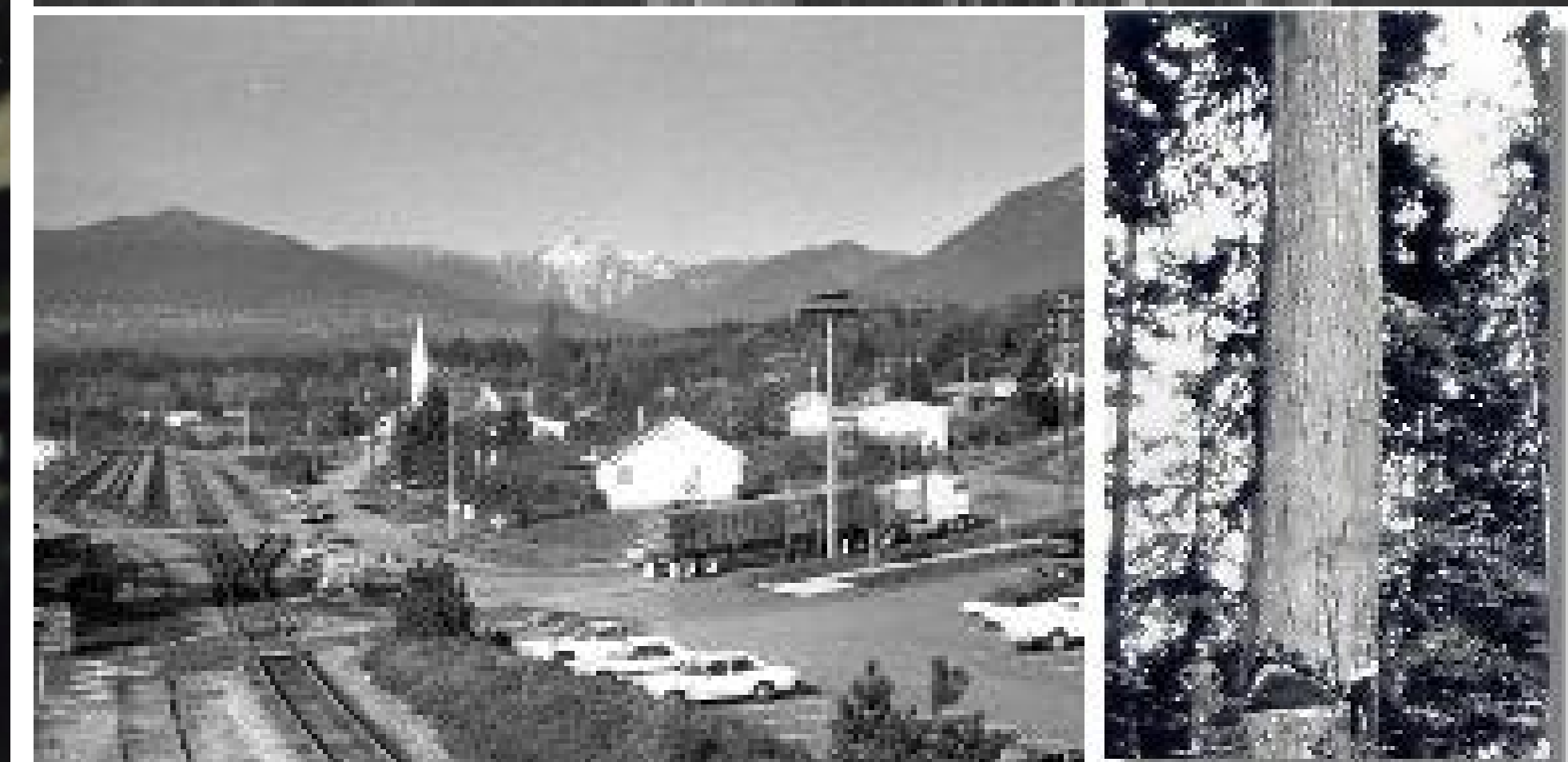


Protecting Natural Indigenous Resources



Project Focus

The focus of the project derives from an oral history conversation with an Indigenous Elder who briefly discussed traditional and cultural ways regarding natural resources and food within Indigenous communities. After having heard this, my interest peaked and I delved deep into learning the history, current state and the future of honouring and respecting this important aspect of Indigenous culture throughout Canada. The research I conducted allowed for me as an individual to gain a plethora of rich and informative knowledge that has largely been undiscussed with western societal systems. With just having listened to the oral history and hearing the mention of this topic, I learned much more than I could have imagined and demonstrates as to the importance of listening to Indigenous communities and specifically elders as to when they are taking their time to converse.

WHY IS IT NEEDED?

Within all aspects of Indigenous life such as culture, community, and in the case of the topic at hand of natural resources and food, colonization and western influence has abused and silenced these vital aspects of Indigenous cultures. Through continuous support and learning through Truth and Reconciliation as well as implementing Indigenous well-being and support into everyday discussions can help in continuing the healing that colonialism has and continues to impose on communities daily. As a basis on the topic at hand, academic institutions throughout Canada can begin to improve and incorporate learning of the protection of Indigenous natural resources as well within learning centers that translates into workplace and societal acknowledgment.

Learning Outcomes

When researching this topic, I found and discovered a vast realm of information that I previously had little or no knowledge of at all. However, when reflecting on this, I found myself highly fixated on 3 different research aspects that truly impacted and changed how I viewed the topic at hand. Firstly, an academic article conducted focused on the integration on traditional medicine from using natural resources within Indigenous people's populations, specifically for diabetes. Not only did this article display the benefits and practices that accompany traditional medicine, it also noted as to the importance in which connecting communities to these said traditions are vital in ensuring they stay alive. Secondly, I spent a lot of time on the Monova Archives Online Database site. Spending hours scrolling and discovering images that connect to the preservation and destruction of Indigenous natural resources was fascinating and informative. As well finding nonrelated images that tie back into the topic at hand regarding communities, traditions, cultures, and resources in the land. Overall, I gained the ability and now have the confidence to find information and research on other databases for future topics and can conduct my own research efficiently. Finally, I found myself being stuck in a loop of not being able to find relevant and up to date information on the topic within government and academic websites. This was a learning experience for me and made me question my own privilege when it comes to Indigenous knowledge. As a non-Indigenous person I was struggling in just looking for information for a research project, yet the matter is much more strenuous and difficult for Indigenous peoples and communities who want to both honour and learn their personal and familial traditions and cultures. This research project was a tremendous learning experience for me and allowed me to gain a deeper understanding as well as learn how to respect and acknowledge my own privilege.

Future Learning

The exploration of the topic opened my eyes to the way in which Indigenous natural resources have been developed through time, the impact that they have had in being destroyed through western influence, and the ways in which they are and continue to be honoured and reconciled both today and in the future. Overall, I feel that with the knowledge I have gained over the past weeks in researching and learning about this topic, I want to continue to learn as to ways in which myself and others can support and honour these traditions of Indigenous peoples throughout Canada. With having gained an understanding as to the history and ways in which natural resources have been depleted it is vital in ensuring that they continue to be both given back and respected with modern day society.

Collection of Resources

The resources gathered for this project were both vast and diverse. I used numerous databases such as the Capilano University Library Online Database, Statistics Canada, and several Academic Institution websites both Canadian and American. As well I used numerous Provincial resource sites that provided past and current information on the topic at hand. However, one of the most informative and engaging databases I used was the Lynn Valley Monova Archives. I was able to have a hands-on experience in sorting through and finding resources for my topic and as well have online access through the website.

References

Left: 'Latash Nahanee, 2000.' Michael Fortney Photo. Courtesy of MONOVA Archives of North Vancouver

Top Right: 'First Nations Canoe, Vancouver Harbour, 1916.' Courtesy of MONOVA Archives of North Vancouver, #4836.

Middle Right: 'Across Indian Arm, 1959'. Courtesy of MONOVA Archives of North Vancouver, #9898.

Bottom Centre: 'Waterfront West of Lonsdale, 1982.' Mary Lafreniere Photo. Courtesy of MONOVA Archives of North Vancouver, #6191.

Bottom Right: 'Logging on Tsleilwaututh Land (Reserve #3), 1924.' Courtesy of MONOVA Archives of North Vancouver, #4982.