

TO DOCUMENT, PRESERVE AND PROMOTE GWICH'IN CULTURE, LANGUAGE, TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND VALUES



IINDOO KHEHŁOK TR'EEDAH (MOVING FORWARD AS ONE)

GWICH'IN SOCIAL AND
CULTURAL INSTITUTE
5-YEAR PLAN
2012 – 2017

UPDATED
OCTOBER 2013

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a revision to *Iindoo Khehlok Tr'eedah (Moving Forward as One): the GSCI 5-Year Plan 2006-2010*. *Iindoo Khehlok Tr'eedah* was the fourth in a series of 5-year plans which have been produced to guide Board members and staff of the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute (GSCI) in its work.

The GSCI has a mandate to document, preserve and promote Gwich'in culture, language, traditional knowledge and values. Since the formation of the GSCI in 1993, over 80 projects have been initiated, most of which involve a number of years of work. While the focus in early years was on place names research, ethnoarchaeology (using oral history to identify camps, burial sites, harvesting locations and other important sites), and gathering traditional knowledge, more recent efforts have seen GSCI staff broaden the scope of their research work to include genealogy (identifying family trees), development of a Gwich'in language dictionary, Elders' biographies, replication of traditional Gwich'in clothing, and identification of proposed National Historic Sites within the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA). The results of these projects and contracts have been published in a number of books, articles, reports, calendars and videos, that collectively represent a significant contribution to our understanding of Gwich'in history, culture, values and traditional knowledge.

During the last four years, both revenues and expenses have been fairly stable. Deficits were reported for 2009/2010 through 2011/2012, before returning to a small surplus reported last year. Annual revenues and expenses are shown in the table below.

REVENUES AND EXPENSES, 2009/2010 – 2012/2013

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Total Revenue	\$1,025,943	\$970,916	\$1,066,270	\$1,121,035
Expenses	\$1,052,690	\$972,807	\$1,068,954	\$1,099,245
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$26,747)	(\$1,891)	(\$2,684)	\$21,790

The focus of previous strategic plans has been on continuing the exemplary record of research in traditional knowledge, culture and language. While this is still strategically important to GSCI, the focus of this strategic plan is broadened to include moving beyond pure research to cataloguing, preserving, and sharing GSCI's extensive collection of research materials.

GSCI's goals for the 2012-2017 period are:

1. We will reverse the trend of erosion in the Dinjii Zhuh G injik.
2. We will continue to build on our expertise in heritage resource documentation, preservation, and data management.
3. We will involve communities in our work.
4. We will make the results of our research available to a wider audience.
5. We will continue to build capacity within GSCI.
6. We will find a new home for GSCI.

To achieve these goals, GSCI staff will continue to seek partnerships with other organizations, apply appropriate technology, stress that language revitalization is an individual and family responsibility, and negotiate core funding agreements with our key funding partners.

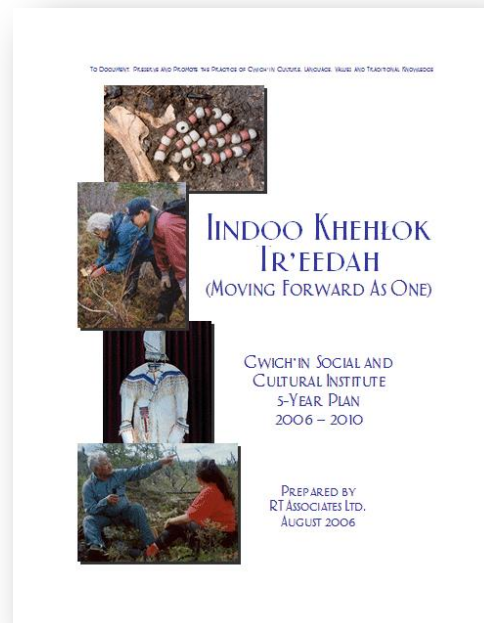
1 INTRODUCTION

The Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute (GSCI) was incorporated under the *Societies Act* of the Northwest Territories on May 6, 1993. It is a separate entity with its own Board of Directors, but still takes direction in many areas from the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC). Indeed, in recent years, the GTC-appointed Board member has served as the Chair of the GSCI Board of Directors. GSCI has its main offices in Tsiigehtchic, maintains small research offices in Inuvik and Yellowknife, and oversees the Gwich'in Language Centre in Fort McPherson.

This is a revision to *Iindoo Khehlok Tr'eedah (Moving Forward as One): the GSCI 5-Year Plan 2006-2010*.¹ *Iindoo Khehlok Tr'eedah* was the fourth in a series of 5-year plans which have been produced to guide Board members and staff of the GSCI in its work.

The first 5-Year Plan – *Coming Together to Heal Ourselves* – was prepared in 1992, followed by *Into the Next Millennium*, which was prepared in 1996. The next formal revision – *Iindoo Khehlok Tr'eedah: the Draft 5 Year Plan for 2003- 2007* – was never formally adopted, primarily because of budget concerns.

Most of the work that has been accomplished to date under these strategic plans involves GSCI staff – who are trained in modern research methods – working with Elders and Youth. The combination of expertise in modern methods and traditional knowledge results in research which showcases the best of both. Most of GSCI's research takes place on the land as much as possible, because Gwich'in traditional knowledge and language are rooted in the land.



Over 80 projects have been initiated since 1993, most of which involve a number of years of work. While the focus in early years was on place names research, ethnoarchaeology (using oral history to identify camps, burial sites, harvesting locations and other important sites), and gathering traditional knowledge, more recent efforts have seen GSCI staff broaden the scope of their research work to include genealogy (identifying family trees), development of a Gwich'in language dictionary, Elders'

¹ RT Associates Ltd. *Iindoo Khehlok Tr'eedah (Moving Forward as One): Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute 5-Year Plan 2006-2010*. August, 2006; p.19.

biographies, replication of traditional Gwich'in clothing, and identification of proposed National Historic Sites within the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA).

Many of these projects have been undertaken in cooperation with partners, such as the Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, Gwich'in Land and Water Board, Gwich'in Land Use Planning Board, Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, Parks Canada, Aurora College, and the Aurora Research Institute, demonstrating the broad appeal and importance of GSCI's work.

In addition to these projects, GSCI also undertakes responsibilities related to implementation of the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim* (e.g., active involvement in the conservation and management of Gwich'in heritage resources; consideration of Gwich'in cultural values in heritage resource management decisions; participation in integrated resource management planning with other Gwich'in organizations; and land use planning reviews to determine if any special considerations need to be included due to the presence of heritage resources in areas of interest).

GSCI also performs contracts on behalf of 3rd parties (e.g., workshops and conferences, repatriation planning). The results of these projects and contracts have been published in a number of books, articles, reports, calendars and videos, that collectively represent a significant contribution to our understanding of Gwich'in history, culture, values and traditional knowledge.

The focus of previous strategic plans has been on continuing the exemplary record of research in traditional knowledge, culture and language. While this is still strategically important to GSCI, the focus of this strategic plan is broadened to include moving beyond pure research to cataloguing, preserving, and sharing GSCI's extensive collection of research materials.

2 FINANCIAL BACKGROUND

Over the years, revenues and expenses have been managed well. GSCI has managed in most years to secure sufficient funding to cover its expenses. Small deficits were reported for 2009/2010 through 2011/2012, before returning to a small surplus reported last year. Annual revenues and expenses for the last 4 years are shown below, and presented in detail in Appendix 1.

TABLE 1: REVENUES AND EXPENSES, 2009/2010 – 2012/2013

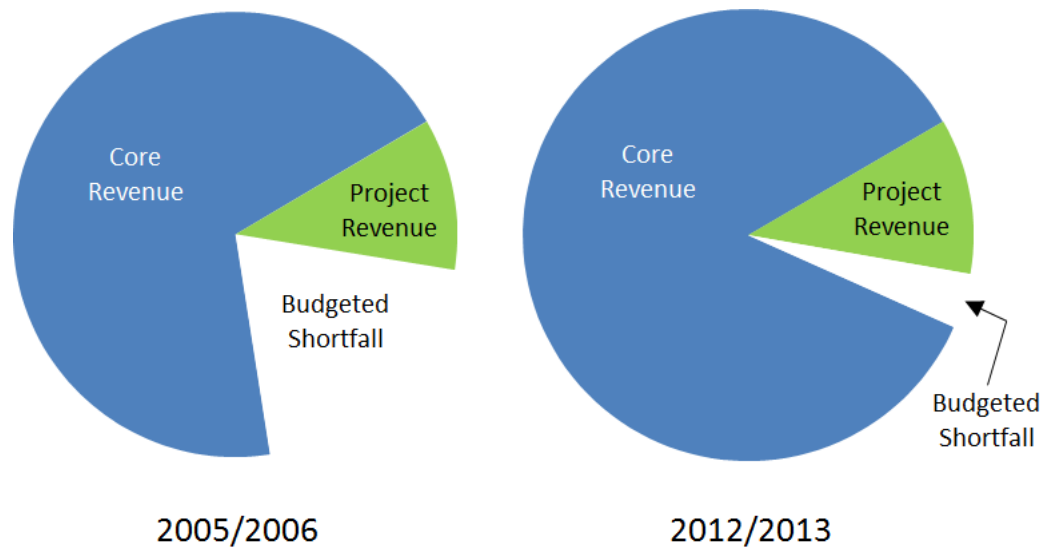
	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
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Expenses	\$1,052,690	\$972,807	\$1,068,954	\$1,099,245
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$26,747)	(\$1,891)	(\$2,684)	\$21,790

GSCI receives core funding from the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Beaufort Delta Education Council. But the core funding that it receives has never been enough. A comparison of budgeted revenues and expenses for fiscal years 2005/2006 and 2012/2013 is shown in table 2.

**TABLE 2: COMPARISON OF BUDGETED REVENUES AND EXPENSES
FOR 2005/2006 AND 2012/2013**

	2005/2006	2012/2013
Core Revenue	\$618,340	\$634,500
Project Revenue	99,100	83,000
Total Revenue	\$717,440	\$717,500
Total Expenses	\$895,983	\$746,687
Budgeted Shortfall	(\$178,543)	(\$29,187)

TABLE 2 CONTINUED



Core revenue accounted for about 69% of budgeted total expenses in 2005/2006. This improved to about 85% in 2012/13. Budgeted project revenue was 11% of budgeted total expenses both years.

The budgeted shortfall of total revenue over total expenses has gotten smaller since the 2005/2006 fiscal year. Further, actual revenues and expenses are typically higher than budgeted each year due to project commitments undertaken after budgets are prepared. Nevertheless, GSCI is constantly fundraising to pay not only project-specific expenses, but basic administrative expenses.

3 PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Strategic planning is about making and undertaking actions to achieve identified goals, usually over a 3-5 year period. Certainly strategic plans can cover longer time periods, but 5 years seems to be an acceptable time period, because it is far enough into the future to envisage significant growth or change happening, but near enough to exercise some control over how that growth or change is managed.

The idea that strategic planning is a process stems from the view that how an organization proceeds towards its goals is just as important as the goals themselves. Further, the best strategic plans are those that incorporate some kind of evaluation mechanism, so that the organization can review its progress from time to time, and, if necessary, change its actions, its priorities, or even the objectives. In this way, strategic planning becomes a process of renewal. This is illustrated in the graphic on the right.

The key elements of the strategic planning framework are:

1. **Vision.** The GSCI Vision Statement defines where we want to be in the future. It should energize, inspire and challenge us to achieve the ideals set out in the GCLCA. Our Vision should not be limited by legislation, geography, or the desires of others. It should set high ideals for all Gwich'in Participants.
2. **Guiding Principles.** Those values and ideals that are important and guide the work that we do.
3. **Mandate.** The mandate should describe the purpose of GSCI, or why it exists.
4. **Goals.** Goals are stepping stones to achieving our overall vision, and represent what we want to achieve in the next 3-5 years.
5. **Priorities.** Priorities are those activities associated with our goals and objectives that require immediate action.



6. **Key Strategies.** The key strategies identify where our focus needs to be. They provide the guidelines by which our goals and objectives may be achieved consistent with our mandate.
7. **Objectives.** Objectives are stepping stones to our goals, and represent what we want to achieve in the next 12 months.
8. **Action Plans.** Action plans assign responsibility and resources to achieving objectives (who does what, when, and how).
9. **Evaluation.** A strategic plan is a “living document”, and can be changed to meet changing needs and circumstances. An evaluation of progress towards achieving goals should be made every year, and the strategic plan adjusted if required to keep – or get back – on track.

A good strategic plan should:

- Explain the mandate and role of the GSCI;
- Inform, motivate, and involve Gwich'in Beneficiaries;
- Assist performance monitoring; and
- Facilitate timely responses to events and issues that can not be forecast

4 VISION

A Vision Statement is often a description of what an organization strives to be, but it can also be a way of saying what values and beliefs are important to the organization as it works to achieve its goals and objectives. The following Vision Statement was discussed during the strategic planning workshop in Tsiigehtchic on February 15th, 2012:

Our Elders are the sources of traditional knowledge and can give guidance in terms of cultural matters and values. We encourage our Elders and our youth to work together, so that communication and respect are fostered and maintained. In this way our traditions and cultural values will be carried into the future for the social well-being of our people.

This captures the spirit of what GSCI staff are working hard to accomplish: linking the past (the knowledge and values of Gwich'in Elders) with the future (the promise and purpose of Gwich'in youth) for the social well-being of all Gwich'in. It recognizes the importance of the Elders as the sources of traditional knowledge and values, as well as the responsibility of youth to respect traditional knowledge and values. It also demonstrates that GSCI has a role to play in linking one with the other.

5 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of GSCI are:

1. *Our Elders play a crucial role as teachers. They are the source of traditional knowledge, history, language and culture.*
2. *The preservation and respect for the land are essential to the well-being of our people and our culture.*
3. *Our family history is important to our identity as Gwich'in.*
4. *All Gwich'in have a role to play in keeping the culture alive.*
5. *Cross-cultural understanding and awareness between Gwich'in and non-Gwich'in is essential in building a new respect and understanding in today's global community.*

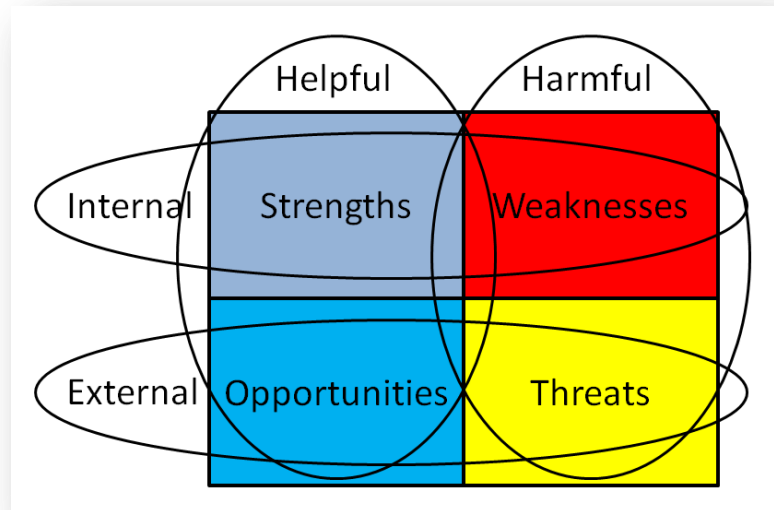
6 MANDATE

The Mandate statement should describe the purpose of the organization, or why it exists. One of the problems with the mandate as stated in GSCI's *Articles of Incorporation* is that it limits GSCI's role to "coordination, facilitation, and representation". These are *passive* roles, implying that other organizations and/or individuals are actually doing the work (i.e., the *active* roles), which is 'coordinated' or 'facilitated' by GSCI. In order to demonstrate GSCI's 'hands-on', active approach to its work, it has adopted the following 'working' mandate:

To document, preserve and promote Gwich'in culture, language, traditional knowledge and values.

7 SWOT ANALYSIS

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis is a tool for assessing an organization and its environment. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the organization, and relate to matters concerning resources and capabilities. Threats and opportunities are external, and relate to matters that the organization needs to address (see graphic on the right).



7.1 STRENGTHS

- Mandate
- Longevity
- Strong organization
- Dedicated, professional, accountable staff
- Committed board members
- Support of Elders
- Respect of other organizations
- Research collection
- Peer-reviewed, award-winning publications
- Strong partnerships with academics and linguists
- Record of mentorship and collaboration with students and traditional knowledge holders

7.2 WEAKNESSES

- Insufficient core funding
- No succession plan (impact of retiring staff on GSCI's ability to continue its work)
- Relationship with GTC
- Lack of support from DGOs and RRCs
- Poor self-promotion
- Aging equipment
- Lack of space

7.3 OPPORTUNITIES

- Activities for and within the education system
- The knowledge of our Elders
- Sources of core funding for GSCI
- Developing language standards
- Application of new technologies
- Partnerships:
 - with educational institutions re program development, linguistic training, bursaries and orthography workshops
 - with DGOs and RRCs re program development
 - with GNWT to assist in implementation of the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* and *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan*
 - with organizations wanting to create cultural institutes

7.4 THREATS

- Time (Elders passing on)
- Major development projects (impact of permit applications on GSCI's staff and resources)
- Global change
- Climate change (impact on heritage sites)
- Disconnection with the land
- Lack of sufficient protective legislation for heritage sites
- Lack of input into ECE and Beaufort Delta Education Council (BDEC) curricula
- State of relationships and understanding between and among Gwich'in organizations
- Multiple spellings and interpretations of the Dinjii Zhuh Gijnjik

7.5 SUMMARY

In developing and implementing our strategic plan, we should seek to:

- Build on our strengths;
- Resolve our weaknesses;
- Exploit opportunities; and
- Avoid or minimize threats.

8 ISSUES

One of the challenges in revising a strategic plan is to identify the critical issues that need to be addressed. During the strategic planning workshop with Board members and staff in Tsiigehtchic on February 15th, 2012, the following key issues – in addition to insufficient core funding identified in Chapter 2 – were identified:

1. The meaning of ‘Social’ in ‘Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute’;
2. GSCI obligations related to the Mackenzie Gas Project;
3. Language planning, and in particular, the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan*;
4. Safeguarding GSCI’s collection of research materials; and
5. Finding a new home for GSCI.

8.1 THE ‘SOCIAL’ IN GWICH’IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL INSTITUTE

Although not necessarily a ‘critical’ issue, there has been a lot of discussion of the word ‘Social’ in ‘Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute’ in recent years. The following definition of ‘social’ is taken from Merriam Webster’s online dictionary:

*Of or relating to human society, the interaction of the individual and the group, or the welfare of human beings as members of society.*²

This definition perfectly describes the intent of GSCI’s research and other activities over the years:

- It is about or relates to human society, and in particular, speaks to the place of Gwich’in society within the larger human society;
- It is about recording, cataloging and preserving the history of interactions of individuals and groups within society; and
- Its purpose is to advance the welfare of human beings as members of society.

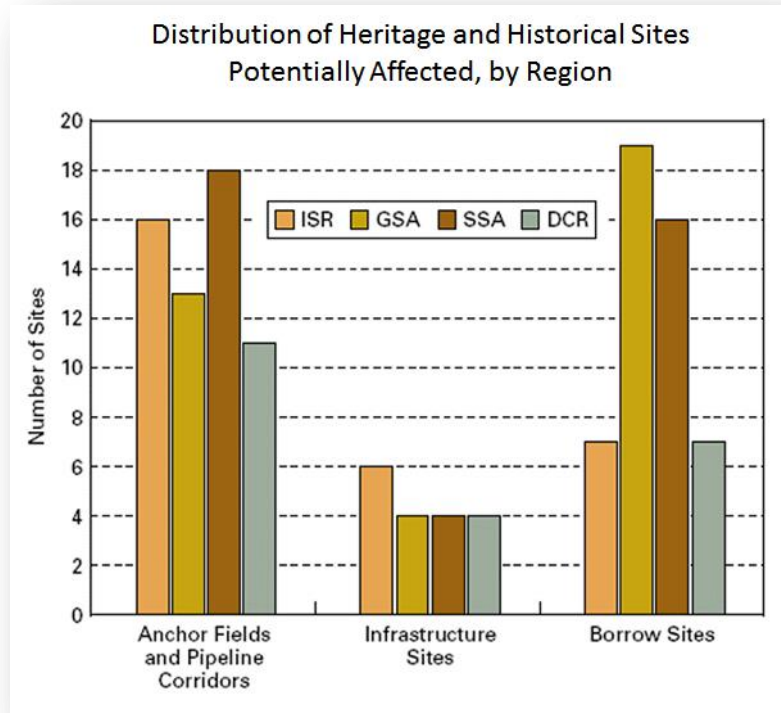
8.2 MACKENZIE GAS PROJECT

The Mackenzie Gas Project has received approval from the federal cabinet, and the National Energy Board has issued a *Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity* for the 1,196-kilometre long Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, which will connect with the existing pipeline infrastructure in northern Alberta. The proponents of the Project have until the end of 2013 to decide if they wish to proceed with the Project.

² www.merriam-webster.com.

The GNWT expects that numerous heritage and historical sites would be at risk of impact due to the size of the Project's footprint.³ This is demonstrated in the graphic below. Within the Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA), the most significant potential impacts would be the result of development of borrow sites (gravel pits).

A number of conditions have been placed on the approval with respect to "the conservation and protection of areas of natural and cultural importance".⁴ In particular, the proponents must complete comprehensive heritage resources impact assessments before construction starts⁵; consult with Gwich'in communities with respect to the location of the pipeline corridor through the Gwich'in Settlement Area⁶; and complete and implement a Heritage Resources Protection Plan.⁷



Because of its heritage research, GSCI provides advice to the Gwich'in Land Administration and Gwich'in Land and Water Board on land use permit applications with respect to possible impact on heritage resources arising from access and development in the GSA. Therefore, development of the pipeline construction portion of the Mackenzie Gas Project would place significant demands upon the time and knowledge of GSCI staff. However, the consensus of opinion seems to be that the currently abundant and cheap supply of natural gas means that the project will be further delayed. Nevertheless, there may be other mining- or highway-related development projects during the timeline covered by this strategic plan that will impose similar impacts on GSCI staff.

³ Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project. *Foundation for a Sustainable Northern Future: Report of the Joint Review Panel for the Mackenzie Gas Project*. December 2009; p. 399.

⁴ Ibid; p. 332.

⁵ Ibid; p. 400.

⁶ Ibid; p. 349.

⁷ Ibid; p. 554.

8.3 NWT ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES PLAN

The *Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan* sets out a framework for strengthening Aboriginal languages over the next decade. It describes a broad vision, goals and objectives, as well as a series of strategies and actions to support increased use of Aboriginal languages by residents and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT).⁸

The Plan sets out four goals, each of which is supported by three objectives. These goals and objectives are presented in the following table.

NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan Goals and Objectives			
Promote Aboriginal Language Use	Speak Aboriginal Languages	Write Aboriginal Languages	Government Services in Aboriginal Languages
Increase Public Awareness	Encourage family-centered, community, and educational activities	Develop standards	Set GNWT language service levels
Recognize and celebrate Aboriginal language use	Increase opportunities for speaking Aboriginal languages	Agreements on terminology and language use	Provide active offer for services in Aboriginal languages
Demonstrate leadership in promoting and using Aboriginal languages	Encourage use of Aboriginal languages during cultural activities	Use writing to communicate stories, legends and other information	Require oral and written language services to meet established standards

The challenges to be faced in achieving these goals and objectives will be evident to GSCI board members and staff. In 1999, the Gwich'in Tribal Council produced *Dinjii Zhuh Ginjik Hahtr'agoodinjih Srù* – the Gwich'in Language Plan. This came about because communities had been telling the GNWT Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) for years that communities – not government – should set priorities for language revitalization activities, and that communities – not government – should have greater control over these activities.

The NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan recognizes and supports the view that responsibility for language should be shared between individuals, families, language communities and

⁸ Education, Culture and Employment. *Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan: A Shared Responsibility*. October 2010, p. 6.

government. In particular, the Plan discusses the key roles that communities should play in supporting the increased use of Aboriginal languages.

However, after two years of implementing *Dinjii Zhuh Ginjik Hahtr'agoodinjih Srù*, it was realized that GSCI did not have sufficient resources – e.g., staff and funding – to undertake the sequence of activities described in the Plan in a meaningful way.

More recently, the Government of the Northwest Territories contracted Northways Consulting of Yellowknife to work with the Gwich'in Aboriginal Language Community to revise the *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan*. The purpose of the draft *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan* is to establish long-term goals and short-term objectives, and to identify community and regional activities to be conducted over the next five year period to support the preservation, use and revitalization of the Gwich'in language.

Therefore, for its own strategic planning purposes, GSCI board members and staff should consider pursuing activities which complement those in the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* and the revised draft *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan*. But beyond that, GSCI should limit its involvement to providing the tools and the opportunities to facilitate achieving the goals and objectives in these Plans. It should be up to communities themselves – to the families and individuals that make communities – to take ownership of the language, and make a strong commitment to getting involved in revitalization efforts. GSCI's goal should be to demonstrate and publicize the benefits from undertaking language revitalization initiatives.

8.4 SAFEGUARDING RESEARCH MATERIALS

Since Gwich'in culture and language has traditionally been passed orally from generation to generation, recordings of the stories told by Gwich'in Elders are precious to the Gwich'in community. The GSCI and the Gwich'in Language Centre have continued in this tradition, conducting much research by recording interviews with Elders on audio cassette tapes.

GSCI continued to compile, update and digitize all of GSCI's research materials from the past 23 years to the latest digital file format, ensure research materials are in good order, and all original research material is stored in the NWT Archives. These research materials include transcripts, photos, maps, and reports for about 80 projects. The GSCI has used several different formats to record and report research activities through its history.⁹ GSCI has received National Archives Development funding to conserve and preserve approximately 150 maps and to digitize over 100 tapes.¹⁰

The GSCI recognizes that its research materials are very precious. These materials need to be kept in a safe place, but the GSCI can't provide a safe place at this point in time, so materials are currently deposited with the NWT Archives.

⁹ Gwich'in Tribal Council. 2009-2010 Annual Report; p. 37.

¹⁰ Gwich'in Tribal Council. 2010-2011 Annual Report; p. 38.

A consultant has recommended that the GSCI continue with this practice, and is low-cost. This consultant has also recommended that the GSCI establish criteria for depositing with the NWT Archives, so that deposits can be made consistently and smoothly.¹¹

However, this is strictly a ‘holding’ agreement – the Archives is not responsible for cataloguing or conserving our materials. The ideal scenario for GSCI would be to have a dedicated building with suitable archival/library space, and an Archivist/Librarian on staff to organize and manage all of the collections from GSCI and the Gwich’in Language Centre. Everything would be catalogued, stored and managed properly, with access provided to the public. In designing and creating this, the recommendations and proposed activities contained in Erin Suliak’s *Strategic Archive Plan*, with respect to organizing, cataloging, financing, and staffing are relevant.¹²

8.5 A NEW HOME FOR GSCI

A new home for GSCI was discussed and included as a goal in the previous Strategic Plan. At that time, finding a solution for administrative inefficiency was the primary consideration¹³, but other considerations included the need for archival storage facilities as noted above, a Listening Room/library, Display area, Gathering Circle, workshop space, warehouse, and revenue generating facilities (e.g., coffee shop, bookstore).



All of these considerations are still valid today.

¹¹ Suliak E. *GSCI Strategic Archive Plan Summary Report*. September 2004; p. 3.

¹² Ibid; pp. 4,5.

¹³ RT Associates Ltd. *Iindoo Khehlok Tr’eedah (Moving Forward as One): Gwich’in Social and Cultural Institute 5-Year Plan 2006-2010*. August, 2006; p.29.

9 GOALS

Goals are stepping stones to achieving the overall vision, and represent what GSCI wants to achieve in the next 3-5 years. As stated earlier, five years is far enough into the future that GSCI staff should see significant growth, but five years is also near enough that some control can be exercised over how that growth is achieved.

During a teleconference with GSCI staff in January of last year, it was clear that three of the goals presented in the 2006-2010 strategic plan were worthy of further consideration, in terms of incorporation into a 2012-2017 strategic plan. These three goals were:

- We will reverse the trend of erosion in the Dinjii Zhuh Gijik (the Gwich'in language).
- We will continue to build on our expertise in heritage resource documentation, preservation, and management.
- We will find a new home for GSCI.

During the strategic planning workshop with Board members and staff in Tsiigehtchic on February 15th, 2012, these 3 goals were deemed relevant and valid enough to be included in the updated strategic plan, along with 3 more goals.

GSCI's goals for the 2012-2017 period are:

1. We will reverse the trend of erosion in the Dinjii Zhuh Gijik.
2. We will continue to build on our expertise in heritage resource documentation, preservation, and data management.
3. We will involve communities in our work.
4. We will make the results of our research available to a wider audience.
5. We will continue to build capacity within GSCI.
6. We will find a new home for GSCI.

10 KEY STRATEGIES

The key strategies identify where GSCI's focus needs to be. They provide the guidelines by which goals and objectives may be achieved consistent with GSCI's mandate.

10.1 PARTNERSHIPS

Formal partnerships with other Gwich'in organizations, key stakeholders and other organizations with similar mandates will assist us to achieve our goals, promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in our work, reduce duplication of services, and assist in raising additional funding.

GSCI has been very successful in the past in creating partnerships with a number of other organizations in order to develop and implement projects, including: Gwich'in Renewable Resource Board, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, GNWT Department of Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development, Aurora College, Aurora Research Institute, and Parks Canada. This practice should continue.

Government departments, schools and other institutions are willing to share their expertise, knowledge and assistance with the GSCI. The key is to structure the partnership so that there are distinct and realizable benefits for the GSCI.

Building partnerships will be a key strategy in helping to achieve all of our goals.

Partnership-building processes should be considered investments.¹⁴

10.2 APPLICATION OF APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

Over the years GSCI have made great strides with using the appropriate technology as a key strategy in helping to achieve all of our goals. The GSCI uses computers and digital technology throughout the organization on a day-to-day basis. However new and more up-to-date computers will need to be purchased soon. Using appropriate technology has helped GSCI create the GSCI website (www.gwichin.ca) and currently the GSCI staff uses Skype to hold staff meetings.

More importantly, in applying appropriate technology to upgrade and organize GSCI's collection of research materials, GSCI staff will continue to compile and upgrade all

¹⁴ Annis R, Beattie M, Gibson R. *Collaborative Partnerships: The Community Collaboration Story*. Presented at Boom Bust Economies: Impact on Rural and Remote Communities, Inuvik, June 20, 2008.

materials to the latest digital file format, consistent with the recommendations contained in Erin Suliak's report.¹⁵

10.3 LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

GSCI needs to convey the message that language revitalization is an individual and family responsibility. Thus, language revitalization initiatives should be primarily culture-based and community-led.

It was true 15 years ago, when the report *Language Planning for Gwich'in and Inuvialuit Communities* was prepared, and it is still true today: the best that organizations with an interest in revitalizing the language can do is to provide the tools and the opportunities to make it happen. Much of GSCI's current efforts in language revitalization stem from a 1997 report entitled *Language Planning for Gwich'in and Inuvialuit Communities*, which was prepared by André Bourcier.¹⁶ This report was an assessment of the means available to the Gwich'in to maintain and enhance the use of the *Dinjii Zhuh Ginjik* in the GSA. The author suggests that the most appropriate role for GSCI is in addressing issues regarding *Dinjii Zhuh Ginjik* definitions, spelling, composition and grammar which can be researched, discussed with Elders, revised and published.¹⁷ GSCI has been doing exactly that, and will continue to do so.

In planning future language revitalization activities, GSCI can take direction from the 2010 *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan*, and the draft 2013 *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan*.¹⁸

In addition, GSCI Board members and staff believe that one effective approach to language revitalization is on the land immersion camps. GSCI will investigate partnerships with DGOs (in particular, RRCs, Regional Youth and Elder Program and Justice Committees) to co-ordinate on the land immersion camps, and report the positive outcomes from these camps to BDEC, in an effort to integrate on the land immersion camps into the school curriculum.

10.4 CORE FUNDING NEGOTIATIONS

Last year (2011-2012), GSCI received \$300,000.00 in core funding from the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation (the investment arm of the Gwich'in Tribal Council) to cover basic administration and salaries. Other sources of core funding include \$100,000 from the GNWT Department of Employment, Culture and Education (ECE), and \$39,000 from the Beaufort Delta Education Council. GSCI receives an additional \$162,000 annually from ECE for Language Plan implementation.

¹⁵ Suliak, 2004; pp. 3,4.

¹⁶ Bourcier A. *Language planning for Gwich'in and Inuvialuit communities*. A report prepared for the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, 1997.

¹⁷ Ibid; p. 13.

¹⁸ At the time of writing (October 2013), the draft *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan* had just been released for review, so GSCI staff and Board members have not formally reviewed the document in order to determine what role GSCI can and should play in implementing the recommendations contained in the report.

This core funding is not sufficient to cover all administrative expenses. Throughout the year, staff must prepare and submit proposals to work on more projects that will reduce the percentage of deferred revenue that is used, and allow staff to carry on full operations each year. Even with other revenue from GSCI activities such as translation and interpretation, publications, and presentations, GSCI is still heavily dependent on funding raised on a project-by-project basis. But proposal writing is time consuming, and funding is not guaranteed.

An important strategy during the upcoming years will be to negotiate core funding agreements with our key funding partners. Having sufficient core funding to cover our needs would free staff to focus on research, preservation and documentation, and key projects.

10.5 PLANNING FOR GSCI'S NEW HOME

As noted earlier, a new home for GSCI was discussed and included as a goal in the previous Strategic Plan, but for a number of reasons, notably constraints on resources and time, not much progress was made. Developing a specific plan for achieving this goal will be made a priority for the upcoming fiscal year.

In addition to planning for a new home, attention must also be given to the proper closure of GSCI's Tsiigehtchic Office in the next few years, including the proper care and storage of research materials stored on site.

11 ACTION PLAN

Our Action Plan for 2013-2014 includes activities in four key areas:

1. Heritage resources documentation and preservation;
2. Language initiatives;
3. Core funding negotiations; and
4. Planning for GSCI's new home.

Activities in each of these key areas are summarized below. It is important to note that the retirement of key staff members may happen before the end of this GSCI 5-year plan, an occurrence which may substantially impact GSCI's ability to implement all of the activities noted below.

11.1 HERITAGE RESOURCES DOCUMENTATION AND PRESERVATION

- Options for backing up all digital materials
- Partner with DGOs and RRCs: request AGM to direct all Gwich'in organizations to initiate integrated budget planning
- Promote GSCI's work within Gwich'in communities

11.2 LANGUAGE INITIATIVES

- Clarify what needs to be done in terms of:
 - a) a partnership with BDEC; and
 - b) how the recent draft *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan* will impact GSCI operations
- Stabilize funding
- Digitization and cataloguing
- Launch Talking Dictionary

11.3 CORE FUNDING

- Investigate By-law #3 implications
- Meet with GTC's Chief Financial Officer
- Submit proposal to GTC Board of Directors for increased core funding¹⁹

¹⁹ GSCI requested an additional \$100,000 in core funding from the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation in May, 2013. Although no decision has been made as of October 2013, it has been assumed – for the purpose of preparing pro forma financial statements – that the request will be approved.

11.4 GSCI'S NEW HOME

- Prepare a discussion paper citing the advantages and disadvantages of each Gwich'in community as a location for the new GSCI office building.
- Discuss options with GTC, and decide upon a process for selecting the location.
- Select location through the agreed process.
- Create and empower a Steering Committee to oversee planning for the new building.
- Prepare a proposal to obtain funding²⁰ for a consultant to assist the Steering Committee to prepare a building plan. The building plan would address potential partnerships, fundraising, site development, selection of an architect, community consultation on design concept(s), selection of general contractor.
- Prepare RFP for consultant to work with the Steering Committee.
- Select consultant.
- Prepare, circulate, review and approve building plan.

²⁰ A contribution of \$30,000 from the GNWT has been included in the financial projections for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

12 FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

As noted in earlier sections, a major – and on-going – issue for GSCI has always been the lack of adequate core funding to cover basic operating expenses. Earlier this year, GSCI submitted a proposal to the Gwich'in Tribal Council to increase the annual core contribution from the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation to \$400,000 from \$300,000. This measure would improve GSCI's overall funding situation, but still not address chronic core funding shortfalls. Financial projections based on expected revenues and expenses result in small deficits through to the 2016-2017 fiscal year, with the exception of a small surplus in the 2013-2014 fiscal year because of revenue deferred from previous years. In other words, GSCI will still be dependent on funding raised on a project-by-project basis.

The assumptions made in projecting revenues and expenses for the next 4 years are shown in table 3.

TABLE 3: ASSUMPTIONS

Funding from the Gwich'in Settlement Corporation	Increases to \$400,000 per year from \$300,000
Core funding from other sources (GTC, GNWT, BDEC, publications)	Remains the same as 2012-2013 figures through 2016-2017
Project Funding	Per GSCI 2013-2014 budget, through 2016-2017; \$30,000 in additional project funding from GWNT added in 2014-2015 fiscal year to hire a consultant to prepare a building plan for the proposed new office building
Salaries and Benefits, generally	Per GSCI proposal
Salaries and Benefits, Heritage Resources	Assumes Alestine and Ingrid retire at the end of the 2014-2015 fiscal year, and replacements earn 80% of the salary allocated for Alestine and Ingrid in earlier fiscal years
Recruiting costs	\$30,000, included in Heritage Resources salaries and benefits for the 2015-2016 fiscal year

TABLE 3: ASSUMPTIONS, CONTINUED

Amortization	30% on computer equipment; 4% on new building costs; 20% on furniture and fixtures; Capital acquisitions include: \$20,000 computer equipment and \$85,000 for architectural and engineering work in 2015-2016; \$1.7 million for new building and \$60,000 for furniture in 2016-2017; Amortization on \$1.7 million building costs in 2016-2017 is prorated for 6 months (i.e., 50% of CCA allowable rate is included in 2016-2017 income statements ²¹)
Other Expenses	Estimated from expenses incurred in last two years; Expenses for professional fees, office and general expenses, telephone, bank charges, insurance assumed to increase 5% per year

GSCI will likely undertake more projects than listed, but since many project are taken on as opportunity allows, and implementation is dependent on fundraising, such projects are ignored in the financial projections. The impact of *planned* strategies and activities on GSCI's revenues and expenses for the next 4 years are shown in tables 4 through 7. Detailed financial projections are presented in Appendix 2.

TABLE 4: ADMINISTRATION, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Core Revenue	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000
Project Revenue	-	30,000	-	-
Total Revenue	503,000	533,000	503,000	503,000
Total Expenses	249,661	277,947	264,287	306,745
Excess Revenue (Deficiency), before Interest	253,339	225,053	238,713	196,255

²¹ Including amortization of new building costs in the pro forma income statements for 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 assumes that GSCI will be successful in raising the funds necessary to design and construct a new building. This funding would normally be capitalized in the balance sheet, and consequently does not appear in the projected income statements. In the likely event that some of the funding is in the form of a loan or mortgage, the interest that would be payable is an expense that would normally appear in the income statement, but is ignored in the financial projections.

TABLE 5: LANGUAGE INITIATIVES, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Core Revenue	\$201,000	\$201,000	\$201,000	\$201,000
Deferred Contributions	15,140			
Project Revenue	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Total Revenue	296,140	281,000	281,000	281,000
Total Expenses	304,806	305,224	305,664	306,125
Excess Revenue (Deficiency)	(8,666)	(24,224)	(24,664)	(25,125)

TABLE 6: HERITAGE RESOURCES, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Core Revenue	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$36,000
Deferred Contributions	31,720			
Project Revenue	61,000	61,000	61,000	61,000
Total Revenue	128,720	97,000	97,000	97,000
Total Expenses	360,458	361,016	339,812	310,427
Excess Revenue (Deficiency)	(231,738)	(264,016)	(242,812)	(213,427)

TABLE 7: CONSOLIDATED REVENUE AND EXPENSES, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Core Revenue	\$740,000	\$740,000	\$740,000	\$740,000
Deferred Contributions	46,860			
Project Revenue	141,000	171,000	141,000	141,000
Total Revenue	927,860	911,000	881,000	881,000
Total Expenses	914,924	944,187	909,763	923,297
Excess Revenue (Deficiency), before Interest	12,936	(33,187)	(28,763)	(42,297)

13 CONCLUSIONS

The goals and strategies presented in this report arise from discussions during a Board and staff strategic planning session in Tsiigehtchic on February 15th, 2012. However, implementing these strategies does not make GSCI's ongoing activities any less of a priority. Nor should it prevent GSCI staff from proceeding with projects which have been identified through other means, or from pursuing other work at the direction of the Gwich'in Tribal Council, or from entering into contracts with 3rd parties.

GSCI's increasing responsibilities associated with heritage resource management obligations, language revitalization, and implementing both the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* and the draft *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan* – on top of expectations to continue the excellent work in documenting and cataloging traditional knowledge, oral histories, place names research and other ethnographic research – means that GSCI must look carefully at what it is able to accomplish with the resources that it has.

It is important to recognize that priorities can change. As described in the *Planning Framework* section of this report, GSCI must review its progress from time to time, and if necessary, change its actions, its priorities, or even the overall strategies themselves as warranted.

Since the formation of GSCI 19 years ago, over 80 projects have been initiated, most of which involve multi-year workplans. While the focus in early years was on place names research, ethnoarchaeology and gathering traditional knowledge, more recent efforts have seen GSCI staff substantially broaden the scope of their research work. The results have been published in books, articles, reports, calendars and videos, that collectively represent a significant contribution to an understanding of Gwich'in history, culture, values and traditional knowledge.

While these endeavours are still strategically important to GSCI, the focus of this strategic plan is broadened further to include moving beyond research to cataloguing, preserving, and sharing GSCI's extensive collection of research materials, as well as assisting in language revitalization activities, particularly by providing the tools and the opportunities necessary to achieving the goals and objectives in the *NWT Aboriginal Languages Plan* and the draft *Gwich'in Regional Language Plan*.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Historical Income Statements, 2009/2010 – 2012/2013

Appendix 2: Pro Forma Income Statements, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

APPENDIX 1: HISTORICAL INCOME STATEMENTS

	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Revenue				
Government of NWT	\$432,243	\$342,256	\$430,246	\$472,165
Gwich'in Settlement Corporation	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Government of Canada	70,302	133,316	168,079	50,000
Beaufort Delta Education Council	115,000	90,000	89,000	89,000
Gwich'in Tribal Council	26,442	28,747	29,000	61,077
Other Contributions	62,954	57,043	31,194	162,562
Interest Income	11	621	610	632
Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions	1,555	1,088	762	534
Deferred Revenue	13,506	10,823	13,619	-36,944
Other Income	3,930	7,022	3,760	22,009
Total Revenue	\$1,025,943	\$970,916	\$1,066,270	\$1,121,035
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits	664,170	618,635	572,438	558,383
Professional Fees	10,606	99,714	246,596	267,630
Travel	83,392	76,827	77,790	114,887
Program Materials and Supplies	45,707	47,269	56,031	54,080
Equipment Rental	1,931	500	4,075	35,003
Office and General	33,407	25,315	18,948	20,497
Telephone	14,301	13,811	17,226	17,940
Rent	14,640	14,400	14,550	12,000
Amortization	14,278	11,804	9,326	7,989
Administration	25,037	5,149	11,649	3,897
Conferences and Workshops	2,444	200	10,632	3,880
Bank Charges and Interest	5,363	3,591	3,809	3,672
Board Meetings	13,142	10,918	6,600	3,646
Insurance	5,233	5,161	5,528	646
Advertising	1,742	990	0	96
Allowance for Bad Debts	58,961	-952	11,006	-5,001
Honouraria	58,336	39,475	2,750	0
Total Expenses	\$1,052,690	\$972,807	\$1,068,954	\$1,099,245
Excess Revenue (Deficiency)	(\$26,747)	(\$1,891)	(\$2,684)	\$21,790

APPENDIX 2: PRO FORMA INCOME STATEMENTS, ADMINISTRATION, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013-2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Revenue				
Gwich'in Settlement Corp.	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
GTC Implementation Heritage Funding				
GNWT-ECE	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
GNWT-ECE (Language Plan)				
Beaufort Delta Education Council				
Publications				
Administration Fees	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Total Core Revenue	503,000	503,000	503,000	503,000
Project-Specific Revenue				
Beaufort Delta Education Council				
GNWT	-	30,000	-	-
Government of Canada				
Deferred Contributions				
Total Project Revenue	-	30,000	-	-
Total Revenue	503,000	533,000	503,000	503,000
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits	145,934	145,934	145,934	145,934
Professional Fees	17,500	48,375	19,294	20,258
Travel	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Project Materials and Supplies	-	-	-	-
Equipment Rental	7,549	7,549	7,549	5,662
Staff Training	7,500	7,500	15,000	15,000
Office and General	3,570	3,749	3,936	4,133
Telephone	4,800	5,040	5,292	5,557
Rent	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Amortization	11,807	8,265	15,186	57,514
Administration	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Conferences and Workshops	-	-	-	-
Bank Charges and Interest	3,700	3,885	4,079	4,283
Board Meetings	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400
Insurance	7,000	7,350	7,718	8,103
Advertising	-	-	-	-
Allowance for Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Honouraria	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Total Expenses	249,661	277,947	264,287	306,745
Excess Revenue (Deficiency)	253,339	225,053	238,713	196,255

APPENDIX 2: PRO FORMA INCOME STATEMENTS, LANGUAGE INITIATIVES, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013-2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Core Revenue				
Gwich'in Settlement Corp.				
GTC Implementation Heritage Funding				
GNWT-ECE				
GNWT-ECE (Language Plan)	162,000	162,000	162,000	162,000
Beaufort Delta Education Council	39,000	39,000	39,000	39,000
Publications				
Administration Fees				
Total Core Revenue	201,000	201,000	201,000	201,000
Project-Specific Revenue				
Beaufort Delta Education Council	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
GNWT	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Government of Canada				
Deferred Contributions	15,140			
Total Project Revenue	95,140	80,000	80,000	80,000
Total Revenue	296,140	281,000	281,000	281,000
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits	254,936	254,936	254,936	254,936
Professional Fees	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000
Travel	16,500	16,500	16,500	16,500
Project Materials and Supplies	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Equipment Rental	-	-	-	-
Staff Training	-	-	-	-
Office and General	3,570	3,749	3,936	4,133
Telephone	4,800	5,040	5,292	5,557
Rent	-	-	-	-
Amortization	-	-	-	-
Administration	-	-	-	-
Conferences and Workshops	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Bank Charges and Interest	-	-	-	-
Board Meetings	-	-	-	-
Insurance	-	-	-	-
Advertising	-	-	-	-
Allowance for Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Honouraria	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	304,806	305,224	305,664	306,125
Excess Revenue (Deficiency)	(8,666)	(24,224)	(24,664)	(25,125)

APPENDIX 2: PRO FORMA INCOME STATEMENTS, HERITAGE RESOURCES, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013-2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Revenue				
Gwich'in Settlement Corp.				
GTC Implementation Heritage Funding	31,500	31,500	31,500	31,500
GNWT-ECE				
GNWT-ECE (Language Plan)				
Beaufort Delta Education Council				
Publications	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
Administration Fees				
Total Core Revenue	36,000	36,000	36,000	36,000
Project-Specific Revenue				
Beaufort Delta Education Council				
GNWT	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000
Government of Canada	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Deferred Contributions	31,720			
Total Project Revenue	92,720	61,000	61,000	61,000
Total Revenue	128,720	97,000	97,000	97,000
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits	278,948	278,948	253,158	223,158
Professional Fees	24,400	24,400	24,400	24,400
Travel	34,800	34,800	34,800	34,800
Project Materials and Supplies	9,150	9,150	9,150	9,150
Equipment Rental	-	-	-	-
Staff Training	-	-	-	-
Office and General	4,760	4,998	5,248	5,510
Telephone	6,400	6,720	7,056	7,409
Rent	-	-	-	-
Amortization	-	-	-	-
Administration	-	-	-	-
Conferences and Workshops	2,000	2,000	6,000	6,000
Bank Charges and Interest	-	-	-	-
Board Meetings	-	-	-	-
Insurance	-	-	-	-
Advertising	-	-	-	-
Allowance for Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Honouraria	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	360,458	361,016	339,812	310,427
Excess Revenue (Deficiency)	(231,738)	(264,016)	(242,812)	(213,427)

APPENDIX 2: CONSOLIDATED PRO FORMA INCOME STATEMENTS, 2013/2014 – 2016/2017

	2013-2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Revenue				
Gwich'in Settlement Corp.	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
GTC Implementation Heritage Funding	31,500	31,500	31,500	31,500
GNWT-ECE	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
GNWT-ECE (Language Plan)	162,000	162,000	162,000	162,000
Beaufort Delta Education Council	39,000	39,000	39,000	39,000
Publications	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
Administration Fees	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Total Core Revenue	740,000	740,000	740,000	740,000
Project-Specific Revenue				
Beaufort Delta Education Council	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
GNWT	41,000	71,000	41,000	41,000
Government of Canada	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Deferred Contributions	46,860	-	-	-
Total Project Revenue	187,860	171,000	141,000	141,000
Total Revenue	927,860	911,000	881,000	881,000
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits	679,818	679,818	654,028	624,028
Professional Fees	59,900	90,775	61,694	62,658
Travel	61,300	61,300	61,300	61,300
Project Materials and Supplies	14,150	14,150	14,150	14,150
Equipment Rental	7,549	7,549	7,549	5,662
Staff Training	7,500	7,500	15,000	15,000
Office and General	11,900	12,495	13,120	13,776
Telephone	16,000	16,800	17,640	18,522
Rent	14,400	14,400	14,400	14,400
Amortization	11,807	8,265	15,186	57,514
Administration	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Conferences and Workshops	4,000	4,000	8,000	8,000
Bank Charges and Interest	3,700	3,885	4,079	4,283
Board Meetings	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400
Insurance	7,000	7,350	7,718	8,103
Advertising	-	-	-	-
Allowance for Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Honouraria	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Total Expenses	914,924	944,187	909,763	923,297
Excess Revenue (Deficiency)	12,936	(33,187)	(28,763)	(42,297)