



TSE'K'WA

National Historic Site

Parks Canada
Concept Proposal





About Tse'k'wa

Tse'k'wa, or "rock house" in Dane-zaa/Beaver language, has been home to the Dane-zaa ancestors for over 12,500 years. The site is owned and managed by Tse'k'wa Heritage Society, a collaboration of three partner First Nations: Doig River, Prophet River and West Moberly. Tse'k'wa was designated a National Historic Site in 2019.

Our goal is to create a world-class museum and interpretive centre: an education and tourism destination, where one can gain knowledge by hearing Dane-zaa stories, seeing ancient artifacts, and engaging with the culture.

Tse'k'wa is at a critical stage of transformation. We are expanding our current infrastructure and offering a variety of public tours, cultural programs, and educational opportunities. We are also experiencing an exponential growth in public interest. Now, we need stable, equitable operational funding to meet this demand.

"Tse'k'wa is Chqde Wuujo (a good place) where we gather, preserve, and celebrate Dane Zaa language, culture, and heritage."

- Tse'k'wa Heritage Society Mission



Infrastructure Improvements

Tse'k'wa Heritage Society is currently completing several large-scale infrastructure projects on the site as we transform the site into a public museum and interpretive centre. The current infrastructure budget is \$1.47 million, provided by:

- Government of Canada
- Province of British Columbia
- Northern Development Initiative Trust
- First Peoples Cultural Council
- Northern BC Tourism
- Peace River Regional District
- Corporate Sponsors

In Progress

All current infrastructure work is on schedule to be completed by April 2023. Projects include:

- Interpretive trail to cave
- Artifact repository space
- Open air amphitheater
- Universal design outhouses
- Accessible picnic tables & benches
- Archaeology dome
- Accessible bathroom renovation
- Basement → classroom renovation
- Teaching kitchen renovation



"We are particularly pleased that the Tse'k'wa Heritage Society has made accessibility a priority right from the start"

- Nancy Harris, Access BC Team Lead

Future Projects

Our five year plans for Tse'k'wa include:

- Welcome vestibule & exterior
- Physical & digital exhibits
- Elevator access to all three floors
- Staff and meetings spaces
- Expanded interpretive trails

Organizational Capacity

Tse'k'wa Heritage Society operates on a shoestring budget, relying on modest operational grants from the three Stakeholder First Nations, project-based grants, and volunteer support from our Elders and community members. We are currently experiencing an operational deficit while doing this critical work.

It is time to recognize the value of Tse'k'wa.

Meet Our Team

Tse'k'wa National Historic Site is managed and operated by three Board of Directors and one full-time staff member.

Cultural staff from the three Stakeholder First Nations provide assistance for special events and programs.



Tse'k'wa Directors and Staff



Staffing Needs

The following staffing positions are urgently needed to meet public demand:

- Tour Guides
- Exhibit Curator
- Educational Coordinator
- Collections Manager
- Communications Coordinator
- Cultural Programmers
- Archaeologist
- Landscaping & Grounds
- Maintenance & Janitorial

Current Activities

These are just a few of the our recent activities:

- K-12 School Tours for SD60/59
- Dane-zaa Storytelling and Drumming
- UNBC Archaeology Field School
- Artifact Curation Training
- Outreach Booth & Lectures
- Public Tours and Visits

"If you want something,
make it."

- Elder Mary McKanachaa

Annual Need: \$775,000

Education & Training

Bringing together Indigenous knowledge and western science, Tse'k'wa connects the past, present and future. We invite our learners on an exciting journey of shared history that builds respect for our land's First Peoples.

Archaeology...

We pride ourselves on being stewards of one of North America's most significant archaeological sites. Some of our recent learning opportunities include:

- Hafting stone tools with local homeschool groups
- Booth at Doig Day, with Heritage North Consulting & SD60
- Archaeology education kit, with SFU and Treaty 8 Tribal Association
- 5 year archaeology research agreement, with SFU and UNBC
- Artifact Curation Training Program, with BC Hydro and NENAS
- Archaeology Field School, with UNBC and SFU
- Stewards of Tse'k'wa documentary with Telus



...and More

In addition to our archaeology programs, we regularly collaborate with schools and organizations to host training workshops and specialized tours, including:

- Grade 11 Earth Sciences Tour
- BC Hydro Environmental Monitors
- Forestry and Lands Development
- Destination Tourism Guides
- BC Wildfire Service & Firesmart

Cultural Programming

At Tse'k'wa we enter a gathering space used by the Dane-zaa since the time of the wqlii nachii (giant animals). It is a unifying place where the Dane-zaa can tell their story in their own voice. Our cultural programming fosters relationships between First Nations, neighbouring settler communities and visitors.

Current Projects

These are a few of our recent projects, completed with the help of our Elders and Knowledge Holders:

- Dane-zaa drumming and storytelling
- Hands-on learning in kwâ-zâa watsáádzé? (old camp)
- Interpretive trail signage featuring Dane-zaa language
- Healing garden and traditional plant survey
- Cultural picnics and activities with Nenan family services
- International Student Welcome with local college
- Orange Shirt Tours on Truth & Reconciliation Day
- Moose hide processing



Program Needs

The following resources are needed to sustain education and cultural programming:

- Honoraria for Dane-zaa Elders & Knowledge Holders
- Program Support Helpers
- Mileage, Travel & Hospitality
- Cultural Medicines & Materials
- Outreach & Event Supplies
- Administration

Annual Need: \$225,000





You Can Help




We are proud of our Nations, our way of being and we don't want the stories that form our culture to be lost. We are planning ahead to ensure that the Dane-zaa language, artifacts, culture, and heritage is not only preserved, but celebrated.

We are evolving with the times - carrying the valuable learnings of the past with us so we always know where we came from and what nation and culture we belong. At the same time, we are acting on opportunities to participate in the local and world economies in innovative and progressive ways.

Tse'k'wa Heritage Society has built a foundation for cultural learning and reconciliation. We need your help to continue this important work.

**Contact us today to support
Northeastern BC's first and only
National Historic Site!**

**\$5 million
over 5 years**

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