



CUMBERLAND HOUSE CREE NATION DECLARATION

ON THE JURISDICTION AND PROTECTION OF THE KITASKĪNAW

Cumberland House Cree Nation is a Sovereign Nation, and let it be known to everyone, we have title to our homelands that is everlasting. We made Treaty No. 5 with the Crown based on mutual promises and a promise to live in peace and friendship. We have always upheld those promises and our Treaties are as much alive today as they were in 1875.

Our lands, our laws and our way of life are sacred gifts from Kise-Manito. Our rights and who we are as a people flow directly from the relationship that we have with Kise-Manito, our lands, and with all living beings who share it. We have sacred responsibilities to maintain these relationships, and to protect the gifts Kise-Manito has bestowed us for future generations.

The Kitaskīnaw also known as the Saskatchewan River Delta is one of our greatest gifts. The Kitaskīnaw has sustained and supported our people since time immemorial. It is central to our survival, our way of life and connection to all things. It is also central to the exercise of our Aboriginal and Treaty Rights. It is the heart of the Boreal Forest; its western source and many tributaries sustain life in the Kitaskīnaw. It is a sanctuary for all beings that share its waters; it is vital to migratory birds and animals; its wetlands filter the waters and store carbon from the air.

We are all connected to the Kitaskīnaw. We also have a sacred duty to protect it. In this uncertain world, we know that we must put the land, water, and wildlife first. We must act to protect the Kitaskīnaw against present and future threats. We will uphold our responsibilities and the protocols we establish, to ensure that future generations can continue to share the many gifts that the Kitaskīnaw brings.

We will work to create new opportunities for our people to foster economic and social well-being. We will strive for natural resource equity and shared wealth as models for business development. Environmental protection and maintaining the Kitaskīnaw is our priority and is a solution to many of the challenges that we face. It is an opportunity to use the empirical knowledge of our Elders for the good of mankind, and to do things that matter for the planet.

Today, we declare that the Kitaskīnaw is formally protected under our laws, a sacred place that we will continue to look after forever. The Kitaskīnaw will continue to be a place for all creation to live and thrive as Kise-Manito intended. We will uphold our jurisdiction and responsibilities to protect the Kitaskīnaw against outside threats. We will establish our protocols and standards and our consent will be required for the use of the Kitaskīnaw. We will apply our traditional knowledge to heal the damage that has already been done and work together to share the Kitaskīnaw's many gifts with our Treaty partners. We will welcome allies and supporters of our work, and we will build partnerships with others under mutual understandings to help achieve our goals.

As Kise-Manito is our witness, this is our **Declaration made at a Special Gathering held on this 10th day of June 2021 on the Ancestral Territory of the Ininew**. This Declaration is made in accordance with the customary and natural laws of our people.