

Researching Kwäday Dän Ts'inchj

Read this excerpt from ["Kwaday Dan Ts'inchj teaches us how to work together"](#), *The Yukon News*, March 20, 2009. Then complete a Venn diagram to show the roles and responsibilities of the government of B.C. and the First Nations in this archaeological research.

Kwaday Dan Ts'inchj, which, translated from the Southern Tutchone language, means "long ago man, found," was discovered by three British Columbia men during a hunting trip in August of 1999. Sensing they had discovered something unusual, they abandoned their hunting plans, hiked out of the mountains and drove to Whitehorse, where they reported the find.

What ensued has become one of the most interesting journeys of historical discovery and co-operation that ever happened in this part of Canada. Because of the location of the find, the ensuing rediscovery of this man became a negotiated collaboration between the government of British Columbia and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, on whose traditional territory the find was made.

The project became a blend of traditional values and modern science. Rather than claiming ownership of the find, the First Nation shouldered the responsibility for the stewardship of this remarkable discovery. Over the next few years, they embarked upon a widespread program of consultation and information sharing.

The community and the elders were consulted to determine the most appropriate and respectful way in which to treat this ancient ancestor. For the First Nation, this became a ground-breaking partnership with the provincial government, in which it assumed an important role in the determination of Kwaday Dan Ts'inchj's fate.

The First Nation has the responsibility for ceremonies and the final disposition of the remains. As well, they direct the interpretation of the who, what, where and when of this individual, and take the lead on land-based site monitoring and artifact reproductions.

Kwaday Dan Ts'inchj was found with a number of artifacts and pieces of clothing, one of which was a gopher skin robe. One of the projects undertaken by the First Nation was a replication of the ancient robe by a group of community elders.

The British Columbia government, in the form of archaeologists, took on the responsibility for the respectful scientific investigation of the remains. They were responsible for the temporary care of the remains, seeking scientific proposals, and negotiating research agreements, tracking the samples and providing conservation treatment for the artifacts that were recovered.

The result appears to have been both productive and rewarding for all involved.