



Saulteau First Nations

# COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN

(FEBRUARY 2022)





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# FOREWARD

Saulteau First Nations' Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) is a roadmap to guide the future of our sovereign Nation. It outlines our Nation's priorities and goals to achieve for the next 20 years and beyond with the overarching intent of enhancing our self-sufficiency, self-governance, and control of our lands without boundaries.

Our CCP will support us as we join and unify with other First Nations politically, economically, socially, and spiritually. Our power and control of our Nation will come from our land and the unity and diversity of our peoples, who will creatively and collaboratively adapt to the changing environments around us.

The CCP will help ensure that our young are well educated and prepared as future leaders to guide our Nation forward. Our elected Council and staff will continue to be creative and innovative in generating economic wealth that is redirected back into programming to support the social welfare of our members. Our brightest minds will be sought-after throughout the world and we will work together to achieve the best results for all our people.

Through the priorities and goals outlined in this CCP, we will be able to develop the right infrastructure in the right places, attracting two thirds of our member population into our great territory. Our water will remain pure, our food will be safe, and our knowledge of land practices will protect our environment as we continue to be stewards of the land. We will value education as a means to secure jobs for our children's children and to improve our economic, social, and community wellbeing.

In summary, we strive to be the best community, and to live, work and play surrounded by a natural environment that inspires an active lifestyle and healthy minds. We will have a community spirit that embraces our traditions, respects diversity, and gives everyone the opportunity to reach their full potential 'for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the rivers flow'.



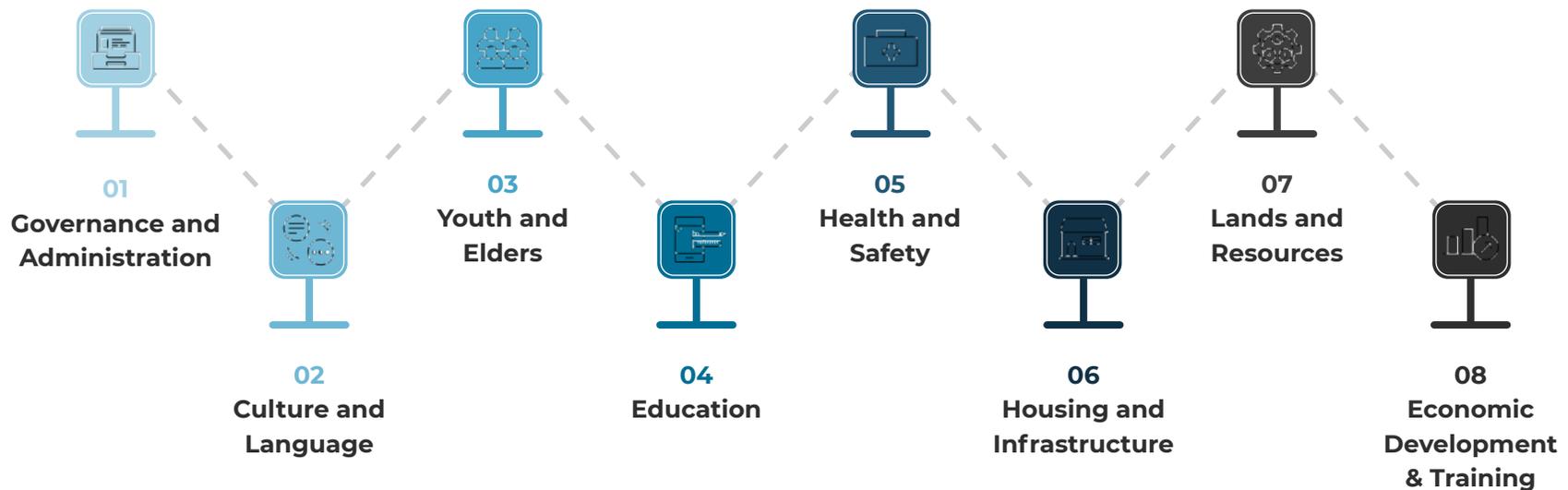
# INTRODUCTION

In 2015, Saulteau First Nations ('Saulteau') developed our first Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP). The 2015 CCP was intended to provide guidance to leadership and administration in the delivery of community programs, services, infrastructure investments, and other community initiatives. Since the adoption of the plan by Council in 2015, our leadership and administration have made progress on many of the priorities and actions in the Plan. In addition, much has changed in our community and the surrounding region over the past six years, prompting a need to review the plan to ensure it continues to reflect and align with members' vision and priorities for the present and future.

Our 2015 CCP strongly emphasized the importance of economic development and infrastructure improvements. While these remain important for the Nation, other priorities have grown in significance in recent years and need to be accounted for. This includes the importance of language and cultural revitalization, community health and wellbeing, and supports for Saulteau Elders and youth.

As part of the 2015 CCP development, Chief and Council committed to reviewing and updating the CCP every 5 years to ensure it remains relevant and consistent with the evolving context of the community. The 2022 CCP will guide our community forward with respect to community, social, economic, governance, and infrastructure development over the next 20 years and beyond.

**The 2022 CCP sets the guiding principles for Chief and Council and Staff based on community input for the eight planning areas below:**



**Figure 1:** Eight Planning Areas of the CCP

## What is a Comprehensive Community Plan?

A CCP is a type of planning document that presents a roadmap for the future of a First Nation by working with leadership, staff and members to determine key priorities for a Nation's growth and development. It establishes a long-term community vision and identifies the necessary steps required for the Nation to realize its vision.

CCPs are usually organized into several key themes, including economic development, governance, lands and resources, health, culture, infrastructure development, housing, education, and social wellbeing (**Figure 2**). A CCP is created through a grassroots process that engages community members in establishing the vision for our community. It involves developing goals, priorities, and planning for how to achieve our community's overarching vision.

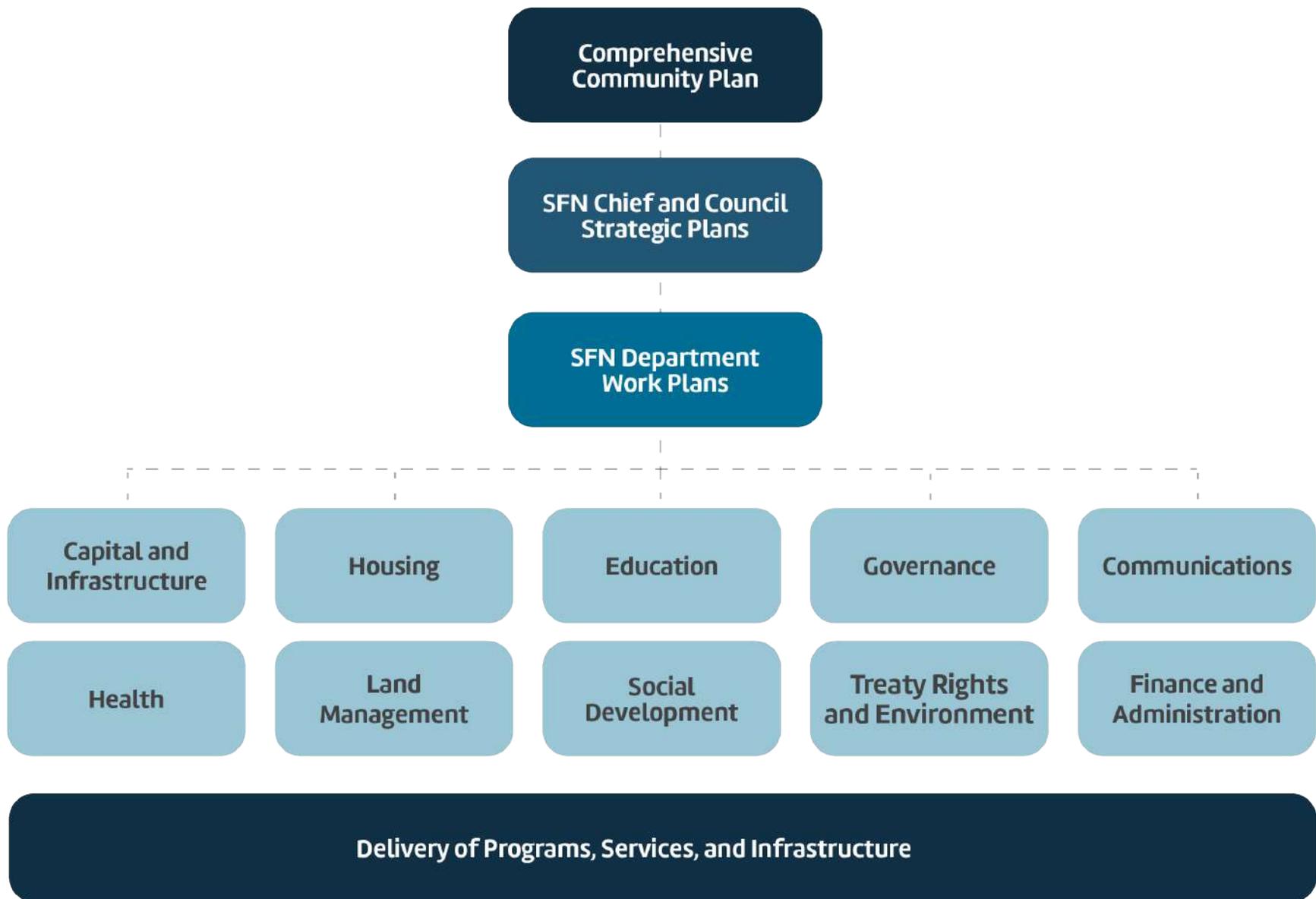
The 2022 CCP provides Saulteau Chief and Council, staff, and members with a clear mandate and direction for the future of the Nation. The CCP is meant to be used alongside existing policies and will be used to inform future policies, including Land Use Plans, Housing Strategies, and culture and language programming (**Figure 3**).

The 2022 Plan builds off the original 2015 CCP by carrying forward key contents that have remained consistent with Saulteau today. New directions include the addition of new community priorities and revisions to existing sections, including the community vision statement and guiding principles. Additions and revisions included in the 2022 Plan were based on meaningful participation with members, leadership and staff. An implementation plan has also been included in the new Plan that clearly articulated steps and responsibilities to achieve the new community priorities and actions.

Further, as a community-based, community-driven plan, the updated CCP can be used to help Saulteau maximize use of its existing resources. It is also a key document to assist Saulteau in leveraging additional funding and new partnerships with external organizations and entities such as businesses, industrial proponents, agencies, and different levels of government.



**Figure 2:** Comprehensive Community Planning Wheel



**Figure 3:** Planning Hierarchy

# Overview of Planning Process

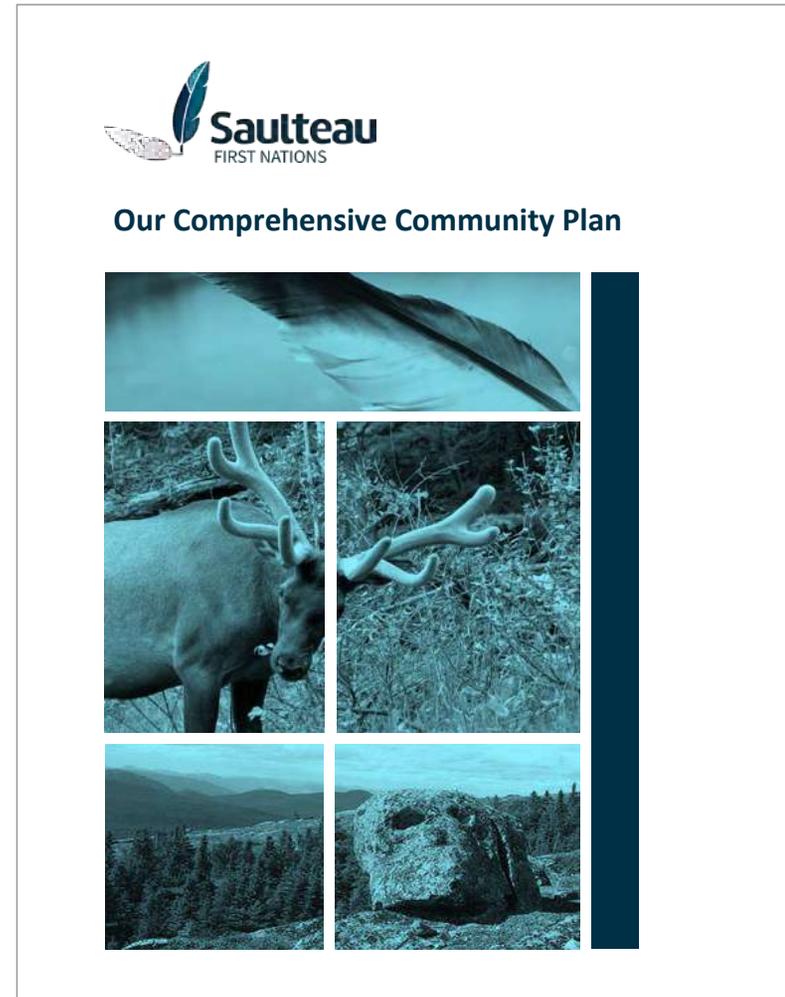
## 2015 CCP

This Comprehensive Community Plan builds off Saulteau's original CCP (**Figure 4**), which was developed through community engagement that occurred from 2014 and 2015. Saulteau undertook several engagement activities during this time with members to understand their priorities for the future and collect feedback on draft versions of the plan. Engagement activities included world café events, visioning sessions, community meetings, and surveys. Saulteau also met with multiple agencies and partners who provide services to the community.

Based on the feedback from community members, the 2015 CCP included a framework for nation building consisting of five key goals and associated activities to support the goals. The 2015 CCP goals were:

1. To communicate effectively
2. To establish effective policy and governance
3. To invest in community infrastructure and facilities
4. To ensure sound financial management and self-sufficiency
5. To support holistic well-being

These five goals remain key priorities for Saulteau and are incorporated into this updated version of the CCP.

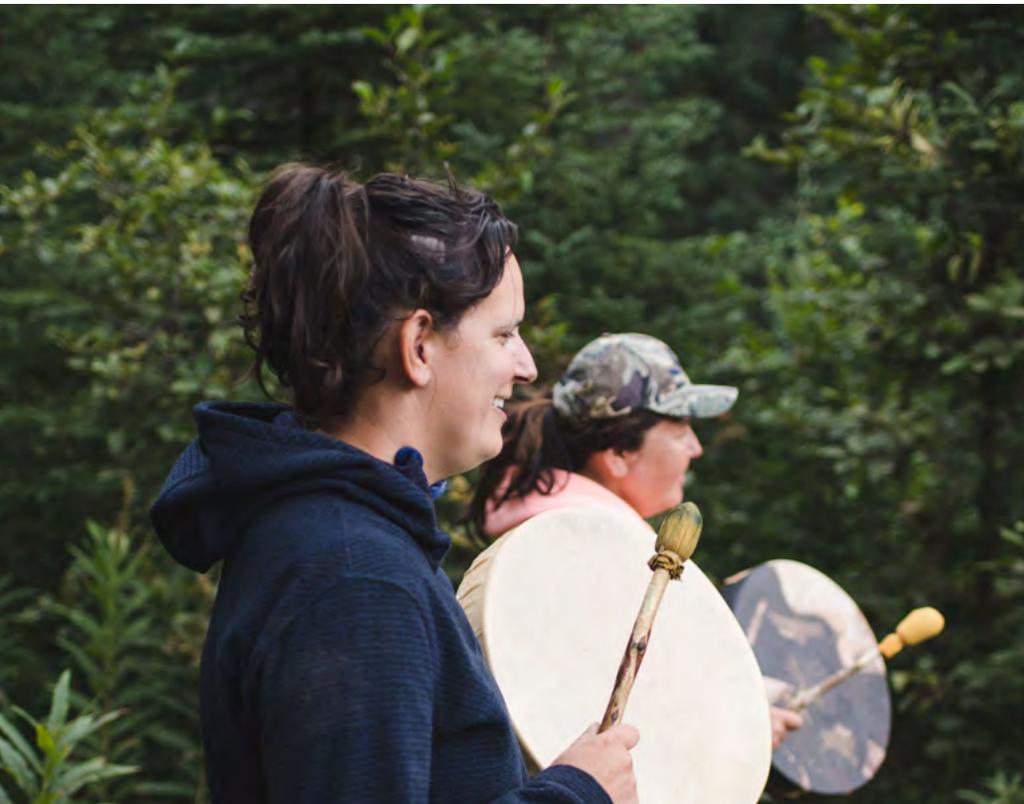


**Figure 4:** Saulteau First Nations 2015 CCP

## 2022 CCP UPDATE

The 2022 CCP was developed through four phases completed between June to December 2021. The planning process involved multiple rounds of engagement with Saulteau leadership, staff and members to ensure the new CCP accurately reflects the Nation's goals and priorities (**Figure 5**). A CCP Committee consisting of Saulteau members was also formed to advise and provide feedback throughout the planning process.

The process phases are included to the right.



**Figure 5:** The CCP Update Planning Process

### ***Phase 1: Project Start Up***

Phase 1 focused on initiating the project in the community, building awareness of future project activities, and gaining initial input from the CCP Committee, which is made up of community members. A project start-up meeting was held with the CCP Committee to review and confirm the CCP updates and to discuss future engagement activities. To raise awareness about the engagement activities in Phase 2, a series of posters and social media posts were also created and shared with on and off-reserve members.

### ***Phase 2: Community Engagement***

Phase 2 involved several meetings with Chief and Council, managers, staff, the CCP committee, Elders, youth, and other community members. This intensive phase of engagement was focused on identifying the Nation's short- and long-term priorities for the various planning areas addressed by the CCP.

This phase included a Chief and Council workshop, a Managers and Staff workshop, a CCP Committee meeting, an Elders lunch, a Youth meeting, a community bingo night, and off-reserve meetings in Dawson Creek and Grande Prairie. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, engagement activities included options for members to participate virtually.

An engagement booth was set up at the administration building to inform members about the project during period of engagement. The Nation also distributed an online survey to Saulteau Managers to understand departmental capacity, staffing, programs, and initiatives. There was also an online and hardcopy community survey to assess current community conditions and needs, which all members were asked to complete.

The results of the Phase 2 engagement were used to develop a full draft CCP in Phase 3 of the project.



**Figure 6:** Community Engagement in Phase 2

### Phase 3: Develop and Review Draft CCP

In Phase 3, the project team developed a first draft CCP and conducted a second round of engagement with Chief and Council, managers and staff, CCP committee, youth, and members. The purpose of this engagement was to review and collect feedback from members on the first draft CCP, including the initial vision, principles, priorities, and actions included in the document. This feedback was used to develop a refined second draft CCP. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the engagement activities were hosted virtually using online engagement tools including Zoom, Miro, and Slido (**Figure 7**).

### Phase 4: Finalize CCP and Implementation Plan

The final phase of the project involved reviewing the second draft CCP with the CCP Committee, staff and Chief and Council through meetings occurring from December 2021 to January 2022. Minor revisions were identified and undertaken to complete a final draft CCP. As part of finalizing the CCP, a short-term implementation plan was developed that outlines the priority actions for Saulteau to pursue in the first five years after adoption of the CCP.



**Figure 7:** Virtual Engagement in Phase 3 using Miro



# COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

## Our Story

Saulteau First Nations is a vibrant and diverse mixture of Dunne-Zaa (Beaver), Néhiyawak (Cree), Iyarhe Nakoda (Stoney), Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), and Nahkawē (Saulteau) people. Our current name comes from the French word Saulteurs which means “people of the rapids”. This name refers to a location around the St. Mary’s River (near Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario), where French fur traders first met with our Nahkawē (Saulteau) ancestors. In the mid 1800’s several influential Nahkawē (Saulteau) leaders received visions, which instructed them to lead our ancestors west toward a sacred place – a lake below the Twin Mountains. It was during their lengthy migration across the prairies, that our Nahkawē (Saulteau) ancestors first met our Néhiyawak (Cree) and Iyarhe Nakoda (Stoney) ancestors. They soon joined forces and continued their westward journey together. After many years of travelling, they finally arrived at Moberly Lake. Here in the shadow of the Twin Sisters Mountains they were welcomed

by our Dunne-Zaa (Beaver) ancestors, who had already been living in the area for millennia.

Our Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) ancestors also travelled a great distance before arriving at Moberly Lake. Their original homeland was in eastern Canada and upstate New York. However, they began working with European and Metis fur traders and travelled west. In the early 1900’s they were welcomed into our nation. In 1914, the relatives of our present-day members adhered to Treaty No. 8 with the newly formed Government of Canada when they accepted treaty annuities at Moberly Lake.

Today, our members continue to self-identify with a mixture of Dunne-Zaa (Beaver), Néhiyawak (Cree), Iyarhe Nakoda (Stoney), Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), and Nahkawē (Saulteau) customs and beliefs. However, Néhiyawak (Cree) is now the most common indigenous language spoken by our members.

## Our Lands

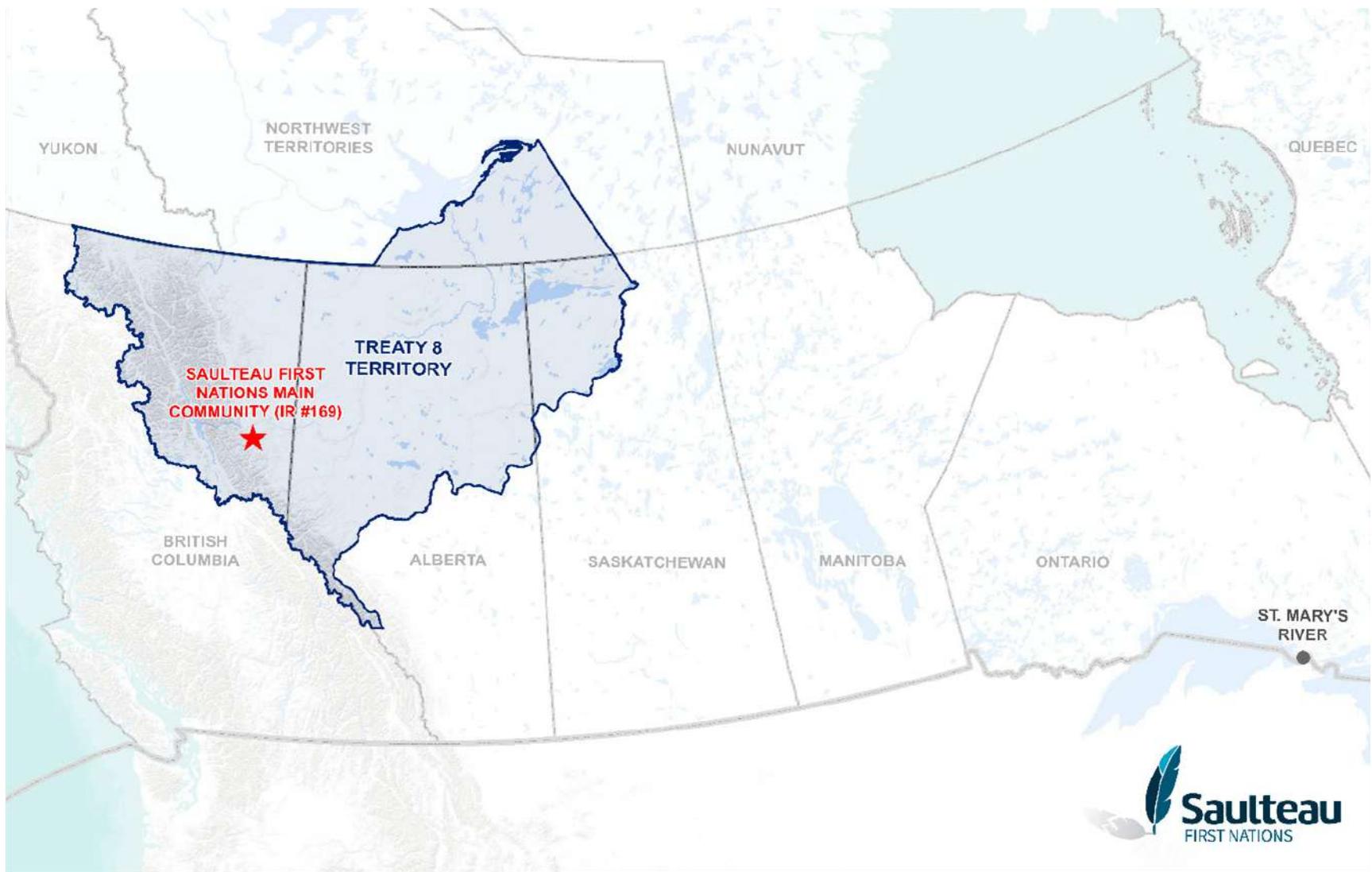
After our ancestors adhered to Treaty No. 8 in 1914, a reserve was surveyed for our people at the east end of Moberly Lake (IR #169), and formally set aside by the Government of Canada in 1918. Our main community is now located on this reserve; however, as **Figure 9** demonstrates on the next page, our Treaty Territory extends well beyond the boundaries of this reserve.

Treaty 8 Territory covers approximately 840,000 square kilometres in what is now northern Alberta, northeastern British Columbia, northwestern Saskatchewan, and the southern-most portion of the Northwest Territories. SFN is a

Treaty 8 Nation, which provides our members with (among other things) the constitutionally protected right to hunt, fish and trap, and to gain a livelihood from the lands and resources within Treaty 8 Territory. Practicing our Treaty Rights provides our people with the means for a rich spiritual, social, and economic life. The land and the activities carried out upon the land connect our people to their past and provide them with the resources they need to build a healthy, stable, culturally rich future. When our ancestors first adhered to Treaty No. 8 it was understood that the Treaty and our Treaty Rights would be upheld for “... as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow.”



**Figure 8:** Twin Sisters Mountains



**Figure 9:** Location of our Main Community and Extent of Our Treaty Territory



## LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Non-traditional land uses have had (and continue to have) a significant impact on our lands and resources. As active stewards of the land we have established a Treaty and Lands Department to oversee development occurring within our Treaty Territory. This department works to ensure our Treaty Rights and environmental concerns are recognized and protected. Our ultimate goal is to pro-actively manage and control the development that is occurring within our Treaty Territory. In recent years, much of our attention has focused on working to manage and protect a particularly important

'Area of Critical Community Importance' (ACCI) that we have identified within our Treaty Territory in conjunction with West Moberly First nations. As **Figure 10** demonstrates, this area is near our main community (IR #169). It is intensively used by our members exercising their Treaty Rights.

Within our ACCI the 'Peace Moberly Tract' is an area of special significance. This area is an important wildlife refuge and one of the last large (and relatively undisturbed) tracts of land in close proximity to our main community available for our members to practice their Treaty Rights.

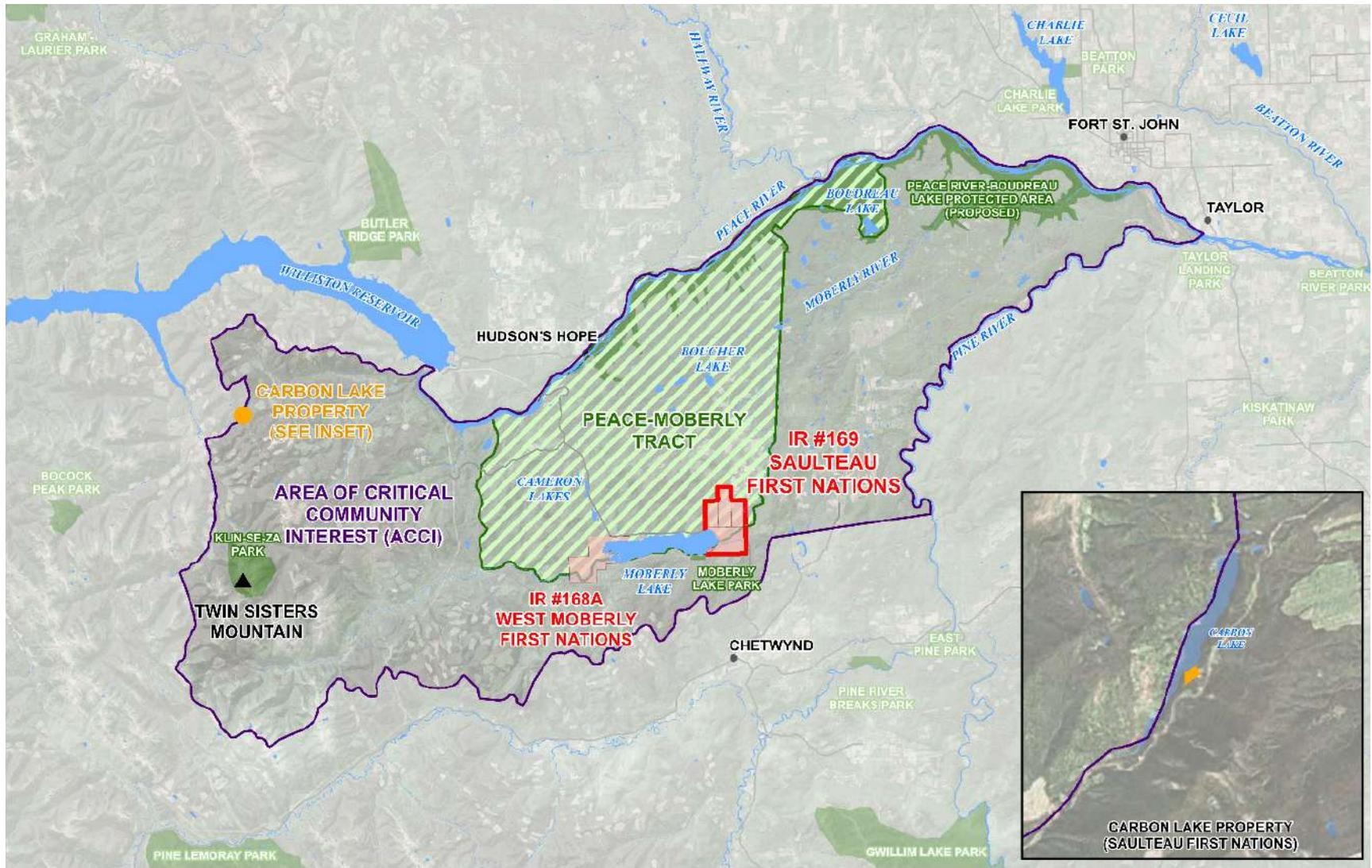


Figure 10: Area of Critical Community Importance

## COMMUNITY RESERVE LANDS

Saulteau's single reserve, East Moberly Lake IR No. 169, is located on the east shores of Moberly Lake in northeast British Columbia. The reserve is approximately 20 kilometers north of the Town of Chetwynd and is 3,025.8 hectares (7,476.91 acres) in size. IR #169 is the site of Saulteau's community, including housing, infrastructure, community facilities and industrial park.

The reserve is bisected by the Don Phillips Highway (Highway 29), which runs along the shore of Moberly Lake. Agricultural and industrial areas have been identified on IR #169 through SFN's land use plan. Agricultural uses are currently limited to grazing for horses and some hay production. Current industrial uses include a gravel pit near the community core and a future industrial park located in the southeast portion of the reserve.

## COMMUNITY LAND ACQUISITION

Saulteau has negotiating several important settlements with industry proponents, British Columbia and Canada. As a result, SFN now has an opportunity to acquire approximately 20,000 acres of Crown land for potential commercial, industrial and residential development, and for the protection of SFN values. Saulteau has engaged the membership in determining Crown lands to select as part of the settlement agreements. Preliminary land selections have been made as of September 2021 that have yet to be finalized and transferred to the community. Saulteau continues to work with British Columbia and Canada on finalizing the selections and rectifying any encumbrances on the lands.



Figure 11: East Moberly Lake 169

### *Treaty Land Entitlement*

Saulteau was entitled to 128 acres of reserve land per person after adhering to Treaty 8 in 1914. However, many of our people were not counted by the Indian agents at the time. Saulteau is now in the process of negotiating a Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) agreement with the Crown to rectify the difference in the number of people who were allotted land in 1914 and the actual number of people who should have received land. We expect a framework will be established whereby SFN selects lands or purchases lands with funds supplied by Government of Canada. Saulteau is entitled to 3,234 acres of land that will ultimately be converted to reserve status. Initial land selections have been made for the TLE lands but have yet to be finalized and transferred to Saulteau.

The TLE settlement agreement includes “equity acres” of land. The “equity acres” allow Saulteau to purchase up to 34,814 acres of private land that Canada has agreed to fast-track through the Additions-to-Reserve process to be added to reserve.

### *BC Hydro Settlement*

Saulteau signed an Impact Benefit Agreement (IBA) with BC Hydro and British Columbia as part of the Site C hydroelectric dam project. As part of the IBA, Saulteau is entitled to select 15,500 acres of Crown land to be transferred to the Nation. Once transferred, Saulteau may keep the lands as fee-simple or add to reserve through the Additions-to-Reserve Process.

A summary of Saulteau’s community land acquisition is included in **Table 1**.



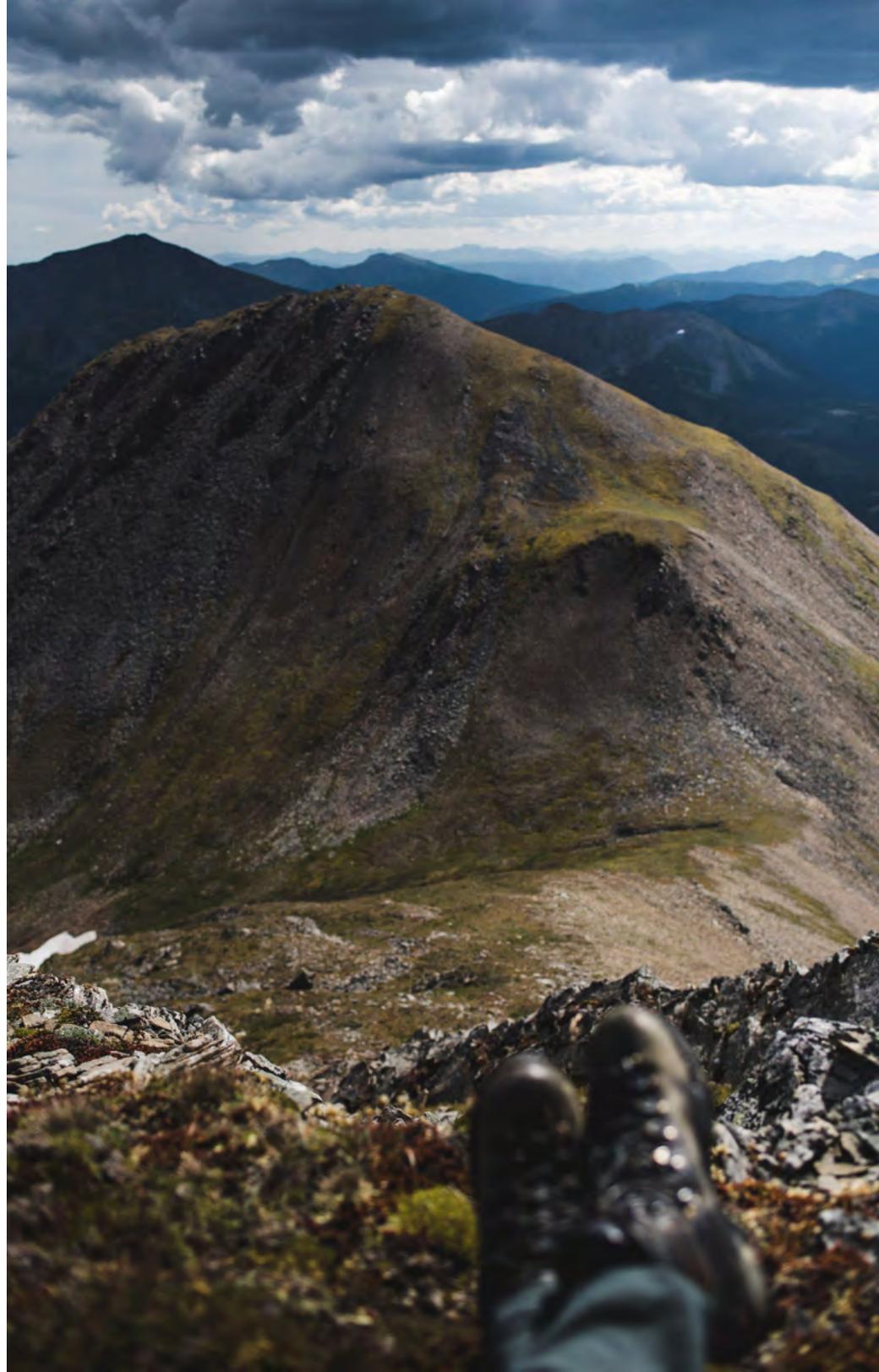
**Table 1:** Sauleau Land Acquisitions

Type	Quantum (Approx.)	Tenure & Comments
<b>BC Hydro Settlement</b> Rural land within SFN's traditional territory	14,500 acres	<b>Private Land (Fee Simple)</b> Land that is selected may be subject to existing encumbrances. Once selected, Sauleau could apply to Canada for an "addition-to-reserve" and BC will not object.
<b>BC Hydro Settlement</b> Urban land within, or adjacent to, nearby municipalities	1,000 acres	<b>Private Land (Fee Simple)</b> Land that is selected may be subject to existing encumbrances. Once selected, Sauleau could apply to Canada for an "addition-to-reserve" – subject to agreement with BC (and municipalities if within municipal boundaries).
<b>'TLE' Settlement</b> 'ADOFS' Acres	3,234 acres	<b>Reserve Land (IR)</b> May or may not include subsurface rights (waiting for BC to confirm), and land that is selected may be subject to existing encumbrances. Canada will likely fast-track ATR.
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,734 acres</b>	
<b>'TLE Settlement'</b> 'Equity' Acres	34,814 acres	<b>Reserve Land (IR)</b> Canada has indicated that it may agree to fast-track Additions-to-Reserve for other lands acquired by Sauleau, up to the amount of 'equity acres' or approximately 34,813 acres. Sauleau may have to purchase these lands from BC or acquire them through the other processes.

## PRIVATE LAND ACQUISITIONS

Saulteau owns several private (fee simple) land holdings throughout our territory that were acquired for various cultural, agricultural, and economic development purposes. Our private land holdings include the following parcels:

- **South Moberly Lake** – located approximately 4 kilometers southwest of our main community. This 59.1-acre lakefront parcel on Moberly Lake was acquired to support a range of economic and cultural uses, including potential tourism development. The parcel includes an old lodge that is no longer in operation.
- **Ranch Properties** – three agricultural parcels ranging from 159 to 638 acres (957 acres total) in size were acquired by Saulteau adjacent and near the northeast boundary of our main community. The parcels are used for agricultural purposes, mainly hay production and grazing lands.





**Figure 12:** South Moberly Lake Property

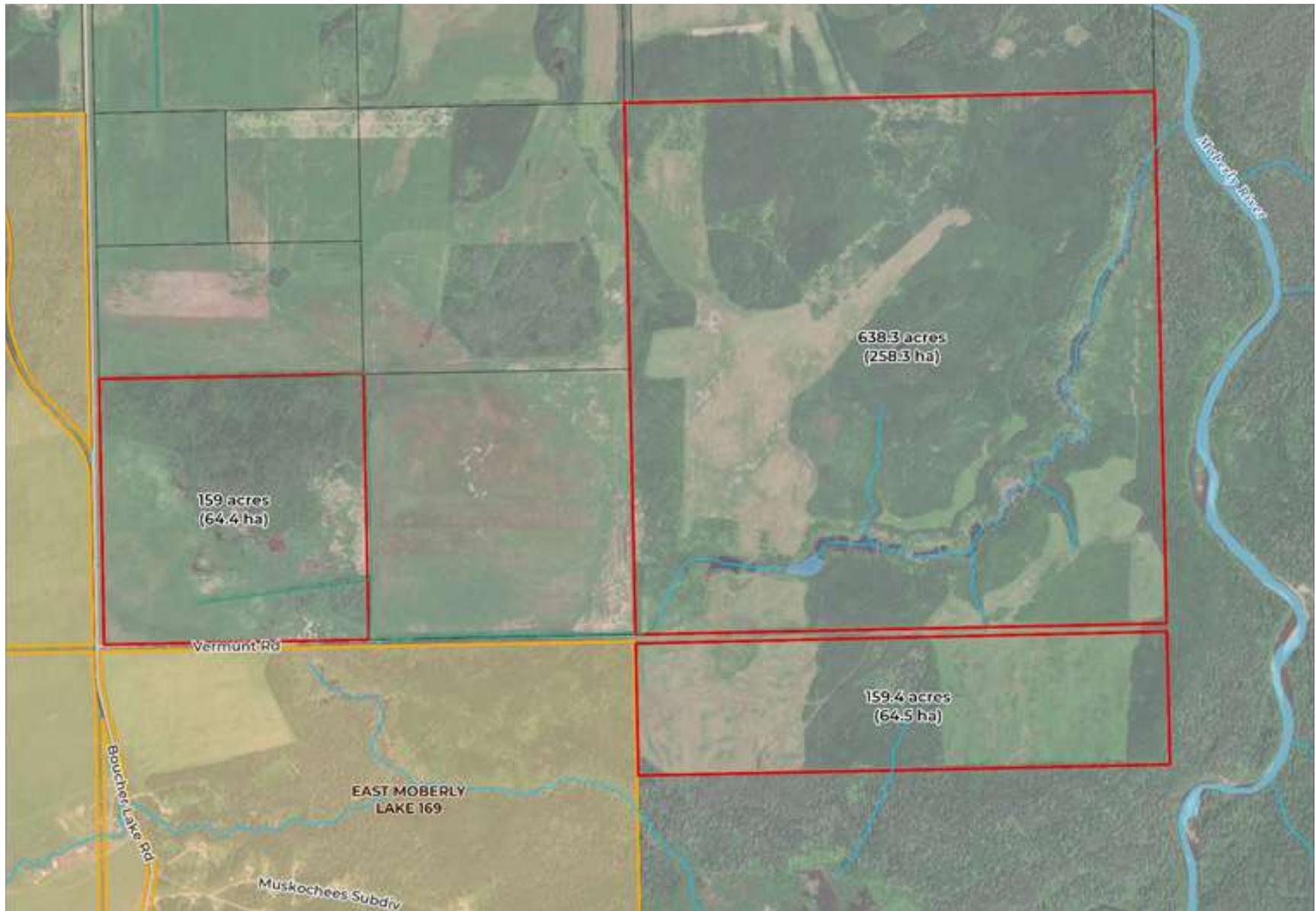


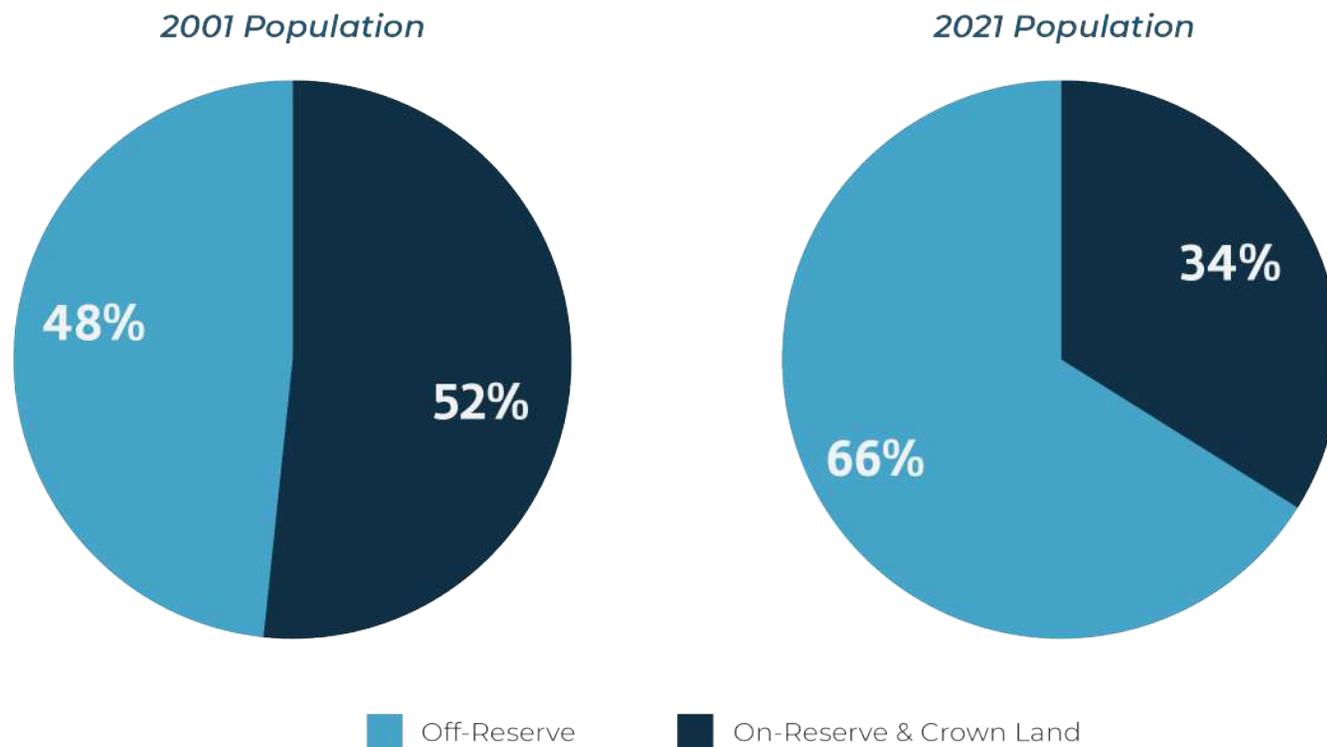
Figure 13: Ranch Properties



# Our People

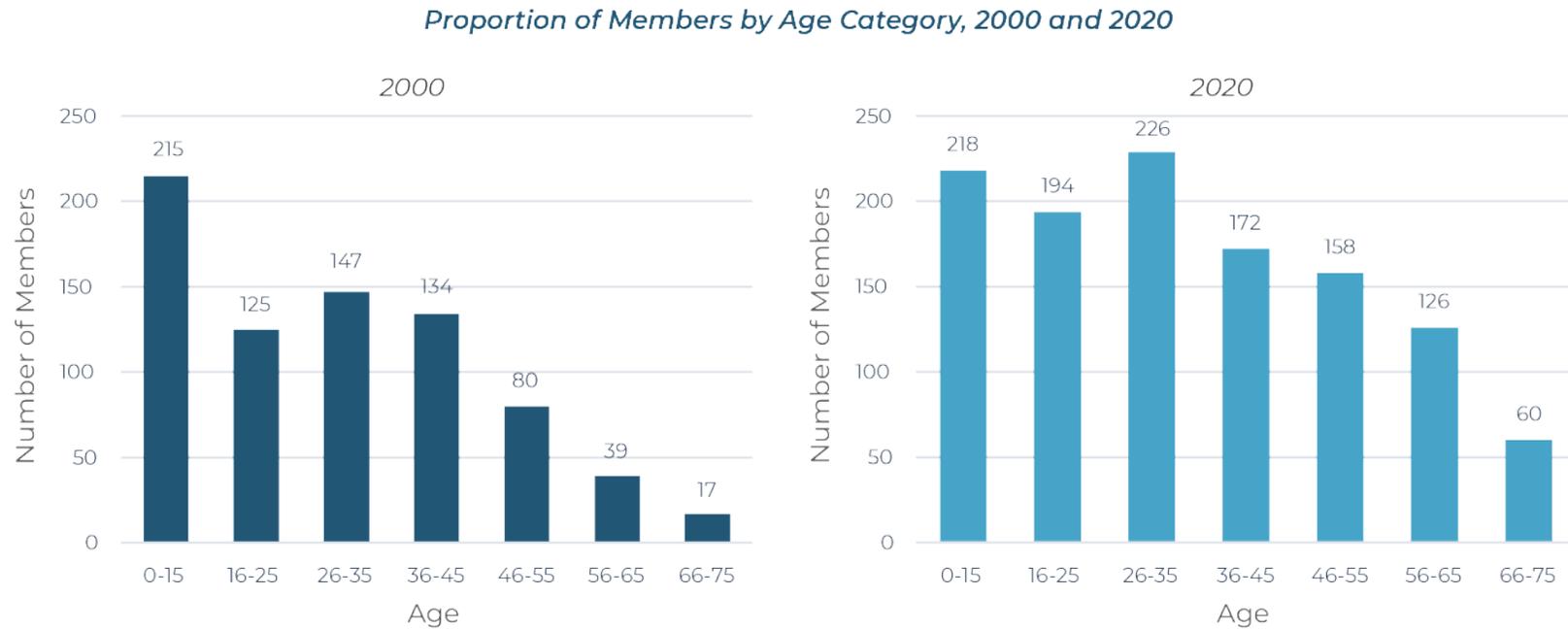
## CURRENT POPULATION

As of Fall 2021, Saulteau has a total of 1,218 members. Two-thirds of our members (66%) live off-reserve. This represents a major change over the last twenty years. As shown in **Figure 14**, more than half of our members (52%) lived on reserve in 2001 compared to only a third (34%) in 2021. This shift in where members choose to live may be due to several factors, including limited on-reserve housing, higher off-reserve birth rates and shifts in employment opportunities throughout northeast British Columbia.



**Figure 14:** Proportion of population living on and off-reserve (2001 to 2021)

The age distribution of members in 2000 and 2020 is shown in the figure below:



**Figure 15:** Proportion of Members by Age Category, 2000 and 2020

The largest age category in 2001 was youth under the age of 15, which represented more than a quarter (28.0%) of members. By 2020, the number of youth under the age of 15 was nearly identical but represented a smaller proportion (18.5%) of the overall membership. The largest demographic group in 2020 was members between the ages of 26 to 35 years old, which represented just under a fifth (19.2%) of the membership. Overall, a significant proportion of the current membership is made up of young adults who recently started or may be starting their families. This means the population is likely to continue to grow in the near future.

Saulteau’s membership is also aging at faster rate than it was twenty years ago. The number and proportion of members over the age of 45 increased between 2000 and 2020. In 2000, there were 147 members over the age of 45, which represented 19.2% of membership. By 2020, there were 366 members in this age demographic, which represented 31.1% of community members. In the coming years, the number of Elders in the community will increase as members between the ages of 46 to 65 become the next generation of Elders. The health care, social service, and housing needs of Elders will need to be considered in the updated CCP to ensure community decisions meet the changing needs of aging members and their families.

Figure 16 shows the distribution of Saulteau members by age, gender, and residency status in 2020.

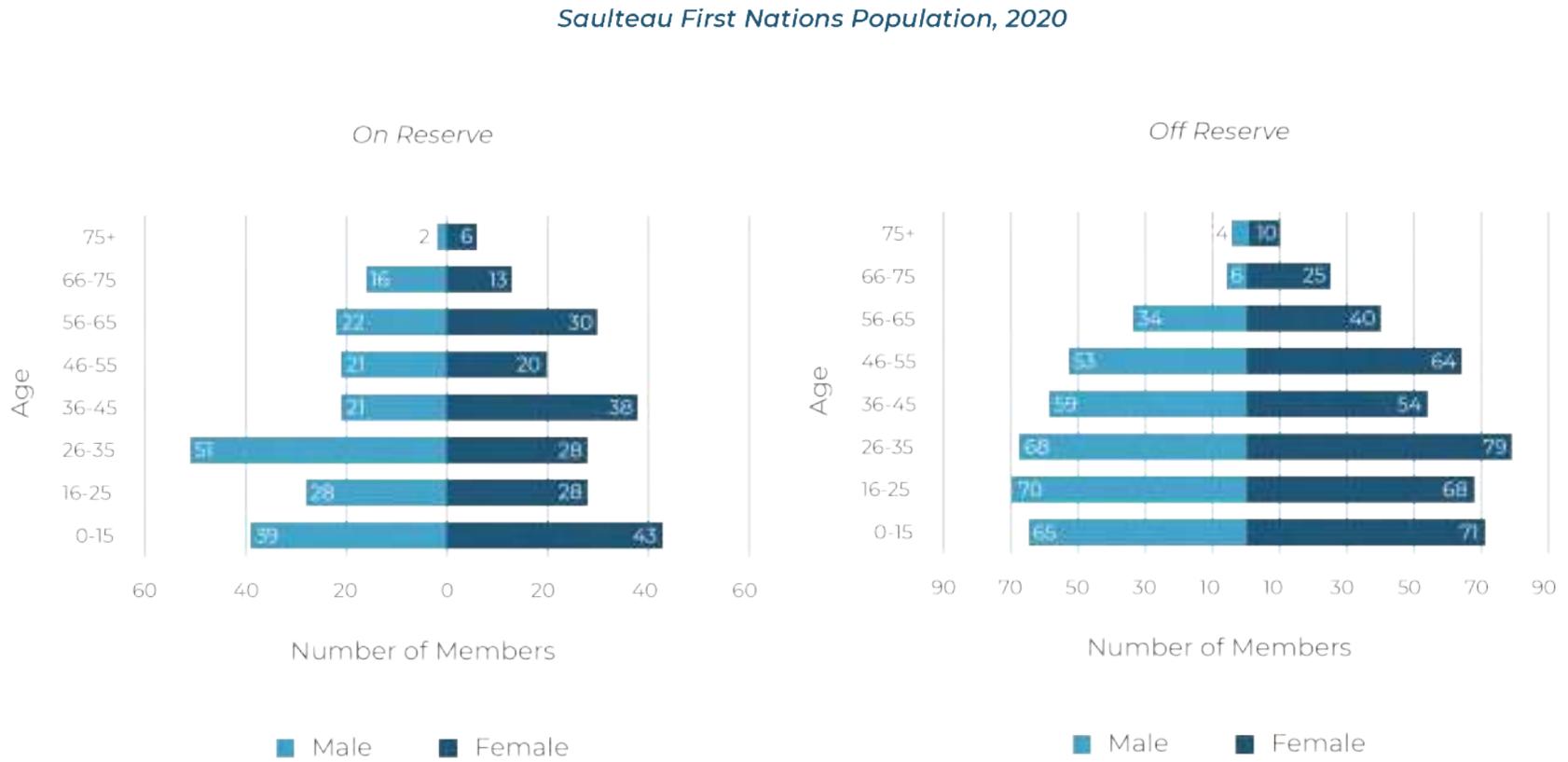


Figure 16: Saulteau First Nations Population On and Off Reserve, 2020



## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections were developed as part of the CCP planning process to help understand where our Nation might be over the next 20 years and beyond. These projections provide valuable information to help Sauleteu to understand and proactively plan for future infrastructure, service and program needs to accommodate a growing member population.

Based on Sauleteu's historic growth rates, population projections were developed for the Nation (**Figure 17**). In the last 20 years, Sauleteu's membership has increased from 778 members in 2001 to 1,176 members in 2020. This represented a growth of 51.2%. To prepare for future population changes, a high-growth and a low-growth scenario were developed. The high-growth scenario is based on a 2.5% Average Annual Growth Rate (AAGR) for the overall membership, and a 3.5% AAGR for the on-reserve population. The low-growth scenario is based on a 0.5% AAGR for both the overall membership and the on-reserve population.

Assumptions associated with both scenarios are listed below:

### *High Growth Assumptions*

- New TLE, TLA, and fee simple lands are converted to reserve land
- More housing is built on existing and new reserve land
- Population is relatively young and young members start new families

### *Low Growth Assumptions*

- New TLE, TLA, and fee simple lands do not include housing
- Nation does not invest in housing for members
- Membership code is finalized and more strict than previously
- Some young people delay or decide not to start families

Population Projections, 2021 - 2040

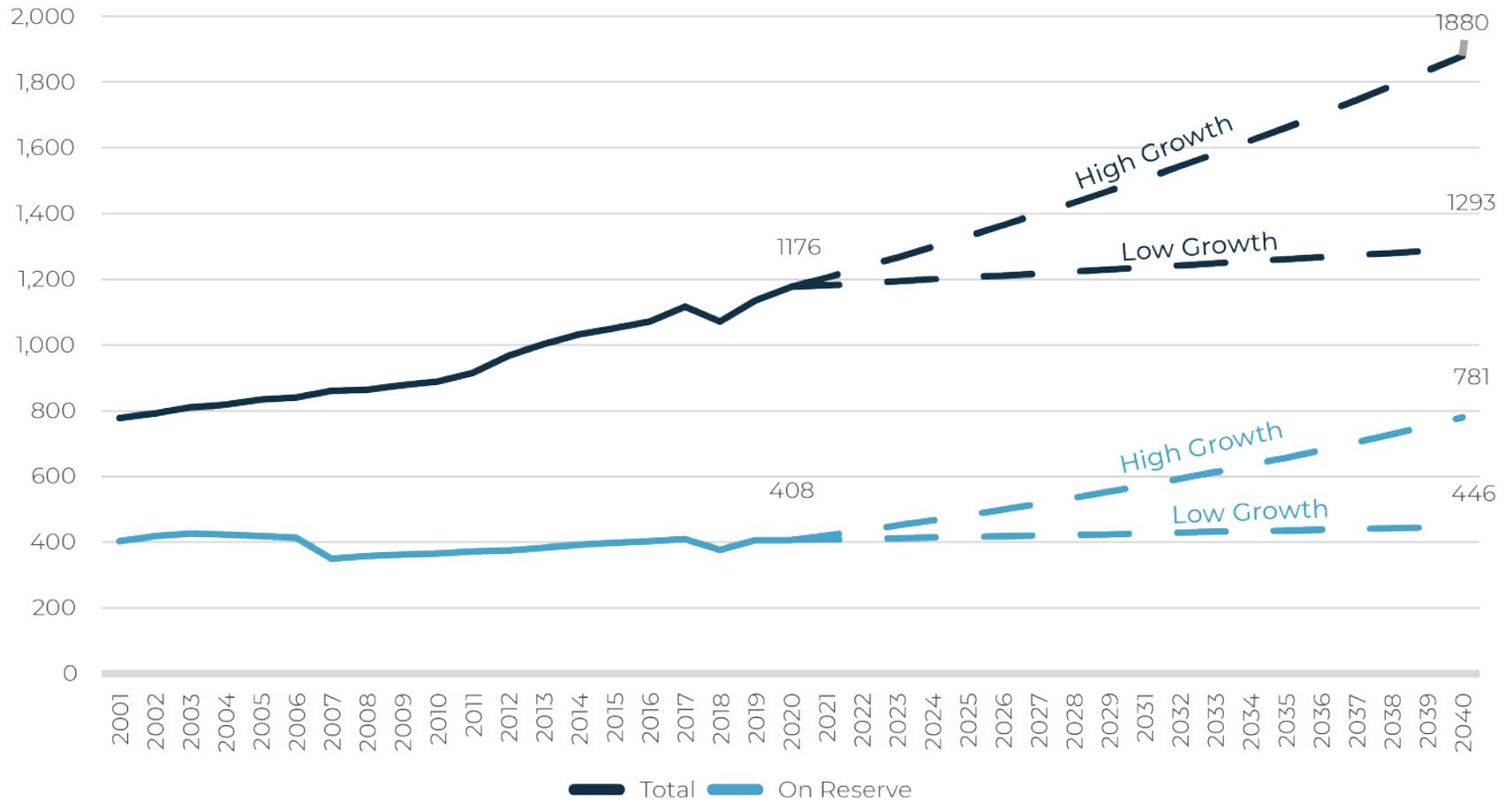


Figure 17: Population Projections, 2021-2040



# OUR VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## Vision Statement

Vision Statements are short phrases or sentences that convey membership's hopes for the future. They clarify the beliefs and long-term aspirations of a community, providing a consistent overarching goal to strive towards.

This vision statement is based on Saulteau's current CCP and input collected from members during community engagement, who described their aspirations for their Nation and the values that Saulteau will embody now and in the future.

*Our vision as a community for the future is:*

***We, the Saulteau First Nations, are a spirited and diverse community.***

***We are a strong Self-Governed Nation, one that is healthy, culturally vibrant, and ready for tomorrow. Our cultural teachings and traditions guide us and keep us rooted as we move forward into the future.***

***As stewards of the land, we ensure that the best sustainable practices are followed, now and in the future.***

***For as long as the 'sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow'. We remain proud and humbly determined.***

## Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles reflect the key values identified by leadership, staff and members and are intended to guide how Saulteau First Nations conducts itself now and in the future.

- **Culture** – Culture is the foundation of our community. Our Nation will continue to preserve, revitalize, and restore our culture and languages.
- **Health and Wellbeing** – Saulteau First Nations will create the conditions for members to live healthy and meaningful lives.
- **Sustainability** – Our Nation will pursue sustainable economic development projects on our lands and traditional territories.
- **Collaboration** – Saulteau First Nations leadership and staff will engage and listen to members. We will continue to build external relationships with other communities, governments, and corporations to advance our interests.
- **Holistic** – We recognize that social, cultural, political, environmental, and economic systems are interconnected and will strive to maintain balance between these systems.
- **Capacity Building** – Saulteau First Nations will support the growth and development of our members so they can grow and lead our community forward.
- **Long-Term Thinking** – Our Nation will strive to be future-oriented and resilient in the face of changing circumstances.
- **Implementation and Evaluation** - We will outline clear strategies and set measurable goals for our Nation in order to celebrate progress and identify opportunities for improvement.









## OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The CCP sets a broad vision for Saulteau First Nations that is based on the collective aspirations of our members, staff, and leadership. It is a framework that provides Saulteau with a list of priorities and actions that will move the Nation forward towards its goals of being a healthy, culturally strong, self-sustaining, and prosperous Nation.

The priorities are organized into the following eight areas:

- 1. Governance & Administration**
- 2. Culture & Language**
- 3. Youth & Elders**
- 4. Education**
- 5. Health & Safety**
- 6. Housing & Infrastructure**
- 7. Lands & Resources**
- 8. Economic Development & Training**

Progress in each of these areas will be achieved incrementally over the next 20 years as resources are made available to Saulteau to implement programs, services, capital projects and other initiatives. Chief and Council and staff will determine how Saulteau uses its resources to implement the direction in this CPP through ongoing strategic and department planning efforts.



The “Priorities for Our Future” section includes the following components:

### ***Priorities***

Priorities are broad and future oriented statements that describe future conditions we hope to achieve for the different planning areas. They were developed from the input of Saulteau members, staff and leadership and remain in place over the long-term as we work towards them through the implementation of identified “Guiding Directions” and “Projects”.

### **→ *Guiding Directions***

Guiding Directions are initiatives or strategies to guide Saulteau when implementing new or enhanced programs, services, and infrastructure in the community. Guiding directions often reflect ongoing community needs that are addressed through continuous efforts by Saulteau. The Guiding Directions were identified through engagement with Saulteau members, leadership and staff.

Guiding Directions will be key in informing and guiding the future activities of Saulteau departments in providing programs, services, and infrastructure to the community.



**Table 2:** Summary of Priorities established in this CCP for each different Planning Area

Area	Priorities
Governance & Administration	Establish effective policy and strengthen self-governance.
	Enhance members’ awareness and participation in community affairs.
	Ensure staff have necessary supports and training to succeed.
Culture & Language	Provide opportunities for members to participate in cultural and traditional activities.
	Revitalize and preserve our traditional languages.
Youth & Elders	Support intergenerational knowledge sharing and interaction.
	Ensure Elders are respected and maintain a high quality of life.
	Invest in programs and services to support youth.
Education	Enhance educational resources, programs, and services.
	Support members in attaining post-secondary education.
Health & Safety	Address mental health, substance abuse and social challenges in our community.
	Provide culturally aligned health services and programs.
	Improve community safety and emergency services.
Housing & Infrastructure	Enhance on-reserve housing development, management, and maintenance.
	Develop and maintain core community infrastructure.
	Develop community energy self-sufficiency.
Lands & Resources	Grow the capacity of the Saulteau Lands Department.
	Enhance the management and conservation of Saulteau’s territory.
	Support members in asserting their Treaty Rights.
Economic Development & Training	Enhance Saulteau’s investment readiness and economic capacity.
	Improve training and employment opportunities available to members.
	Pursue economic development across the territory and on Saulteau lands.





## GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

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This priority area refers to how we govern ourselves as a Nation and how we administer services and programs to our members, including those living on and off-reserve. We aim to strengthen our self-governing systems, enhance communication and transparency between leadership, staff, and members, and ensure members are included in decision-making processes about the future of our Nation.

To accomplish this, our priorities are to:

1. Establish effective policy and strengthen self-governance.
2. Enhance members' awareness and participation in community affairs.
3. Ensure staff have necessary supports to succeed.

**PRIORITY:**

**Establish effective policy and strengthen self-governance.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Continuously review and update Saulteau's administrative policies and practices
- Implement the new Financial Administration Law (FAL)
- Complete an update to the CCP by 2030
- Strengthen Saulteau's self-governance through law-making including;
  - Membership Code
  - Land Code
  - Updating our Election Act
  - Citizen Act
- Adopt a Constitution for the Nation
- Establish a Comprehensive Self-Government Agreement with Canada
- Complete long-term financial planning for Saulteau and the TLE settlement

**PRIORITY:**

**Enhance members' awareness and participation in community affairs.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Hold regular community meetings and engagement activities (e.g. World Cafés and Band General Meetings)
- Develop regular easy-to-read reports/updates on Saulteau financial matters for members (e.g. audits, Saulteau business financial information)
- Increase engagement with off-reserve members through virtual online meetings
- Continue to update the member contact list with current information
- Develop electronic signage (e.g. billboards) in the community to provide notice on community events and activities
- Develop virtual and interactive community newsletters
- Establish guiding Committees for Chief and Council

**PRIORITY:**

**Ensure staff have necessary supports and training to succeed.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Develop cultural cross-training initiatives for existing and new staff
- Invest in ongoing professional development and training for staff
- Provide managers and staff with mental health supports and programs
- Organize team building events, retreats, and activities for staff
- Implement new mail management systems for staff
- Continuously review the organization and structure of Saulteau's administration
- Develop opportunities for remote working for Saulteau administrative positions
- Conduct Emergency and Crisis Training for Staff
- Complete succession planning for Saulteau's administration



DESIGNED IN VERMONT





## CULTURE AND LANGUAGE

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Our Nation's culture and languages are the foundation of our community. With the support and guidance of our Elders, we aim to revitalize our languages, pass on our intergenerational knowledge, and support the resurgence of our cultural practices. Progress in strengthening language and cultural practices among our members and awareness among non-members is a key priority for our Nation moving forward.

Our main priorities in this area are to:

1. Provide opportunities for members to participate in cultural and traditional activities.
2. Revitalize and preserve our traditional languages.

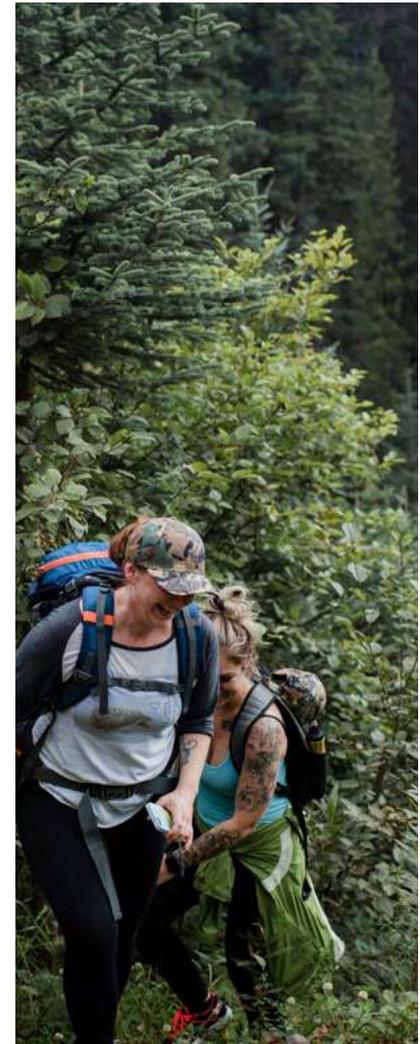
**PRIORITY:**

**Provide opportunities for members to participate in cultural and traditional activities.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Provide culturally focused programs and classes for members including:
  - Hide making
  - Drum making
  - Traditional dancing
  - Beading/arts
  - Canning
  - Hunting and trapping
  - Fishing
  - Guiding
  - Cabin building
  - Moccasin making
  - Traditional plants and medicines
- Explore potential cultural collaborations with West Moberly First Nations for programs, activities, and events
- Build additional cabins for members on Saulteau lands as directed by the community Land Use Plan
- Incorporate more Saulteau culture and history into the on-reserve and School District 59 curriculum
- Consider opportunities to develop urban cultural spaces (e.g. Dawson Creek and Fort St. John)
- Develop a Saulteau History Book and historical displays
- Complete Family Genealogies and create a community family tree displays
- Develop strategies to support cultural revitalization
- Develop an arbor and upgrade the Pemmican Grounds
- Develop a Cultural Centre



**PRIORITY:**

**Revitalize and preserve traditional languages.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Offer language classes in various formats (e.g. virtual, land-based)
- Use social media (e.g. TikTok, Snapchat) to engage and teach youth languages
- Hold community language events (e.g. Language Days, Language Camps)
- Archive and share Saulteau's traditional languages, knowledge, and stories through multi-media formats (e.g. videos, podcasts)
- Hire additional language teachers and expand language programming
- Expand language programming in the Muskoti for early years and primary school
- Develop strategies to support language revitalization
- Create a dictionary and other resources to support learning of Saulteau languages







## YOUTH AND ELDERS

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This priority area focuses on youth and Elders, who both play an important role in our community. We aim to provide programs, initiatives, and supports to both youth and Elders to ensure they can lead a healthy and active life.

Our main priorities in this area are to:

1. Support intergenerational knowledge sharing and interaction.
2. Ensure Elders are respected and maintain a high quality of life.
3. Invest in programs and services to support youth.

**PRIORITY:**

**Support intergenerational knowledge sharing and interaction.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Organize opportunities for intergenerational engagement, such as:
  - Storytelling and activities at local schools
  - Community picnics with families
  - Elder appreciation events
  - Elders and youth camps
- Provide financial literacy classes for youth, Elders and families
- Establish a format Elder-Youth Mentorship Programs and activities
- Develop an inventory of knowledge-holders in the community

**PRIORITY:**

**Ensure Elders are respected and maintain a high quality of life.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Enhance home-based medicine and health-related programs
- Expand non-medical services (e.g. yard care, home maintenance, wood delivery, meals on wheels, grocery delivery, social visits)
- Ensure adequate supports exist for Elders with mobility issues (e.g. transportation, home retrofits, etc.)
- Conduct regular social visits and check-ins on Elders
- Hire staff to provide programs and services for Elders
- Help Elders get access to fire wood for heating
- Develop an Archive of Elders' knowledge, teachings and stories
- Improve transportation options for Elders for medical and non-medical trips
- Develop long-term care services on-reserve

**PRIORITY:**

**Invest in programs and services to support youth.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Host more cultural activities and events for youth (e.g. culture camps, fishing, canoeing)
- Enhance sports teams, activities, and programs available for youth
- Engage with off-reserve youth through virtual events, activities, and social media
- Create “Monthly Profiles” of Saulteau youth and their achievements
- Plan and implement youth programming at the Saulteau Youth Centre
- Create campaigns and information to educate youth on health and healthy lifestyles
- Establish a Youth Support/Crisis line







## EDUCATION

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We strive to improve our members' quality of life through education. Our nation aims to enhance and expand opportunities for on and off-reserve members at all educational levels, from primary to post-secondary school.

Our priorities in this area are to:

1. Enhance educational resources, programs, and services.
2. Support members in attaining post-secondary education.



## PRIORITY:

Enhance educational resources, programs, and services.



### *Guiding Directions to Follow*

- Host community celebrations and acknowledgments of members' educational achievements
- Advocate to School District 59 for improvements, including hiring more Indigenous educational assistants
- Establish a Youth-at-Risk Programs for high school youth
- Provide guidance counsellors and career preparation programs for youth
- Complete cultural cross-training for Muskoti staff and School District 59 staff
- Expand the primary and secondary school tutoring program
- Complete an expansion to the early childhood education program and facility
- Develop kindergarten to Grade 12 education on-reserve, including a school expansion

**PRIORITY:**

**Support members in attaining post-secondary education.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Enhance awareness of funding and supports for members to pursue post-secondary education and training
- Supplement the ISC Post-Secondary Student Support Program with additional funding for students
- Conduct youth fieldtrips to regional post-secondary institutions
- Promote trades careers through awareness and information campaigns
- Establish on-reserve remote learning program for post-secondary education and training
- Develop urban student housing for students accessing post-secondary education and training in urban areas







## HEALTH AND SAFETY

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The health and safety of our members is of utmost importance to Saulteau First Nations. We strive to improve health programs and enhance community safety and emergency services to ensure the mental and physical well-being of all our members.

Our priorities in this area are to:

1. Address mental health, substance abuse and social challenges in our community.
2. Provide culturally aligned health services and programs.
3. Improve community safety and emergency services.



**PRIORITY:**

**Address mental health, substance abuse and social challenges in our community.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Create awareness campaigns focused on addictions and mental health
- Explore harm reduction approaches to prevent overdose deaths (e.g. supervised injection, education on safer consumption)
- Invest in infrastructure to support treatment and healthy living (e.g. transitional housing)
- Establish at-home detox programming in the community
- Create strategies to address drug use and prevention and mental health
- Establish on-reserve after-care programming
- Expand the existing Safe House facility
- Complete mental health response training for staff
- Develop an on-reserve treatment centre

**PRIORITY:**

**Provide culturally aligned health services and programs.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Identify traditional healers and incorporate their teachings and services into health and social services
- Develop land-based healing programs for members with Saulteau Elders and knowledge holders
- Continue incorporating cultural activities into health programs and services (e.g. sweats, smudging)
- Promote active and healthy lifestyles (e.g. nutrition, exercise, mental health) through programs, awareness, and community activities
- Improve food security and healthy food options on-reserve (e.g. greenhouses, grocery stores)
- Enhance transportation services for members who require medical appointments
- Establish a Primary Care Program, Clinic and Community Health Society
- Develop a Community Health Plan
- Develop palliative care programming on-reserve
- Develop a palliative care facility on-reserve

**PRIORITY:**

**Improve community safety and emergency services.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Implement the forest fire prevention program
- Develop traffic calming, lighting and road safety infrastructure (e.g. speed bumps, streetlights)
- Work with the RCMP to strengthen enforcement on-reserve, including undertaking evictions required to address crime and safety issues
- Complete planning for emergency management and response
- Improve animal control in the community and develop animal bylaws
- Establish a neighbourhood watch program
- Develop backup power sources for community facilities
- Establish a Saulteau Fire Department on-reserve







## HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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This priority area refers to housing and other infrastructure on Saulteau First Nations' lands, including community and recreational facilities, roads, and utilities. We strive to develop and maintain sustainable, high-quality housing and infrastructure that meets the evolving needs of our members while reducing our environmental footprint.

Our priorities in this area are to:

1. Enhance on-reserve housing development, management, and maintenance.
2. Develop and maintain core community infrastructure.
3. Develop community energy self-sufficiency.



**PRIORITY:**

**Enhance on-reserve housing development, management, and maintenance.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Invest in a mix of housing types (e.g. single-family homes, apartments, tiny homes, Elders' home, granny suites, accessible units)
- Provide serviced reserve lots for off-reserve members who wish to develop and finance their own housing
- Conduct regular housing inspections focused on electrical and fire hazards
- Support home maintenance and repairs by:
  - Hosting home maintenance training workshops for members
  - Providing home renovations and repair grants
- Implement the Housing Policy.
- Develop policies to support home-ownership and payment of housing arrears
- Establish a Saulteau Housing Society
- Develop a community Housing Strategy
- Develop a campground for short-term member accommodation
- Complete a Home Condition Inventory, Maintenance and Management Plan
- Complete housing infill of the Onion Hill subdivision



**PRIORITY:**

**Develop and maintain core community infrastructure.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Continue extending the water system to all residential areas on reserve
- Plan and develop a community wastewater system for the reserve
- Develop roadside ditches and culverts on-reserve
- Extend the network of local roads to include additional areas (e.g. Lakeview subdivision, other new residential developments)
- Continue to install fibre optic cable as part of all new developments
- Continue to develop recreational projects (e.g. soccer pitch, mountain bike trails, skateboard park, basketball courts, climbing wall, cross-country ski trails, parks and green spaces)
- Complete asset management planning and create a GIS inventory of Saulteau infrastructure
- Develop a community wastewater system
- Complete long-term planning for recreation and recreation infrastructure
- Construct trails, paths and sidewalks throughout the reserve
- Develop a Stormwater Drainage Plan and complete the Muskochees Creek protective berm
- Develop community greenhouses
- Develop a Community Recreation Centre / Complex
- Develop a new Administration / Health Building(s)



**PRIORITY:**

**Develop community energy self-sufficiency.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Continue to develop and invest in clean energy infrastructure (e.g. solar panels, biomass)
- Investigate options for clean energy and energy efficient retrofits to existing community facilities, buildings, and housing (e.g. adding home insulation, solar panels)
- Explore the feasibility of developing district heating systems for new community development areas
- Complete planning to understand how to be more clean, green and renewable









## LANDS AND RESOURCES

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This priority area includes our reserve lands as well as new Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) lands, fee-simple properties, and lands acquired through the BC Hydro agreement. We will ensure our lands are managed and developed in a sustainable manner that benefits our Nation and creates opportunities for members to participate in our cultural and traditional activities.

Our priorities in this area are to:

1. Grow the capacity of the Saulteau Lands Department.
2. Enhance the management and conservation of Saulteau's territory.
3. Support members in asserting their Treaty Rights.

**PRIORITY:**

**Grow capacity of the Saulteau Lands Department.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Implement a Land and Resource Engagement Policy
- Identify staffing needs and fill vacancies within the Lands Department (e.g. Land and Environment Officers, Program Support Coordinator, GIS Specialist)
- Participate in training and capacity-building opportunities through NALMA (National Aboriginal Land Managers Association) and BCLAM (British Columbia Aboriginal Land Managers)
- Have up to date land use planning for existing and new Saulteau lands
- Develop a Climate Change Plan for the community
- Understand the long-term Land Department needs as required for Land Code
- Develop a Zoning Bylaw
- Develop policies and bylaws to strengthen Saulteau's land management;
  - Zoning Bylaw
  - Environmental Management Plan
  - Development Procedures
- Establish Development Procedures for Saulteau Lands

**PRIORITY:**

**Enhance the management and conservation of Saulteau's territory.**



**Guiding Directions to Follow**

- Continue documenting traditional knowledge on Saulteau's current and future reserve lands and broader territory
- Continue to advocate for the protection of culturally and historically important areas
- Advocate and lobby for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to be integrated into policies and agreements
- Complete land stewardship planning for our territory
- Complete Water Management projects for Moberly Lake
- Expand the Guardians Program guided by a longterm strategy
- Develop a fleet and compound for the TREP Department
- Expand the Saulteau Drone Program and staffing
- Establish a Saulteau Conservation Officers program

**PRIORITY:**

**Support members in asserting their Treaty Rights.**



***Guiding Directions to Follow***

- Develop cabins, camping areas and cultural gathering spaces for members on new TLE, TLA, and fee simple lands
- Implement programs and provide resources to help members participate in traditional activities (e.g. hunting, fishing, trapping, harvesting)
- Install buffer zone signage on Saulteau reserve lands







## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

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We strive to increase our economic capacity and enhance training opportunities for all members. This will allow Saulteau First Nations to become more financially self-sufficient and make strategic investments for our future.

Our main priorities in this area are to:

1. Enhance Saulteau's investment readiness and economic capacity.
2. Improve training and employment opportunities available to members.
3. Pursue economic development across the territory and on Saulteau Lands.



**PRIORITY:**

Enhance Saulteau's investment readiness and economic capacity.



*Guiding Directions to Follow*

- Maintain the First Nations Financial Management Certification
- Maintain and promote an inventory of member businesses
- Investigate potential taxation regimes to implement to create sustainable resource streams for Saulteau
- Provide professional and financial supports to members interested in starting their own businesses
- Complete economic development planning to guide investment and activities
- Improve Saulteau's staff capacity to undertake economic development projects and initiatives
- Establish a new Development Corporation for land development

**PRIORITY:**

Improve training and employment opportunities available to members.



*Guiding Directions to Follow*

- Create job shadowing and mentorship opportunities for members
- Prioritize hiring Saulteau community members for employment opportunities and projects
- Identify employment openings associated with Saulteau's initiatives and projects and provide members with the training for those jobs
- Provide members with financial and training supports to help obtain their driver's license
- Host Job Fairs or Career Days for members to promote training opportunities that align with Saulteau's capacity needs
- Work with industry proponents and partners to provide training for members
- Create a Long-Term Employment Strategy for members
- Develop an inventory of member skills, training and employment experience

**PRIORITY:**

Pursue economic development across the territory and on Saulteau lands.



*Guiding Directions to Follow*

- Develop the Moberly Lake fee-simple lands for tourism development, including business planning for the lakefront lodge
- Expand the Nation's hospitality and retail sector on new and existing lands (e.g. restaurants, coffee shops, grocery store, golf course, hotel)
- Conduct feasibility studies for commercial, industrial and tourism developments on lands designated for such uses in the Land Use Plan
- Explore development opportunities on urban lands in Dawson Creek and Fort St. John (e.g. urban reserve development)
- Acquire Woodland Licenses and Forestry Revenue Sharing Agreements
- Complete a Business and Development Plan for the Lakefront Lodge and site
- Complete power and water upgrades to the industrial park
- Complete a nursery development and/or expansion
- Develop a Business Plan and establish partnerships for a buffalo ranch
- Undertake an Urban Reserve development project



# IMPLEMENTATION

## Tools for Implementation

This CCP Update includes several key priorities identified by the community for the next twenty years and beyond. The plan is intended to help inform budgetary decisions and empower community members to vocalize their individual and collective aspirations for Saulteau. The following tools and strategies for implementation can help Chief and Council, managers, and staff follow through and implement the priorities and actions outlined in this plan for the benefit of the Nation and our members:

### ENSURE CONSISTENCY WITH THIS PLAN

All future Saulteau policies, by-laws and program documents prepared after the adoption of this plan shall include a “CCP Reference Statement.” This will ensure that all future plans, policies, by-laws or programs remain consistent with the direction of this Plan.

This CCP Reference Statement will include:

- A reference to the CCP vision statement and guiding principles and applicable priorities.
- A general description of how the adoption of a plan, policy, by-law or program achieves or supports a CCP priority.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

A key tool for implementing the CCP is ongoing short-term strategic planning. Three strategic planning activities recommended to implement the CCP are summarized below:

### *Annual Strategic Plan each year*

Chief and Council is recommended to conduct a strategic planning session(s) with the executive management team to identify initiatives to implement in the next fiscal year. This should be used to inform the budgetary planning process.

### *5-Year Strategic Plan every five years*

Saulteau is recommended to undertake a comprehensive strategic planning process to set an agenda for the next five years on specific initiatives to pursue with estimated budgets, potential funding opportunities and key staff responsible for managing implementation. This broader strategic planning initiative should include Chief and Council, executive management team and all staff from each department in the planning process.

### *Departmental Work Plans every five years*

As part of the 5-Year Strategic Planning process, department work plans should be developed that outline the mission, responsibilities, roles, initiatives for implementation, and related resources required for each department. These workplans will be key in guiding the day-to-day and long-term operations of each department in alignment with the 5-Year Strategic Plan and the CCP.

## ACCESS AVAILABLE FUNDING AND GRANTS

There are several other funding streams that Saulteau can access to implement the priorities and related actions identified in CCP. The funding streams available include:

- Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Grants and Funding Programs.
- Industry Agreements.
- Agency Funding (e.g. First Nations Health Authority, Treaty 8 Tribal Association, NENAS, etc.).
- Provincial Government Grants.
- Own Source Revenues.

## MONITOR AND REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CCP

Monitoring our progress on reaching the CCP priorities through the implementation of guiding directions and projects will require leadership, staff, and the community to be involved in the evaluation of the implementation of the plan.

Annual or semi-annual community meetings related to CCP priorities and actions undertaken by Saulteau should be held to ensure members are aware of progress made in implementing the plan. This includes hosting meetings in external communities with significant populations of members residing in them, such as Dawson Creek and Grande Prairie.



