

'If there's no protection, there will be development. If there is development, the stories of the land will go with it.'

What do you think he means when he says the stories of the land will go if there is development? Do you agree with him?

3. What will the protection status mean for Edehzhie according to Herb Norwegian?

4. What's the first step of the Protected Areas Strategy?

5. Describe your "special place." Where is it and what activities do you do in there?

Existing Protected Areas, National Parks and NWT PAS Initiatives (Map)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Answer the following questions using the information provided on the map.

1. Name three existing protected areas in the NWT.
2. Which existing protected area is closest to your home? What is special about that place?
3. Name an "area of interest" which is being put forward by more than one region.
4. Which step are Sahoyúé and ?ehdacho in the PAS process. What protection does this give this area?
5. Who is advancing the Pehdzeh Ki Ndeh area?
6. By looking at the map, which area looks to be the largest proposed protected area? Which is the smallest in area? What is the largest area already protected?

**This is Our Land: Let's ensure it is healthy for our children and grandchildren
(Audio)**

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Where did Stephen Kakfwi grow up?
2. He describes his home place as a "mini-NWT." Why?
3. What is his favourite place and why?
4. The Elders said that "keeping our land healthy keeps our people healthy."
Can you explain how this is true?
5. What did Stephen Kakfwi fight for 30 years ago?
6. What work does he say is still left to be done? What is he challenging the
leaders and youth of today to do?
7. If you want to protect special areas what can you do?

Bonus: Who is Stephen Kakfwi?