

HANDS ON OUR HEARTS, MOCCASINS ON THE GROUND

The NPTGS UNDRIP In Action Program

A New Pathways to Gold Society Strategy 2024



New Pathways to Gold



Dale Snyder and Cecil Salmon, descendants of Captain Henry Snyder and Chief Cexepe'enthEm, shake hands in front of the memorial to the great Nlaka'pamux leader in Lytton, 2018.

Introduction

On a hot summer night in 1858 in the hills above Lytton, two leaders met around a campfire to talk peace. Conflict between B.C.'s Indigenous Peoples and the hordes of gold-seeking miners flooding into their traditional territories threatened to escalate into an all-out war.

These two men had the fate of modern British Columbia in their hands. Fortunately, one of those leaders was Chief Cexpe'nthEm of the Nlaka'pamux Nation. The peace he negotiated with Henry Snyder, Captain of the American militia forces, ended the Canyon War. Were it not for Cexpe'nthEm's persuasive diplomacy, the conflict would almost certainly have spread south of the border and resulted in the United States intervening in what is now the Mainland of British Columbia.

As B.C. enters a new phase of Indigenous Reconciliation with the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act now in provincial law, the example of these two men has new significance—they found a way to work together in a time of incredible upheaval and change. They made a promise of peace and prosperity. It was in the spirit of that promise that the New Pathways to Gold Society was founded 18 years ago. It is in that same spirit it looks forward to the future.

The New Pathways To Gold Society

In 2007, a group dedicated to finding remedy to the challenges facing the communities along the historic Gold Rush/Spirit Trails corridor from Hope to Barkerville met in Lytton. They represented a broad-based coalition of local elected officials, historians, Indigenous leaders, heritage tourism advocates and local businesses. They developed a vision of a re-invented corridor based on economic development via heritage tourism, Indigenous reconciliation, community projects and heritage events. They also devised a strategy to encourage British Columbians to rediscover and explore our province's unique heritage and listen to a more inclusive narrative of our shared history.

The vehicle they created to make that vision a reality is the New Pathways to Gold Society (NPTGS). A non-profit, non-partisan organization, NPTGS partners with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, corporations, heritage partners and all levels of government to develop and deliver projects supporting local economies and creating heritage tourism assets.

The Society is governed by a Board of Directors representative of broad skill sets, inclusive of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities from Hope to Barkerville. On this balanced board, half of the Directors are Indigenous representatives, one is a designated Multicultural Director and there are two co-chairs, one of whom is Indigenous.

The 2020 Vision

NPTGS started with a grant of \$150,000 from the government of B.C. in 2007. In 2009, the Society developed the "2020 Vision," a comprehensive, corridor-wide strategy for heritage/cultural tourism geared to increasing the corridor's assets/attractions and profile by the year 2020. By harnessing the resources of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, government and the business sector, the strategy's goal was to make the corridor a world-class tourism attraction known as "The New Pathways to Gold."

The 2020 Vision was an ambitious project based on a series of small and medium-sized cultural infrastructure and programming projects added to the corridor to increase its heritage tourism capacity and profile. Then as now, it was also designed to enable the provincial government to capitalize on a new spirit of Indigenous Reconciliation and Multiculturalism. And it was specifically tailored to the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails corridor, the heart of modern British Columbia.



Former NPTGS Indigenous Co-Chair Cheryl Chapman and Director Mike Retasket providing interpretive services at Barkerville.

The Gold Rush/Spirit Trails Corridor

The Gold Rush/Spirit Trails corridor between Hope and Barkerville is the heart of modern British Columbia. The Fraser River Gold Rush of 1858 resulted in the mainland of B.C. becoming a British colony, preserving it from annexation by the United States. Historic communities are found all along the banks of the Fraser and Thompson rivers and beyond: Yale, Spuzzum, Lytton, Lillooet, Ashcroft, Canim Lake, Clinton, 100 Mile House, Xat'sūll, Williams Lake, Quesnel and Barkerville, just to name a few.

Today, the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails corridor comprises 38 Indigenous and dozens of other communities large and small, four provincial ridings and four federal electoral districts. It's home to about 20 per cent of B.C.'s 270,000-strong Aboriginal population, contains six Indigenous language groups and multiple dialects.

The corridor has many assets to build upon. It has diverse Indigenous cultures experiencing a cultural renaissance and building their capacity to engage in the tourism industry. It has a rich tradition of Chinese Canadian and Multicultural heritage that is only starting to be articulated and appreciated. And it has multiple magnificent natural landscapes, including the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails themselves. The most storied trail of them all is the Cariboo Waggon Road, which traverses virtually the whole of the corridor.

The Need for NPTGS

With all of this going for it, why did the NPTGS feel the need to help the corridor? Because in 2007, Gold Rush/Spirit Trails communities faced major challenges:

- A declining resource-based economy
- Declining populations
- Greatly reduced traffic on Highways #1 and 97 because of the Coquihalla Highway
- Lack of employment and opportunities in many Indigenous and other communities

NPTGS is inspired by the example of Chief Cexpe'nthIEm, whose leadership during the Canyon War of 1858 makes him a co-founder of modern British Columbia. Since 2007, the Society has worked on major, minor and in-between-sized projects to revive Chief Cexpe'nthIEm's vision of peace, prosperity and cooperation along the entire length of the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails corridor and all of B.C.

The 2020 Vision Today

It's now 2024. So how did NPTGS do? How close did the Society get to realizing the 2020 vision? Since its founding in 2007, NPTGS has taken that initial \$150,000 and:

- Raised/leveraged nearly \$8 million for projects to benefit Indigenous and non-Indigenous corridor communities.
- Created 26,000-plus person-days of employment for Indigenous and non-Indigenous corridor residents.
- Built or restored 430-plus km of heritage trails and installed dozens of signs, kiosks and campsites.
- Launched and/or completed 20 major projects, creating new heritage tourism assets that generate revenues for local economies.

- Staged over 200 events, performances, lectures, workshops, screenings and symposia to work towards Indigenous Reconciliation, create a more inclusive narrative of our shared history and raise the profile of the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails worldwide.
- Partnered with ministries and agencies at all levels of government to mobilize resources to make the difference in corridor communities, including the 38 Indigenous communities from Hope to Barkerville.
- Made significant progress in restoring the historic 1926 Alexandra Bridge and precinct to create a world-class heritage tourism attraction.
- Embarked on the restoration of the fabled Cariboo, Waggon Road, B.C.'s original highway, with over 130 km of road being restored this season.

NPTGS has multiplied the money it has received from the province and other funders, putting almost all of it into corridor communities. By working with our partners—Indigenous, heritage sites and organizations, all levels of governments and businesses large and small—the Society has delivered the 2020 Vision. Further, the jobs the Society has created means those workers paid taxes and were able to participate in the economy, further enhancing the return on investment by the government and other partners. By any metrics, the 2020 Vision was a big success. Now it's time to renew that vision and grow it even larger.

In the spirit of the 2020 Vision and Chief Cexpe'nthIEm, NPTGS proposes a vision of peace, reconciliation and prosperity in lock-step with the provincial government's UNDRIP Act Action Plan.



NPTGS UNDRIP In Action Program: **The Society's Vision to 2032**



Work starts on the Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration Project in the Cariboo, 2021.



NPTGS Director Mike Retasket (left), former 100 Mile House Mayor Mitch Campsall, Canim Lake Band Elder Irene Charley, former New Pathways to Gold Society Indigenous Co-chair Cheryl Chapman and former High Bar First Nations Chief Roy Fletcher ceremonially cut an inner tube as they open a bike repair station installed in 100 Mile House as part of the Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration Project in 2021. Patrick Davies photo, 100 Mile Free Press

Building on the Society's achievements over the last 18 years, NPTGS has launched the UNDRIP In Action (UNDRIP-IA) Program. This ten-year initiative will build on the 2020 Vision and the hopes of Chief Cexpe'nthlEm articulated in 1858. With additional investment, the Society will work with its partners to:

Build The Spine

NPTGS is already restoring/rebuilding intact sections of the historic Cariboo Waggon Road stretching from Yale to Barkerville to create a world-class destination heritage network to rival the West Coast Trail and be an addition to the Trans-Canada Trail. The base of the spine is the iconic 1926 Alexandra Bridge in the traditional territory of the Spuzzum First Nation, currently being restored. And at its heart, the Chief Cexpe'nthlEm Park Project, a partnership with the Lytton First Nation, Village of Lytton and the St. Barnabas Parish. Despite the tragedy of the Lytton fire of 2021, the park precinct was spared and work continues to deliver this project, funded by the province of British Columbia.

String The Beads

As we keep building the spine, NPTGS will work with its partners to add heritage tourism assets along the corridor.

The beads will include new phases of the 1926 Alexandra Bridge Rehabilitation, Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration and Chief Cexpe'nthlEm Park Projects. As well, NPTGS is working with partners to expand the trails networks in Indigenous communities like Xat'sūll and Anahim Lake to create further tourism assets and provide employment. The Society will also build on its record of partnering with local communities to build more Multicultural monuments and stops of interest like the East Lillooet Internment Site Memorial Garden and the Harmony Project in Ashcroft.

Provide The Tools

Training Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth is a key component of the UNDRIP-IA Program. NPTGS will build on the success of the Jobs Creation Partnership Project which saw young Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people gain the skills and experience they needed to enter the work force. New initiatives to move forward on the UNDRIP-IA Program projects calendar can be powered by both federal and provincial skills-training programs given a renewed investment in NPTGS by government, including the Forest Employment Program.

Preserve The Language and Culture

Every component of the UNDRIP-IA Program will adhere

to the Society's core value of advancing Indigenous Reconciliation. A key part of this is preserving the language and culture of the 38 Indigenous communities from Hope to Barkerville. This will be achieved by intensive consultations with Indigenous communities to ensure all interpretive materials, signage and communications materials include the Indigenous place names and stories unique to their locations in Indigenous languages along the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails. Further, engagement with Elders and Knowledge Keepers will ensure that a more inclusive narrative of our Shared History will be told all along the corridor. Events will be held to ensure that these stories are shared with Indigenous Youth and non-Indigenous Peoples to help preserve language and customs as well as reaching out to and educating non-Indigenous audiences.

Let the World Know

Working with our partners Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association (CCCTA), Gold Rush Trails Marketing, Destination BC and others, NPTGS is committed to telling the world about the incredible experiences awaiting domestic and international visitors along the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails. NPTGS has been working with the CCCTA to build the Gold Rush Trails Marketing brand since 2010 and will continue to do more to promote the corridor.

NPTGS is doing more and emerging from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic thanks to funding from the Community Services Recovery Fund and the Recovery and Resiliency Fund. These programs have allowed the Society to rebuild connections with its Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners as well as to create stronger ties with the Chinese Canadian community and other groups. This funding has enabled NPTGS to hold its first live stream hybrid events, work with partners to create new Indigenous cultural spaces and expand its online presence. It provides stable core funding for the Society as it moves forward into the UNDRIP In Action era.

What We Need to Realize The Vision

While the Recovery and Resiliency Fund has provided NPTGS with several years of core funding, the Society needs an additional investment to realize the long-term UNDRIP-IA vision. This core funding will provide the Society with the resources it needs to pay for support personnel, Board of Directors and administrative costs. It will also give NPTGS money needed to access provincial and federal funding programs, which usually require applicants to provide anywhere from 10 per cent to 50 per cent of a project's budget to qualify for a grant.

The vast majority of funds received by NPTGS go directly to projects. Administrative overhead is about 15 per cent

of that total. An additional investment in the Society of \$200,000 a year for five years would ensure the delivery of the NPTGS UNDRIP-IA Program. In return, funders would see this investment more than doubled by:

- Leveraging it dollar-for-dollar for a return of \$1 million over five years.
- Additional tax revenue via payroll deductions etc. from workers employed on program projects.
- Additional revenue from increased spending in corridor communities thanks to thousands of hours of employment created.
- Additional revenue from businesses and individuals who benefit from increased visitation in their communities because of the new heritage tourism assets in the corridor.

These financial benefits are in addition to the creation of heritage tourism assets worth millions of dollars. Given NPTGS' track record over the past 18 years, the Society is confident that it will deliver on this commitment that will benefit funders and the communities in the Hope to Barkerville corridor, creating a win-win scenario for all.

Engaging the Business Sector

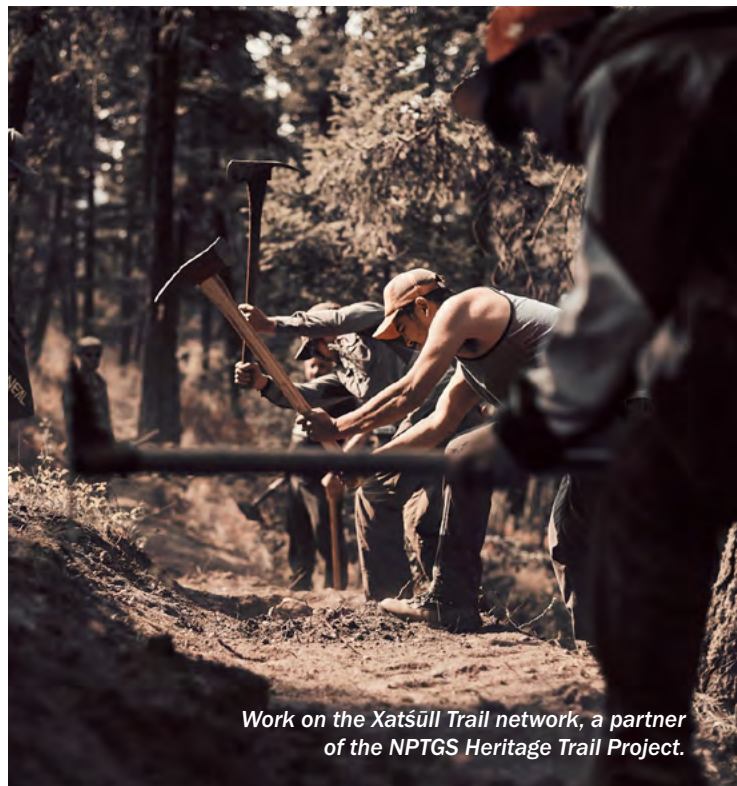
Since 2009, NPTGS has been highly successful in leveraging funding to obtain corporate and small business financial support for the Society's projects. The Society has received funds from corporations like CP, CN, BC Hydro, Barkerville Gold Mines and Husky Energy to build heritage tourism assets and provide programming that raised the profile of the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails and advanced Indigenous Reconciliation. NPTGS has also received support from small businesses like Fraser River Rafting and Harbour Publishing to help make the difference in corridor communities.

The corridor has many good corporate citizens who want to give back to communities like Telus, B.C. Hydro and Teck Resources. NPTGS invites these and other companies to get behind the UNDRIP-IA Program to continue to demonstrate their community spirit and their commitment to Indigenous Reconciliation and Multiculturalism.

What Your Funding Will Mean for Corridor Communities

More Heritage Tourism Assets

Starting with the 1926 Alexandra Bridge Rehabilitation, Chief Cexpe'nthlEm Park and Cariboo Waggon Road Restoration projects, NPTGS and partners will continue to add heritage tourism assets throughout the Gold Rush/Spirit Trails corridor, creating more economic opportunities in a region that is reinventing itself.



Work on the Xat'sull Trail network, a partner of the NPTGS Heritage Trail Project.

Long- and Short-Term Employment, Especially in Indigenous Communities

Since 2007, NPTGS and partners have created over 26,000 person-hours of employment in the Hope to Barkerville corridor and that number is growing daily. Through initiatives like the 1926 Alexandra Bridge Rehabilitation and Jobs Creation Partnership Projects, the Society has not only created new heritage tourism assets but provided training and employment opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous workers. Given additional funding, NPTGS is confident it can continue to give corridor residents meaningful employment while building additional heritage tourism assets and advancing Indigenous Reconciliation.

Putting the UNDRIP Into Action

NPTGS sees its work with the Indigenous Peoples of the corridor as a practical and very real expression of the UNDRIP declaration's expression of the individual and collective rights of Indigenous peoples, including their rights to cultural and ceremonial expression, identity, language, employment, health and education. The NPTGS UNDRIP-IA Program will put Indigenous People throughout the corridor to work and benefit the entire provincial economy in the process.

Building on Our Multicultural Past, Present and Future

If there's one thing NPTGS has learned over 18 years, it's that the Gold Rush was a Multicultural experience. There was sometimes conflict, but also cooperation, particularly between the Indigenous Peoples and early Chinese arrivals. These Cedar-Bamboo Relationships are

something that NPTGS has celebrated and helped to raise to the highest levels of government and public attention, with our now retired Multicultural Director Lily Chow having played a key role in the Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council. The Society will continue to work with corridor communities to identify and celebrate sites and symbols of these cross-cultural success stories as it has done in the past in Lillooet, Ashcroft, Lytton and others. Not only will this attract more visitors from key target audiences identified by the Ministry of Tourism's strategic plan, it will build a more inclusive narrative of the founding of B.C. and encourage Multiculturalism while discouraging racism.

Fulfilling the 1858 promise of peace and prosperity of Cexpe'nthlEm and Snyder: Over 160 years ago, Chief Cexpe'nthlEm worked with Henry Snyder to try to create a peaceful, prosperous British Columbia in the most challenging of circumstances. As our province enters a new phase of Indigenous Reconciliation guided by the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act/Action Plan, NPTGS feels the time is right to recognize Chief Cexpe'nthlEm as a cofounder of modern British Columbia and fulfill his dream by investing in the NPTGS UNDRIP-IA Program vision.

Work With Us!

We know that corporations, foundations and concerned citizens care about rural communities where much of B.C.'s wealth is generated. We know they want to make Indigenous Peoples equal partners in our economy and culture. We also know their support of Multiculturalism has helped enrich the province, breaking down barriers and creating a spirit of cooperation and common purpose. By investing in the NPTGS UNDRIP-IA Program, you can help us put these goals into action. Please work with us to help realize Chief Cexpe'nthlEm's vision—a vision that we all share. Together, we can make this prosperous vision a reality.

For more information, please contact:

Don Hauka, Executive Director
New Pathways to Gold Society
Cell: 604-787-9155
Email: ddclauka@shaw.ca



New Pathways to Gold

newpathwaystogold.ca

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS!



Funded by the
Government of Canada's
Community Services Recovery Fund



vancouver
foundation