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## Celebrating and Honoring the Lives of Kaska MMIWG

Over the past many months, we have worked towards celebrating and honoring the lives of our missing and murdered (MMIWG) Kaska sisters, engaging families in a process designed to support their grieving and closure, and the passage of their loved ones.

*\*In our work to Celebrate and Honor the Lives of Kaska MMIWG, we gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Bell Canada Let's Talk Community Fund.*

### Honoring Potlatches

The process of honoring our MMIWG sisters relies heavily on the reciprocal sharing that is part of our clan system. To acknowledge this, we will be hosting honoring potlatches in Ross River and Watson Lake as follows:

Ross River	Crow Honoring Potlatch	September 23	3:00 pm	RR School
Ross River	Wolf Honoring Potlatch	September 24	3:00 pm	RR School
Watson Lake	Crow Honoring Potlatch	September 28	2:00 pm	WL Community Centre
Watson Lake	Wolf Honoring Potlatch	September 29	2:00 pm	WL Community Centre

***\*This is a substance free event. No drugs or alcohol allowed. We ask that you respect our request.***

### Our Potlatch Tradition

Different forms of potlatches are used to mark different life events, all forms being rooted in our traditional matrilineal clan system of wolf and crow. Wolf and crow is an old teaching about harmony in relationships based on respect, giving, and receiving, and identity. In knowing this, we come to know ourselves and our place in the world. Wolf and crow each have their own way, but each needs the other. Wolf needs crow and crow needs wolf. Together in harmony, they are one.

The clan system is important in the potlatch tradition because it brings balance and harmony to life events. In end-of-life potlatches this is important for those passing as well as for those who are left behind. When a member of one clan passes, members of the other clan are there to offer their care, allowing the clan with the loss time to grieve. In return, it is customary for the grieving clan to hold a potlatch to honor the one who has passed and to express their gratitude to the opposite clan for their care and support

Typically, preparations start well in advance of an honoring potlatch with the grieving clan sewing and preparing gifts to give the opposite clan. The honoring potlatch is a ceremonial way of restoring and preserving harmony. In feasting together, and in giving and receiving we feed the forces of harmony with all our relations, signifying that the spirit of a loved one has moved on, bringing an end to the period of mourning.



## Remembrances

In further honoring the lives of our MMIWG Kaska sisters, we have supported Kaska families from Watson Lake, Good Hope Lake, Lower Post, and Ross River in creating commemorative headstones, benches and fencing as enduring markers of remembrance and respect in honor of those lost and taken from us way to early and traumatically.



### Commemorative Red Dress Ceremonies

In the spirit of hope of our missing sisters returning home, traditional dresses will be installed at each Kaska Nation office on the dates below.

<b>Liard First Nation @ Health Centre</b>	<b>October 4th 11:00 am</b>
<b>Daylu Dene Council @Daylu Health Centre</b>	<b>October 5th 11:00 am</b>
<b>Dease River First Nation @Dease River Council Office</b>	<b>October 6th 11:00 am</b>
<b>Ross River Dene Council @MTC Office</b>	<b>October 11th 11:00 am</b>



## **Returning Home to the Shores of Watson Lake (Tuts Algua)**

Over the 25 years since our founding in 1998, our services have grown and so has our need for a new home for our organization. Our efforts to find a new home over several years have finally resulted in our acquiring a new property located at 221 Ptarmigan Way on Watson Lake (Tuts Algua).

For us, Tuts Algua is like an old relative, recollecting our past and calling us to come back.

“With this, we will go back to where we left.

It is a place in waiting, a calling, and now we will return.

It is a place of significance, a sacred place that holds the memory of our people.

Once more by the shore, we will gather as our place comes back to us.”

--Anon

To mark our return, we plan to hold a welcoming celebration this fall in late October or November. More information on the celebration,, it will be announced once a date has been determined.



## **Mothers of the Land Gathering II: For the Love of Caribou**

Hosted by Liard Aboriginal Women's Society  
October 19-20<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Watson Lake, Yukon

### **GATHERING THEME:**

For the Love of Caribou: Mothers of the Land Gathering II plans to be an engaging and interactive gathering in Watson Lake, Yukon to share dialogue on the traditional principals and spirituality of land stewardship, discussions on issues of land use and resource management on traditional lands and dialogue on developing consensus on critical issues including the creation of an environmental declaration on behalf of all Kaska citizens.

SAVE THE DATE!

# For the Love of Caribou

Upholding Dignity of  
Indigenous Women, Children and Our Land



Mothers of Land II Gathering

October 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Watson Lake Recreation Centre, Watson Lake, Yukon

PRESENTED BY:

**LIARD ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S SOCIETY**