KITSELAS
TREATY INFORMATION SOURCE

Kitselas Constitution

WHAT IS A CONSTITUTION?

The Kitselas Constitution outlines the principles, values, and choices that Kitselas agrees to be governed by.

In a modern democratic society, the Constitution is the 'foundation.' It sets out the roles and responsibilities of the Legislature (elected officials), how laws are made, a modern administration with real accountability, and a way to appeal administrative decisions. It sets out the 'rules of the game' based on our culture, history, and elders.

Over time, every community or society has established these principles. For Kitselas, as an oral people, they were not written down. Writing our constitution helps us formally recognize and protect parts of the way of life for our People—'the Kitselas Way'—pass it down for future generations and communicate this to others.

WHY DO WE NEED A CONSTITUTION?

The Constitution sets out and explains the legal rights of the People and the roles and responsibilities of elected officials and the administration.

It's like a rulebook explaining what the Kitselas First Nation leaders can and can't do and the People's rights. It's similar to Canada's Constitution but only applies to the Kitselas First Nation and those who live or work on the Treaty Settlement Lands.

WHAT SHOULD A CONSTITUTION CONTAIN?

A Constitution tells people how their government will work.

It defines the rights, freedoms, and accountability of the government and how power is distributed between the Legislature, Administration, Courts, and the People.

It explains the rights and systems the Kitselas People agree to follow based on their cultural, historical, and modern democratic principles. The Constitution explains how the Kitselas government should work and make decisions fairly and predictably while ensuring everyone's rights are respected.

WHO DEVELOPED OUR CONSTITUTION?

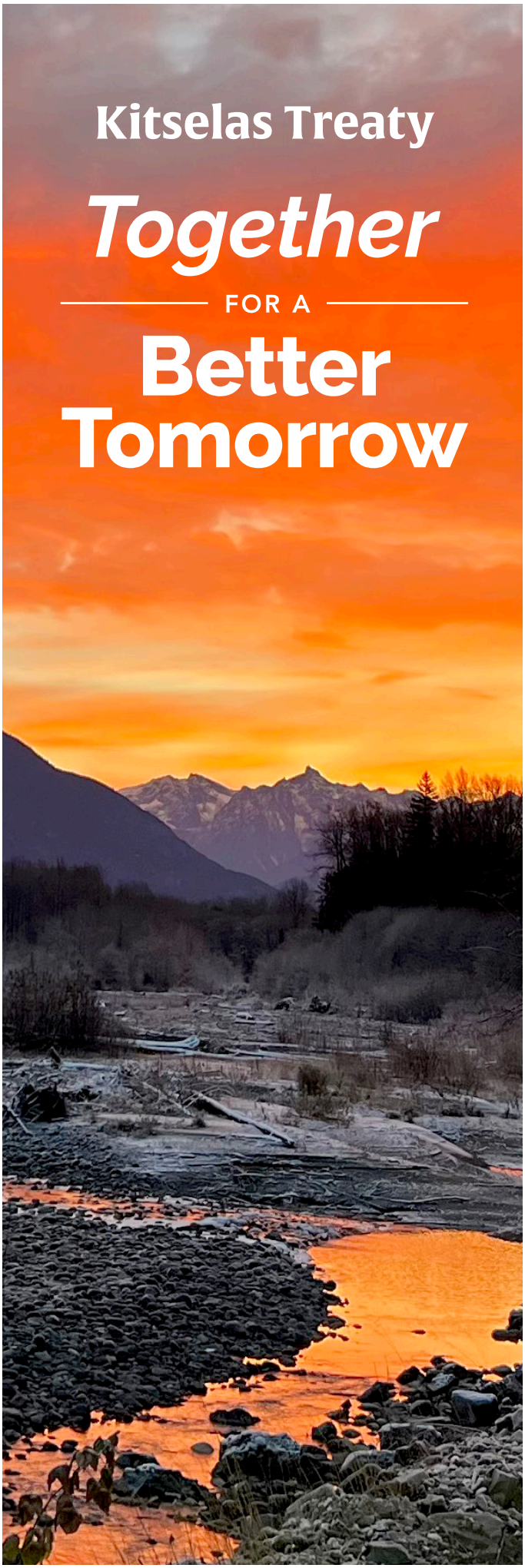
The Kitselas Constitution was built, clause by clause by the Kitselas People, through many community workshops, engagements, and consultations—we've been at this for a long time, well over a decade. Your thoughts, comments, input, and advice form its very foundation, including the voices of our Elders, many of who have now passed, leaving us to complete this work. We know how important it is for Kitselas Citizens to be central to these discussions; after all, who knows us better than ourselves?

CONSTITUTION WORKSHOPS

The latest version of the Constitution was shared with Kitselas Members in the August 2024 mailout and is available in the Members' Area of kitselastreaty.ca. We encourage you to read this Constitution and share your questions, feedback, or comments. Over the fall and winter of 2024, we will have monthly workshops where you can learn more about the Constitution as we work to finalize the Constitution for the Ratification vote, currently planned for April 2025. The next workshop will be on Saturday, November 2, 2024.

LEARN ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION & ASK QUESTIONS

You can learn more about the Constitution and ask questions at many events planned before the Ratification votes, expected in April 2025. All community members are welcome to attend meetings and events, which are also available on Zoom for our non-local members.

It's the people who decide if Kitselas becomes a Treaty Nation with our own Constitution and with control of our future.

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