

## 7 HERITAGE RESOURCES

### 7.1 Introduction

#### 7.1.1 Background

This section describes heritage resources within the study area. Heritage resources are nonrenewable resources located at or near the ground surface and are therefore highly susceptible to any activities that result in disturbance to the ground. Heritage resources are defined and managed under the provisions of a series of legislation in the Northwest Territories including:

- *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and Land Use Regulations*
- *Territorial Land Use Regulations, pursuant to the Territorial Lands Act*
- *Northwest Territories Archaeological Sites Regulations, pursuant to the Northwest Territories Act*
- *Historical Resources Act, which pertains only to Commissioner's lands*

In Alberta, heritage resources are defined and managed under the *Alberta Historical Resources Act* (Government of Alberta 2000).

Under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, heritage resources are defined as *archaeological or historic sites, burial sites, artifacts and other objects of historic, cultural or religious significance, and historic or cultural records* (Department of Justice 2002). Further general information is provided in the Heritage Services Policy outlined by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre (PWNHC), which defines heritage as *any tangible or intangible product of human or natural history that has potential to have scientific, educational, aesthetic, cultural, or social meaning or value for present or future generations* (PWNHC 2003).

Under the *Alberta Historical Resources Act*, historical resources (called heritage resources in the Northwest Territories) are defined as *any work of nature or of humans that is primarily of value for its palaeontological, archaeological, prehistoric, historic, cultural, natural, scientific or aesthetic interest, including but not limited to, a palaeontological, archaeological, prehistoric, historic or natural site, structure or object*.

Archaeological resources are defined and administered under the provisions of the *Northwest Territories Archaeological Sites Regulations* (GNWT 2001). An archaeological site is defined as *a site where an archaeological artifact is found*, and artifacts are defined as *any tangible evidence of human activity that is more*

*than 50 years old, in respect of which an unbroken chain of possession cannot be demonstrated.*

In Alberta, archaeological resources are defined under the *Alberta Historical Resources Act* as *a work of humans that is primarily of value for its prehistoric, historic, cultural or scientific significance, and is or was buried or partially buried in land in Alberta or submerged beneath the surface of any watercourse or permanent body of water in Alberta, and includes those works of humans designated by the regulators as archaeological resources* (Government of Alberta 2000).

By these definitions, heritage resources are locations where events took place in the past and all of the objects at these locations, including any contextual information that might be associated with them, which will aid in their interpretation, including natural specimens and documents or verbal accounts. Heritage resources are divided into different categories:

- Prehistoric Period archaeological
- Historic Period archaeological, structural and documentary
- palaeontological sites and specimens

#### **7.1.1.1 Prehistoric Period**

Archaeological resources of the Prehistoric Period in northern North America are the archaeological sites, objects and affiliated materials that represent occupation by Aboriginal people before the arrival of European goods, people and the historic records that characterize their culture. In the Northwest Territories, these include the locations where various activities took place and the remains of these activities, usually represented by stone artifacts and features, such as hearths, tent rings and settlements. Often, any associated animal bone and other organic artifacts have been destroyed by the acid soils of the area but, in areas characterized by permafrost, artifacts and affiliated organic material can provide a rich record of this use. These archaeological resources can span a period exceeding 8,000 years.

### 7.1.1.2 Historic Period

Archaeological, structural and documentary resources of the Historic Period often include the sites, artifacts, structures and documents relating to the influx of Euro-Canadians in the region. This period extends about 250 BP to the present. It includes remains related to the early fur trade conducted in the region, and those relating to later economic developments, such as transportation, mining, and energy exploration and production. A large proportion of the regional Historic Period sites comprise artifacts and affiliated resources relating to post-contact Aboriginal peoples' use of the landscape. These include archaeological sites and objects, such as:

- standing and collapsed cabins
- camp sites
- graves
- trails
- traditional use sites and resources
- culturally significant places
- hunting and plant collecting areas
- trapping areas and associated remains
- oral traditions
- documents, which are usually identified through consultation procedures, such as traditional land use studies

### 7.1.1.3 Palaeontological Sites

Palaeontological sites include sites with evidence of multicellular invertebrate remains, vertebrate faunal remains and plant materials that have been fossilized or otherwise preserved, including:

- fossils
- bone deposits
- shells
- the impressions of these remains

Palaeontological sites can occur in bedrock, and unconsolidated glacial and postglacial sedimentary deposits.

### 7.1.2 Environmental Setting

Environmental conditions in the North, coupled with little previous archaeological research, hinder the development of comprehensive cultural chronologies for the Prehistoric Period. Therefore, the information sources used to describe the regional cultural setting include, by necessity, some of those available for adjacent areas of the Mackenzie River drainage basin, the Canadian Arctic, and parts of northern Alberta, British Columbia and Alaska. In contrast, extant documents, records and oral testimony provide a firmer basis for understanding the historic period of the region. The baseline setting for the prehistory and history of the study area is derived from these sources.

### 7.1.3 Objectives

The primary objective of the heritage resources baseline setting is to provide a synopsis of the prehistoric and historic culture of the study area. Additional objectives are to provide a framework within which to:

- determine the relative heritage resource potential of the various project components, to assist in designing field studies
- interpret the heritage resources found during the field studies
- evaluate the significance of the heritage resources found during the field studies
- formulate recommendations to manage project effects on heritage resources

## 7.2 Methods

### 7.2.1 Baseline Investigations

A comprehensive literature review was completed to complement the 2002 and 2003 permit applications for the Northwest Territories field programs, and to assist in refining areas planned for the field investigations. The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre sites database and accompanying national topographic system map sheets were searched for any known heritage resource sites within the study region. A review of general environmental information and previous archaeological studies for the region was conducted to provide context for the field studies. Traditional knowledge information was incorporated into the heritage resource field studies through a review of previously published source material and through discussions with local field assistants of each field crew. The results of the field studies form the assessment component of the socio-economic impact assessment (see Volume 6, Socio-Economic Impact Assessment).

## 7.2.2 Baseline Components

The baseline is discussed under the broad headings of prehistory and history because of the nature of the data. Relatively little specific data is available for the prehistoric context of the settlement regions. Therefore, the information was obtained by extrapolating from regions with similar subsistence strategies. This information applies to broader areas than the more specific historic data.

The cultural backgrounds of the people within the traditional areas are also presented in some detail, as this is a fundamental link for archaeologists as they find and understand the physical remains of cultures.

## 7.3 Baseline Conditions – Overview

### 7.3.1 Prehistory Overview

Two relatively distinct subsistence patterns existed within the Northwest Territories study area:

- a marine-based strategy in the northern Inuvialuit area
- a boreal and sub-boreal strategy in the more southerly Dene area, i.e., Gwich'in, Sahtu and Deh Cho

Although interaction between groups practising each of these strategies likely occurred, the following overview has been divided into two separate chronologies, one for each region.

#### 7.3.1.1 Inuvialuit Area

Systematic archaeological investigation in the ISR is limited to the few sites that have been found. These sites primarily date to the last 100 years. Therefore, knowledge of the prehistoric past is limited and any findings that can enhance our understanding, based on findings in similar environments, is likely to be viewed as significant. To enhance the cultural chronology within which to interpret and evaluate archaeological sites, data from adjacent areas must be considered. The prehistoric past in the ISR is summarized under phases, traditions and cultures that represent the past 10,000 to 12,000 years:

- Flint Creek Phase – about 11,000 BP
- Palaeo-Arctic Tradition – about 10,500 to 7,000 BP
- Arctic Small Tool Tradition – about 4,200 to 2,800 BP
- Dorset Culture – about 2,500 to 1,000 BP
- Thule – about 1,000 to 400 BP

The phases, traditions and cultures are poorly defined, and the transition from one phase to the next is not well known. Little data regarding the earliest occupation has been recovered in the ISR. Regionally, a terrestrial-mammal hunting adaptation is known for the earliest occupations, the Flint Creek Phase and Paleo-Arctic Tradition. Although marine-based subsistence economies were likely present, few coastal sites are known, possibly because rising sea levels after the retreat of the last glaciers have inundated the coastlines from the early periods. The Arctic Small Tool Tradition is thought to relate to a separate migration of people from Siberia that developed into the subsequent Dorset Culture, known for exquisite miniature carvings (Park 1999).

People of the Dorset Culture focused primarily on maritime subsistence, occupied a huge area and perfected winter hunting on the sea ice. Thule replacement of Dorset is not well understood. Thule adaptation initially focused on maritime resources but later also used terrestrial resources. Sled dogs, still in use today, were introduced during the Thule tradition.

### 7.3.1.2 Gwich'in, Sahtu and Deh Cho Areas

More systematic archaeological research has been conducted and more archaeological sites have been recorded in the Mackenzie Valley than in the delta and coastal areas to the north. Therefore, from a prehistoric perspective, considerably more is known about the prehistoric occupation of the Mackenzie Valley. However, many questions remain about specific dates, transition in the complexes and phases that represent the major periods and changes in technology.

Canadian boreal forest prehistory is divided into three major components:

- Early Prehistoric Period (about 11,000 to 7,000 BP)
- Middle Prehistoric Period (about 7,000 to 2,500 BP)
- Late Prehistoric Period (about 2,500 to 2,200 BP)

These correspond to periods of cultural development marked by changes in weapons, and reflect complex cultural evolutionary processes that include major technological advances. The prehistory of the Mackenzie River Basin, especially in the northern portions, is intermixed with coastal cultural expansions and is less well defined than areas farther south.

The Mackenzie Valley, in its present form, did not exist in this area until after 9,900 BP, so occupation was not likely before this time (Smith 1994). Although the earliest human habitation of the Mackenzie Valley is unknown, it might be associated with populations moving south from a Beringian refugium. Sites from the oldest part of the Early Prehistoric are not expected, particularly in the area from Fort Simpson to Fort Good Hope. The earliest incontrovertible evidence of prehistoric occupation of the Mackenzie Basin comes from south of the study area near Fort Liard. The tool kit found there is similar to assemblages recovered

elsewhere dating between 9,000 and 6,000 BP (Millar 1981). Near the study area, a site on Chick Lake by the Donnelly River crossing dates to about 7,000 BP (Millar and Fedirchuk 1974). Sites dating up to the Protohistoric–Historic Period have been recorded in the area (250 BP to present).

### 7.3.1.3 Northwestern Alberta

As with the Mackenzie Valley area, a relative paucity of previous archaeological investigations in northwestern Alberta leaves many questions unanswered concerning the exact nature of the prehistoric occupation of this region. The prehistoric sequences outlined for nearby areas, such as the lower Liard River Basin and northeastern corner of British Columbia, would appear to be relevant for the portion of northwestern Alberta through which the pipeline facilities will pass. In broad terms, the same major components outlined previously for Canadian boreal forest prehistory in the Gwich'in, Sahtu and Deh Cho areas might apply to northwestern Alberta.

Little information from the Early Prehistoric Period has been recovered in northern Alberta. Although Clovis is the first well-documented culture in North America (about 11,500 to 10,500 BP), so far there are no known Clovis sites in the region. However, evidence of this early occupation has been recovered from northeastern British Columbia near Fort St. John. Clovis groups colonized Alberta from the south, and likely entered northwestern Alberta during later stages of deglaciation.

Early Prehistoric occupations in this region are not well defined, and usually occur in a disparate series of material expressions that lack a clear range of radiocarbon dates. Finds of toolkits that include bifacially flaked tools in their earliest expressions and later microblade technology, are thought to be early, and have been assigned as the Early Northwest Interior Culture.

Evidence of the Acasta Lake Complex, dating between 7,000 and 5,000 BP, has also been found nearby. Originating from earlier Northern Plano traditions in the North, this complex represents an adaptation to forest and barrenland environments. Dating to about 3,990 BP, a series of Middle Prehistoric Period occupations have been identified in the Fort Liard region, belonging to the Julian Complex of the Northwest Microblade Tradition. These combine technological traits of the earlier Palaeoarctic Tradition of Alaska with lanceolate and notched projectile points that have a southerly stylistic origin.

In northern Alberta, the Middle Prehistoric Period also likely encompasses the Taltheilei Tradition, starting at 2,650 BP, which was defined for the barrenlands but can sometimes be found as far south as central Alberta. In its earliest expression, this tradition includes large lanceolate and stemmed points, and it is considered to represent Athapaskan-speaking people ancestral to the historic Dene.

Evidence of Late Prehistoric Period occupation in northern Alberta is dated as Late Taltheilei Phase. This occupation is characterized by the presence of small side-notched projectile points that might be termed prairie side-notched if they had been found on the Plains. These types likely represent the diffusion of bow-and-arrow technology into the region rather than a direct southern cultural presence.

### 7.3.2 History Overview

A synopsis of the historic past is a big aspect of the baseline setting, as archaeologists are also responsible for recording Historic Period remains. Perhaps as early as the mid-eighteenth century, the Slavey of the Mackenzie Valley were introduced, by Cree or Chipewyan middlemen, to a few European trade items, such as knives and hatchets. Inuvialuit traded to the west and south with the Alaskan Inuit for Russian goods. Initial contact between the Slavey of the Mackenzie Valley and the Europeans occurred with Alexander Mackenzie's expedition in 1789. Although Mackenzie's expedition reached Inuvialuit territory, the first contact with the Inuvialuit occurred with the Franklin Expedition in 1826.

The first trading post in Slavey territory was Livingston's Fort, established by the North West Company about 1796, on the Mackenzie River downstream of Great Slave Lake (Asch 1981). With the North West Company fur trade posts on the Mackenzie River, the Dene were afforded direct access to Euro-Canadian goods (Innis 1962). Between 1800 and 1810, five short-lived posts were established along the Mackenzie and Liard rivers. By 1879, when Wrigley was established, the posts operating along the lower Mackenzie included Fort Norman (now Tulita), Wrigley, Fort Simpson and Fort Good Hope. The Inuvialuit traded with the Dene at Fort Good Hope. Fort McPherson on the Peel River was also in operation.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries had been in contact with the people in the Mackenzie Valley. Euro-Canadian activities within the Mackenzie Valley encouraged regional concentration of the dispersed populations centred on trading posts and missions (Savishinsky and Hara 1981). These centres drew in people from several ethnic or dialectic groups, making communities more sedentary and redefining their identities in association with specific posts, thus creating bands with which treaties could be signed.

The Canadian government did little to assert its presence in Slavey and Hare Territory until its first treaty negotiations at Fort Resolution and Fort Vermilion brought segments of the Slavey into Treaty 8 in 1900. The Fort Nelson Slavey were added to Treaty 8 in 1911. Under the advisement of Bishop Breynat, the Gwich'in signed Treaty 11 in July 1921 (Heine et al. 2001). A treaty with the Gwich'in, the rest of the Slavey and the Hare was not signed until 1921 (1922 in Fort Liard) (Asch 1981). The terms of this treaty are still in dispute.

Competition between companies, followed by mergers, resulted in fur trade posts being closed and new ones being opened. However, by the 1930s, exploitation of mineral resources replaced the fur trade as the principal industry of the Northwest Territories. The World War II period was pivotal in this, with development of the oil reserves at Norman Wells and construction of the Canol pipeline. With these industrial developments, the Dene found temporary and permanent wage employment, further concentrating populations in established communities.

Through the first half of the twentieth century, the Dene life changed only gradually because of the influx of Euro-Canadian goods and influences. Subsistence still depended on traditional pursuits, self-reliance and mobility (Asch 1981). During the early and middle portion of the century, the high price of furs persuaded many Slavey to become seriously involved in trapping and in the market economy of the dominant culture. Coupled with an increasing reliance on government services, this has resulted in a more sedentary existence. With the recent collapse in the fur market, the supplementary income formerly provided by trapping has had to be replaced with wage work, where available (see Section 2, People and the Economy).

The Métis are the descendants of non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal parents, usually with Dene maternal and Euro-Canadian paternal ancestries. Since about 1850, the Métis in the SSA have participated in traditional subsistence activities, working as interpreters, trappers and provisioners, and at trading posts. The Métis were most recognized for their role in transporting goods via canoe, York boats and steamboat (Slobodin 1981b). Today, the Métis live throughout the Mackenzie region, although they have a collective identity based on a shared heritage.

During the 1977 Berger inquiry into the Mackenzie Valley pipeline (Berger 1977), the Dene and Métis insisted that outstanding land claim issues be resolved before planning further development in the Mackenzie Valley. Negotiations to settle these claims began in October 1991, with the final agreement signed in 1994 (Simpson 2002).

The Slavey people also extend into northern Alberta, where they are known as the Acha'ottine, or woodland people. These Athapaskan-speaking people refer to themselves as the Dene Tha'. Although culturally and linguistically similar to the Slavey of the Northwest Territories, they are geographically located in the northwest corner of Alberta. The traditional lands of the Dene Tha' extend from northwestern Alberta into northeastern British Columbia and the southern regions of the Northwest Territories (Ross 2001). Although the Dene Tha' adhered to Treaty 8 in 1900, their reserves were not surveyed until 1946.

#### **7.4 Cultural Context**

The proposed project extends through many traditional territories, each of which is an amalgam of tradition, language and heritage. The following information on

cultural background is presented from north to south, beginning with the Inuvialuit of the north. Following this is the more closely related Dene Athapaskan-speakers, including the Gwich'in, Sahtu and Deh Cho, who inhabit much of the boreal forest of Canada. The origins and relationships of these groups are explored by administrative region: ISR, GSA, SSA and DCR, then, cultural background related to northwestern Alberta is presented.

#### 7.4.1 Baseline Conditions – Inuvialuit Settlement Region

The Inuvialuit are the Inuit people of the western Canadian Arctic. Identified by anthropologists and historians as the Mackenzie Inuit or Mackenzie Eskimo, their lands include the Mackenzie Delta, from the western edge of the Arctic islands to the Alaskan boundary. Although the Inuvialuit likely originate from the Thule culture that spread as far as Greenland, they have more in common with their neighbours in northern Alaska than others in Arctic Canada (Morrison 1997).

There are five subgroups of early Inuvialuit (Smith 1981):

- Kigirktarugmiut
- Kupgmiut
- Nuyorugmiut
- Kitegaryumiut
- Avvagmiut

Friendly relations existed between these subgroups and they interacted extensively. The houses of the Inuvialuit were made of logs or planks and sod, and several families usually shared these houses. Snowhouses were used in winter when travelling or hunting. Large community structures framed in driftwood and with central fireplaces were built for dances and religious activities (Morrison 1997).

The Inuvialuit population was estimated to be as high as 2,500 in the early nineteenth century – about the same number as all other Inuit people in the rest of the Arctic combined (Smith 1981). The Mackenzie Delta, a rich environment providing a relatively stable and prosperous existence, dominates their territory. By the time of Euro-Canadian contact, the Inuvialuit were engaged in elaborate hunting and fishing activities using advanced technology. Beluga whale were hunted around the mouth of the Mackenzie River and villages on the headlands to the east harvested bowhead whale. Hunting was conducted by boat, either the single-man kayak or the larger umiak. Beluga whale were often driven into the shallows and lanced, whereas bowhead whale were hunted using heavy harpoons more than 2 m long, with a detachable toggling head (Morrison 1997). Although these types of technology are evident throughout the world, the Inuit developed the most complex pre-industrial forms of harpoons (Arnold 1989). Seal were harpooned in open water from kayaks or on foot at breathing holes. They were also netted. Nets made from baleen or sinew with bark floats, spears, or hooks

were used to catch fish to be preserved for future use by scoring, drying and smoking (Petitot 1876).

Muskrat and beaver were often hunted from kayaks with a pronged spear and throwing board. The flesh was preserved in a manner similar to fish and the pelts used for clothing (Stefansson 1919). Waterfowl were speared and ptarmigan netted, but bird eggs were not usually eaten (Smith 1981). Plant foods included edible roots of willow, knotweed, sainfoin, mountain sorrel, rush, cranberry, blueberry, crowberry and cloudberry (Petitot 1876, Stefansson 1919). These plants often also had medicinal values.

The Inuvialuit used several land mammals, including moose, lynx, muskox, bear, sheep, hare, wolf and fox (Nagy 2002). Woodland and barren-ground caribou were the most important and intensely harvested land animals, providing meat for sustenance and hides for winter clothing. Caribou were hunted using spears, bows and drives in the inland areas.

Alexander Mackenzie was the first European to arrive in Inuvialuit territory in 1789 (Mackenzie 1801). Accompanied by Dene guides – the traditional enemies of the Inuvialuit – Mackenzie was steered away from the well-populated east channel of the river, and so never encountered the Inuvialuit (Morrison 1997). However, he did document abandoned camps and reported that the Inuvialuit were, by this time, receiving Russian trading goods, such as iron, from the Alaskan Inuit (Lamb 1970). In 1826, Lieutenant John Franklin undertook an expedition to discover a northwest passage. Franklin and Dr. John Richardson both encountered the Inuvialuit along the Mackenzie River on their way to the Coppermine River. The reception they received was hostile, as was Inuvialuit reaction to the arrival of traders and missionaries to the Mackenzie Delta in the late 1840s (Smith 1981).

Inuvialuit trade with Europeans began indirectly, first with the Alaskan Inuit for Russian goods, and with the Dene farther south on the Mackenzie River, who traded at Fort Good Hope with the Hudson's Bay Company (Morrison 1997). Peel's River Post, later known as Fort McPherson, was established in 1840, and by 1850 the Inuvialuit were trading directly with the Hudson's Bay Company. By 1860, 300 to 400 Inuvialuit were trading at Fort McPherson. Red and white fox pelts were exchanged for metal fishhooks, glass beads, metal pots, iron knives and tobacco (Morrison 1997). In 1861, the Hudson's Bay Company opened Fort Anderson on the Anderson River to trade more efficiently with the Inuvialuit. This post was closed five years later because of declining profit and difficulties with supply transportation. The closure created economic disruption for many Inuvialuit who had become integrated into the fur trade. However, a more devastating effect of involvement with traders was infectious diseases.

Early trade with more southerly Dene groups, such as the Hare, might have introduced foreign infectious diseases to the Inuvialuit as early as the 1840s. An

epidemic of measles or scarlet fever followed in 1865 (Morrison 1988). The arrival of American whaling ships in 1889 exacerbated these effects. Trade goods, such as rifles, tents, clothing, boats and nontraditional foods, were introduced to Inuvialuit employed as whalers and suppliers of caribou meat (Morrison 1997). Measles epidemics in 1900 and 1902 led to the abandonment of large traditional villages, and by 1905, the Inuvialuit population was reduced to 250 people. By 1910, this population was 150 – less than 10% of what it had been 100 years earlier (Usher 1971). At the same time, the whale population was nearly decimated and local caribou herds experienced substantial decline. The Inuvialuit were further affected by the proliferation of missions in the 1890s, which had profound impacts on the traditional belief systems of the Inuvialuit (Morrison 1997).

Many Alaskan Inuit (known as Nunatamuit) migrated to the Mackenzie region. Drawn by employment in the whaling industry and feeling the effects of a collapse in the caribou population, the Nunatamuit eventually became known as the Uumarmiut, or people of the green trees and willows. Although early relations were characterized by resentment, the Uumarmiut and Inuvialuit eventually intermarried and merged, although two linguistic dialects, Uumarmiutun and Siglitun, remain evident in the region (Morrison 1997).

The Inuvialuit, under an organization called the Committee for Original Peoples' Entitlement, negotiated a comprehensive land claim agreement with the Government of Canada, signed in 1984. Although the Inuvialuit have adapted to modern amenities, such as frame houses, snowmobiles and modern hunting technology, they continue to participate in terrestrial-, riverine- and marine-based economic and cultural activities that represent a traditional connection to the Mackenzie Delta and Arctic coastal plain.

#### **7.4.2 Baseline Conditions – Gwich'in Settlement Area**

The most northerly Athapaskan-speaking Dene in North America, the Gwich'in, live just south of the Inuvialuit. They have traditionally occupied a large part of the Alaska and Yukon interiors, extending east to the Mackenzie Valley. The Gwich'in who used the land along the Mackenzie River were known as the Nagwichoonjik, the Mackenzie River people (Heine et al. 2001). Summers were spent at fish camps usually located at the mouths of creeks. The Mackenzie River represented an important travel route for the Gwich'in during all seasons, whereas the Mackenzie Delta was well known for summer fishing and spring muskrat harvest.

The caribou was of central importance to the Gwich'in, although other large mammals, such as moose, Dall's sheep, grizzly bear and black bear, were also harvested for food. Small mammals, such as muskrat, beaver, marten, wolf, hare, weasel, wolverine, fox and lynx, among others, were important for subsistence, clothing and intertribal trade (Slobodin 1981a). Much day-to-day subsistence

depended on fishing with spears, weirs, fish traps and nets. Migratory birds were also consumed.

Tools included long bows, plus a wide range of stone and bone axes, chisels, mauls, knives, awls, scrapers and fleshers. Copper was acquired through trade with people of the Pacific Coast (Slobodin 1981a). Snowshoes, birchbark canoes and moose skin boats were used for hunting and travelling (Heine et al. 2001, McClellan and Denniston 1981). Sleighs were made of mooseleg skins (Heine et al. 2001). Later, pack dogs and dog teams improved the ability for long-distance travel.

The Gwich'in did not have permanent settlements until after contact with Europeans, but tended to revisit distinct areas over the years, such as caribou hunting or fishing locales. Dwellings included (Heine et al. 2001, Pilon 2002):

- moss and sod structures
- semi-subterranean framed structures
- caribou skin tents
- willow lean-tos
- snow houses

The first documented European contact with the Gwich'in was with Alexander Mackenzie in 1789. However, according to archaeological evidence, indirect contact with Russian traders had taken place before then (Nolin 1993). Around 1806, the North West Company established Fort Good Hope at the margins of Gwich'in territory. A permanent post within Gwich'in lands was not established until Fort McPherson (Peel's River House) was founded in 1840 (Krech 1979). The Gwich'in participated in the fur trade to acquire trade goods to make their lives more comfortable. However, subsistence and traditional activities continued to play primary roles (Heine et al. 2001).

The discovery of oil at Norman Wells in 1920 provided the impetus for treaty negotiations between the Gwich'in and the Canadian government. As mentioned previously, the Gwich'in signed Treaty 11 in July 1921. Treaty 11 was designed to remove Gwich'in title to the land in return for obligations of cash and annuities, and hunting, trapping and fishing equipment. The Gwich'in interpreted this treaty as a friendship treaty and expected protection of their traditional lifestyles and lands (Heine et al. 2001). Large-scale oil exploration in the Mackenzie region in the 1970s provided an opportunity for political organization of the Gwich'in under the position of Aboriginal rights to the land. This position culminated in signing of the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement in 1992.

### 7.4.3 Baseline Conditions – Sahtu Settlement Area

South of the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit are the traditional lands of the Athapaskan-speaking Dene people that make up the SSA. These lands comprise the Mackenzie Valley lowlands between the Blackwater and Travaillant rivers, from the Mackenzie Mountains and Foothills into the Yukon, to the Anderson Plain west of Great Bear Lake.

Before contact with Europeans, the Aboriginal people of this region were similar in terms of technology and language. Although they shared the same area, they considered themselves to be separate groups when the first fur traders and explorers arrived in the region (Savishinsky and Hara 1981). Although these regional groups had many cultural similarities, they did recognize separate homeland use areas for each local band, including:

- Sahtu Dene group of the Great Bear Lake area
- K'ahsho Got'ine of the Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake area
- Shuta Got'ine of the area west of the Mackenzie River and south of Norman Wells
- K'aalo Got'ine between the Mackenzie River and Great Bear Lake (Sahtu Heritage Place and Sites Joint Working Group 2000)

However, groups had access to and used the entire traditional lands of the Sahtu. Today the SSA is divided into three administrative districts:

- K'ahsho Got'ine
- Deline
- Tulita

The ways in which these people view and understand the land is preserved and passed on through oral tradition. This includes knowledge of the environment and animal behaviour, cultural values, making tools and equipment, and how to interact with family members and neighbours. The land is a place to pass on this knowledge, and special places become aids for recalling stories and related knowledge (Sahtu Heritage Place and Sites Joint Working Group 2000). Special places might include:

- burial sites, which are considered sacred
- landmarks that identify travel routes
- landscape features that figure prominently in stories of the Sahtu Dene

Currently, five regional cultural groups make up the SSA:

- the Hare, who live primarily in Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake
- the Slavey in Tulita
- the Sahtu Dene (Bear Lake) in Déline
- the Mountain Dene, in Tulita
- the Métis, who live throughout the Mackenzie Valley (Sahtu Heritage Place and Sites Joint Working Group 2000)

The following is a brief overview of each of the groups that occupy the SSA.

#### 7.4.3.1 Hare

The Hare, so named because of their reliance on the hare for food and clothing, are also called the K'ahsho Got'ine or big willow people (Osgood 1932). They traditionally occupied an area from the Yukon, across the Mackenzie River, to the area west and northwest of Great Bear Lake (Savishinsky and Hara 1981). This diverse territory included mountains, taiga and tundra, and supported a population of about 700 to 800 during first Euro-Canadian contact (Mooney 1928). In many areas of the Hare's land base, the reliance on hare for food led to periodic food shortages that coincided with the natural cycle of hare populations, and the harvesting of caribou, moose and fish was often not enough to prevent starvation (Sue 1964). Groups that used the Mackenzie Valley had more plentiful resources in terms of moose, and those near Great Bear Lake and north had easy access to barren-ground caribou herds (Rowe 1972). Fish and edible plants supplemented their diets.

Clothing was primarily made of hare skins, although the skins of moose, caribou and other furbearers were also used. It was decorated with porcupine quills and moose hair (Savishinsky and Hara 1981). Facial tattooing was also practiced (Sue 1964). Canoes provided transportation in the warmer months, whereas snowshoes and toboggans were used in the winter. Other examples of material culture during this time included tools made from stone, bone, antler, wood, bark and beaver teeth, and caribou sinew snares and lacing. Housing consisted of conical tipi-like structures covered with hides, moss and boughs (Savishinsky and Hara 1981).

Trade goods probably reached the Hare by the late 1700s, and the posts established at Fort Franklin (now Déline) and Fort Good Hope attracted the Hare, Mountain Dene, Gwich'in and Inuvialuit (Sue 1964). Fort Good Hope became a centre for missionaries, and a meeting place where baptisms, marriages and religious holidays were celebrated (Savishinsky and Hara 1981). Interaction between non-Aboriginal fur trade employees and Aboriginal populations resulted in Métis culture, now recognized as the Sahtu Métis (Sahtu Heritage Place and Sites Joint Working Group 2000). The influence of the church, fur trade and 1898 Gold Rush saw the Hare split into three main groups:

- those hunting and trapping west of the Mackenzie River
- those along the Mackenzie River
- groups in the lake district northeast of Fort Good Hope (Sue 1964)

There were dramatic changes for the Hare in the first half of the twentieth century. A Treaty was signed with the Canadian government in 1921 and children began attending a residential school in Aklavik. Disease became rampant, and by 1928, underground burials were instituted to replace the Hare's traditional scaffold burials in an effort to contain the spread of disease (Sue 1964). Participation in the wage economy increased with introduction of oil exploration in the region, along with an increased use in western technology and a division of time spent in settlements and on the land. As government services became centralized, and trapping decreased because of low fur prices after World War II, more time was spent in settlements than in the bush (Savishinsky and Hara 1981). By 1962, a road to Colville Lake and establishment of that community gave the Hare an opportunity to migrate from Fort Good Hope and pursue a more traditional way of life based on hunting, trapping and fishing.

#### **7.4.3.2 Slavey**

The traditional lands of the Slavey reach from the Mackenzie Valley to the Great Bear River, from the Liard River to the Hay River. The Slavey now occupy the southern reaches of the SSA, and live primarily in Tulita. As the Slavey represent the major cultural group of the DCR, their cultural and historical background are discussed in Section 7.4.4, Baseline Conditions – DCR.

#### **7.4.3.3 Sahtu Dene**

The Bear Lake people, or Sahtu Dene, are a postcontact cultural entity. They are descendants of the Dogrib, Hare and Slavey people who came together at the fur trade posts on or near Great Bear Lake. Therefore, their precontact lifestyles are discussed in other sections of this document.

Great Bear Lake is the largest lake fully within Canada's borders, and its shores are home to the Sahtu Dene. The lake is located in the transition zone of the boreal forest, characterized by muskeg and rock outcroppings with stunted spruce,

poplar and birch (Rowe 1972). A North West Company trading post located at a good fishery site on Great Bear Lake was used from 1799 to 1815, and traders documented the presence of the Hare, Slavey and Dogrib bands (Stager 1962). When the Hudson's Bay Company established Fort Norman (now Tulita) on the Mackenzie River, it became the trading post of choice until the mid-twentieth century. Only temporary posts existed on Great Bear Lake (Gillespie 1981). As previously mentioned, the intermarriage of the Dogrib, Hare, Slavey and some Mountain Dene that traded at Fort Norman resulted in the Sahtu Dene, who self-identified as a distinct group (Osgood 1932). When Fort Franklin was re-established on the site of the old North West Company post in 1950, there was a shift of trade to that area, centralization of services and settlement of many Sahtu Dene in Fort Franklin.

#### 7.4.3.4 Mountain Dene

The Mountain Dene, or Shuta Got'ine, historically used the area west of the Mackenzie River and east of the Mackenzie Mountains. Although several bands, known by anthropologists as *Mountain Indians*, have been associated with this region, the Shuta Got'ine were likely part of a larger group associated with the Nahanni or Kaska Dene (Gillespie 1981). Relatively little is known of the Mountain Dene's lifestyle in the Mackenzie Mountains before 1957, when the first documentation by non-Aboriginal people occurred. What is known was gathered from annual cycles of trade visits and periods of residence at Fort Norman. Trading patterns, starvation, disease and intermarriage with the Hare and Slavey influenced the shifts of these people within their traditional lands (Gillespie 1981). The Shuta Got'ine represent those bands that traded in Fort Norman since the early 1800s.

The rugged terrain inhabited by the Mountain Dene included alpine tundra, fast-moving rivers, and valleys with an intermittent cover of spruce with some birch and aspen. Game animals included moose, woodland caribou and Dall's sheep, and fish, hare and squirrel were frequently harvested (Gillespie 1981). Meat was often cached for winter when it was more difficult to hunt. In the fall, families travelled to Tulita, where they fished, trapped and traded dry meat in the region until January, and then returned to the mountains to hunt caribou.

Toboggans and dogs were not used for winter travel until the mid-1800s. Although canoes were made from spruce bark, moose skin boats remain the most distinctive trait in Mountain Dene culture and were the favoured method of travelling from the mountains to the Tulita area. Other material culture of the Mountain Dene did not differ greatly from other Athapaskan groups in the region. Lodges were constructed in a simple lean-to style or with caribou hide, and sheltered two to four families (Gillespie 1968). Caribou, sheep and moose hides, and squirrel skins were used for clothing.

#### 7.4.4 Baseline Conditions – Deh Cho Region

Most people in the DCR, which is Dene for *Big River*, are Slavey. East of the Slavey and the Mackenzie River are the Dogrib, another Athapaskan-speaking Dene group. The traditional lands of the Dogrib are found north to south between Great Slave Lake and Great Bear Lake, and east to west between the Mackenzie lowlands and Contwoyto, Aylmer and Artillery lakes (Helm et al. 1981), an area outside the current study area.

Member communities of the Deh Cho First Nation include:

- Acho Dene Koe in Fort Liard
- Deh Gah Got'ie First Nation in Fort Providence
- K'atlodeeche First Nation in Hay River
- Liidlii Kue First Nation in Fort Simpson
- N'ah adehe First Nation in Nahanni Butte
- Pehdzeh Ki First Nation in Wrigley
- Sambaa K'e First Nation in Trout Lake
- Ts'uehda First Nation in West Point
- Tthe'K'ehdeli First Nation in Jean Marie River

The Métis members include (Deh Cho First Nation 2002):

- Fort Liard Métis Nation
- Fort Providence Métis Nation
- Fort Simpson Métis Nation

The territory of the Slavey during contact was from the western edge of the Great Slave Lake along the Mackenzie River to the current site of Fort Norman (Osgood 1932). This area sustained a population of about 1,250 during contact (Kroeber 1939). Small lakes and rivers in low-lying plains, with tree cover of jack pine, white spruce and birch, characterize the area. This environment was a rich source of fish (Asch 1981). Moose, woodland and barren-ground caribou, black bear, beaver, marten, waterfowl and hare provided much of the livelihood for the Slavey, as did edible plants (Asch 1981). However, because the area was not particularly ecologically diverse, the Slavey likely stayed in small groups for most of the year, gathering together once a year at a central meeting place (Asch 1981).

Material culture of the Slavey included snares, bows and arrows or spears used to take large and small game, and nets and weirs for harvesting fish. Clothing was usually made from moose hide, with personal adornment in the form of tattooing, wood and bone jewellery, and nose piercings. Housing was usually of two types: a tepee-like structure of bark or moose hide (Lamb 1970), or log-style cabins chinked with moss and covered with spruce boughs (Mason 1946). Like other cultural groups in the region, travel was by snowshoe and toboggans in winter, and by foot or bark canoe in the snow-free months.

The Chipewyan or Cree likely introduced trade goods in the mid-eighteenth century. Certain trade goods were useful to the Slavey, including metal goods, guns, tea, flour, rice and tobacco (Asch 1981). The fur trade disrupted traditional land use patterns, including travel routes and settlement areas, as the Cree began to move northward in response to trade rivalries (Lamb 1970). After Alexander Mackenzie's initial contact with the Slavey in 1789, trade expansion saw posts being established throughout the region. By the late 1800s, the Slavey traded at seven posts (Asch 1981):

- Fort Norman
- Wrigley
- Fort Simpson
- Fort Providence
- Hay River
- Fort Nelson
- Fort Liard

The South Slavey name for Wrigley is *Pehdzeh Ki*, which means *clay place* (PWNHC 2002). The first site of this community, about 30 km north of the present location, was called Old Fort Island. Dene people settled there after the North West Company closed Fort Alexander, its post at Willowlake River. When famine and tuberculosis killed nearly one third of the residents of Old Fort Island, the families established a new site for the community near a landform known as *Roche-qui-trempe-a-l'eau*, the rock that plunges into water. The site is now known as Old Fort Wrigley, as the community was moved to its present location on higher ground in the 1970s (Northern News 2002b).

To the south is Trout Lake. Fort Simpson is located at the confluence of the Mackenzie and Liard rivers, and is the oldest continuously occupied trading post on the Mackenzie River (Northern News 2002b). Jean Marie River began as an outpost camp in 1935 as part of a traditionalist movement. Wrigley became a base for Slavey people after 1905, although they continued a traditional lifestyle (Northwest Territories Protected Areas Strategy Advisory Committee 2001).

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have witnessed rapid change for the Deh Cho. The influx of fur traders and missionaries was followed by the Klondike gold rush to the west, arrival of the Northwest Mounted Police, and steam-powered boats along the river. Airplanes, the Mackenzie Highway and a pipeline to support war efforts also dramatically changed the face of the region. Treaty 8 was negotiated in the southern reaches of Slavey territory in 1900 at Fort Resolution and Fort Vermillion, and at Fort Nelson in 1911. Treaty 11 was not signed until 1921, with the Slavey residing north of the Great Slave Lake and Mackenzie Valley. Disputes surrounding Treaty 11 have continued since that time, and came to a head during the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry

in 1977. Negotiations regarding a land claim in the DCR continue to the present day.

#### **7.4.5 Baseline Conditions – Northwestern Alberta**

The Slavey people also extend into northern Alberta, where they are known as the Acha'ottine, or woodland people. These Athapaskan-speaking people refer to themselves as the Dene Tha'. Although culturally and linguistically similar to the Slavey of the Northwest Territories, they are geographically located in the northwest corner of Alberta.

The traditional lands of the Dene Tha' extend from northwestern Alberta into northeast British Columbia, and into the southern regions of the Northwest Territories (Ross 2001). Although the Dene Tha' adhered to Treaty 8 in 1900, their reserves were not surveyed until 1946. Concentrated settlement was part of a larger plan by the government to facilitate assimilation of Aboriginal people into non-Aboriginal society (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996). Construction of a residential school in Assumption (now Chateh) by the Catholic Church also encouraged settlement, as families wanted to live near their children. What resulted was development of three communities in northwestern Alberta where most of the Dene Tha' population live: Chateh, Bushe River and Meander River.

### **7.5 Synopsis**

Heritage resources include archaeological or historic sites, burial sites, cairns and artifacts. Little information exists on the Prehistoric Period for this region. Therefore, information sources from adjacent areas have been used. However, the regional Historic Period is much better understood.

The study area for heritage resources consists of the general region that will be directly or indirectly affected by the project. Five areas are encompassed within this region:

- Inuvialuit Settlement Region
- Gwich'in Settlement Area
- Sahtu Settlement Area
- Deh Cho Region
- northwestern Alberta

#### **7.5.1 Prehistory – Inuvialuit Area**

During the prehistoric past of this region, a terrestrial-mammal hunting adaptation is known for the earliest occupations. Although marine-based economies were likely present, few coastal sites are known. The five phases, traditions and cultures of this region are poorly defined, and the transition from one to the next

is not well known. It is thought that people migrated to the region from Siberia. These people developed into the Dorset Culture, focused primarily on maritime subsistence. They occupied a huge area, and perfected winter hunting on the sea ice. Thule replacement of Dorset is not well understood. Thule adaptation initially focused on maritime resources but later also used terrestrial resources. Sled dogs, still in use today, were introduced by the Thule.

### **7.5.2 Prehistory – Gwich'in, Sahtu and Deh Cho Areas**

The Mackenzie Valley, in its present form, did not exist in this area until after 9,900 before present (BP), so occupation was not likely before this time. Although the earliest human habitation of the Mackenzie Valley is unknown, it may have been associated with populations moving south from a Beringian refugium. The earliest evidence of prehistoric occupation comes from south of the study area. The tool kit found is similar to others recovered elsewhere that dated from 9,000 to 6,000 BP, and also a site dated about 7,000 BP. Sites dating up to the Protohistoric Period have been found in the area.

### **7.5.3 Prehistory – Northwestern Alberta**

Little is known about the prehistoric occupation of northwestern Alberta, and it is assumed that cultures occupying adjacent areas were also present here. Following deglaciation of northwestern Alberta about 11,000 years ago, Clovis groups likely conducted exploratory forays into the region from southern Alberta. A late variant of the lanceolate Northern Plano culture, known as the Acasta Lake Complex, has been found dating between 7,000 and 5,000 BP, and was perhaps followed by an expression of the Julian Complex, which dates to around 4,000 BP. The Julian Complex toolkit comprises a mixture of projectile point styles, including lanceolate and stemmed specimens, and microblade technology. Bow and arrow technology arrived with the Late Taltheilei Tradition, and was probably introduced into this area from the plains.

### **7.5.4 Historic Past – Regional**

Perhaps as early as the mid-eighteenth century, the Slavey of the Mackenzie Valley were introduced to a few European trade items by Cree or Chipewyan middlemen. Inuvialuit traded for Russian goods with the Alaskan Inuit to the west and south. Initial contact with Europeans occurred with Alexander Mackenzie's expedition in 1789.

When the North West Company fur trade posts were established on the Mackenzie River, the Dene were afforded direct access to Euro-Canadian goods. By the end of the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries had contacted most of the people in the Mackenzie Valley. The Canadian government did little to assert its presence until its first treaty negotiations brought segments of the Slavey into Treaty 8 in 1900.

In the 1930s, exploitation of mineral resources in the region replaced the fur trade as the principal industry. The Dene found temporary and permanent wage employment with these industrial developments, further serving to concentrate populations in established communities. This, coupled with an increasing reliance on government services, has resulted in a greater degree of sedentary existence. Since about 1850, the Métis in the SSA have participated in traditional subsistence activities, and also worked as interpreters, trappers and provisioners, and at trading posts.

### **7.5.5 Historic Past – Inuvialuit Settlement Region**

During Euro-Canadian contact, the Inuvialuit were engaged in elaborate hunting and fishing activities using advanced technology. Inuvialuit trade with Europeans began indirectly, first with the Alaskan Inuit for Russian goods and with the Dene farther south on the Mackenzie River. During the early 1900s, many Alaskan Inuit migrated to the Mackenzie region, drawn by employment in the whaling industry and feeling the effects of a collapse in the caribou population. Although the Inuvialuit have adapted to modern amenities and technology, they continue to participate in terrestrial, riverine and marine-based economic and cultural activities.

### **7.5.6 Historic Past – Gwich'in Settlement Area**

The Gwich'in live just south of the Inuvialuit, and have traditionally occupied a large part of the Alaska and Yukon interiors. Caribou was of central importance to the Gwich'in. Hunting and travelling initially used snowshoes, birchbark canoes and moose skin boats. Later, pack dogs and dog teams improved long-distance travel. The first documented European contact was with Alexander Mackenzie in 1789. However, indirect contact with Russian traders had taken place before this time. The Gwich'in participated in the fur trade, but subsistence and traditional activities continued to play primary roles. The discovery of oil at Norman Wells in 1920 provided the impetus for treaty negotiations between the Gwich'in and the Canadian government. The Gwich'in signed Treaty 11 in July 1921.

### **7.5.7 Historic Past – Sahtu Settlement Area**

South of the Gwich'in and Inuvialuit are the traditional lands of the Athapaskan-speaking Dene. Five regional cultural groups currently make up the SSA: the Hare, Métis, Slavey, Sahtu Dene and Mountain Dene. Before contact with Europeans, the cultural groups of this region were similar in terms of technology and language, and moved around frequently. However, they were considered distinct enough by their neighbours to be designated as separate people when the first fur traders and explorers arrived in the region. The ways in which these people view and understand the land is preserved and passed on through oral tradition.

The Hare were named because of their reliance on the hare for food and clothing. During first Euro-Canadian contact, their population was 700 to 800. Trade goods probably reached the Hare by the late 1700s, and several posts were established. A treaty was signed with the Canadian government in 1921 and children began attending a residential school in Aklavik. Participation in the wage economy and use of western technology increased with introduction of oil exploration in the region.

Interactions between non-Aboriginal fur trade employees and Aboriginal populations resulted in the birth of Métis culture in the region, now recognized as the Sahtu Métis. The Métis were most recognized for their role in transporting goods via canoe, Yorkboats and steamboat.

The Slavey occupy the southern reaches of the SSA and represent the major cultural group of the DCR. The Sahtu Dene (Bear Lake people) are a post-contact cultural entity, descendants of Dogrib, Hare and Slavey people who came together at the fur trade posts on or near Great Bear Lake and now have their homes on its shores. Relatively little is known of the lifestyles of the Mountain Dene, and what is known has been gathered from annual cycles of trade visits and periods of residence at Fort Norman (now Tulita). Trading patterns, starvation, disease and intermarriage with the Hare and Slavey influenced the shifts of these people within their traditional lands.

### **7.5.8 Historic Past – Deh Cho Region**

Most people in the DCR are Slavey. During contact, the DCR sustained a population of about 1,250. This region was a rich source of fish, and terrestrial animals provided much of the livelihood for the Slavey, as did edible plants. The Chipewyan or Cree likely introduced trade goods in the mid-eighteenth century. The fur trade disrupted traditional land use patterns, including travel routes and settlement areas, as the Cree began to move northward in response to trade rivalries. The influx of fur traders and missionaries was followed by the Klondike gold rush to the west, arrival of the Northwest Mounted Police, and steam-powered boats along the river. Airplanes, the Mackenzie Highway and a pipeline to support war efforts also dramatically changed the face of the region. Treaty 8 was negotiated in the southern reaches of Slavey territory in 1900 at Fort Resolution and Fort Vermillion, and at Fort Nelson in 1911. Treaty 11 was not signed with the Slavey residing north of the Great Slave Lake and Mackenzie Valley until 1921.

### **7.5.9 Historic Past – Northwestern Alberta**

The Slavey people also extend into northern Alberta, where they refer themselves as the Dene Tha'. Although the Dene Tha' adhered to Treaty 8 in 1900, their reserves were not surveyed until 1946. Concentrated settlement was part of a larger plan by the government to facilitate assimilation of Aboriginal people into

non-Aboriginal society. What resulted was development of the three communities in northwestern Alberta where most of the Dene Tha' population live, Chateh, Bushe River and Meander River.