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In the Face of Exploitation: Empowering Stó:lō Cultural Landscape Management and Heritage Preservation



Presentation

by

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ABSTRACT



Since the establishment of the colony of British Columbia in 1858, the Sto:lo of the lower Fraser Valley continue to face exploitation of their land and resources by colonial forces. Lacking power to prevent the massive scale of resource extraction and urbanization of the past 150 years, the Sto:lo suffered severe adverse impacts to their culture, society and health - in realms both material and immaterial. More recently, the Sto:lo Nation drafted heritage policy and applied GIS systems to heritage management in efforts to protect and preserve their cultural properties and landscape. These efforts effectively bring recognition to the Sto:lo the management of their cultural and intellectual properties, bringing new strategies and increasing empowerment in

A QUESTION OF RELATIONSHIPS

At the heart of the relationship between Indigenous people and the State lies the greatest repatriation effort in human history -- the reconstitution of Indigenous governance from centuries of colonial dislocation and control.

But how do we do this....

.....I examine three historic models and propose a fourth *model of relations*.

“Colonialism”

A practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another...
[that] involves political and economic control over a dependent territory.

-Kohn, Margaret. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition).

(I) Indigenous Identity – “If First Nations can’t trust the government to act properly where a few hectares of trees are at issue, why should it trust it to respect the treaty process where the stakes are far higher -- *survival itself in the eyes of many aboriginal leaders?*”

- Stephen Hume (*Vancouver Sun*, 13 December 2003)

(III) Land ‘Managers’ – “Companies are looking for clarity around what areas of the province are absolutely open, or absolutely closed to mine development, which is where.. miners feel caught **in the middle**.. \$400 billion worth of resource-related projects being proposed across Canada involve aboriginal interests. ”

- Derick Penner (*Vancouver Sun*, 12 November 2011)

(II) Colonial Authority - “We have no history of colonialism.”

- Stephen Harper, Prime Minister, Canada (September 2010)

The Heart of the Issue: Political Economic Competition



Two communities of Power & Rights

(both Human)



(I) Indigenous Intellectual Properties & Inherent Rights

- Originating *in situ* from a place
- Constituting interconnected relations of people, places, things
- Aboriginal paradigm / values

(II) Colonialist Intellectual Property & Imported Rights

- Imported from another place
- Occupying a conceptual 'vacant space' (*Terra Nullius*) - *erasure*
- Foreign paradigm / values

RELATIONAL THEORY & MODELS

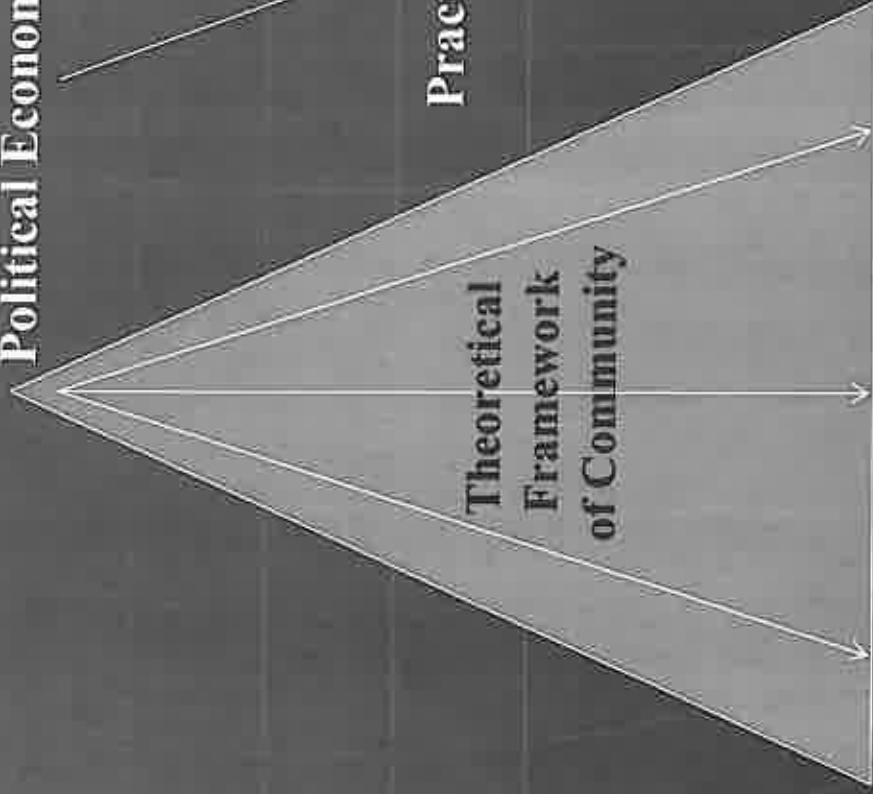
A Brief History of Relations

Political Economy – Intellectual Property – Knowledge

Practice & Tradition

Land and Resource Use

Theoretical Framework of Community



RELATIONAL MODELS thru time

(A) An Indigenous Framework – Two Rows



- Two Canoes & travelling Parallel Paths down the River of Life
– each maintaining their own Laws, Culture and Beliefs
- No Overlap

...IT DIDN'T WORK!

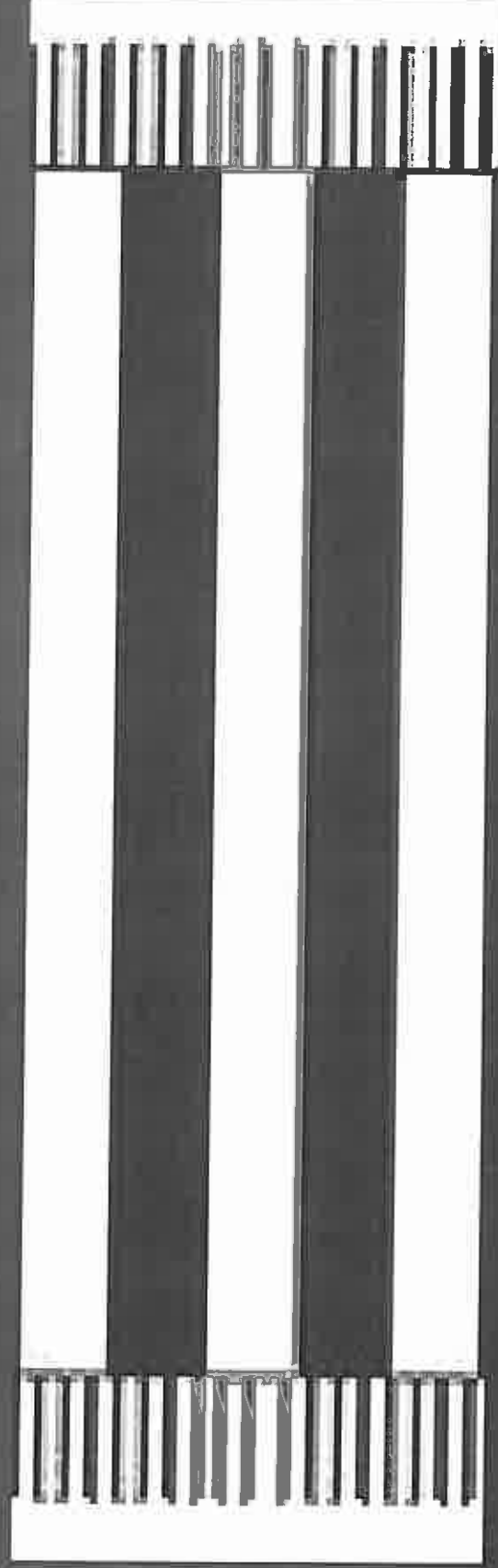
(B) A Colonial Framework – One Row



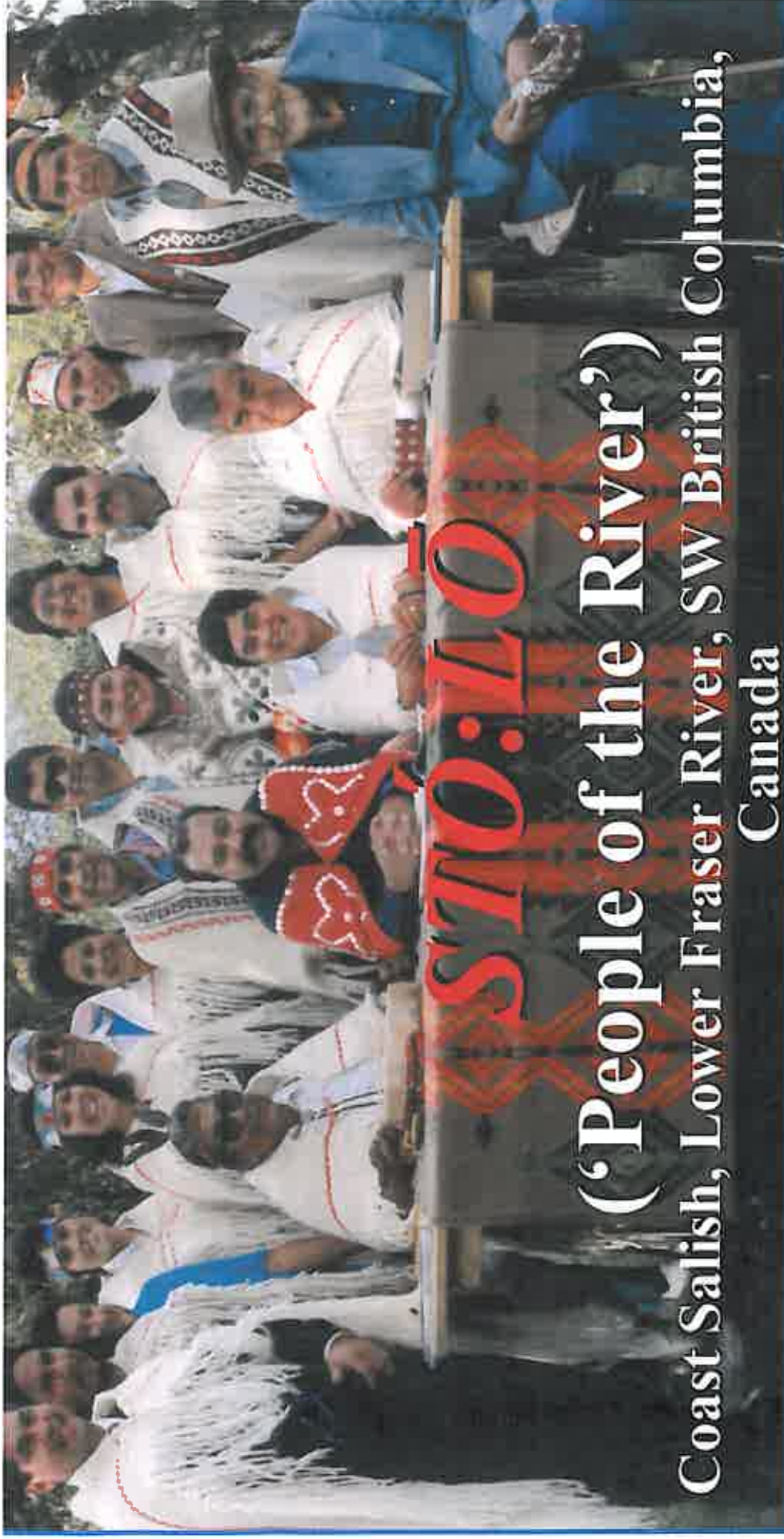
- Domination & Assimilation – ‘Colonialism’ - (term first used ca. 1853)
- Uncontrolled Overlap

...IT DIDN'T WORK!

Early G.I.S.



Now.. The Stó:lō & GIS.



STO:LO (‘People of the River’)

Coast Salish, Lower Fraser River, SW British Columbia, Canada

- Colonized for 150+ years – British Columbia (since 1858)
- ‘Wards’ of Canada per *Civilization / Indian Act* since (1870s)
- No Surrender of Land
- No surrender of Rights
- No Treaty

A Stó:lō Constitution

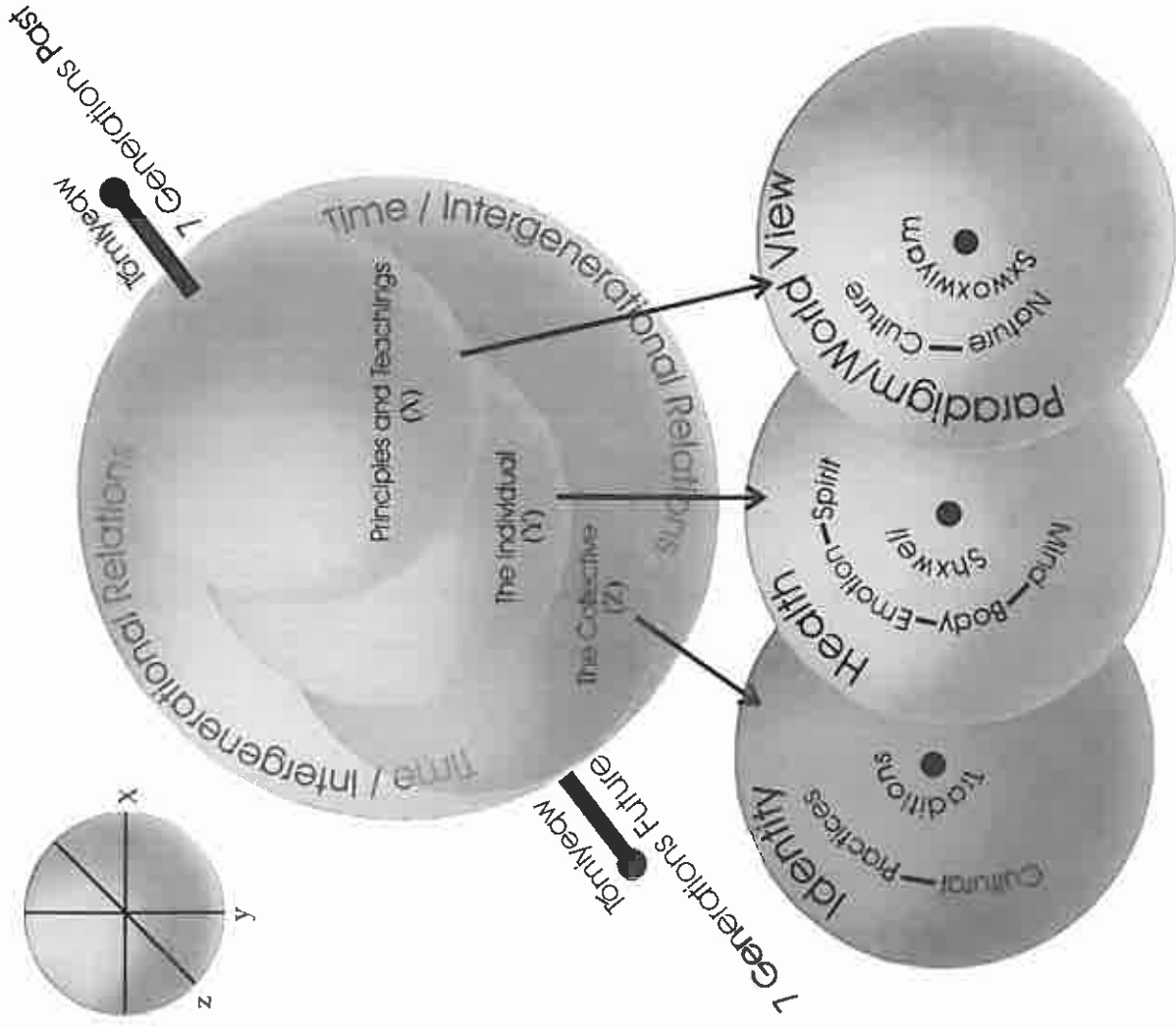
The creator in his wisdom decided to take certain people and make an example of them, and so throughout the Nation you have these stone figures which represent rules or values that we have actually now in stone. And our constitution has always been here then, our rules of conduct, our rules of behavior, and the way that we think, our moral values....

- Interview with Xwelikwetal (Steven Point) in "Xwelatse is Findly Home," film production by Herb Joe, David Schaepe, Albert McHalsie and the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (2006).

Political Economic Paradigm: Inter-connected relations between People, Places, and Things

'4 Inter-connected Dimensions of Stó:lō Culture'

(Schaepe et al. 2004)



S'ólh Téméxw ('Our World')

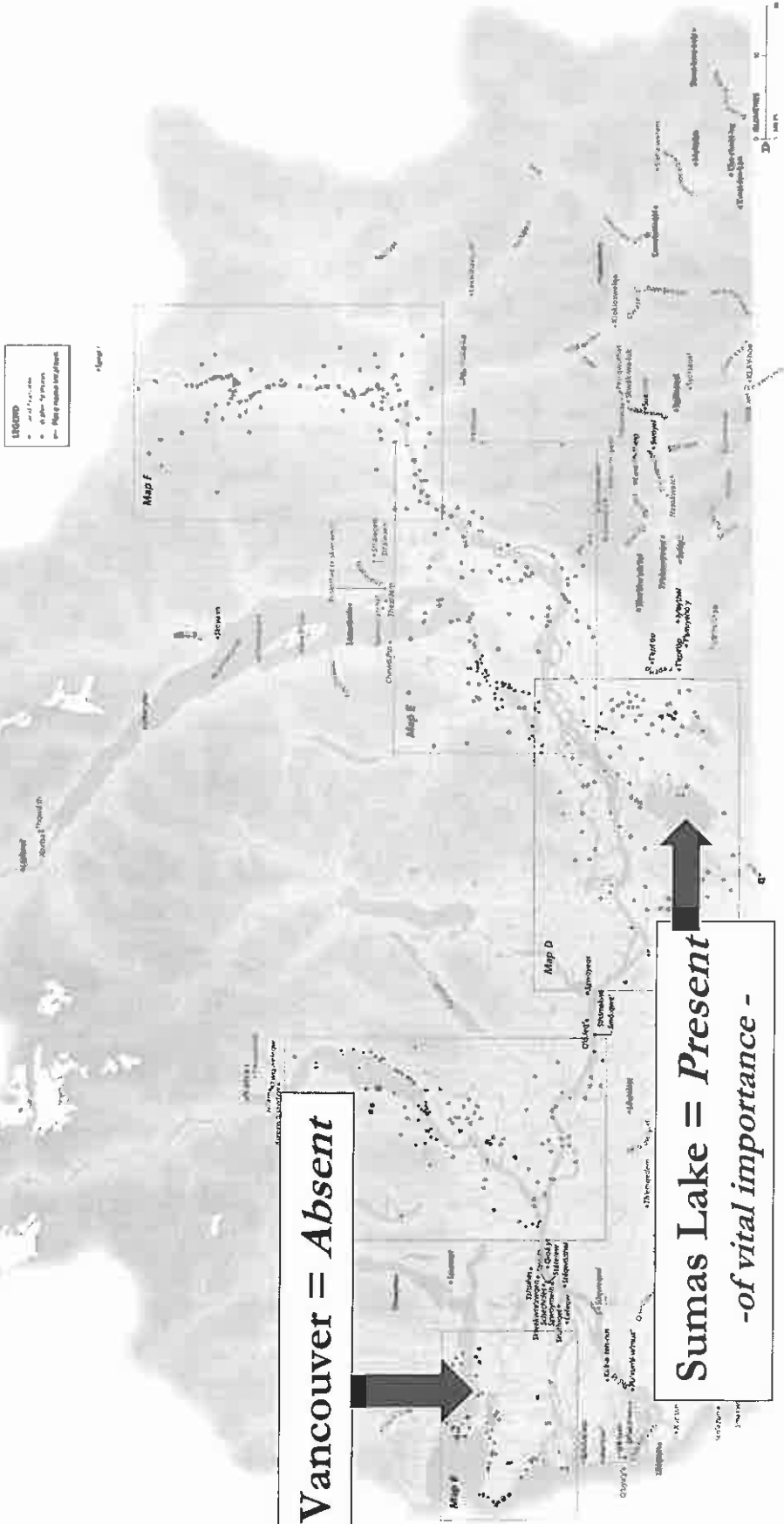
Lower Fraser River Watershed, SW British Columbia



S'ólh Téméxw - ca. 1800

LEGEND

- First Place Name
- Second Place Name
- Third Place Name

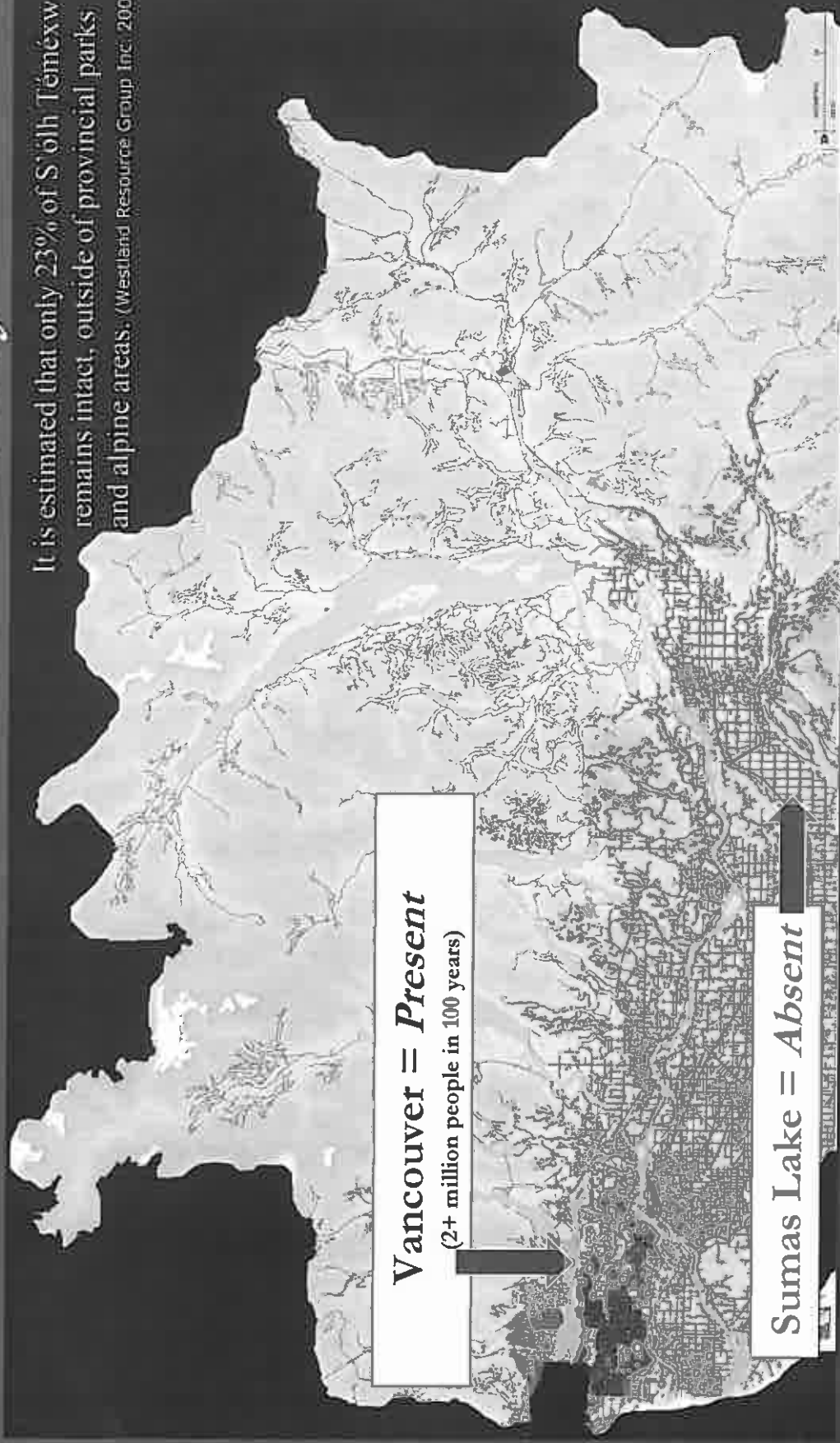


Vancouver = Absent

**Sumas Lake = Present
-of vital importance -**

S'ólh Téméxw – Today

It is estimated that only 23% of S'ólh Téméxw remains intact, outside of provincial parks and alpine areas. (Westland Resource Group Inc. 2008)



(Duffell 2001)

“When they drained the lake, they drained the heart out of our people.” (Elder Ray Silver, Sumas/Sema:th Tribe)

Common Mechanisms for Re-dressing Colonialism

Colonial Processes – at the mercy of Colonial Power & Paradigm:

- The Courts - litigation
- Treaty-making – negotiation

Indigenous Processes:

- ‘Nation Building’ – political unification
- Assertion - direct action

RELATIONSHIP MODEL C: (CURRENT SITUATION) **GAINING RECOGNITION and DEFINING RIGHTS** thru

Applying Mechanisms...

- Litigation
- Negotiation
- Direct Action
- Consultation / Accommodation

...**THAT HAVE NOT WORKED!** Based on assessment of Aboriginal standards of living.

The Legal Spectrum of Aboriginal Rights

Access / Use -----

(dependent on availability of resources
Managed by others – e.g., SUMAS LAKE)



Title -----

(never been specifically
recognized)

Management -----

(a largely unexplored area & opportunity)

Intro to Stó:lō's

S'ÓLH TÉMÉXW USE PLAN

(2010)

A Cultural Heritage Resource Management Tool

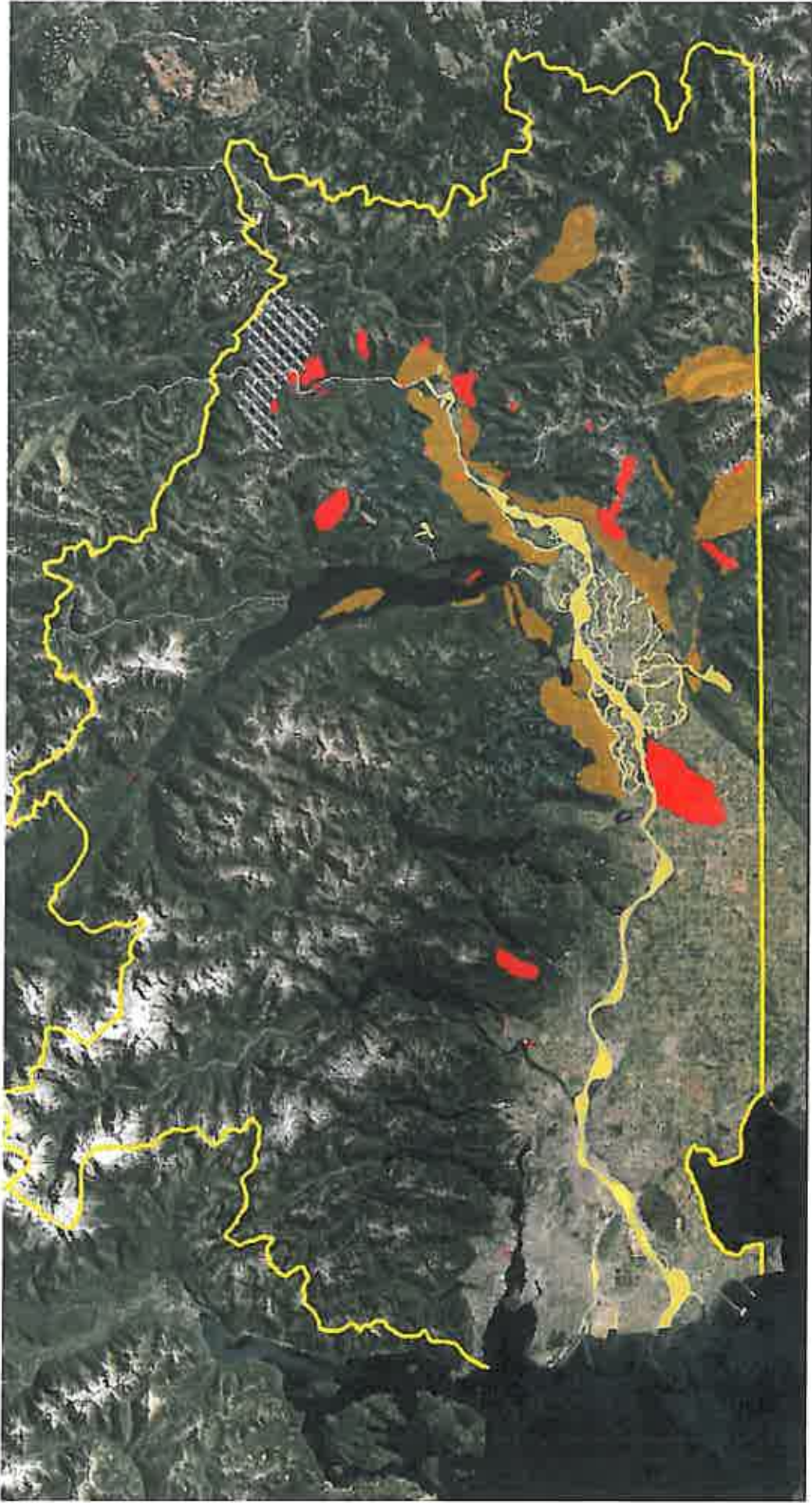
(with an 'anthropological' foundation)

- BALANCES CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEEDS – per STO:LO VALUES
 - REPRESENTS STO:LO POLITICAL ECONOMY / IDENTITY
 - BRINGS VISIBILITY TO THE STO:LO CULTURAL LANDSCAPE
 - A GIS-based TOOL FOR 'COMBATTING' COLONIAL RESOURCE EXTRACTION
-
- Built on Policy - *Stó:lō Heritage Policy (2003)* – Defines Stó:lō Heritage
 - Derived from Inventory – *Stó:lō Heritage Plan (2003-present)* – spatially locates Heritage

**Geographic Information Systems (GIS):
REPRESENTATIONS OF
INDIGENOUS & COLONIAL
CULTURAL LANDSCAPES**

Hard to see, eh?





Legend



Canyon Heritage Area



Cultural Landscape/Sxwoxwiyam Feature



Sanctuary



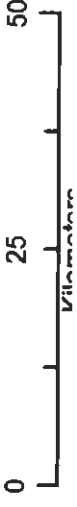
Protect Watershed



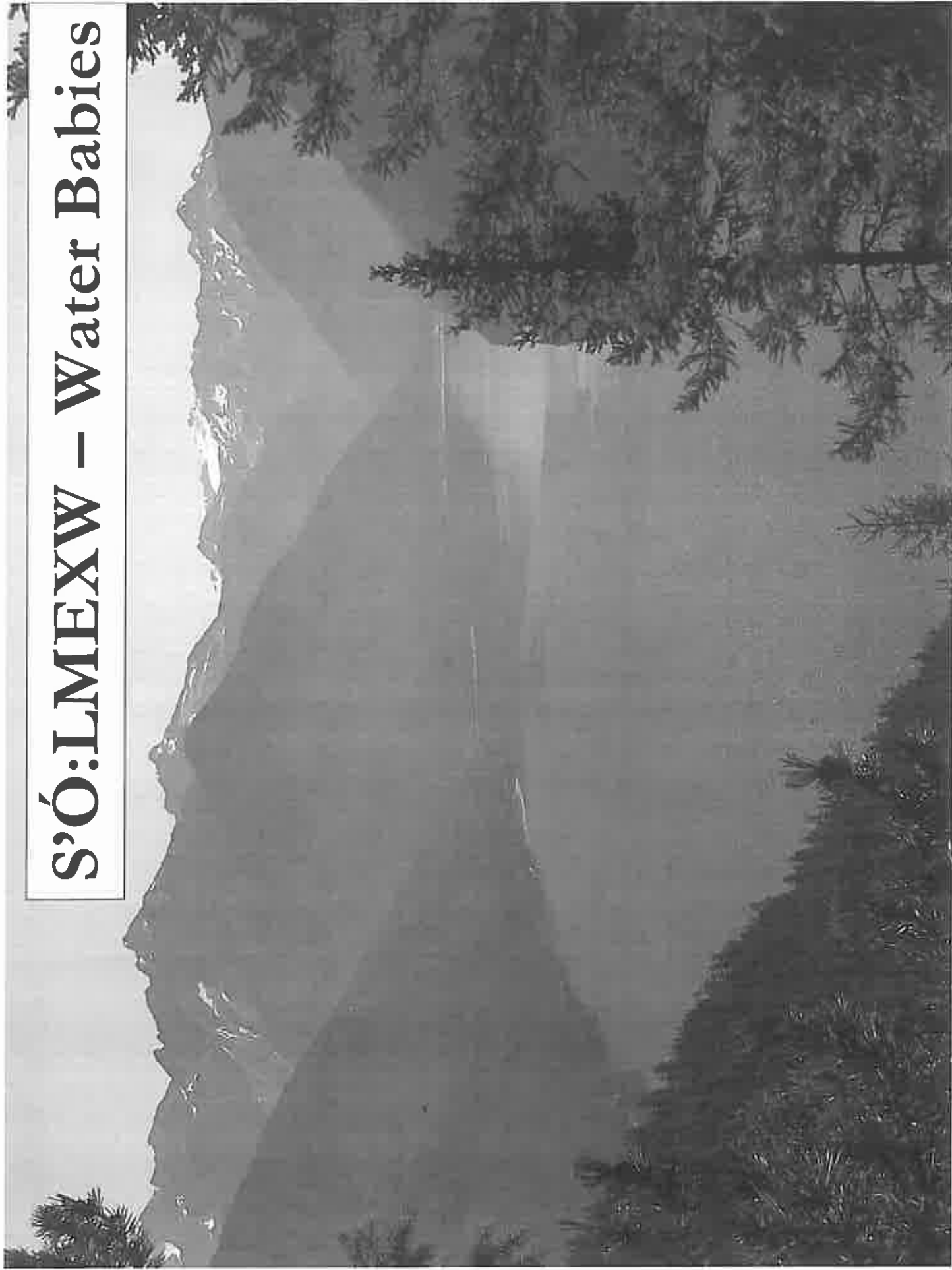
Protect Waterway_Waterbody



S'ólh Téméxw

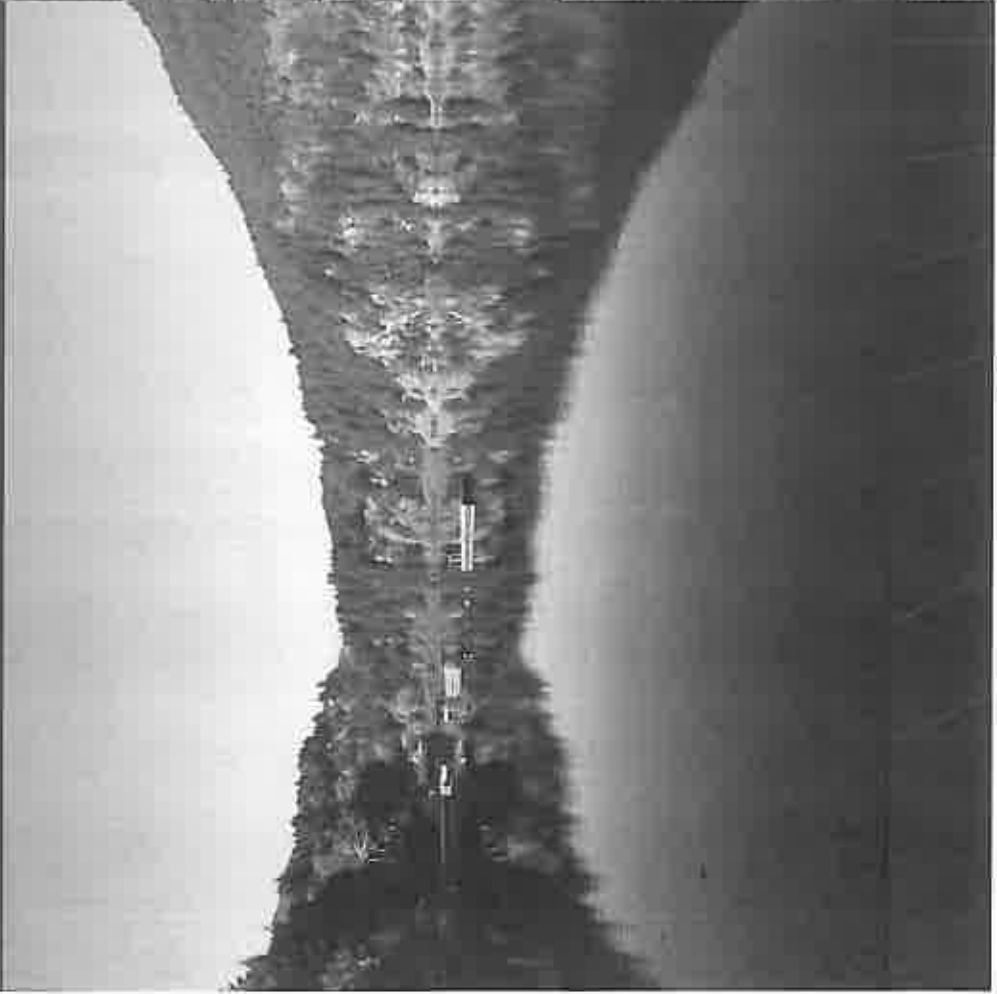


S'Ó:LMEXW – Water Babies



SXWÓ:YXWEY

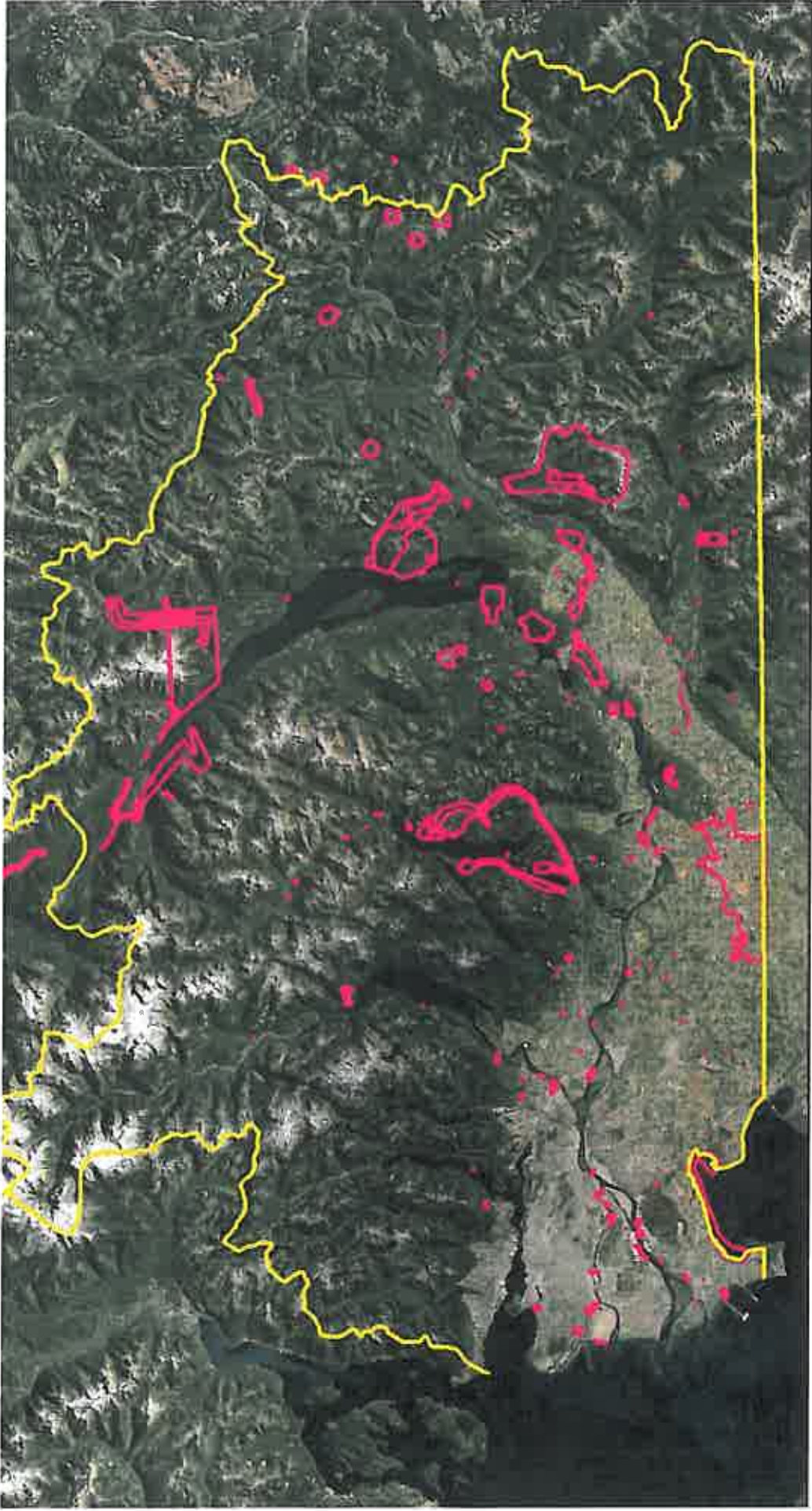
KOW KALFE



SMÍLHA – Winter Dance



**British Columbia's
ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE**



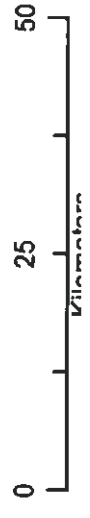
A COLONIAL CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF RESOURCE EXTRACTION

Legend

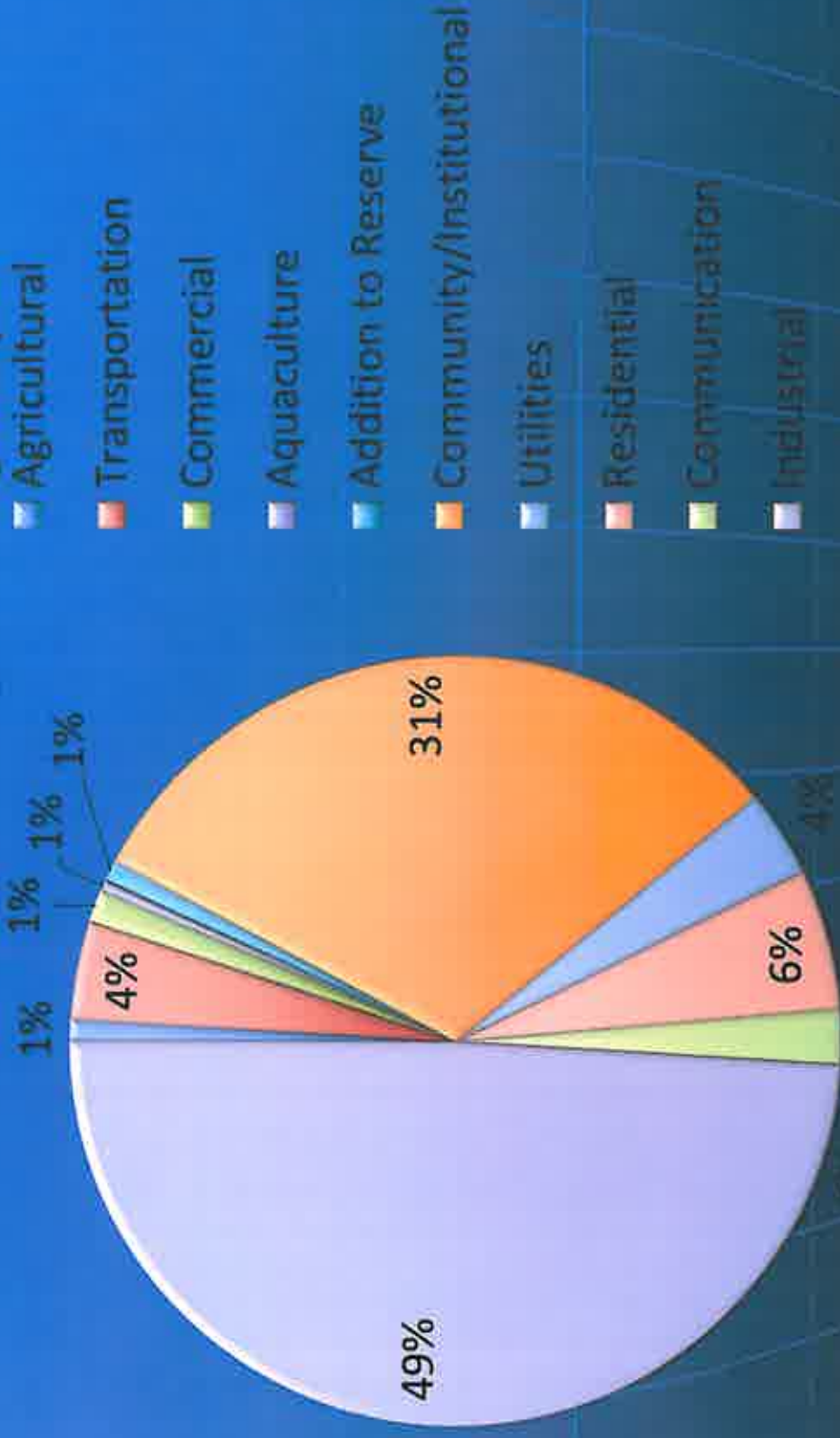
— S'ólh Téméxw

□ 2008 Referrals

- Excluding Forestry



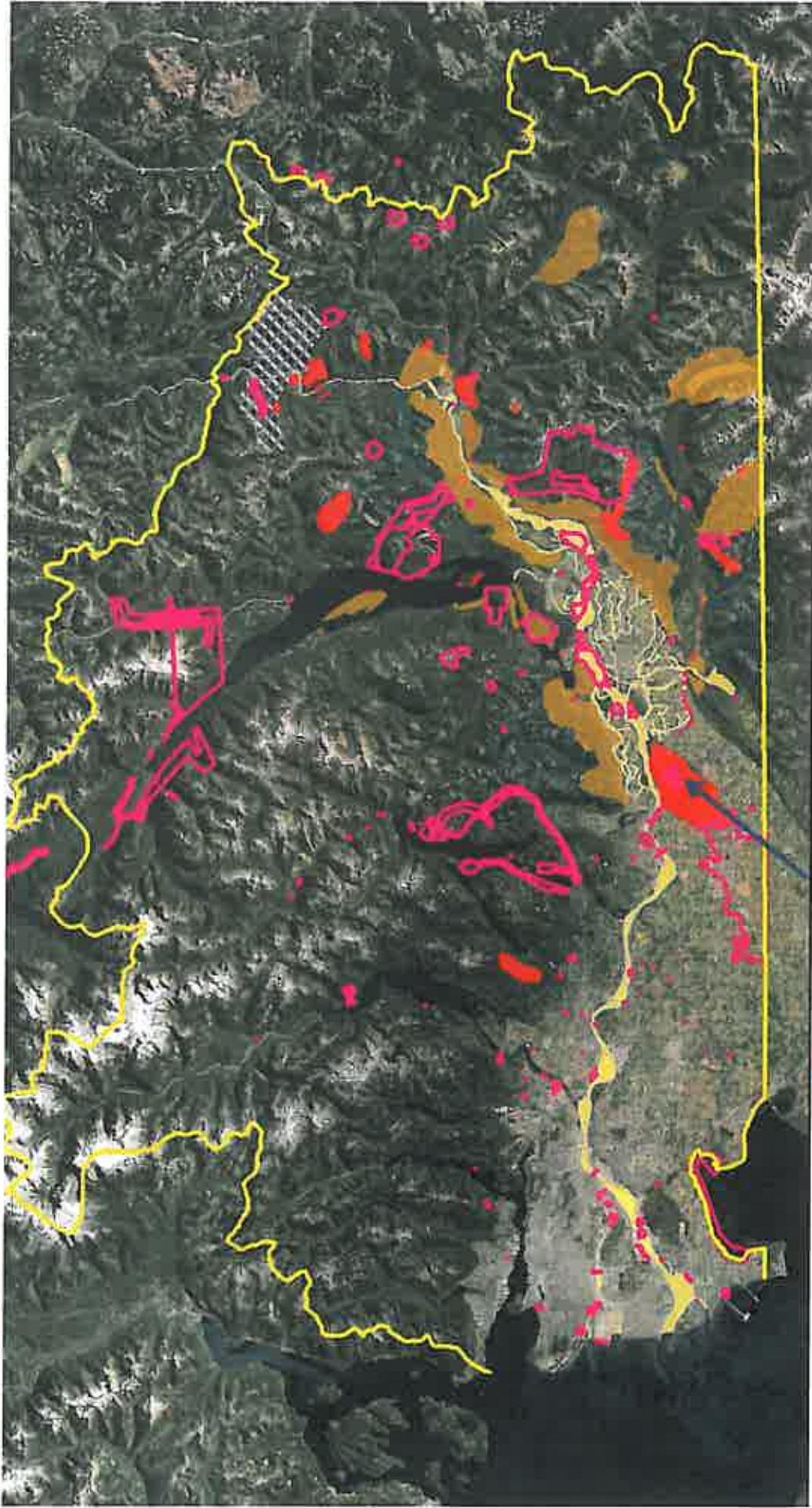
Quantifying Resource Extraction Development Applications (Yr 2008): Types / Percentages / Frequency



of Referrals: 220
- Excluding Forestry

...creating a fourth model – Three Rows!

THE CO-OCCUPATION OF PLACE: Overlaying Indigenous and Colonial Political Economies & Landscapes



Legend

 Canyon Heritage Area

 Cultural Landscape/Sxwoxwiyam Feature

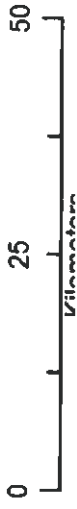
 Sanctuary

 Protect Watershed

 Protect Waterway_Waterbody

 S'ólh Téméxw

 2008 Referrals

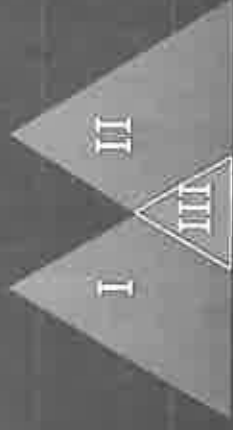


"DONT MINE HERE!"

(D) THREE ROW MODEL of RELATIONSHIPS

- Each maintains their own Laws, Culture & Beliefs (I & II) – i.e., exclusive IPs.
- Each shares in managing the land (III) – shared material economy.
- Set against a backdrop of mutual respect.

= EXCLUSIVITY WITH CONTROLLED OVERLAP.



CAN IT WORK TO MITIGATE
impacts of COLONIALISM?

We're trying. We'll see.



THANK YOU.