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“This Land was Your Land”

Indigenous Engagement and Partnership in the Canadian Outdoor Recreational Landscape

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Foreword

A huge thank my family for being a great support during my educational journey, my friends back home, and the ones I made here (especially the lagomies). Congratulations NUPS 2024!

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Brynhild Granås, for her support and help while I tackled writing my first thesis. As well as the other past professors from MacEwan University, Roskilde University, Malmö University, and UiT.

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Rachel Laura Luisa Rebonne

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Summary

Recreating outdoors is something that many people in Canada enjoy doing and often do so in National Parks or nature close to their homes, which Canada has an abundance of. However, recreation is a heavily colonized field that often excludes Indigenous people, who have been using the same land for numerous years.

This thesis focuses on bringing Indigeneity back into the outdoor recreational landscape through engagement and partnerships. It also looks at how users can contribute to the reconciliation and decolonization of the outdoor recreational landscape. The ongoing National Urban Park initiative within the city of Edmonton is looked at as a developing case. A dive into the background of this topic provides an extensive overview of the problem. This research therefore discusses how engagement and partnership can bring back The qualitative empirical data that comes from semi-structured interviews and online media analysis, using content analysis to identify underlying themes.

The concept of the Ethical Space serves as the theoretical framework that encompasses the research. Ethical space is a theoretical space where Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems can coexist and interact in a mutually respectful and beneficial manner. It provides a framework for working with Indigenous communities from start to end, and maintaining meaningful engagement practices and relationships with them, even after the partnership or project is completed.

Two analysis processes have been looked at. First, engaging and partnering with Indigenous communities and second, reconciling and decolonizing the outdoor recreational landscape. Within these two topics, the summary of findings discusses (1) engagement, partnerships, and relationship building, (2) best and poor practices, (3) decolonization and reconciliation, and (4) the ethical space.

Learning from mistakes and committing to do better are ways to do so, and can deconstruct systematic racism and power imbalances, and promote ethical and meaningful transcultural interactions.

1 Introduction

"National Parks are maintained for all the people—for the ill, that they may be restored, for the well that they may be fortified and inspired by the sunshine, the fresh air, the beauty, and all the other healing, enobling, and inspiring agencies of Nature. They exist in order that every citizen of Canada may satisfy his craving for Nature and Nature's beauty; that he may absorb the poise and restfulness of the forests; that he may steep his soul in the brilliance of the wildflowers and the sublimity of the mountain peaks; that he may develop in himself the buoyancy, the joy, and the activity he sees in the wild animals; that he may stock his mind with the raw material of intelligent optimism, great thoughts, noble ideals; that he may be made better, happier, and healthier." (Harkin, 1957, p.16)

Figue 1. Yoho National Park. Rachel Rebonne

The quote above, by J.B Harkin (1957), depicts a warm and welcoming snapshot of outdoor recreation in Canada. Though it comes across as optimistic, warm and welcoming, it doesn't represent the truth of the outdoor recreational landscape, especially in the form of National Parks, and the displacement and exclusion of Indigenous people who once called these landscapes their homes. It is still widely believed that we live in a post-colonial world; however, this belief is very far from the truth for many Indigenous groups worldwide. Colonial practices are still taking place in many communities around Canada, especially in areas that are in traditional Indigenous territories. Constant threats such as climate change, resource depletion, cultural loss and systematic racism are some tokens of modern-day colonialism. The outdoor recreational landscape is an example of inherently colonized spaces.

In Canada, National parks were outdoor landscapes that were taken away from Indigenous communities and people and are now being used in the name of recreation and conservation. Meanwhile, they restrict access or create barriers for Indigenous people in their traditional and ancestral territories and homelands. National Parks are often associated with being way out in the wild. Recently, Canada established its first National Urban Park (NUP), called Rouge National Urban Park, in the city of Toronto, as a way to draw more Canadians into nature. Although urban life brings many opportunities, it is often accompanied by noise, overcrowding, pollution, and other ailments, which make them less liveable for their citizens. Urban parks aim to target these urban consequences. In 2021, the Parks Canada Agency, which administers National Park places, proposed to create up to 6 new NUPs throughout Canada. These proposed new NUPs, in theory, should facilitate collaboration between the federal and other levels of government, local citizens, Indigenous organizations, communities, people, and other potential partners. The city of Edmonton, which is located on Treaty Six territory, is one of the several possible cities in which the Parks Canada Agency wishes to establish a new NUP. Therefore, this thesis will use this as a 'live' or developing case study of negotiation regarding an outdoor recreational landscape. As a developing case study, investigations of engagement and inclusion with local Indigenous organizations, communities, and people will be highlighted.

This thesis will include research on the outdoor recreational landscape in Canada and the inclusion of Indigenous organizations, communities, and people through ethical space, engagement practices and partnerships.

1.1 Research Problem and Research Questions

Outdoor recreation has colonial origins and practices that are still done today. This makes the outdoor landscape less accessible or welcoming to Indigenous people, who have been stewards of the land for thousands of years. National parks are spread throughout Canada and are constantly attaining more land that gets transformed into federally administered outdoor spaces. Edmonton, the capital city in the province of Alberta, is a possible site for a future NUP after the implementation of Rouge NUP, Canada's first NUP, in the Toronto, Ontario, area. As all of Canada is located on traditional Indigenous territory, specifically Treaty Six territory in the Edmonton area, the city has the duty to consult with Indigenous groups who call the area their home.

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of how Indigeneity can be brought back and normalized into the landscape. Within this context, recreation means refers to visiting or participating in activities within an outdoor setting. Specifically, National Parks will be examined since they are federally administered and widespread across Canada. Due to Canada's vast size, National Parks located in Alberta, specifically Banff, Jasper, and Elk Island National Park will be discussed. Rouge Urban National Park, in Ontario, will also be discussed since it is the inaugural NUP in Canada. Overall, I want to explore how governments and organizations implement meaningful engagement in outdoor recreational landscapes, specifically through planning, creating and maintaining new federal parkland in Canada. In addition, I will compile and discuss the best and poor practices in implementing Indigenous engagement and partnerships in outdoor recreational landscapes and decolonizing and reconciling said landscape.

The research questions are as follows:

- How should non-Indigenous organizations, governments, or partners approach Indigenous communities for engagement and partnership reasons?
    - How do non-Indigenous organizations, governments, or partners facilitate Indigenous involvement in the outdoor recreational landscape?
- Which are some best practices in engaging and partnering with Indigenous communities, and which also contribute to reconciliation and decolonization of the outdoor recreational landscape?

1.2 Thesis Structure

This thesis will be organized into 7 sections to introduce, discuss and analyze the research problem and questions.
The introduction chapter aims to introduce the reader to the scope of the issue of the outdoor recreational landscape in Canada. Here, the research problem and questions will be shared.

The aim of the background chapter is to provide background information and context and to create a narrative explaining how the research problem came to be. To create an extensive background study, literature review and document analyses were used to create a basis for this study. The background chapter is divided into several sections. First, National Parks,

Canadian National parks, and NUPs will be introduced and discussed. A large part of this section was created by reviewing documents, such as management plans published by the Parks Canada Agency. The Parks Canada website and previous literature also contributed to this section. This section also looks at why urban parks are important. Next, the case study of Edmonton as a possible site for a new NUP is discussed. To wrap up this section, previous literature and discussions on some best practices for engaging with Indigenous communities will be discussed, which will be drawn upon later in the analysis chapter.

The concept of Willie Ermines's ethical space provides the theoretical concept and helps draw the problem, background, and data to help answer the research questions. In short, the ethical space is the invisible space where, in a process of engagement, both parties position themselves to start a meaningful, equitable, and long-lasting relationship. The ethical space is often called for when an unequal power dynamic or knowledge system exists between the parties involved. The ethical space creates a foundation where both parties are at the same level and are, according to Ermine, ultimately the existing area or space. The who, what, when, where, and why of ethical space will be answered using Ermines and other scholars' development and interpretations of the ethical space. A complementary worldview, Etuaptmumk (Two-Eyed Seeing), will be used to further break down ethical space and describe how it can be implemented.

A qualitative, mixed-methods approach was conducted during this research. Two methods were used, including semi-structured interviews and online media analysis. Self-reflexivity and ethical considerations are included here and discussed the importance of self-reflection while doing research and the ethics that must be considered when conducting research, especially topics involving Indigenous communities.

The analysis was conducted by interpreting the data collected through interviews and online media sources. It has been compared and contrasted with the background and theory chapter to help interpret the data and present relevant findings. Throughout the analysis, several key elements will be repeated or overlapped. This shows how intertwined engagement and relationship building are with each other.

The discussion section aims to synthesize the the results and discuss any implications, limitations, potential contributions and future research, and the future implications of Edmonton's NUP Initiative.

Lastly, the conclusion will wrap up the thesis and previous discussions and will explicitly answer the research questions.

2 Background

Figure 2. Treaty map of Canada (https://native-land.ca/) Retrieved Febuary 2 2024

This background study explains previous literature and context, which will help the reader understand the scope of the problem. It begins with the case of outdoor recreation and colonization and how Canada's outdoor scene is involved with Canada's past. Next, the origin of global national parks is briefly discussed because they created a domino effect worldwide. Canadian National Parks and National Urban Parks come after. This is where the origins and systems of Canadian National Parks and sites administered by Parks Canada are discussed. Last, literature on best practices in the outdoor field will be discussed, so that they can be eventually compared and contrasted to what was found as a result of this study.

2.1 Colonization in the 'Great Outdoors'

For many Indigenous people worldwide, the 'outdoors' as we now know it wasn't an escape from reality or a well-deserved vacation. Instead, it served as their home, where they stewarded the land and survived for millennia. Indigenous people's knowledge and experience of the land helped pave the way for settlers/ colonizers. Indigenous people invented canoes,

which were an important mode of transportation, especially during the early fur trading era (Priest & Asfeldyt, 2022, p. 498). The canoe is now considered a quintessential symbol of Canadian culture and 'Canadianism.' In turn, colonization prohibited or restricted Indigenous groups from their sustenance and cultural practices, and the outdoors was transformed into a rule-based, 'unprimitive' society that catered towards Western society, especially Western men (Shah & Badaloo, 2023, p.4). Creating nature reserves, such as national parks, is an example. National Parks in Canada were traditionally created by taking away land from and excluding the Indigenous peoples who were native to the area (Shah & Badaloo, 2023, p.4).

Mark David Spence (1999) describes how the concept of the "wilderness" is a Western concept used to justify the untamed and unclaimed belief of the outdoors (p.15). To many Western societies, the concept of the wilderness and nature seem to be used interchangeably. According to Shah and Badaloo (2023), there was generally no word for wilderness in Indigenous languages in Canada. This is, instead, a colonial term which inherently "others" Indigeneity and fosters an "us versus them" colonial mentality (p.4). William Cronon (1996) stated that "wilderness stands as the last remaining place where civilization, that all too human disease, has not fully infected the earth (p. 7). He critiques this belief, stating that how Western society came to be is why the wilderness seems like a sanctuary away from said society. Beliefs like these cause the erasing of Indigenous people's sense of belonging within their traditional territories and homelands. Believing that wilderness is untouched and pristine is unfair to the Indigenous people who call and/or call these natural areas their home before they were forced to flee for the sake of enjoyment by Westerners. To Westerners, nature was "uninhabited", but this really meant uninhabited by Westerners themselves (p. 15). Beliefs like these disregard and erase the care that Indigenous people have put into sustainable ecology.

Today, barriers still exist for many Indigenous and people of colour within the outdoor world. Indigenous people in rural and urban areas face similar challenges when visiting and recreating outdoors. Removal from traditional territories has caused a disconnect between people and place, among many other consequences. Indigenous populations have

disproportionately higher rates of preventable diseases, so health disparities are a cause of one kind of barrier. Another is the lack of culturally relevant education on Indigeneity and nature. There are environmental, socioeconomic, and political barriers. Poor or no infrastructure, especially in rural settings, can make it difficult to maneuver outside. Poor weather conditions

can make it difficult or unsafe. A lack of community connectivity or high crime can make people feel unsafe. Family dynamics, such as finding childcare, can hinder some people from participating in recreational activities of all kinds, especially ones away from home. Many outdoor activities have a financial burden attached to them, such as membership fees, gear, or even the right to visit and recreate in certain areas, such as National Parks. There are also certain restrictions or obstacles to doing traditional activities, such as hunting or foraging (Sutherland, 2021, pp. 12-14). Discrimination, such as racism and sexism, can also be invisible barriers that hinder or discourage Indigenous individuals from the outdoors, especially for Indigenous youth (Sutherland, 2021, pp. 14-15). Culturally "irrelevant" programs and activities make it difficult to spark interest in Indigenous youth, according to Sutherland. Despite the effort, these programs and opportunities nearly all come down to one thing: funding. In 2017, a successful ice hockey program in Nunavut was shut down due to inadequate funding and insufficient infrastructure (2021, p.15)

Canada's history of systemic racism and lack of representation can cause certain groups to feel "underrepresented and feeling unwelcome and unsupported in the outdoors", which can cause people to avoid the outdoors despite wanting to participate (Shah & Badaloo, 2023, p.7). Sutherland (2021) identifies community, kin, and social support as vehicles in increasing participation, interest, and access to recreational and outdoor recreational activities. Group activities can facilitate "a sense of belonging and community" and help combat racism and sexism by creating safe gathering spots and connections. Cultural awareness and pride are important, too. Allowing cultural groups to do their own things without the rules and judgment of others allows them to thrive. Decolonizing the outdoor landscape, such as by providing land-based and cultural activities, can foster community self-determination (pp. 17-18). Taking a holistic approach is the last element determined by Sutherland (2021), which includes considering the development of spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical support and programs.

Sutherland (2021) identifies several best practices for encouraging and facilitating participation in outdoor activities. First, the researchers and developers of recreation and physical activity must do their due diligence to decolonize the recreation landscape. This can be done by incorporating culturally appropriate programming, opportunities, and sufficient research beforehand. Including community members in planning processes and offering land-based recreation is also crucial (p. 19). Recreation and physical activity policy must also

be “decolonized and more inclusive” (p. 20). Next, researchers and developers must not think broadly. Indigenous communities are unique and are not homogenous. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Diversity and specific needs must be acknowledged (p. 20). Appropriate and fitting representation is important. Last, space and appropriate activities should also be developed for Indigenous youth. Better access to recreation can help at-risk youth. In fact, participation in outdoor leadership opportunities is “effective for improving resilience and well-being for Indigenous youth (p. 17-21). Therefore, it is important to “create spaces for Indigenous youth to be empowered to take control of their wellness” (p. 21).

Bringing Indigenous representation and teachings back into nature, as paradoxical as that seems, is a way to welcome those who are not interested in Western norms of outdoor recreation.

2.2 National Parks

National Parks often represent governmental attempts to restore or conserve sites of ecological and cultural interest; however, ecological conservation and land stewardship practices have existed for much longer than wildlife reserves and National Parks have. In pre-colonized North America, Indigenous groups used fire and prescribed burning as a way to control and manipulate their environment. This is one of many forms of traditional ecological knowledge that Indigenous people have used while sustaining their environments (Eisenberg et al., 2019, pp. 1-2). Nowadays, many countries worldwide have ‘natural’ outdoor spaces designated for conservation and recreation, such as National Parks. Created in 1872, Yellowstone National Park in the United States of America was the first official national park in the world. It was created to promote tourism, economic development, and the belief that the “great wilderness” belongs to the nation and ought to be set aside for conservation. Indigenous people were not included in these developmental initiatives, and this set to marginalize them further from the settler/colonial groups. These attitudes of were not isolated to just the United States. European values of ecological conservation ultimately spread, and Indigenous peoples worldwide were subjected to cruel treatment and had their traditional territories taken away from them (Harper and White, 2012, p. 54; Poirier & Ostergren, 2002, pp. 333-334). Indigenous people's successful survival and resilience in the natural environments was seen as a threat to European colonial groups, at least in Australia (Poirier & Ostergren, 2002, p. 336). Countries with British colonies, such as Canada, New Zealand, and Australia, opened their own first National Parks soon after the opening of Yellowstone in the

United States. Although the conditions of National Parks and Indigenous people are slightly different worldwide, the creation of Yellowstone National Park set the stage for nearly everywhere else, with many governments worldwide using Yellowstone National Park as a model. These National Parks were used to link civilization and nature and were generally created with one group in mind- the settler white men (Harper & White, 2012, pp. 50-52)

2.3 Canadian National Parks

Canada has a lot of nature. In fact, Canada boasts 367 million hectares of forest throughout the country (Natural Resources Canada, 2024). It is not uncommon for nature to be integrated into Canadians' everyday life, seen in urban communities located within river valleys, employed in National Parks, or cut through a green space on their way to work. Canada is lucky to have large amounts of green spaces that are maintained by different organizations and levels of government. Of these green spaces, National Parks are one that many Canadians are proud of.

2.3.1 An Origins of Canadian National Parks

National Parks in Canada have undergone extensive changes throughout the decades to become what they are today. With inspiration from Yellowstone in the United States, Banff was set to become Canada's first national park, with many more to follow. As the first national park, many historical moments happened during the founding and creation of Banff. Nearing the end of the 1800s and throughout the 1900s, more national parks were developed in Alberta and the rest of the country. Introducing the parks in this way will provide context on how the parks came to be, providing a foundation for how they have developed and managed and how they function today. The Parks Canada agency maintains over 200 Parks Canada places, including national parks, national historic sites, marine conservation areas, and one NUP throughout 470,000 km2 of land (Parks Canada Agency, 2021, p.3). As mentioned in the Parks Canada overview (2021), the programs and initiatives they administer include ecological integrity, NUPs, marine conservation, commemoration and cultural heritage conservation, Indigenous stewardship, visitation, storytelling, diversity, inclusion, equity and accessibility, safety, fire management, infrastructure and municipal-type services, real property management, and lastly international engagement (pp. 8-13).

Three National Parks located in the province of Alberta will be discussed. These parks have been chosen due to their history, their proximity to each other and the City of Edmonton, and

the author's personal experience and knowledge regarding these parks. Including these National Parks will give insight on how they all started on similar terms, but have been developed differently throughout history.

Figure 3. Map of National Parks (Google Maps)

Banff- The First National Park

Figure 4. Moraine Lake, BNP. Rachel Rebonne

Banff, which is located west of the city of Calgary in Treaty 7 territory, is Canada's oldest national park and sparked the creation of many more national parks in Canada. Many different Indigenous groups used and travelled around present-day Banff for thousands of years before European settlers arrived (Town of Banff, n.d., para. 3).

‘Founded’ in 1883 and properly established in 1885, Banff National Park (BNP) is Canada's first and oldest National Park. Its’ journey began under the name of ‘Rocky Mountain National Park' and jumpstarted when Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) workers, who were in the midst of connecting the country coast to coast, ‘discovered’ a natural source of hot water at Sulphur Mountain. The railway workers were building the railway towards the neighbouring province of British Columbia. This site sparked an economic and tourism idea as a spot for railway users to visit. This area was also of interest to many because the Western part of Canada was relatively unknown by settler and colonizer groups due to its “primitive, trackless and virtually inaccessible” state (Lothian, 1987, p.10). It was, of course, populated by the Indigenous people, who were used as guides for early traders and explorers. In late 1885, the prime minister at the time allocated 26 square kilometres of land around the hot springs to the crown, therefore making it public property and free from ownership disputes which had taken place after its discovery (Lothian, 1987, pp. 5-17). Soon after, the Rocky Mountains underwent major infrastructure development. They became a recreational spot where Canadians and international visitors could enjoy the views and escape civilization. The park was legally established in 1887. This made it the world's third national park system and kickstarted the future of an extensive national park network in Canada (p. 5). By the end of 1887, hotels, churches, and stores had started to be built. In 1888, the CPR opened the lavish Banff Springs Hotel, with access to pools with hot water from the mountain. Later, the natural hot springs were transformed into a more European-style facility with plumbing and various kinds of infrastructure, such as changing rooms, to make the visitor's experience more comfortable. Mountain guides from Switzerland were brought over. Around this period in time, the Town of Banff started to go from plan to reality, and various scenic points of interest were becoming established close to the townsite. The late 1890s and the beginning of the 1900s saw the national perk used mostly for leisure and recreational purposes by thousands of visitors across Canada and the United States. The possibilities of new parks and reserving land for them were discussed around this time. The end of the 1800s provided a significant change to Canada overall. Under Prime Minister Macdonald, natural conservation was one of the lowest priorities, and it took until 1909 for any proper conservation initiatives to begin. (Harper and White, 2012, p. 55; Lothian, 1987, pp. 5-29; Mortimer-Sandilands, 2009, pp. 164-166).

By 1901, the number of visitors reached just over eight thousand, and the hot springs were still the primary attraction. In 1902, the world-renowned Lake Louise area was founded and

incorporated into the Rocky Mountain Parks, as it was seen to have beauty and recreational and leisurely potential. The initial park was also enlargened, with it growing to 11,396 square kilometres (Lothian, 1987, pp. 27-32)

The mid-1900s saw great recreational and cultural development throughout all throughout Banff. Winter sports, the opening of a post-secondary institution, and the expansion of the camping offers were just some of the endeavours going on within the park (Lothian, 1987, p. 33; Parks Canada Agency, 2021, p. 3). Jas. B. Harkin, called "the father of National Parks," was the first commissioner of the national parks. At the time, animal conservation was a reaction to the prediction that North America would become a "gameless continent" due to the declining number of wild animals (Parks Canada Agency, 2021, pp. 3-4). In 1914, Harkin had the first road built to Banff National Park. This made national parks much more accessible. The Ice Field Parkway, a popular and scenic highway from Banff National Park to Jasper National Park, was created soon after. Harkin presented national parks as an economic opportunity for the federal government, drawing in more tourists and their money. Expanding the road network meant that visitors had more destinations to visit and could travel on their own schedule. Rail travel decreased in popularity as visitors opted for more flexible and cheaper means of visiting the national parks (Mortimer-Sandilands, 2009, p. 170; Parks Canada Agency, 2021, p.4). After the war, Canadians' desire to visit national parks rapidly grew. Thanks to post-war interest, new parks were created in areas with potential for tourism and recreation. In the 1960s, environmental concerns began to grow. The National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada (now known as the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society) emerged (Mortimer-Sandilands, 2009, p.170-171).

In the 1980s' the Parks Canada Agency was still juggling its recreational and economic development versus ecological preservation dilemma. Funding was drastically cut, and the agency looked for other revenue streams. At this time, they decided to market the parks globally. Despite already having a sizable number of international visitors, the town of Banff underwent rapid growth, exceeding 100% in some areas. In the 1990s, there was a shift to bring National Parks back to a place of national identity and a boom in National Park creation (Mortimer-Sandilands, 2009, pp.176-178).

Jasper National Park

Figure 5. JNP. Rachel Rebonne

Likewise to Banff, the railway contributed to the creation of Jasper National Park (JNP). In 1907, the Canadian Government set aside 12,950 square kilometres of land for the new railway to go through. Its conservation purpose was to protect and conserve the trees of the Rocky Mountains. However, it was then renamed to just Jasper, named after a trading post that existed before (Lothian, 1987, p.52). The 1800s brought early explorers and traders to the area, and near the end of the 1800s, railway surveying began. Indigenous people were present in the area long before the arrival of the first European settlers and were pushed out of their traditional territories despite providing useful skills and information to the settlers (Government of Canada, 2022c; Municipality of Jasper, n.d.). The park relied on rail for transportation until the road network began, and the highway to Edmonton, the nearest city to the East, was finished in the early 1930s. In the 1940s, the Banff to Jasper highway opened, allowing travel from the other National Parks. Like Banff and Elk Island, Jasper is an outdoor haven, and recreational opportunities are plenty. A hot spring opened in the late 1930s. Ski areas were developed, but despite the park's many recreational offers, people unused much of the park, and park zoning was applied to protect natural areas from over-development or development (Lothian, 1987, pp. 54-56)

Elk Island National Park

Elk Island National Park (EINP) is a small National Park east of the city of Edmonton. Elk Island National Park came to be due to citizen concern over a local elk population that was being threatened by overhunting. In 1904, a petition circulated with the request to reserve a small plot of land (41 square kilometres) and a small herd of elk. It was given official National Park status in March of 1913 (Lothian, 1987, pp. 47-48). Today, there is an abundance of bison which can be found throughout nearly the entire park. Bison are the

largest land mammal that can be found throughout North America, and in the early 1900s, they were threatened by extinction (Parks Canada Agency, 2022b). The bison made their Elk Island debut in 1907 when a shipment came in from the Flathead Indian Reservation in the American state of Montana. 716 buffalo eventually made it to the park by 1912 however, due to several factors such as relocation, injuries, illness, or other ailments, the park ended up with a modest herd of around 48 bison. Once the bison population was larger and healthier, some of the bison could relocate. The Blackfoot Indigenous band received donated 25 bison (Lothian, 1987, p. 49; Parks Canada Agency, 2022). In 1965, the park received a shipment of a new species of bison, wood bison, for gene conservation purposes. Elk Island thus became "the largest fenced buffalo preserve in Canada…" (Lothian, 1987, p. 49). From 2016 to 2018, very special relocation initiatives took place. First, 87 plains bison were repatriated to the Blackfeet Nation Reservation in Montana, where the original herd came from in a spiritual homecoming. The following year, 16 plains bison were reintroduced to Banff National Park. The bison spent about a year secured in a pasture in the Panther Valley and were released in 2018 with their newborns to graze within the national park (Parks Canada Agency, 2019; Parks Canada Agency, 2022). Despite its conservation origins, a yearning for recreation occurred at EINP. Recreational opportunities were created around Astotin Lake and Sandy Beach. Major development started in the 1930s, but not all of the offers were worth the upkeep. The park was, therefore, promoted and developed for more day use (Lothian, 1987, pp. 50-51). Today, the park and its surrounding areas are designated as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve thanks to its contribution to conservation (Parks Canada Agency, 2019).

Figure 6. Wild Bison in EINP. Rachel Rebonne

Figure 7. Domesticated dog on a hiking trail in EINP. Rachel Rebonne

2.4 Parks Canada and Indigenous Relations

Since the creation of National Parks has historically disconnected Indigenous people from their traditional homelands and territories, Parks Canada now aims to facilitate reconciliation efforts, decolonizations, and Indigenous involvement through ongoing cooperation with Indigenous groups and their ways of land stewardship and culture (Government of Canada, 2022a). Figure 8 shows an example of cultural programming that many Parks Canada places have. Everyone who wishes to visit a Parks Canada-administered place must have a National Parks Pass. They are not free and can cause a financial burden on some people. Indigenous people are granted free access to Parks Canada places, but not every park offers the same entrance programs. Banff offers Indigenous people a short-term access pass, which grants unlimited entry for a set amount of time. This pass is available at Parks Canada locations within the national park, such as the visitor centre or national park gates. For bands or groups wishing to make further arrangements, they are directed to contact the Banff National Park Indigenous Relations Advisor (Parks Canada Agency 2023d; Parks Canada Agency, 2022). The Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) partnered with Parks Canada to create the Indigenous Peoples Open Doors Program, commencing in 2021. The previous arrangement meant that Métis individuals had to show their Métis card to receive a free park pass. Now, this pass is available by application for all Métis individuals in Alberta and works for Parks Canada places located in Alberta (Métis Nation of Alberta, n.d.). Although this is a step in the right direction, it shows the discrepancy in relations with different partners in national parks.

Figure 8. Cultural programming. Rachel Rebonne

Banff National Park

All of the Parks Canada places are located in the traditional territory of the Indigenous people in Canada. Indigenous people have been present during the early exploration of National Parks. Banff is located in Treaty 6,7 and 8 territories. Parks Canada has ongoing cooperation with Indigenous people who have had a connection to the land long before national parks were established. In 2018, Banff National Park established an Indigenous Advisory Circle to help the agency strengthen its understanding of the importance of the landscape to the various Indigenous groups and provided an opportunity for dialogue between the agency and the different First Nations. Cultural use arrangements are also available through the Banff National Park Indigenous Relations Advisor (Parks Canada Agency, 2023a). Since placenames have meaning, one way of contributing to the reconciliation process within the outdoor recreational landscape can be by discussing the importance and the use of traditional and land-based knowledge. With the repatriation of the bison to Banff, the renaming of ecological landmarks is a way to facilitate Indigenous involvement in park management. An example of a more recent dialogue between the agency and Indigenous groups was in 2017 when Tunnel Mountain, a mountain within the town of Banff, was proposed to locally be renamed Sacred Buffalo Guardian Mountain (Finch, 2017).

Elk Island National Park

Here, the bison are an important part of Plains Cree culture and were often hunted as they provided sustenance for food and materials for survival needs. Traditional knowledge allowed the plains Cree to lead successful hunts. Once the herd populations began to decline thanks to commercial hunting, this threatened the livelihood of the groups who relied on the bison. Thanks to these overhunting practices, the population decreased drastically, from 30 million to around a thousand. Negotiations with the government entailed, but ultimately, many Indigenous people had to leave the area due to the bison population being nearly wiped out. Nowadays, Elk Island National Park plays a key part in conserving animals and other organisms. Several bison relocation initiatives have occurred, and it has been an important initiative done by Parks Canada to contribute to the reconciliation process and sometimes the repatriation of bison back to their traditional habitats or donating bison to communities for cultural or sustenance purposes (Parks Canada Agency, 2022a). According to Parks Canada, EINP continues working with Indigenous communities by consulting with them regarding key management plans, facilitating Indigenous programs and cultural showcases, and selling

Indigenous-made arts and goods at their visitor centre, called the Wahkotowin Visitor Information Centre. Wahkotowin in Cree means “the sacred relationship with the land and all that dwells on it,” and the visitor centre aims to facilitate a sense of gathering and honouring the traditions of the people who have previously and now currently call the area home (Government of Canada, 2019).

Jasper National Park

Jasper National Park exists in Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 territory, which are the homelands of various groups. Historically, the Indigenous people were physically blocked from committing sustenance practices, and their homes or places of residence were burned down. They were essentially displaced and erased from their homes and territory, causing a disconnection. Some of the original surviving homesteads are available for visitors to see (Parks Canada Agency, 2022). Today, more than 26 Indigenous partners have connections with Jasper, and efforts by different levels of government are in place to contribute to maintaining relationships with the people who have connections to the land (Municipality of Jasper, n.d.).

Indigenous Misrepresentation in National Parks: The totem pole in Jasper National Park

When visitors arrive at the townsite of Jasper National Park, they are welcomed by a beautifully carved, Indigenous-made wooden totem pole. For those who are familiar with the region of western Canada, it might even remind one of the traditional art style of the Pacific Northwest, and there is a precarious reason for this.

National Parks were originally promoted as untouched wilderness while ignoring the use of the areas by various Indigenous populations throughout history (Johnston & Mason, 2020, p. 1). They attempt to assist in preserving and presenting ecosystems and natural resources, but their colonial origins often contradict their mandates, creating somewhat of a paradox. It was simply false that parks, such as Jasper, were pristine and untouched, as this ignores Indigenous history. The case of the Jasper National Park totem pole is an example of homogenization and misrepresentation of Indigenous cultures throughout Canada. The presence of the Haida totem pool, which is used by Indigenous groups in the North Western parts of North America, doesn't represent the culture of the local Indigenous groups. This case of ‘mistaken identity’ case still occurred despite Jasper National Park having collaborated

with 26 groups, or the Jasper Indigenous Forum (JIF), with cultural ties to this particular region (p. 4). This allows for Indigenous people to be portrayed as similar or not unique (homogenous, simplified) and “perpetuates stereotypes” of Indigenous peoples, cultures and histories (p. 4). Indigenous representation is often seen and told through a colonial/settler and Eurocentric lens, which dampens the Indigenous history throughout the national park (p.5). The history of Jasper’s totem pole goes all the way back to the park's formation. The original pole, called “the Raven Totem Pole”, was brought to Jasper via railway all the way from Haida Gwaii on the western coast of Canada. In 2011, the pole was replaced with the one that stands there now, called “the Two Brother Totem Pole” as seen in Figure 9. In the early days of tourism, Indigenous curiosities drew many people to Canada’s national parks. Indigenous presence was a huge tourist hit, even though it was often done in a misleading way (p. 5) A totem pole representing an Indigenous group from the North West is not an appropriate representation of the local group in the area. For some local people, the pole is a visual representation of colonization, symbolizing the power imbalance between local people and the government, hence a “reminder that the government will do what it wants, regardless of connection to place, regardless of whose traditional territories it is” (p. 8). It is widely believed among local communities that there are no reasons for the totem pole to exist anymore, but there are no current plans to remove or rectify it. However, the pole has started a dialogue, encouraging better “consideration and consultation with local Indigenous communities” and hopefully serves as a reminder for the government to take steps in the right direction (p.9).

Figure 9. JNP totem pole. Rachel Rebonne

2.5 National Urban Parks

In 2011, the Parks Canada Agency took an interest in taking over a large plot of land, Rouge Park, to become Canada's first NUP. Located within the greater Toronto area, this landscape is located close to large and small urban areas, as well as lakes and other natural attractions. Settled just before the 1800s, it was first known as the Rouge Valley and was used for various reasons. The area has a long history pre-settler history and has been in use for at least 10,000 years by Indigenous groups,. As a diverse landscape, it boasts major cultural and ecological importance. The area offers opportunities for agriculture, recreation, history and culture and is home to thousands of species. The park was created to become a “Peoples Park” based on decades of use. The Rouge Valley National Uban Park set out to make history of its own, especially since a park like this could reach a large amount of Canada’s population (Merringer, 2013). In general, the creation of this NUP seems to have stemmed from the desire to protect the everchanging Rouge Valley's culture, history, and ecology and present it to others. It has also allowed for collaboration with different levels, including various Indigenous groups, different levels of government, local businesses, and other partners (Merringer, 2013; Parks Canada Agency, 2014, pp. 2-5). In 2021, the Canadian federal government allocated funds to create up to six new NUPs by 2025 and up to 15 future NUPS. The six candidates include Victoria, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Windsor, and Halifax. Montreal is another potential candidate. The discussion is still ongoing (Parks Canada Agency, 2024).

2.5.1 RNUP and Indigenous Relations

In 2011, the PCA began an advisory council with local Indigenous groups prior to the creation of Canada’s first NUP and in 2012, the Rouge National Urban Park First Nations Advisory Circle was formed. In total, 10 Indigenous groups were included in the advisory council. This council was consulted before the creation of the park and are still called upon now, for important cultural and ecological decisions and projects, for example (Parks Canada Agency, 2023e). Parks Canada (2014) also mentioned that turning the Rouge Valley area into a national park was an opportunity for Indigenous involvement, who were among some of the partners involved in making management decisions. The Parks Canada agency believes that the creation of a NUP would make it easier for some Indigenous people to access their traditional homelands by “strengthen their relationship with a landscape that has been a part of their identity and culture for millennia” (pp.5-11). The draft management plan indicates that fruitful collaboration with partners, especially Indigenous groups and organizations,

seems to have been high on the priority list. It cites the agency's desire to help partners' shape proposals and suggestions that they may have for activities in the park, as well as in consultations relating to "major park decisions." (Parks Canada Agency, 2014, p. 22).

2.5.2 Objectives of National Urban Parks

NUPs seek to bring more nature opportunities within urban settings. Parks Canada has three objectives for NUPs. Conserving nature seeks to look at the biodiversity within urban settings and take actions to stop or slow the negative effects of climate change and global warming through strategic conservation measures (Parks Canada Agency, 2023). Connecting people with nature seeks to introduce people to nature within their own backyard. As many people live in urban settings, visiting National Parks may be difficult for various reasons. The Parks Canada Agency seeks to break down some of these barriers by creating better access for urban or peri-urban centres. Unlike most other national parks, these Urban National Parks won't have admission fees (Parks Canada Agency, 2023). Advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples is the last objective. The Parks Canada Agency acknowledges that Indigenous people have been present on these lands and have served as land stewards for thousands of years. Therefore, NUPs must create a place that makes Indigenous people feel welcome and represented, foster Indigenous rights and traditional and cultural uses, and create programs and opportunities for Indigenous groups that contribute to decolonizing the space and contribute towards reconciliation. This pillar also encourages Indigenous people to represent themselves and contribute to Indigenous-led programming and conservation efforts (Parks Canada Agency, 2023).

2.5.3 National Urban Park Planning and Governance

Before a park is created, four steps for NUP designation are done.

The pre-feasibility stage explores the possibilities of an area welcoming a new urban national park. It seeks to conduct research and to start a discussion with those who will be involved or affected by the addition of a new urban national park. Partners include stakeholders, Indigenous groups, local governments, and other organizations. Second, the planning stage continues the dialogue with project partners and begins to develop visions, governance models, areas and boundaries, and budget plans, among other initiatives. Negotiations are made between the agency and the partners, and draft plans are created. Third, designation finalizes and confirms plans, partners, and proposals. Funding from other partners is designated toward the project. Last, implementation commences the operation of the park, including the process of management structure, infrastructure building, the creation of

management plans, and finally, the opening of the new urban national park (Parks Canada Agency, 2023).

Governance of the NUPs will be dependent on location and partner collaboration. Since each NUP will have its own needs and attributes, the NUPs will have different governance schemes. If the City of Edmonton were to move forward with becoming a NUP, the Edmonton city council and the mayor have made it clear that they would maintain 100% ownership and that this is non-negotiable (City of Edmonton, n.d.). With that said, governance is different than ownership. Should Edmonton more forward, they will have a partnership model-style governance, where Parks Canada and other partners share governance duties. For Edmonton, these partners are the City of Edmonton, the Metis Nation of Alberta, and the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nation (City of Edmonton, n.d.). The second possible governance model is what Parks Canada calls "places administered by third parties" and this relates to NUPs that are governed by non-federal levels of government, or Indigenous governments, for example. In this model, Parks Canada would still provide guidance (Parks Canada Agency, 2023). Other contenders may not have the same criteria. The final possible governance model includes "federally administered places", such as Rogue Urban National Park. This means that Parks Canada maintains full governance (Parks Canada Agency, 2023).

2.6 Why Urban Parks Matter

Over half of the world live in urban settings, and Canadian statistics released in 2022 revealed that nearly 75 percent of the Canadian population lives in an urban setting. Canadian statistics released in 2022 also reveal that Canada has a recorded Indigenous population of just over a million people, at 1,048,405 people. This includes First Nation, Metis, and Inuit individuals. 801,045 Indigenous people, or approximately 76 percent, live in urban settings (Larson et al., 2016, p.1; Statistics Canada, 2022a; Statistics Canada, 2022b).

Though the benefit of urban parks is not the focus of this thesis, it is worthwhile to include some brief points on why urban parks matter as a means to strengthen the justification for writing on a similar topic and to provide background context on the matter. It is widely agreed that urban parks are key for liveable cities. According to Konijnendijk et al. (2013), an urban park is defined as:

> "delineated open space areas, mostly dominated by vegetation and water, and generally reserved for public use. Urban parks are mostly larger, but can also have the

> shape of smaller ‘pocket parks’. Urban parks are usually locally defined (by authorities) as ‘parks.” (Konijnendijk et al., 2013, p.35).

This definition assists the author's study on the benefits of urban parks. They conducted this study to contribute to the understanding of the benefits of urban parks, as lots of previous studies conducted have looked at all parks, and not just urban ones (Konijnendijk et al., 2013, p.35).

They conducted this study to contribute to understanding the benefits of urban parks, as many previous studies have looked at all parks, not just urban ones (Konijnendijk et al., 2013, p.35).

Therefore, urbanization has both good and bad consequences on human health and society. Previous studies have shown positive effects for urban areas, access to green spaces for mental, physical, and community health and well-being, and climate relief such as urban heat reduction (Larson et al., 2016, pp.1-3).

In a study conducted by Larson et al. (2016), the authors gathered data from over 100 cities in the USA and measured well-being using the Gallup-Healthways Well-being Index. They found that access to urban green spaces in the form of public parks increased overall well-being among members of the community, supporting previous research. However, other causes of increased well-being included in the study, such as weather, temperature, finances, or marital status, were also considered (pp. 4-11).

How does this data fit in with the broader topic of opening national parks? Well, by dedicating their study to urban parks, the data and results, and other findings can be used to emphasize the importance of urban parks and contribute to the conversation of opening new NUPs in Canada, especially with a large population of Indigenous individuals who make urban areas their homes. According to the Parks Canada Agency (2014), locals to the Greater Toronto Area have a longstanding connection to the area where Canada’s first NUP now stands. It is stated that parks like these are important for individual and collective heritage. The agency itself states:

> “today, this history is reflected in a unique mosaic of natural, cultural, and agricultural landscapes and activities that remain relevant to the fundamentals of healthy, vibrant communities—fresh water, protected green spaces, good quality food, sustainability and social well-being” (Parks Canada Agency, 2014, p.4).

NUPs offer many benefits to Canadians, including economic, conservation, reconciliation, connection and inclusion, and collaboration benefits (Parks Canada agency, 2023b). Therefore, it can be established that the creation of Canada's first NUP hits many birds with one stone. On one hand, it protects, preserves and presents a chapter of Canada's past, and on the other hand, it ensures the wellness of urban dwellers, Canadians, and visitors. The creation of new NUPs can help bring these elements to other cities to keep the ball rolling with new partnerships from different levels of government, Indigenous groups, environmental organizations, and other actors.

2.7 The Case of Edmonton

Edmonton is a Western Canadian city and is the capital of the province of Alberta, where Banff, Jasper, and Elk Island National Parks also lie. Between the years of 2017 and 2018, the city broke a population of a million people. Recent statistics states that Edmonton has around 1.1 million inhabitants, many of which identify as Indigenous (Government of Alberta, 2023). The North Saskatchewan River, or kisiskâciwani-sîpiy, Omaka-ty, flows throughout the city of Edmonton, and the Edmonton river valley runs alongside the riverbank and is connected to other urban parklands. It boasts great cultural, ecological and recreational importance. In early 2024, it was designated as a Canadian Heritage River (Canadian Heritage Rivers System, n.d.) Historically, the land where Edmonton now lay was was home to numerous Indigenous groups and served as an important trading and waiting spot. The Indigenous groups provided hospitality and shared knowledge with their new guests. The City of Edmonton cites that Indigenous people had a big part in creating Edmonton into the city it now is, which now has a very high urban Indigenous population (City of Edmonton, 2005). Edmonton saw its first European settlers arrive near the end of the 1700s, when two trading companies established forts in the area. The trading posts established trading forts, which kick-started the establishment of Edmonton as a city. Many different industries and forms of resource extraction, such as mining, were centralized around the North Saskatchewan River. The creation of the city displaced many Indigenous communities through various acts of colonialism. The river valley system is something which Edmontonians take great pride in. In the early 1900s, the city consulted with architect Frederick Todd, whose previous places of work included cities like New York and Montreal. He offered advice on integrating the city with the river valley system, suggesting celebrating and preserving its natural beauty. As Edmonton grew, so did their portion of the river valley (Edmontion River Valley Conservation Coalition, n.d.). Nowadays, the Edmonton River Valley offers many recreational

opportunities. There are some commercial and residential uses. Many city parks are located within the river valley system, and multi-use trails or bridges connect them. Conservation efforts did not really start until the end of the 1970s. Soon after, bylaw 7188 or the River Valley Bylaw was passed. This was the first means of protection of the river valley. This bylaw stated that:

> "As Edmonton grows and changes and as land becomes more valuable the River Valley may become threatened by commercial and industrial uses, as well as by civic uses such as public utilities." This bylaw demands that all river valley projects be "essential" and states that its first goal is "to ensure preservation of the natural character and environment of the North Saskatchewan River Valley and its Ravine System." (para. 24). In the 1990s, the COE began to participate in conservation efforts to protect the urban ecosystem. The river and river valley system is still important to Edmonton residents today. A former Alberta premier stated, "This park is our vision of a good quality of life to be enjoyed by the people of Edmonton and by their children" (ERVCC, n.d., para. 14).

2.8 Preliminary Best Engagement Practices with Indigenous Communities

Previous literature points to several key elements and ways towards best practices regarding engagement with and in Indigenous communities. In a publication called Working in a good way, The Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia (ORCBC) (n.d.) suggests a priority of working ethically and appropriately, citing that efforts to be sustainable are appreciated by Indigenous communities and that "Indigenous communities place a high priority on doing things and making decisions in 'a good way'". Working in a good way means " ensuring that all community initiatives are undertaken with a strong focus on process, prioritizing inclusivity, equality, honesty, protecting and enhancing the natural world and ensuring cultural survival for their people" (p.2).

One perspective from Gamble and McQueen (2019) includes five consecutive steps for engaging. "Identify" means learning about local nations and the Indigenous population that has lived and still lives in the research or project area. Each nation has its own wants and needs, and even though there may be overlap, it is important to address each nation individually (p.2). "Learn" means dedicating time and doing homework so that each nation's unique "history, traditions, culture, cultural events and celebrations" are well understood. If

there are any uncertainties, they can be identified upon contact. It is okay to "seek guidance" from a nation and have them point you in the right direction (Gamble and McQueen, 2019, p.2; ORCBC, n.d., p.4). Furthermore, the Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. (2018) identifies research, respect, and recognition of rights as a part of the "learn" stage. They say engagement is a critical part of the project process and benefits both parties. The ORCBC (n.d.) also emphasizes the importance of doing due diligence, research and homework, such as on specific protocols or policies that groups may have (pp.2-3). "Plan" identifies HOW you want to engage with the community or organization and presents WHY you want to engage and start a relationship. This is when goals, objectives, methods, and any other process steps need to be laid out and shared. It should be efficient and clear enough so that the nation won't be left with too many big questions after this point (p.3). Historically, Indigenous knowledge has often been passed down through oral traditions. The ORCBC recommends using visuals when presenting information to help support the overall context (p.5). Being patient at this step and throughout the engagement process is important because timelines between prospective partners may not match (ORCBC, n.d., p. 4). Communication plans can also be thought about. Will communication be through an email, or visiting the nation's office or headquarters in person, therefore establishing a personal connection (ORCBC, n.d., p. 5). Next comes "engage". This step covers the process of *who* to contact and engagement etiquette. The authors state that a great deal of frustration often occurs when there is poor or no engagement, or engagement isn't done at the right time, such as a project looking for consultation from an Indigenous organization or community *after* the project has already begun. It is suggested to find a contact for the organization that you are trying to reach and have them guide you to the right direction, different departments, for example (Gamble and McQueen, 2019, pp.3-4). During the engage step, the ORCBC recognizes several good practices. These include listening more and speaking less, committing to equitable actions and helping others succeed (p. 5). Lastly, "maintain is the lasts recommended step from the authors, who state:

> Indigenous peoples generally feel that a strong understanding and foundation is important for any relationship before moving forward with agreements and partnerships. That said, once the basis of trust and understanding is in place, the relationship is a strong one with much potential for positive mutual benefits.
>
> (Gamble and McQueen, 2019, p. 4)

Maintaining relationships can include supporting the community, by hosting or attending events, giving gifts whether material or metaphorical, such as the gift of time (ORCBC, n.d., p. 5-6). Even if you are faced with undesirable situations, maintaining a relationship can help if the group you are working for doesn't have the capacity to participate at a particular moment in time (p.4). The Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. (2017) indicates that relationship maintenance is as important as first contact. An organization should seek to form a genuine relationship with Indigenous partners and not just aim to get their approval. Genuine relationships also mean that they do not end once the project or collaboration is over (ORCBC, n.d., p. 7).

From another perspective comes the Public Health Agency of Canada's (2023) public health sector. They state that meaningful engagement is essential to "readdressing inequities" caused by a history of colonialism and systematic racism (p.4). They have identified three key principles for overall engagement. These are: (1) Advancing reconciliation, (2) Respecting Indigenous cultures, knowledge and history, and (3) Building relationships and demonstrating humility and openness (pp. 9-11).

For the first key principle, advancing reconciliation, they suggest for organizations to familiarize themselves with Canada's truth and reconciliation calls to action and to acknowledge that reconciliation is an ongoing process, so each opportunity to engage is an opportunity to advance reconciliation. Reconciliation practices can also be done when Indigenous communities are able to do or participate in work that helps "cultural survival" and recognizes their "rights, title and their role as the caretakers and stewards of their lands". It can also mean education ones self on kinship or societal structures, as they can differ across nations or organizations (ORCBC, n.d., pp. 5-7)

The second principle, respecting Indigenous cultures, knowledge and history, encourages organizations to consider holistic approached and to do extensive research and homework regarding the nation they wish to engage with, similar to the identify and learn step from Gamble and McQueen (2019). They, however, suggest organizations familiarize themselves with each nation's treaty rights described in the Constitution of Canada. The Public Health Agency of Canada (2023) suggests acknowledging intergenerational trauma and for organizations to practice "trauma-informed care" and to take a "trauma-informed approach" if necessary (p.10). The ORCBC adds that it also means being considerate of traditional

practices and sacred areas. Indigenous organizations can help others point out where projects should or shouldn't be conducted in, and what is or isn’t appropriate (pp. 6-7)

The third principle is “building relationships and demonstrating humility and openness,” which, in short, means being inclusive, open to feedback, communicating effectively, participating in reciprocity and honest about the benefits to the community, being culturally sensitive, accepting and using Indigenous knowledge, respecting the capacity of partners, being aware of power imbalances, and respecting boundaries (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2023, p. 11; ORCBC, n.d., p. 6).

These key elements and ways towards best practices include the status quo on how ethical, meaningful, and appropriate engagement has been recently done. Often times, many of the suggestions and advice are broad and applicable in most fields of work, but there does have to be a considerable amount of care when working in the outdoor recreational field.The points made by the Public Health Agency of Canada (2023), as well as by Gamble and McQueen (2019) where therefore strengthened by the ORCBC (n.d.) and the The Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. (2017; 2018).

3 Theoretical Framework

Including theoretical concepts to apply the research question in an academic setting is important. Researchers may use theory to achieve many things and it often serves as a toolbox. Theory can be used to provide a lens on the methodology or to construct a framework for the context of the study (Collins & Stockton, 2018, pp. 1-2).

Here, the "ethical space" concept will be used to describe the intersection of transcultures, knowledge, values, and worldviews between settler/colonial and Indigenous groups (Ermine, 2007, p.199). I was introduced to this term while in a meeting with a social planning consultant from an Albertan community services consultancy, who then introduced me to an ethical space expert.

Since ethical space suggests how to interact between groups and cultures, it is the theoretical concept that I have found useful and will provide a framework for this research and I am using it as a main theoretical theory as it encompasses the research well.

As this research looks at discourses and partnerships between outdoor recreation actors and Indigenous groups, it then requires consideration on culturally appropriate and ethical engagement practices. The ethical space theoretical concept will be used as an analysis tool to interpret data, identify key elements or patterns, identify best practices in transcultural partnerships and land-use negotiations.

3.1 Definition

Willie Erimine's ethical space is an invisible, theoretical space which exists between Western and Indigenous worlds. The concept and action of creating an ethical space come from the century-old act of silencing Indigenous perspectives and voices. Ermine cites that since colonization times, there has been an unequal balance of power when it comes to engagement between the two cultures. For example, treaties were created between settlers and Indigenous people but were often drafted and implemented in a settler/colonial process.Prior to engagement, these two cultures or societies were disengaged, as these societies were physically apart and somewhat unaware of each other. Once settlers/colonizers made it to North America, they began acts of negotiation and colonization through the domination of Canadian culture and ways of doing. Due to these historical ways of engaging, Ermine

explains that there is a reason that modern-day engagement may be accompanied by worry and anxiousness, as previous engagement was almost synonymous with coercion.
As an example of a place where an ethical space would have been useful, Ermine discusses the negotiations of treaty-making between Indigenous and the Crown, or the Canadian government period Ermine cites that this is an example of negotiation between two communities, or from one nation to another and builds a foundation of trust and respect (Different Knowings, 2011b, 00:01:42; Ermine, 2007, pp. 194-200).

Within an Indigenous context, ethical space calls for the understanding and solidification of "Indigenous knowledge systems, legal traditions, laws, protocols, practices, songs, methodologies of validation, of ratification, of actioning [Indigenous] lifestyles before relationships can occur (Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership, 2020, 00:47-01:14)

3.2 Purpose

Using ethical space in engagement and relationship building can "generate more substance or depth in Indigenous- conservation partnerships" (Nikolakis and Hotte, 2021, p.10). Historically, Indigenous people have been disadvantaged while participating in research, and have distrust towards the discipline (Peltier et al., 2019, p.48). It is used to change the power and "relationship dynamics" with the goal of contributing to decolonization and to create "respectful engagement [between] Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners" (Sinclaire et al., 2021, p. 68).

3.3 Application

Non-Indigenous partners can implement ethical space 'practices' by recognizing and implementing Indigenous knowledge systems and familiarizing themselves with culture and community-specific protocols before, during, and after the engagement or partnership. Other ways that organizations can implement ethical space practices are by acknowledging that knowledge systems ought to be equal, that Indigenous knowledge does not need to be proved to be considered valid, that flexibility and an understanding that not everything can be planned or go as planned. By implementing some of these practices, non-Indigenous partners can help contribute to ethical and appropriate engagement and relationship building (Government of Canada, 2018, p.7). For example, Laurila (2018) describes a 2012 study

where ethical space was being used within a pedagogical context. In the study, Kapyrka and Dickstator use a “two-worlds” approach, or including both Western and Indigenous pedagogy, within their educational environment. In this example, each knowledge system is given its own spotlight and is not compared or competed with the other (pp. 96-97).

Ethical space takes thoughts, debates, discourses, and ideas from the drawing board to the stage. It provides a vehicle for doing something (Different Knowings, 2011b, 03:50-04:19). Ermine explains that ethical space should be conducted when individuals seek to take back their own humanity and when they want to construct a world that are “not prescriptions from the institutions or the systems that try to run our lives (Different Knowings, 2011b, 06:04-06:20).

3.4 Creation and Development

The concept was given a spotlight by Canadian Indigenous Scholar Willie Ermine, who is a Cree ethicist and researcher from Sturgeon Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan, Canada. In his words, an ethical space is a vector towards a new partnership model and the “theoretical space between cultures and worldviews” (Ermine, 2007, pp. 193-194).

While Ermine did not coin the concept (he adapted it from Roger Poole), he was inspired by it as he had a critical response to what he was seeing himself while conducting thesis research research “concerning or involving Indigenous people he reconceptualized it. He then reconceptualized it in a way to help describe the metaphorical space that should exist in the engagement process between Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners, where all knowledge systems are talked about transcultural (Different Knowings, 2011b, 01:02-02:38)

Even before Poole, it was beloved that he himself took inspiration from Søren Kierkegaard whose philosophical focus was on the topic of subjectivity and ones’ relationship to knowledge. Poole adapted this notion of subjectivity to acknowledge that people realize that they might have “different truths” from one another when they become self-aware of their own subjectivity in engagement processes. Processes of engagement are then considered ethical, as in being within an ethical space, when the engagement purpose is for each party to better understand each other (Laurila, 2018, p. 97; Different Knowings, 2011b, 01:06). Poole mentions the ethical space in his own work, Towards deep subjectivity, where he describes a scene where a young Czechoslovakian individual is sitting amongst russian soldiers, in what Kushner and Norris (1980) describe as what would have been a ‘hostile’ moment, with the

oppressor and the oppressed sharing a space, which is shared physically and metaphorically and what Poole, therefore, called the 'ethical space' within this space of interaction (p.30).

3.4.1 Further developing the ethical space

Although the concept of the ethical space and behaving ethically is not new, very little is published regarding examples of the ethical space as its own concept in action. In a study, Nikolakis and Hotte (2021) investigated how the actions of the ethical space were being conducted between Indigenous and non-Indigenous actors, whether they were aware of the concept or not. Based on self-created criteria, they interviewed 16 individuals from 13 organizations involved in Indigenous conservation. Though they interviewed organizations from around the world, many of them were based or involved in Canada.

The authors researched the organizations they were interviewing to conduct interviews in a structured manner. The questions that were asked reflected the "goals and practices of each organization" (pp.4-5). Through their research, they found that two traits, as well as two subtraits, accompany ethical space. Engagement is the term used to describe the building blocks in relationship building with Indigenous people. Engagement is open-ended and has no set way in how it must take place. Within the study, engagement was discussed as occurring in both formal and informal instances. Informal engagement included making sure that the meetings were not transactional, that they occurred face-to-face, that mutual understanding occurred, and that the organization are "facilitators not drivers of anything". Formal engagement included have Indigenous participants involved from the start, such as by having Indigenous board members or an Indigenous council (pp. 6-7). According to the authors, The first subtrait of engagement is dialogue, which is essential in engagement, and using the right terminology is key to understanding. It is the discussion between partners. Principles are the second subtrait of engagement. The authors summarize that "principles for engagement must be clear and consistent". This statement came from Indigenous organizations describing situations where partner organizations are not clear on their intentions or shift things around. This can cause a sense of distrust or trust to be lost (pp. 7-8). The last trait is Introspection and reflection. This involves reflections on learnings and successes and failures, abolishing colonial hierarchies, and giving space to communities throughout the engagement process. Adapting from learning can help foster a cultural and community-specific partnership (pp. 4-8). The authors conclude that the findings from this study can contribute to future research and use of the ethical space and deepen "our understanding of how ethical space is being institutionalized" (p.10). Littlechild and Sutherland state that ethical space is not static, there

are no set rules or regulations for implementing it. It can be tailored depending on the needs of the parties involved (p.10).

3.4.1.1 Etuaptmumk (Two-Eyed Seeing)

The term Etuaptmumk, or Two-Eyed Seeing, means to use both eyes and multiple perspectives to see the world. One eye uses an Indigenous lens and one eye uses a Western lens, which is beneficial all holders of disparate worldviews (Leighton, nd., para. 1; Littlechild and Sutherland, 2021, p.6). It was conceptualized by collaborative developers Albert and Murdena Marshall, who are Mi'kmaq Elders. It serves as a guiding principle which emphasizes the importance and enhancement when multiple worldviews or perspectives are interacting with each other (Reconciling ways of Knowing, 2020, para. 2). Sinclaire et al. (2021) demonstrate the complementary nature of Etuaptmumk, and ethical space. Etuaptmumk can serve as a precedent to ethical space, replacing the one-sided narrative, which is very colonial (p. 68).

Etuaptmumk is similar to ethical space because Albert and Murdena Marshall conceptualized it as "the requisite guiding principle in collaborative/transdisciplinary/transcultural work…" (Reconciling ways of Knowing, 2020, para. 4). Ethical space also highly focuses on interaction between transcultural, going back to Roger Poole's example of the Czechoslovakian and Russian interaction in Kushner and Norris (1980) up until more recently with the development of the concept by Ermine (2007) and the further developments by Nikolakis and Hotte (2021) other scholars within an Indigenous and non-Indigenous context. Etuaptmumk highly encourages multiple perspectives within the two lenses, making it slightly more broad. It has also been cited as a tool used in multiple fields, such as healthcare or land use planning (Bartlett et al., 2012, p. 331-338). Both of these concepts have been around for a while, but just recently they have been given a title and have been used and developed by multiple scholars and practitioners. According to Littlechild and Sutherland (2021), "they are concepts that have been developed in different ways through our collective attempts to understand good relations - between and amongst Indigenous Peoples, non-Indigenous peoples and the natural world…" (p.6).

3.5 Users

Ermine's concept generally includes two groups but often refers to Indigenous groups and non-Indigenous groups (Ermine, 2007, pp. 193-194). To expand on this, non-Indigenous

groups can include governments of all levels, urban, regional, and land-use planners, consultants, non-government organizations, etc,.

Within the context of this research, planners, consultants in outdoor recreation, and city public servants are classified as non-Indigenous actors. In the context of the NUP initiative, these include partners such as the City of Edmonton the federal government (Parks Canada). On the other hand, Indigenous groups include, well, Indigenous groups! Within this research, however, only one Indigenous group has been interviewed. In terms of the NUP Initiative in Edmonton, The Métis Nation of Alberta and the Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nation are the Indigenous partners, as mentioned on the City of Edmonton's NUP Initiative webpage (City of Edmonton, n.d.).
One challenge, as described by Nikolakis and Hotte (2021), is when engagement includes non-Indigenous governments in the mix, such as the case of the NUP Initiative.
Non-Indigenous governments may provide funding opportunities but also "political challenges and red tape". For communities that fund themselves, they have more leeway. Regardless of the process, engagement requires maintaining communication and keeping a relationship going whether there is a project collaboration going on, or not (p. 6-7).

Non-Indigenous groups using ethical space need to be careful and considerate when using it. Practitioners must be aware of the implications of colonization and should aim to decolonize, and not recolonize the engagement environment. The practitioner should keep themselves educated and maintain an open mind, to allow for "a collaborative and equitable partnership" (Lauria, 2018, pp. 97-98). Furthermore, users of ethical space need a sense of "discipline and reflexivity", and ensure that words are being put into action, and before this, that the plans are realistic and attainable for all parties involved (Littlechild and Sutherland, 2021, p. 25). Those who wish to use the ethical space should ask themsevles three questions: "How will you sustain Ethical Space in your project or partnership?Are there ways to encourage institutional memory regarding Ethical Space? Is there room for Ethical Space to evolve over time?" (p. 28).

3.6 Key elements of Ethical space

It would seem as ethical space represents many aspects, making it a multifaceted tool. From literature from Ermine and other authors, here are four key elements from the discussion of the ethical space:

3.6.1 A grounded normative theory

The concept of ethical space brings forward a framework that non-Indigenous partners need to consider when engaging with Indigenous partners, or as Ermine puts it, "the way things ought to be" (Different Knowings, 2011b, 03:21). Coulthard and Simpson (2016) interpret grounded normative theory as an ethical framework for transcultural interactions. They specifically look at Indigenous and non-Indigenous interactions within their article. Grounded normative theory seeks to use Indigenous practices and knowledge, encourage reciprocal relationships, encourage taking on an equitable stance, and to respect transcultural interactions and relationships (p. 254). Grounded normative theory teaches how to interact with others in a "nonauthoritarian, non-dominating, and nonexploitive manner" (Ackerly et al., 2024, p. 165). Using ethical space can assist researchers conduct research and work with other cultures in an ethical way. When working with Indigenous communities in particular, it is said that research and projects "should aspire to meet the primary objective of creating respectful and ethical research (Peltier et al., 2019, p. 50). As more engagement opportunities between communities, governments and organizations emerge, ethical space is becoming a leading model for approaching partnerships, especially involving conservation and Indigenous communities (Nikolakis and Hotte, 2021, p.9).

3.6.2 An Interaction Framework within a settler/colonial and Indigenous context

Both Etuaptmumk and ethical space can be used by Indigenous and non-indigenous partners as a tool through the means of engagement, relationship building, and seeing different worldviews. They help bridge the gap between 'disparate' worldviews and can help guide non-Indigenous partners towards culturally appropriate interactions and to take decolonial approaches (Littlechild & Sutherland, 2021, p. 7; Sinclaire et al., 2021, p. 62).

Ethical space, as well as its traits as distinguished by Nikolakis and Hotte (2021) can be used as a vehicle towards ethical partnerships, where Indigenous partners have the right to participate based on their culture, their capacities, their terms, and so on (p. 9).

Furthermore, Ermine states that it can be used as a tool to reconcile worldviews, to embed knowledge systems, and to see eye-to-eye with one another. This theory serves as a 'common table' and can help construct "ethical/moral/legal principles in cross-cultural cooperation…" (p. 201).

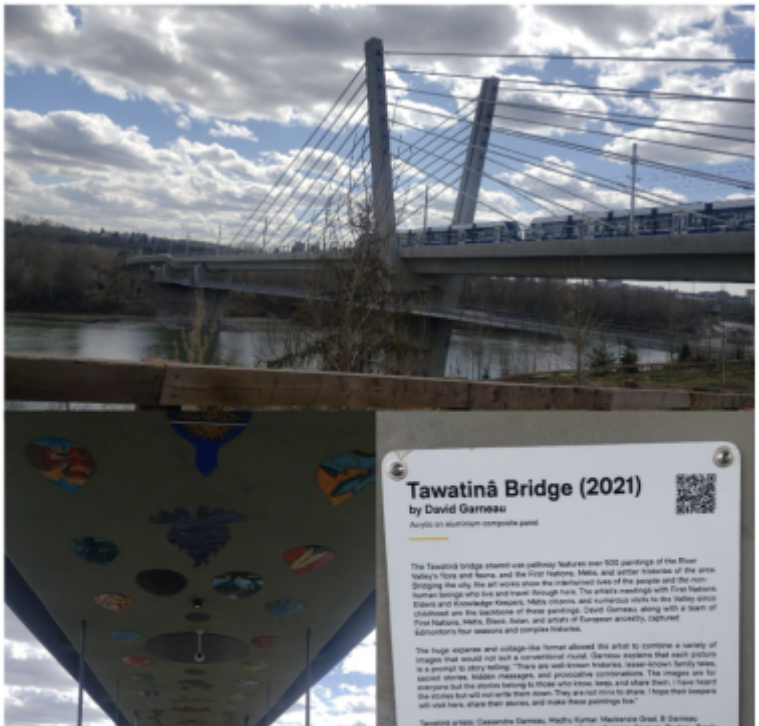
3.6.3 A Guide to Behaving Ethically

Regarding appropriate and ethical engagement with Indigenous communities, Bourassa et al. (2018) state that "the reciprocal trust and relationships built between researcher and co-researcher (or doctor/nurse and patient) is critical to the success of cultural safety. Co-researchers' ways of Knowing and contributions made to a research project are a valued aspect of research as it creates a safe space for empowerment and self-determination" (p.5).

Ethical space facilitates human-to-human dialogue. Creating an ethical space in an engagement process requires discussing, setting, and implementing boundaries. Engagement should also encompass human principles and be ethical and appropriate. Ermine states that it is a tool for those "yearning to be ethical and try to do good, etcetera" (Different Knowings, 2011b, 03:28-03:32; Ermine, 2007, p. 202).

3.6.4 A Way to Address Colonization

Relationships between Indigenous populations and settlers/ colonizers have traditionally included the implementation of state systems and norms on Indigenous "knowledge, political systems, and ways of being" (Coulthard & Simpson, 2016, p. 254). Transcultural engagement, such as between Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous partners, is still rooted in colonial practices. Reinstating Indigenous land and representation is a way to combat the colonial dynamics that have been present for centuries (Coulthard & Simpson, 2016, p. 254; Ermine, 2007, p. 199). A large part of this research looks at land use via outdoor recreation management. The case of NUPs creates an intersection of outdoor recreation within an urban setting. By using an ethical space perspective, planners and similar actors can contribute to decolonizing planning and the outdoor landscape. Initiatives like NUP initiatives also create an intersection between governments. Several levels of government, including Indigenous government, partner together in discussing and planning.



The city of Edmonton is a prairie city, located in Treaty Six territory, and has been and

still is home to many Indigenous people. The development of cities in colonial states means that the effects of colonization are often still felt to this day. European settlers used colonial strategies to displace and maintain control over the local Indigenous populations. There have historically been difficulties. Including Indigenous people and organizations and normalizing their existence within an urban setting has been used as an anti-colonial practice. For example, implementing artwork is one of the practices in which cities can contribute to urban Indigenization. In the city of Toronto, the authors cite that "Aboriginal arts have been a key feature in the restoration of cultural sovereignty and decolonization in Toronto's Aboriginal communities"(Sinclaire et al., 2021, p. 59; Walker et al., 2013, pp. 195-196). Within the context of the city of Edmonton, one example of recent collaboration with Indigenous communities was through the building of the new Tawatinâ Bridge (Figure 10) in the Edmonton River Valley. This bridge features several hundred pieces of Indigenous art, created by David Garneau, who is an artist with Métis heritage, and several other supporting artists. The process included meeting and engaging with numerous Indigenous and Métis artists (Garneau, 2021). Figure 10 shows the information placard, where the bridge users can learn more about its conception. It also shows how the bridge looks as you are standing on the north side of the North Saskatchewan River, looking south. Lastly, there is a viewpoint from on the bridge itself, looking towards the south. You can see some of the art installations that cover the ceiling.

Walker et al. state that decolonization in planning requires planners to "decenter western authority over the production of space" (p. 196). As Nikolakis and Hotte described, introspection and reflection is a way for ethical space to dismantle colonialism. Reintroducing Indigenous knowledge and culture to Indigenous territory, such as done by the city of Edmonton on outfitting the new bridge, assists towards dressing historical power imbalances and turns reaction into action (p.4). Therefore, ethical space can be used to address colonialism by fostering spaces for, as Ermine said, planning for a shared future, acknowledging and working with different worldviews and knowledge systems within the current landscape, which is still divided in many aspects as a consequence of colonialism (Sinclaire et al., 2021, pp. 62-63).

3.7 Wrapping up Ethical Space

While Willie Ermine conceptualized ethical space within a Canadian Indigenous context, the concept was expanded from other theorists, such as Poole, and continues to be expanded upon, such as by Nikolakis and Hotte, who extracted two traits and four subtraits.

Etuaptmumk is another concept which Sinclaire et al. (2021) found to be complementary to ethical space and could be used before and alongside it. Throughout this research, I have extracted four key elements of ethical space, including as somewhat of a grounded normative theory, as a tool, as a way to behave ethically, and as a way to address colonization.

4 Methods

The following section discussed the methodology that was used to investigate Indigenous engagement and partnership in the outdoor recreational landscape. A qualitative, mixed methods approach was used for empirical research. This section wraps up with discussing ethics, self-reflexivity, and limitations in the research process.

4.1 Background

In order to set the scene for the research, extensive background research was conducted to provide extensive background information and context that helped answer the research question. First, background research was conducted on national parks to share the origins on how they came to be. Similarly, the same was done regarding national parks in Canada, discussing Banff, Jasper, and Elk Island National Park, and this was done to provide context on how the Parks Canada agency works in Canada. These three parks were chosen because they are all located within the province of Alberta and are located close, in Canadian terms, to the City of Edmonton. Next, the phenomenon of NUPs was discussed. NUPs are not just simply urban parkland, so their origins and existence were discussed. The city of Edmonton is further introduced here, by briefly discussing its history, the Indigenous people who call this area their home, and the importance of and implications of the river valley and the river that flows through a great part of the city.

To complete a background study, I did a literature and document review. Literature included digital history books and articles. I looked at articles defining the importance of urban parks. Documents included maps and management plans, for example. Online media was also used. These forms of media included newspaper articles or webpages from various governments. For example, the Government of Canada, Parks Canada, and the City of Edmonton, as well as various environmental, Indigenous, or outdoor recreational organizations. On these web pages, lots of information is spread throughout different departments, units, or geographical areas. I spent a lot of time sifting through various web pages in order to create a coherent narrative. This was necessary because most modern information regarding Canadian national parks is found online, on its own webpage which the Government of Canada manages.

4.2 Methods of Analysis

Both online media and interviews were analyzed using content analysis as inspiration. Content analysis is a qualitative research method often using transcriptions to extract data. With content analysis, I created codes, categories, and themes on my interview notes and video transcriptions. This was done by transcribing or annotating my empirical data. All of my online media was available on YouTube, which has a transcription function. I used the transcriptions from there and revised them as needed. As there were hours of transcriptions, content analysis allowed me to organize my data into broader themes. The coding was mostly done inductively. However, the deductive approach was used to find key elements from the ethical space theory and use these elements to aid the analysis. Content analysis has allowed me to take large sections of data and break it down it into viable segments for further analysis (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017, p. 94).

4.3 Research Methods

Two main methods were used throughout this research process, which were online media, expert interviews. Although interviews were meant to be the primary method, I came across several webinars and recorded videos throughout the research process. Some had taken place recently, and one was attended live online. They ended up being very helpful data sources, as they could contribute to answering the research questions and tie in well with the theoretical concept of ethical space.

4.3.1 Online media

For this research, online media was used as a method, including media in the form of videos and webinars. These webinars were discovered while researchig different outdoor recreational and Indigenous organizations in Canada, whilst on the search for potential interviewees. I attended and/or watched recordings of three webinars hosted by different organizations throughout Canada and one City of Edmonton Urban Planning Committee meeting. They became particularity important because they fostered dialogue between different organizations and were created for a wide audience, but especially to those looking to engage with and start relationship building with Indigenous communities. These particular videos were then transcribed and annotated for useful data collection. More information on these videos can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1. A compilation of video-based media

Name	Organization	Key speakers
1. What matters: How to build meaningful relationships with Indigenous organizations, Webinar, October 2021	National Association of Friendship Centres (CFC-FCC)	-Shady Hafez, the National Association of Friendship Centres
2. Reconciliation and recreation: Advice and lessons from outdoor groups, Webinar, YouTube, March 2024	Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia (ORCBC)	-Ryan Stuart, host, Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia -Rod Clapton, panelist, BC Federation of Drift Fishers -Thomas Schoen, panelist, First Journey Trails and Indigenous Youth Mountain Bike Program -Uzi Valiante, Panelist, Squamish Off-Road Cycling Association -Irwin Oostindie, panelist, Wild Bird Trust of BC
3. EDI Discussion Series: How to engage effectively with Métis communities and governments, Webinar, YouTube, March 2024	Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGSPP)	-Dr. Kurt Boyer, Moderator, JSGS -Dorothy Myo, Deputy Chief, Metis Nation of Saskatchewan -Dr. Daniel Voth, Associate Professor, University of Calgary

Takeaways and relevancy:

1. The first part of this webinar discussed tools and techniques for building meaningful relationships with Indigenous organizations. The target audience was for non-Indigenous people and organizations to get a better understanding of what Indigenous communities may face, and how to approach them in a considerate way.

2. This webinar presented techniques and best practices to support reconciliation and facilitate meaningful Indigenous partnerships in an Outdoor recreational landscape. Best practices for pre-during- and prior projects where settler organizations and Indigenous communities are partners. This webinar was suitable for all groups of people who are involved in outdoor recreational management and planning, land use planning, or are involved or looking to be involved in engagement and partnerships with Indigenous groups and communities.

3. This seminar discussed culturally appropriate ways of engaging with First Nation and Métis communities. A big topic of discussion was regarding why relationships between settlers, First Nations and Métis communities are important. The target audience was for non-Indigenous people and organizations to get a better understanding of what Indigenous communities may face, and how to approach them in a considerate way.

4.3.2 Expert Interviews

Four expert interviews were conducted to provide further depth on the research topic and contribute to answering the research questions. In the context of this research, experts are defined as those who have experience in my research field. These experts include people employed in outdoor recreation, government, urban and land planning, and Indigenous governance/organizations. These interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner so that I could collect data on certain topics without influencing the answers too much and as a means of data collection to get detailed information from individuals who are involved in outdoor recreation and/or the NUP initiative.

Before the interview, I conducted preliminary research on my interviewee and their affiliated organization. This way, I created a space for more dialogue and prepared myself to do interviews with experts from different cities, fields, and organizations. This was especially

helpful since not everyone was located in Edmonton, let alone Alberta. Two of the four interviewees are located in or near Edmonton, and the other two are located in the neighbouring province of British Columbia. This means that the two out-of-province interviewees were unaware or knew very little about the perspectives of a NUP opening up in Edmonton. Therefore, questions like "What would a National Urban Park mean in Edmonton?" or something similar were irrelevant to them. The two out-of-province interviewees were both. However, their relevancy to the research is that they are employed within the land use and planning sector and are greatly involved in the outdoor recreational landscape. They both work closely with Indigenous communities. With these interviewees, I was able to discuss Indigenous engagement within the outdoor recreational world and learn more about best practices that have or should be done, as well as poor practices that have been done.

Both interviewees in Alberta are currently partners with the NUP initiative in Edmonton. One was with the City of Edmonton, and the other with the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, one of the two Indigenous partners (at the moment). The interview process started with creating an interview guide (Appendix X) split into four sections. The first section lets the interviewer and interviewee take a few minutes to get to know each other and form a relationship. The interviewee was then asked if they had any questions or concerns before moving forward with the formal interview. During this time, research ethics relating to this project were discussed. The next section of the interview was on the context and background of the research. Here, Edmonton's NUP initiative partners could discuss their role and/or involvement in the process. Those without involvement had a chance to ask questions about the initiative. Those uninvolved with NUPs were then asked about section three, about Indigenous engagement. This section asked about best and poor engagement practices, relationship building, meaningful engagement in action, and what organizations and governments can do moving forward. The last section was for final questions or remarks or to tie loose ends.

Wrapping up the interview included opportunities to tie up any loose ends and gave the interviewee another chance to ask questions or raise concerns. As I printed out my interview guide and took notes by hand, the interviewee also explained the data handling process. I explained how I would digitalize my interview notes and send them a copy for their review in case there was anything that they wanted to redact, edit, or change. One interviewee sent back a copy of their interview summary. They corrected statistics, type some spelling mistakes and

further clarified their role and responsibility in their organization. One interviewee retracted a few remarks after our interview was done.

Table 2. Interview list and biographies

Name and Title	Biography
Moe Nadeau Urban planner, Ethical space expert, Sole proprietor	Moe is a planner and an ethical space expert working out of the west Kooteney region of British Columbia. She often works with local and Indigenous communities. Much of her work is relationship based and she often supports communities, and outdoor recreation planning and management is an area she often works in
Miranda Jimmy Municipal Affairs Coordinator, The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations	Miranda Jimmy is the Municipal Affairs Coordinator of The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations. She has represented the confederacy in partner meetings regarding the NUP. Although she is not directly associated with outdoor recreation, she represents one of two Indigenous partners and oversees 16 different nations
Thomas Schoen CEO/Planner/Consultant/ Director, First Journey Trails Consulting and Indigenous Youth Mountain Bike Program	Thomas is the CEO, planner, consultant, and director of a consultancy company, Indinous Mountain Biking Program, in the Central Interior region of British Columbia. He works for local and Indigenous communities, and his duties Include tasks such as trail planning, consulting, and construction, and master planning of outdoor recreation landscapes
Anne Stevenson COE City Councillor, Ward O-day'min	Anne Stevenson has been an Edmonton city councillor since 2021. She was the chairperson for the urban planning committee meeting where the NUP initiative was discussed and is one of the city representatives in the partnership. Her ward is called O-day'min, an Anishinaabe word that represents the physical area of where her ward lies, which is the heart of the city (City of Edmonton, n.d.)

4.4 Ethics

It is important to conduct research in an ethical manner, especially when working with Indigenous communities. The first step was to draft an application to SIKT, the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research.

Taking ethical considerations in research is a part of contextual reflexivity, which, according to Olmos-Vega et al. (2023), is the intentional and unintentional impacts that a researcher may have on its “social fields”. Contextual reflexivity also encourages researchers to take ethical steps towards a positive impact in the social field where the research occurs (p. 5).

As a researcher, I have been thinking about ethics throughout the entire process. I got verbal consent to use my interviewee's name and field of work. It was important to be transparent about where my data is coming from. In the spirit of this research, it is appropriate to give credit and to acknowledge who knowledge keepers are. One ethical dilemma I had was regarding terminology. Originally, I had used the term “involvement”, but it seemed to resonate more with Indigenous tokenism, as organizations were doing the bare minimum by merely involving an Indigenous partner in their project. After digging deeper into research, I chose to use engagement instead. In conversation with an individual from an Indigenous organization in Alberta, we discussed that the term partnership is a better term to use, as it refers to what organizations ought to have with Indigenous partners, that is a long-lasting relationship that is reciprocal and not one-sided. Another note on terminology. Indigenous groups, organizations, communities, nations, bands, or people will be used throughout the course of this thesis. Though they will not be defined explicitly, the terminology in this list goes from broad to more specific.

I had hoped to interview more Indigenous communities. However, I have learned more about the capacities and priorities that many communities face. A few communities I had approached for an interview had their own research and ethics protocols that were unlikely to have been resolved before the end of this research project. To respect their time, as well as my own deadline, I respectfully rescinded my interview request.

4.5 Self-reflexivity

It is rare for researchers to approach a subject or topic without any previous knowledge or experience. Therefore, self-reflexivity can help the researcher position themselves between their identity, the research context, and the research itself. Acknowledging reflexivity in

research gives the researcher more opportunities to learn themselves (Olmos-Vegas et al., 2022, pp. 2-4). I can attest to in this research process as both an insider and an outsider to topics and cultures relating to this research (Olmos-Vegas et al., 2022, pp. 2-4). As an insider, I know the structure and protocols of Parks Canada and the outdoor recreation scene in Canada. I am also familiar with the Indigenous-colonial history. However, I am an outsider to the role of transcultural engagement. This research has taught me a lot about being a better transcultural researcher. For example, I learned better ways to approach partners, especially Indigenous partners, throughout this research process.

Self-reflexivity helped me place myself as a student researcher and as someone who has ties to the overall scope and topic of the research. I have a settler and Indigenous background, and I am researching outdoor recreational landscapes and Indigenous people while living and studying in Norway. I also have a background in working for National Parks and Outdoor Recreation, so this is why I have provided extensive background research on the topic, as not everyone will quite understand the context as I do. This thesis reflects my experiences and interests, but I am not an expert or affiliated with all aspects of the research.

Traditional knowledge and Indigenous ways of doing will not always be similar to Western knowledge and ways of doing. Therefore, much of my data comes from videos where experts discuss the ethical space and how it can be implemented in engagement. By accumulating data this way, I can construct my thesis to lean into a more ethically spaced approach as I look for data in other forms, such as videos, which allow the speaker to speak in a way that is not limited to traditional methods, such as papers.

As Vine Deloria Jr. (1999) mentioned, there are two ways of knowing, similar to ethical space. These ways are tribal knowledge and the Western worldview. Traditionally, tribal knowledge has been described as “primitive” and “quasi-scientific” and is often not seen as valid until Western scientific methods have verified it. Meanwhile, Western worldviews have traditionally focused on observations and experiments that can be duplicated and tested repeatedly. Furthermore, when Western science and tribal knowledge come to the same or similar conclusions, western science is used as the criterion “of truth and accuracy” instead of the other way around. This mindset reinforces the power imbalance between settler/colonial/western worldviews and tribal knowledge (pp. 63-72). Acknowledging

different ways of knowing, as discussed in the theoretical chapter, is important when one considers approaching engagement or partnership with an ethical space lens.

4.6 Limitations

I have identified several limitations, which I will briefly discuss here.

First, my research was focused on a Canadian context while writing for a Norwegian university. This means that I had to decide which background information would be best suitable to "set the scene" for readers, who may or may not have previous knowledge of Canada. Because of this, I excluded previous literature on Canadian urban and land-use planning. This information would have been useful but would not have necessarily been better to help me answer the research questions. Because of this, it was excluded. I was also physically present in Norway while conducting my research and data collection. Should I have been physically present at my research locations, it may have been possible to reach more interviewees instead of relying on online media as another source of data. Second, I had much less responses to interview requests than I had anticipated. With that said, I now have a better understanding of the struggles that Indigenous organizations go through, especially with capacity, so I can fully understand that an interview may not have been appropriate or relevant for certain groups. Third, my data is greatly sourced from Individuals or organizations outside of Edmonton, or even Alberta. The overall scope of the data is not location specific, but as I focused on central Alberta as case location, it would have been more beneficial to get data that was sourced from this region. A large amount of my data, including half of my interviewees, came from British Columbia. Each province, and even each region within a province, can differ on rights, rules or protocols when it comes to working with Indigenous communities. The histories, people, and kinds of outdoor recreation may differ slightly. This means that my analysis and findings are more broad and less specific to the Edmonton area.

5 Analysis

This analysis represents the findings from four interviews and three webinars. A content analysis was used to distinguish the data, where coding and categorization were done. Several reoccurring themes were extracted from the data and interpreted based on the background, theory, and empirical data. Overlap of findings is present in the data. To better identify how the data fits in answering the research questions, the analysis is split into two different sections:

5.1 Engaging, partnering, and relationships with Indigenous communities

5.2 Reconciling and decolonizing the outdoor recreational landscape

Who contributed data?

As a reminder, expert interviews and online media were used for the data collection process. The names and a brief description of the individuals involved will be included here. These individuals are all experts in the fields of planning, local government, Indigenous relations or organizations, outdoor recreation, and academia. The interviews were conducted with professionals who are based in Alberta and British Columbia. Some of them even collaborate with each other from time to time through numerous partnerships and projects. They come from settler and Indigenous heritage. Moe Nadeau and Thomas Schoen are based out of British Columbia. Miranda Jimmy and Councillor Anne Stevenson are based out of Edmonton. From the online media, there was Shady Hafez, Dr. Kurt Boyer, Dorothy Myo, Dr. Daniel Voth, Rob Clapton. Thomas Schoen, Uzi Valiante, and Irwin Oostindie. They are all located throughout Canada. More background on these individuals can be found in the methods chapter in Tables 1 and 2.

5.1 Engaging, partnering, and relationships with Indigenous communities

This section discusses the implications of engagement and partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups from my empirical data. It will be compared to some of the best practices discussed in the background chapter to see their similarities and differences. The theoretical framework will also be applied to see how ethical space fits within the action of engagement and partnership in the outdoor field.

5.1.1 The Phases of Engagement

Many people agree that engagement is not a one-and-done process. In the background chapter, Gamble and McQueen (2019) identified five consecutive steps for engagement, which have been comparable to the process of engagement found within the data. I have simplified these steps into three phases of engagement from the empirical data.

Pre-engagement includes anything before the engagement, partnership or relationship between parties begins. This means conducting research and homework regarding the Indigenous group(s) that are being considered for engagement. The Etuaptmumk, or two-eyed seeing perspective can start here, especially if an organization is just learning about their partner(s). Acknowledging multiple perspectives can also set a more equitable flow of engagement, as the settler/ colonial systems tend to be the default or what is known, as opposed to the other way around. Here, the opportunities for learning about Indigenous protocols, programs, and policies open up. For instance, they may have a designated person in their external relations department or an official portal for communication and inquiries on their website. Pre-engagement should prevent the Indigenous partner from taking their time or capacity to educate or brief the non-Indigenous organization on the community's history, issues, or challenges. Indigenous people in Canada have rights that are in the Canadian constitution, such as section 35 of the Canadian Constitution Act, that cannot be ignored (JSGSPP, 2024, 1:00:12). The duty to consult is another factor that needs to be recognized by non-Indigenous partners. Partners need to research what their duty to consult requires and ensure they uphold section 35 of the constitution (JSGSPP, 2024, 1:13:10). Pre-engagement means learning about partners' unique cultures and histories. This step is really important, as it shows the Indigenous partner that care and due diligence have been conducted, which can create a sense of legitimacy for the external partner. This is where principles, or the second subtrait of engagement as identified by Nikolakis and Hotte (2021), come in. This is where organizations ensure that their intentions are clear and consistent. Key points that lead to best pre-engagement practices include communication, understanding, and education. Organizations can achieve these key points by conducting preliminary homework before reaching out and being clear with wants or needs (CFC, 2022, 26:54). Time, capacity, and support are key pre-engagement points. This means organizations shouldn’t expect partners or potential partners to have the same priorities or schedules as their own. No response could indicate a lack of capacity, relevancy, or interest from the organization. Indigenous organizations are often swamped with requests. Organizations must be reasonable with what

they are asking for (CFC, 2022, 28:05). The third set of pre-engagement key points includes objectives, agreements and protocols. Organizations should outline the expectations, such as roles and responsibilities and come towards mutual agreements. They must respect preexisting roles, responsibilities, and protocols, especially between nations and regions, as they can greatly differ (CFC, 2022, 28:57). Partners can facilitate the ethical space within this process stage. Entering the ethical space first starts off with intent and pre-engagement processes, doing one's due diligence and homework before approaching a community. Organizations ought to approach potential partners from a relational standpoint. Sometimes, negotiators may not necessarily know what they are asking for and, therefore, may not meet the Indigenous communities' needs or protocols. This goes back to capacity, which was often brought up in several of the webinars. Ethical space is an action that "brings us together to understand levels of governance and law and ensures that both parties are on the same page/level" and that it "starts to structure governance and legal structures so that parties can meet each other as equals." Ethical space returns to a deeper level of understanding relationships. It provides opportunities for dedication to understanding each other, ensures that relationships are meaningful, not just for extractive purposes or tokenism, and ensures that the shared knowledge isn't devalued (M. Nadeau, personal communication, April 3 2024).

Next, Mid-engagement starts once the initial contact has been made and is confirmed in previous literature by Nikolakis and Hotte (2021), who indicate dialogue as the first subtrait of engagement within an ethical space. This step nurtures the relationship between parties. Good mid-engagement practices include being clear on plans or objectives and constantly communicating with, updating, and checking in on partners. During this process, external partners can be there for Indigenous communities in several ways. Going to or hosting events, funding a project to relieve funding or capacity issues, and working towards equitable partnerships occur here. Relationship maintenance can start during this phase. According to Dorothy Myo, this can be done in several ways. Going to events and showing up strive towards a more "human level" of engagement. Learning about one another, especially the ones you want to form a relationship with, is crucial. External partners must respect the nation they are working with, follow their protocols, and respect their time (Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy, 2024, 57:05). Safe spaces and mentorship opportunities must be offered since Indigenous people tend to be a minority within many spaces (JSGSPP, 2024, 1:03:30). Once organizations have gotten to know and work with Indigenous communities, they can start thinking about reciprocity. Indigenous organizations,

communities, and people are often giving more “knowledge, information, [and] understanding” than they receive (29:10). Therefore, reflections on giving back to the community are very significant.

Lastly, post-engagement means maintaining relationships between partners. By keeping the relationship and engagement process going strong, the partners can stay in the ethical space. However, practices from mid-engagement can still be committed. Maintaining a relationship makes reaching out for future projects easier for either partner. Engaging with a group doesn’t necessarily mean that a partnership or project occurred. Again, the proposal doesn’t fit the budget, capacities, or interests of the Indigenous organization at that time. Keeping up a relationship can help nurture future opportunities, as the community's prospects and capacities can always change. Within this process, organizations can partake in introspection and reflection, the second trait of engagement that Nikolakis and Hotte (2021) identify as encompassing an ethical space.

Meaningful Engagement

It was found that ‘meaningful’ engagement differs slightly across partners or depending on their role or perspective. However, being genuine, patient, and showing interest and willingness to learn was the general consensus across the board.

During interviewee Thomas’s career, he realized that the most important takeaway is to be proactive and plan well. Start the engagement process before you need the knowledge or expertise from the Indigenous partner. “Start giving before you start asking” (ORCBC, 2024, 14:35). This draws back to reciprocity, addressing power imbalances, capacities, and boundaries. For example, he discussed the partnership between a mountain biking club and a First Nation community. They started dialogue early and started maintaining a relationship with them before the need for collaboration. “You want to be seen…as an ally, as someone who has an interest in Indigenous communities, in Indigenous culture…” (ORCBC, 2024, 14:29). Organizations can facilitate meaningful engagement by helping nations reconnect with their ancestral and traditional land and territories. For example, the Squamish communities worked together to put together a mountain biking workshop for local Indigenous kids without asking for any recognition (ORCBC, 2024, 24:48). It is important to remember that meaningful engagement is non-transactional. Organizations should do their best to lift up partners and create an equitable negotiation. The ethical space helps organizations achieve this by fostering “a collaborative and equitable partnership,” as emphasized by Lauria (2018)

on her contributions to the ethical space (pp. 97-98). Fear is one difficult emotion that can be experienced in these settings and situations. Fear can create a mental roadblock when engaging. "...go[ing] with good faith, an open heart, and honesty" can help one overcome this fear (ORCBC, 2024, 1:11:32). Seldom will interactions go 100% smoothly. Making mistakes is bound to happen, but learning from them, getting feedback, and committing to self-reflection fosters learning for greater outcomes in the future (ORCBC, 2024, 1:12:53).

For interviewee Miranda, and many like her, individuals in an engagement process often wear two different hats. This offers a unique and elevated perspective. On a personal note, she described that meaningful engagement means valuing opinions and wanting to work with each other to aim for something that works for both parties. The external organization should commit to a relationship outside of the project, such as by having tea, attending events, or sponsoring the nation. Keeping and maintaining a relationship after the project is over is also considerate. From a professional perspective, she emphasized that the role of the external partner is to uphold the Treaty Six agreement. She also emphasized that organizations should look through the lens of reciprocity, pondering how this relationship can benefit both parties. These points all go back to the engagement process, which suggests that a good engagement process can also contribute to meaningful engagement, therefore killing two birds with one stone. In summary, meaningful engagement means striving towards good practices and non-transactional interactions as norms when engaging with historically disadvantaged groups.

Engagement in an Outdoor Context

As you may recall, the "great outdoors" and "wilderness" were not traditionally separate parts of Indigenous peoples' lives. Negotiations regarding land use for outdoor recreation continue to be controversial because the origins of the field, as it is known now, are deeply rooted in colonialism. How do we ensure that projects and partnerships deconstruct colonialism and build towards advancing reconciliation? For one, reflecting on what hasn't worked well and striving to work better towards good practices is a start to appropriate engagement in these kinds of spaces. The empirical data showed that many agree that Indigenous engagement in an outdoor context is handled fairly poorly and that there tend to be more poor practices rather than best ones. Miranda suggested that engagement seems to be implemented on a policy rather than a program level regarding the NUP initiative. She wants to shift away from this to

allow members to reconnect with the land in an urban environment and be more engaged in projects or initiatives that take place locally (M. Jimmy, personal communication, April 9 2024). Furthermore, Moe agreed that "there has not been great work done" (M. Nadeau, personal communication, April 3, 2024). She described the long-running implications of colonization on the Indigenous communities and how they are still deeply rooted within the outdoor scene. Furthermore, Thomas mentioned that "settler and Indigenous conflict is often centred around outdoor recreational landscapes" and gave an example of the September 2004 settler and Indigenous land conflict between the owners of the Sun Peaks golf course and the Secwepemc community, who are local to the area. Camps were raided, and land defenders were removed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, causing upwards of 53 land defenders to be arrested (McCreary, 2005; T. Schoen, personal communication, April 12 2024). Past and present conflicts and ongoing tensions mean that Indigenous communities and their leaders may be cautious when it comes to engagement.

Indigenous Engagement and the National Urban Park Initiative

All the points above remain true for the NUP Initiative. However, this is currently an ongoing negotiation between Parks Canada and several partners, so the analysis will be more specific to this case. Representation was of huge importance to the partners involved in the initiative. Councillor Anne Stevenson described how the City of Edmonton has a large urban Indigenous population. With that, they participate in a memorandum of understanding with several Indigenous communities around the Edmonton area. The City of Edmonton has its own Indigenous framework, which it uses as a tool for its commitment to reconciliation. The city of Edmonton does have departments and tools for working with Indigenous populations. (A. Stevenson, personal communication, April 26 2024). Miranda represents The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations, and explained that The Confederacy overlooks 16 of the 32 local Indigenous and Métis communities. Her organization is not directly involved in "frontline services or program delivery" (M. Jimmy, personal communication, April 9, 2024). Rather, they do political advocacy, treaty rights, and self-determination. Her role helps the Confederacy start dialogue first. She advocates for the Nation's priorities in a municipal context rather than wait to be asked to engage. Regarding the memorandum of understanding, her organization is concerned with dialogue and cooperation with the City regarding land use or green spaces of mutual interest. There is a mutual understanding that engagement needs to be done (such as information sharing and cooperation, for example). Various levels of government need to be clear on what they want to do, especially in terms of commitment,

partnership expectations, and what the government can then provide for the community (M. Nadeau, personal communication, April 3 2024).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the NUP negotiations are still in the pre-feasibility stage. As one of four partners, the city of Edmonton is prepared to move into the planning phase (City of Edmonton, n.d.). This means, in theory, that engagement from this point should be past the 'pre-engagement' phase. The general consensus from the interviewees and recent media indicates that the process has slowed down considerably. It was unclear whether any partner engagement opportunities have occurred recently. However, the previous literature and empirical data suggest that the NUP partners still partake in engagement practices and relationship maintenance, whether the project continues or not. Urban outdoor spaces have been proven to be beneficial to our health. We must not forget about the people who stewarded this land for millennia. Outdoor recreation is one of the reasons that they were displaced, and excluding them from new projects or partnerships is a repetition of history and poor practice. By following the steps and doing it meaningfully, engagement can help create new norms and higher engagement standards and contribute towards decolonization, much like ethical space.

The National Urban Park Initiative

If the NUP initiative in Edmonton goes through, it will reallocate a part of Edmonton's river valley into a federally funded, co-governed urban parkland.

Miranda explains that this proposal would be putting a label on an already existing park, as new parkland wouldn't necessarily be created but rather repurposed. However, this process is slow-moving and has some unresolved business to address. The NUP negotiations are not quick-moving and are facing their own roadblocks. The only Indigenous representation, according to Miranda and the City of Edmonton's website, includes The Confederacy of the Treaty Six First Nations, and the Métis Nation of Alberta, who are somewhat of a "packaged deal (M. Jimmy, personal communication, April 9 2024). The city of Edmonton saw an alignment with the NUP's three objectives (Chapter 2) within their own principles, and access to federal funding would help the city align with these pillars. Miranda agreed that this would bring federal money to existing outdoor parkland and/or recreational sites. An opportunity to transform a part of Edmonton into a NUP could provide an economic opportunity and help

put Edmonton on a map. Last summer, the city council approved moving into the NUP development's planning stage. Councillor Anne Stevenson emphasized that the planning stage movement is not a binding agreement with the federal government. Some aspects, such as ownership, user fees, significant investments, etc., still need to be discussed.

Poor practices

The purpose of pinpointing poor practices goes back to learning from mistakes and thriving to do better. Discrepancies in consultancy practices can cause issues and poor quality engagement circumstances. For example, Miranda explained that the duty to consult is just that, to consult, and does not mean that the government or organization needs to follow up! She mentioned that external partners should approach Indigenous ones by saying something like “I am talking to you because I am interested in what you have to say” (M. Jimmy, Personal Communication, April 9 2024) and that one shouldn't ask questions that they are not willing to hear the response or answer to.

Disconnection, miscommunication, or getting lost in translation can result in poor engagement practices. Thomas criticized the sense of disconnection that sometimes occurs within nations in what he called a “catch-22 moment” (T. Schoen, personal communication, April 12 2024). He described that some job positions are filled remotely, leading to disconnect. He explains this can be the wrong way to fill this position, as the person in the position has no connection, is not well-versed, or has no knowledge of what is happening within the nation or region. It is not that this itself is a poor practice, but it can lead to possible poor engagement. Sometimes, nations need to do what they need to do. This issue may stem from many nations and organizations’ lack of funding and capacity, making it difficult for people to work physically close to the Indigenous communities or organizations. This issue presents a double-edged sword because, on one hand, it's good for roles to be filled within Indigenous communities, especially if they are filled by community members themselves. On the other hand, remote work, as described by Thomas, creates a disconnect between communities and organizations, which could ripple into other projects, engagement opportunities, or relationships. Though it isn’t quite clear what a perfect solution may be, helping Indigenous nations, communities, and organizations with these capacity issues seems to be one way to address this issue.

Pushed boundaries present as yet another poor practice that has been done time and time again. Boundaries are pushed even after an organization has given a hard no. It is often assumed that outdoor recreation has the same high priority for Indigenous communities as it does for settler communities. Thomas stated that “this viewpoint is simply wrong- their viewpoint [on outdoor recreation] may be different [and include things like] hunting or sustenance [practices], for example (T. Schoen, personal communication, April 12 2024). In other instances, projects will not proceed, but project leaders often keep bothering Indigenous organizations for their consent. These constant ‘bothering’ acts increase an organization's capacity, as they may need to acknowledge requests.

Like the above, poor communication of objectives, intentions and partnership models is poor practice. For example, there is some criticism of the partnership model regarding the NUP initiative in Edmonton. The four-way partnership was announced in 2021. It is structured so the city of Edmonton would be the land owner and Parks Canada would be the funder. This leads to a power imbalance for the remaining two partners, who are both Indigenous organizations (M. Jimmy, personal communication, April 9 2024). Miranda explained that legally, the partners have no right to stop anything, and the project could still move forward if they decided to walk away. The delegation of the North Saskatchewan River as a heritage river is an example of this in recent events, where not all voices were considered. This points towards broken communication and unequal partnerships/power imbalances. Miranda explained that, in theory, the NUP partners should have equal weight in the initiative, but it was not actually being done in practice. One of Miranda’s tasks is to speak for the nation and represent the interests of the 16 member nations. She has not been able to have a discussion about what is “in it” for the nations, and The city of Edmonton and the NUP initiative has not pitched any potential benefits. Concerns like these lead back to the concern of poor engagement. According to Miranda, Parks Canada has traditionally “set the tone” or been the initiative's head. This causes assumptions by others that it is Parks Canada’s project and goes back to the points on power imbalances and unequal partnerships. Throughout this project, the role of the confederacy and other partners has not been clearly defined. Should the opportunity to move forward occur, the roles, responsibilities, decisions, and conflict resolution methods must be defined. For example, there is a wish for the NUP boundaries to

be discussed so that Miranda can go and discuss it with her internal partners. Currently, there is no boundary designated. This lack of critical information sets her up for failure. In order to honour the partnership in a correct way, a four-way consensus needs to be made. Miranda stated that ideally, “it should be a [equal] four-way partnership with a facilitator.”. There shouldn't be a mindset that Indigenous groups are even happy to have a seat at the table (M. Jimmy, personal communication, April 9 2024). Partners should be giving space and options to Indigenous communities to discuss on whether they even want the same things that the external organization wants (M. Nadeau, personal communication, April 3 2024). In terms of the three pillars or objectives of NUPs, Miranda is still wondering how they show up in practice. Especially for the reconciliation pillar, which is important for Indigenous partners. These aspects are still unclear, making engaging people from her organization difficult, as the objectives, intentions and partnership responsibilities are unclear (M. Jimmy, personal communication, April 9 2024).

Lastly, settler groups sometimes do not give themselves enough time to As another example of common poor practices, settler groups do tend to approach Indigenous communities for approval, but it is often done too late or as an “afterthought” (T. Schoen, personal communication, April 12 2024). The reality is that many nations simply do not have the capacity to negotiate outdoor recreation, as they are often busy with issues such as housing or healthcare. Simply, outdoor recreation often doesn't have a seat at the table. Oftentimes, engagement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups is akin to ‘tokenism,’ and is more so done to “tick a box,” meaning that the settler group can say that they did the bare minimum (T. Schoen, personal communication, April 12 2024). Again, boundaries are being pushed. If a community or nation doesn't explicitly say “no”, it is often seen as “giving an ‘ok’ for production on their traditional land” (T. Schoen, personal communication, April 12 2024).

These examples of poor practices in engagement amplify why it needs to be meaningful and done correctly. When using the engagement process or some variation of it, settler groups can therefore take better steps towards correct and meaningful engagement. Helping Indigenous communities thrive might mean extra work, such as breaking down barriers (such as systematic racism) or building bridges (such as working from an ethical space lens), but it is worth it for everyone.

Best Practices

You may recall that several preliminary best practices for participation have been identified by Sutherland (2021) and the Public Health Agency of Canada (2023). These were: decolonizing the landscape and making it more inclusive, including community members in the planning process, recognizing and planning for diversity, implementing space for appropriate cultural activities, advancing reconciliation, respecting Indigenous cultures, knowledge and history, and building relationships and demonstrating humility and openness. While these practices are important, the ones identified through this analysis agree on or expand on these preliminary best practices.

Regarding respecting capacity and boundaries, non-Indigenous organizations need to realize that "no means no."As a good practice, organizations can ensure that they educate themselves on and respect Indigenous groups' capacities and boundaries. Flat out, Thomas emphasized again that priorities can be vastly different across nations, organizations, and cultures. Indigenous people still face disproportionate issues in housing, health, security, and loss of resources. Organizations can still engage, maintain relationships, and communicate with Indigenous communities when there is a no. 'No's' can always change, so keeping contact might make future partnerships more fruitful (ORCBC, 2024, 17:22). Challenging capacity can lead to arguments, which can lead to conflict. From the ORCBC (2024) webinar, Uzi expressed the need to realize that 'no's' are usually not personal- they are often just due to capacity, interest, or priority. Doing your homework and due diligence will help strengthen your proposal and give the nation more consideration (ORCBC, 2024,1:02:20).

Engaging and Relationship Building

In theory, engaging and relationship-building seem synonyms to each other. Nikolakis and Hotte (2021) even agree that engagement is the building block to starting a relationship. The point of discussing relationships further is for organizations to be critical of why they are engaging with groups in the first place and how deep the quality of their engagement is. Organizations have been able to be critical of how building and maintaining relationships with others has been done. Engagement should proceed with a relationship/ partnership process. Maintaining relationships can foster further relationships/ opportunities. They keep validity (or how to leverage) for the external partner/ organization (M. Jimmy, Personal Communication, April 9 2024). It is agreed upon that there are more negative rather than positive relationship-building experiences between partners. The processes of relationship

building are very similar to good engagement practices. But, relationship building brings organizations closer, and on a deeper level. Relationship building can occur throughout the engagement process but ideally, start at the pre-engagement phase. Therefore, building meaningful relationships, in addition to good engagement, is seen as a best practice.

When seeking to start a relationship, non-Indigenous partners should conduct an ‘internal evaluation’ and “ ask themselves is what is your organization's current comprehension of an engagement with Indigenous peoples and issues,” how educated are they on the issues that Indigenous people face, do they know the fundamentals of Indigenous identities and communities, and what they face today (CFC, 2022,13:31-14:31). Next, the issues of why non-Indigenous organizations want to build a relationship with an Indigenous organization need to be brought up. Providing an opportunity for an Indigenous presence isn't wrong, but can lead to a tricky blur between the boundaries of representation versus tokenism. Therefore, partners should consider the following questions: (1) what are you looking for in this relationship, and (2) why do you want to begin a partnership with an Indigenous organization? These questions need to be answered clearly before seeking engagement with an Indigenous organization (CFC, 2022, 16:21- 17:00). It is important to avoid stereotypes or to make preconceptions about the relationship.

According to Thomas (personal communication, April 12 2024), there needs to be a shift from what is being done right now. For example, he suggests to have a project in mind, do your homework and provide your due diligence. Then, you can start a relationship.

Shady, from the CFC (2022) webinar, identified four elements that cover common issues or assumptions that people often make when seeking partnerships with Indigenous organizations. Some of these overlap with good engagement practices. Confronting these issues can help organizations achieve best practices in relationship building.

Capacity is a huge challenge for many organizations, especially since these organizations aim to address the needs of their community first. Time is valuable, and oftentimes, Indigenous organizations cannot allocate their time and resources to other organizations or projects (CFC, 2022, 18:45). The size, the aim, the time commitments (which may take away from their own tasks or duties), and whether the partnership will support the Indigenous organization are all things to consider when thinking about capacity boundaries and limits (CFC, 2022,19:48). “Building a relationship with an Indigenous organization is building a relationship with an

Indigenous community" (CFC, 2022, 24:58). Indigenous organizations are accountable for their communities and non-Indigenous organizations need to keep this in mind.

Funding is another challenge. Many organizations are underfunded, and funding is not allocated in a way that serves the different populations of Indigenous people, such as urban or rural populations. Funding is closely linked to capacity. If an Indigenous organization doesn't have the financial capacity to work with another organization, they do not necessarily have the capacity. The Indigenous organization may benefit from some alternative funding or compensation for their time, knowledge, and resources (CFC, 2022, 20:55).

Representation is another challenge. The diversity of Indigenous communities means that they can only speak for themselves. This goes back to the common poor practice of homogenizing Indigenous populations, such as what happened with the totem pole in Jasper National Park. Being asked to provide a broad "Indigenous perspective" is impossible from just one organization. If organizations want this, they should reach out to many different groups who represent themselves correctly (CFC, 2022, 23:05).

Lastly, relationship building comes down to objectives. Clear and transparent objectives are often neglected to be shared, making it hard for Indigenous organizations to decide whether the partnership is relevant or worth their time. This is an issue that Miranda (personal communication, April 9, 2024) discussed earlier on the boundaries of the potential NUP in Edmonton. Shady shared an example from his own organization, explaining that he has often been present in interactions to simply allow an organization to tick their 'representation' box (CFC, 2022, 23:45). This goes back to tokenism and the bare minimum duty to consult. The project and the work that is being done should somehow be connected or related to the Indigenous organization so that they aren't sitting there and wondering why they are there (CFC, 2022,24:41). Drawing back to the Jasper Totem Pole and the Tawatinâ Bridge back in chapter 2. The bridge shows an example of good collaboration and representation, whereas the totem pole shows a poor representation of Indigenous people in an area.

Relationships and Communication

Relationships should be long-term and sustainable. Support, interest, and commitment can facilitate relationship building and must exist beyond the project or collaboration need (ORCBC, 2024, 15:22). Reaching out throughout shows commitment to local groups. What happens when you reach out but don't get a response? Low capacity and budgets can make it

difficult for Indigenous organizations to put more on their plate. However, it is still important to continue to reach out and update organizations, even if it is only one-way. While still respecting boundaries, showing up in person and making personal connections can be a way to build relationships faster. Doing this can leave positive impressions, making communication and engagement easier for the future.

5.2 Reconciling and Decolonizing the Outdoor Recreational Landscape

This section discusses the impact and practices of reconciling and decolonizing the outdoors. This was discussed briefly in chapter 2 with authors such as Sutherland (2021), who discussed the impacts of decolonizing the outdoors and best practices in doing so.

True Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a common word associated with decolonization practices, especially in the outdoor recreation landscape. Rob (ORCBC, 2024) suggests that reconciliation is the "dominant issue of the decade" (8:15). Within his organization, this has been partially addressed by forming The Lower Fraser Collaborative Table. Rob credits the success of this program, citing that the right people are involved and that people practice lots of patience and listening. Both sides have a shared goal of ecological sustainability and the integrity of future generations. There is still criticism, and the system isn't perfect, but reconciliation is being addressed, and Indigenous representation is at the table. Uzi's (ORCBC, 2024) take on reconciliation suggests that organizations ought to look at the Truth and Reconciliation report to learn more about best practices in reconciliation efforts (31:45). Irwin (ORCBC, 2024) countered the term 'reconciliation' with a term used within his own organization. He states that "reconciliation is about dialogue it's about understanding the problem, but redress is actually doing something about it. It's about repairing that relation…" (42:31). Landback and repairing ecological sites and strained relationships is all part of the redress premise.

Decolonizing the Outdoor Recreational Landscape

I asked my interviewees for advice on how governments and organizations can take steps to decolonize outdoor recreational landscapes and whether they had any advice for organizations moving forward. I was happy to receive answers from all four interviewees, especially

Miranda, who represented the only Indigenous organization in my repertoire. A way to contribute to decolonizing the landscape can be by normalizing Indigenous presence back into the landscape and hosting events or programs that welcome Indigenous people back. This can be done by hosting powwows and traditional activities, providing community mentors, or creating space for Indigenous people to connect or be themselves, such as with Indigenous communities or friendship centres (Sutherland, 2021, p.16). Using ethical space as a means of decolonization through land back movements and increased proper representation also contributes to these actions (Coulthard & Simpson, 2016, p. 254; Ermine, 2007, p. 199). Creating space and culturally appropriate opportunities for Indigenous people, especially Indigenous youth, is a way to contribute to decolonization and self-determination efforts and improve members' overall well-being (Sutherland, 2021). For example, the bison repatriation program (Chapter 2) contributes to cultural and ecological conservation effort and is an effort to reconciliation and decolonization from a top-down perspective. One of the ways that Moe (personal communication, April 3 2024) has contributed to decolonizing the outdoors has been by increasing Indigenous presence and normalizing the history of the area and its people. For example, she said that increasing signage is one way to participate in decolonizing efforts, such as done in the Pemberton mountain biking area. Opening more opportunities for Indigenous people and communities is also a step in the right direction.

Thomas offered several ways for organizations to commit to decolonization. First, he emphasizes that education is key. One can educate oneself by learning words or phrases in the local languages. This shows interest and encourages external partners to do their bare minimum and due diligence. He stated that “showing interest can make or break engagement!” and also reminded me about boundaries, that no means no. Next, any user group/ organization must have a designated position for someone who is in charge of reconciliation and Indigenous engagement. This role fills needs and shows group members that they must learn about reconciliation and commit to appropriate and ethical Indigenous engagement. This also creates a spark for the users of the area to think about why this role was created, and it introduces the concept of reconciliation to larger groups. This is important because “if you have an ask or a need [for Indigenous groups], the Indigenous community has seen that you have taken a step in the right direction” (personal communication, April 12 2024). Miranda recommends that partners be clear on non-negotiable boxes/subjects/topics. She has a wish for partners to be more honest about what their intentions are. She recommends clarity among rules and responsibilities among partners, which means doing

homework, setting up the context, doing your due diligence, and investing in 'foundational building.' These are required in order to move forward (personal communication April 9 2024). Councillor Anne Stevenson suggested that we should give space to Indigenous people. She brought the example of space for ceremony within the city, such as done by the kihcihkaw askî, or sacred land space located within Edmonton's river valley. This place "provides a natural setting for Indigenous peoples, groups, and communities to host ceremonies, sweat lodges, and facilitate intergenerational learning" (City of Edmonton, n.d., para. 1). Reconciliation is the objective of creating NUPs. There is little information on how Edmonton's NUP will seek to decolonize the landscape; however, the above practices are steps in the right direction.

Decolonizing the system is also important. The system doesn't just mean engagement and relationship building but protocols and methods of initiating interactions or communications. Organizations can use ethical space and Etuaptmumk (Two-Eyed Seeing) to bridge the gap between different cultures, ideologies, and ways of doing and contribute to reconciliation and decolonization. For example, Uzi's (ORCBC, 2024) organization now uses the Squamish Nations' protocols when initiating a project. It's important to ensure the project plan aligns with their land-use plan. Also, maintaining communication with the nation, and ensuring proper consultation is another important step. Again, improving Indigenous representation, such as with signage or cultural presence shifts projects in the right direction (28:47). Non-Indigenous organizations should not to be afraid to ask Indigenous organizations for guidance, such as what kind of work they should do before committing to a long-term relationship (30:19). Irwin (ORCBC, 2024) noticed that in some outdoor recreational spots, the users were often Indigenous people who were not being recognized as a majority user. Therefore, he suggested being reflexive about where one is working and understanding who uses the area and how they might contribute to a partnership. Being reflexive also means looking at policies, governance, protocols, programming, who the members or audience are, place-based inventory, and what the future may look like (48:10). He wants partnership and engagement to promote sustainable futures and believes that land-back initiatives do not need to be kickstarted by local Indigenous communities or governments, that private organizations and members can take it upon themselves (50:45). Regarding asking nations to join an organization, group, or board, Irwin reminded us that structures like these are often akin to Western capitalistic norms and are very colonially based. Instead, he suggests appropriate

reciprocity practices (1:06:43). Decolonization and reconciliation require organizations to commit to self-reflection and learning from the past.

Decolonization efforts can come from both top-down and bottom-up approaches. Many of the examples mentioned are more from a top-down perspective. However, an engagement process that the city of Edmonton conducted showed bottom-up decolonization wishes, where some participants suggested improving the Indigenous involvement and representation of the river valley should a NUP come to be. Since Canada's Indigenous people are heterogeneous, vast and diverse. Treating Indigenous groups as individuals is crucial because their histories and cultures are unique. As a best practice towards decolonization and reconciliation, organizations can ask Indigenous communities what they need help with or how they can support them, with no strings attached.

Best and Poor Practices

Decolonization efforts can come from both top-down and bottom-up approaches. Many of the examples mentioned are more from a top-down perspective. However, an engagement process that the city of Edmonton conducted showed bottom-up decolonization wishes, where some participants suggested improving the Indigenous involvement and representation of the river valley should a NUP come to be. Since Canada's Indigenous people are heterogeneous, vast and diverse. Treating Indigenous groups as individuals is crucial because their histories and cultures are unique. As a best practice towards decolonization and reconciliation, organizations can ask Indigenous communities what they need help with or how they can support them, with no strings attached.

Regarding poor practices, criticisms of how colonized the engagement systems and portals are were often brought up. Moe (personal communication, April 3 2024) shared an example of the engagement portals that force nations and Indigenous communities to work with a colonized system. Using settler-based engagement and communication practices is inappropriate for many groups and unsustainable and uncooperative.

Poor practices can be limited or avoided by taking the necessary and appropriate steps when engaging with Indigenous communities. For example, Rob (ORCBC, 2024) described a settler/colonial and Indigenous conflict that resulted in violent actions "where a prominent First Nation's Chief was shot in the face with a pellet gun" (5:03), which, in turn, sparked the creation of a program called the 'peacemakers.' This was because both sides of the conflict

acknowledged that the conflict could no longer continue like this for conflict-free fishery landscapes. This program turned into a more developed collaboration opportunity, albeit nearly two decades later. As of now, it is called the Lower Fraser Collaborative Table. Its mandate is now to “reduce conflict and find ways to share resources” (6:49). This conflict and collaboration, according to Rob, was done without meddling or facilitating from any government in what is called “tier three consultation. Uzi (ORCBC, 2024) shared an example that started off poor but ended up well. The project was to build a trail, called the Legacy Trail, which ended up being an “illegal build” that passes through Indigenous land. The Squamish nation brought up the issue, as no consultation was done. This resulted in a learning experience that started poorly but ultimately led to a relationship between the two groups, a dialogue, and a partnership (22:55). As mentioned before, organizations have made many mistakes in the past and are bound to continue to make them. What matters is what is learned.

6 Discussion

The discussion aims to sum up the overarching themes, implications, and possible future direction of this topic and research.

6.1 Summary of Findings

Engagement, partnerships, and relationship building

Engagement and relationships have a beginning and a middle, but not necessarily an end. Similarly, implementing ethical space practices doesn't need to end after the project and engagement is formally over (Littlechild and Sutherland, 2021, p.11). The steps and suggestions for engagement and relationship building were found to be very similar throughout the analysis process. The initial intent was to focus on engagement and partnerships, but in the end, good practices on relationship building and maintaining were the glue that held them together. One cannot go smoothly without the other.

Best and poor practices

Straying away from Eurocentric or colonial thinking and heading more towards culturally appropriate thinking can help facilitate appropriate transcultural partnerships. Most importantly, best practices mean learning from our mistakes and listening to what communities need or want. Settler organizations need to be clear on their expectations and timelines and commit to good engagement practices from start to finish. In this research, I used two examples of representation of Indigenous cultures in public areas. These were the Jasper Totem pole and the Tawatina bridge. Both of these are steps in the right direction. Despite the pushback on misrepresentation, the totem pole still stands today. On the contrary, the Tawatina bridge reintegrates Indigenous presence from the right nations while also normalzes Indigenous artwork and teaching. Future projects can learn from these examples, with being akin to reconciliation and decolonization, and the Jasper Totem Pole more akin to misrepresentation and tokenism.

Decolonization and Reconciliation

Decolonizing the system is essential to overall decolonization and reconciliation. Reintegrating and normalizing Indigenous knowledge and representation within different

landscapes can help bring us to a large-scale transcultural understanding. We are often taught about how Indigenous people were forcibly removed from their traditional homeland, so we should then learn how to welcome them back in an ethical and culturally appropriate way.

Ethical space

Ethical space encompasses nearly all of the practices and suggestions discussed throughout this research. It is overarching and can be imagined as a way to facilitate transcultural interactions in appropriate and uplifting ways.

It is heavily intertwined with engagement and best practices and can increase quality. It is a tool for bringing groups together more equitably, bridging gaps, and giving Indigenous people a safe space to work with others. Its a grounded normative theory can be used as a tool for decolonization as it challenges the norms and redirects them to, as Ermine (2007) puts it, “the way things ought to be.” It serves as a framework and provides suggestions and ways to hevae ethically throughout transcultural interactions. Ideally, ethics should be considered in all projects, but especially in transcultural projects where one group has power over the other. It addresses colonization by bringing partners together on the same level, and encourages actions for reconciliation.

6.2 Future steps and Implications

If you haven't figured it out already, the title is a play on the song called “This Land Is Your Land” by Woody Guthrie. It is a play on a popular song that's about land sharing. It may be relatable to some but not everyone. It recognizes that land was stolen due to colonization and settlers' desire towards outdoor recreation.
This research aimed to compile information about good engagement, best and worst practices, and how to contribute to decolonization and reconciliation wthin the outdoor world. I hope that these findings can contribute understandings to better engagement and partnership between Indigenous organizations and settler societies. These findings are not limited to the outdoor recreational landscape, but were focused on this field because of the rapid expansion of outdoor recreation in canada, and its colonial origins.

Future research could follow up on these findings and see how engagement actually occurred, or how it differed between different sites, or if the levels of involvement stayed the same throughout the numerous planning stages and eventual implementation of one or more NUPs.

It could also critically analyze the planning and engagement throughout the next set of NUPs in Canada

The future of the NUP initiative in Edmonton remains to be determined. Some partners have already taken a step back. At the time of research, the Alberta government passed Bill 204. This bill, was first introduced in late 2023; however, I was not aware of this bill until the end of April, when it came up in an interview with someone working with the City of Edmonton. Bill 204 means that the Edmonton City Council may no longer negotiate the NUP without involvement by the Alberta Government. For the time being, the NUP project is paused (CPAWS Northern Alberta, 2024; personal communication).

7 Conclusion

Outdoor recreation in Canada has been and continues to do throughout the Indigenous territory.
Much work must be done to reconcile and decolonize the outdoor recreational landscape. As all land in Canada was once Indigenous land, new work and projects need to include Indigenous people from the very beginning.

Appropriate engagement practice is a crucial step in approaching Indigenous communities. It needs to be meaningful and aim towards building relationships. Reconciling and decolonizing the landscape helps Indigenous communities feel welcome. Taking steps to facilitate inclusion, such as taking reciprocal actions or helping communities out where they need help is a benefit to both parties. Actions speak louder than words. The best practices that were identified, along with the examples from real organizations, are ways to show plans into action. In contrast, policies are written on paper; examples are real-life situations that can be broken down, praised or criticized.

Using ethical space can help practitioners engage well, build relationships, implement Indigeneity into the outdoor scene, push best practices and critique poor ones. It can be used as a tool for decolonization and reconciliation between two disparate worldviews.

It is unsure what this will mean for the future and whether Edmonton will ever welcome a National Urban Park within its river valley. However, this research's findings are still important for engagement processes and relationship-building between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups in outdoor recreational environments.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 contains the interview guide that was used for this research. Appendix 2 contains my SIKT information letter and consent form

Appendix 1

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Rachel Laura Luisa Rebonne

1. Introduction:

Begin with a thank you and a brief introduction to the scope of the thesis, and ask if the interviewee has any questions or concerns

-Please tell me a little bit about yourself and your role in your organization

-How are you involved with (if at all) outdoor recreation planning and/or management?

-How do you or your organization align with the three pillars of creating a new NUP?

-How are you involved (if at all) with Indigenous communities?

-Is there anything else you would like to discuss before moving on?

We are now going to move onto the topic of context and background information regarding the thesis

2. Context and background:

-Are you aware of the plans by Parks Canada to expand the national park network by opening up new National Urban Parks and that the city of Edmonton is a site candidate for this?

-What would a National Urban Park (in Edmonton) look like and/or mean for you or your organization?

-If the Edmonton site is granted permission from Parks Canada to move into the planning phase, how should they go about Indigenous involvement?

-How have Indigenous people been involved in outdoor recreation planning and management in your experience and/or organization?

We are now going to move onto the topic of Indigenous involvement

3. Indigenous engagement:

-How have Indigenous communities been *included* in outdoor recreational planning and/or management?

-How has Indigenous governance been present in outdoor recreational landscapes?

-Following these two questions, can you share examples from your or other organizations?

-How do you think that Indigenous communities should be involved in the progression of this potential National Urban Park in Edmonton?

-The city of Edmonton (COE) currently has the Metis Nation of Alberta and The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations as Indigenous project partners sitting on the partner committee. Is this sufficient for involvement and representation of the National Urban Park initiative?

-Following the previous question, is there anything that could be changed or improved?

-Following the previous question, what has worked well? What hasn't worked or could have been done differently?

-On the topic of Indigenous inclusion in outdoor recreational planning and management, are there any gaps that need to be filled?

-How have organizations (such as yours) taken the steps to decolonize outdoor recreational landscapes?

-Do you have any recommendations or suggestions for organizations moving forward?

-Is there anything else you want to share regarding Indigenous involvement/participation/collaboration in outdoor recreation landscapes?

Thank you for your answers. We are now going to begin wrapping up the interview

4. Closing the interview

-Do you have any final remarks that you would like to share?

-Do you have any questions about this interview or my thesis?

*Finish the interview and discuss the next steps/ following up process, answer any questions or concerns from the interviewee, and thank them again)

Appendix 2

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

"Indigenous Involvement in National Park and Outdoor Recreational Management- The Case of Edmonton as a Contestant to Welcome a New National Urban Park"?

- **Purpose of the project**

You are invited to participate in a research project where the main purpose is to *discuss how Indigenous communities have been included (or excluded) in outdoor recreational landscapes and Indigenous inclusion during the planning processes of a potential new National Urban Park within the city of Edmonton in Alberta, Canada.*

This study explores the participation and collaboration elements of outdoor recreational landscapes/ National Park management with Indigenous communities and aims to contribute with knowledge and key findings

*The research question follows along the lines of how the City of Edmonton and other partners facilitate Indigenous involvement with the (potential) opening of a new National Urban Park**

**The research question may be adjusted along the process due to the explorative nature of the study*

Hopeful outcomes include:

-To find examples of best and/or poor practices

-To highlight what planners, management teams, and partners can do moving forward

-To discuss what needs to be done when "creating" or repurposing outdoor recreational spaces

-Overall, to compile my findings on how to include Indigenous people in outdoor recreational management, especially with the plan to open up to five more National Urban Parks in Canada, with one possibly being in Edmonton

Data conducted for this study project will be included in my Masters Thesis for the course SPL-3901 Master's Thesis in Nordic Urban Planning Studies for the Nordic Urban Planning Master's degree

Which institution is responsible for the research project?

The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) is responsible for the project (data controller).

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are asked to be interviewed based on your experience and/or knowledge of or a combination of the following:

-Indigenous knowledge

-Outdoor recreational planning or management

-Land use planning and management

-User of outdoor recreation landscapes

-Member(s) of a community

You have been contacted due to your role or involvement in organizations related to the scope of the research project

- **What does participation involve for you?**

You are being asked to participate in a short, semi-structured interview that will be conducted online through Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, Zoom, or a similar platform.

You may be asked to describe your location and your work and/or position; however, your name and other identifiable information will be kept anonymous ***unless you wish to have it published***

If you choose to participate in the project, this will involve meeting with me online for a semi-structured interview. It will take approx. 45-60 minutes. Your answers will be recorded by hand in a note-taking form

Information about you or your place of work/organization may also be collected through other means of data collection, such as:

-management plans and similar documents

-public media

Participation is voluntary

All information about you will be anonymous. Participation in the project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw data.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified here, and we will process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the GDPR).

- *Only the researcher (myself) and my direct supervisor (Brynhild Granås) will have access to your personal data and any data that has been collected*
- *If requested, I will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data*

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The planned end date of the project is *the end of June 2024. The thesis and thesis appendix will be submitted to The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) and assessed by one (1) internal*

and one (1) external examiner. A thesis defence will follow, where topics of the thesis may be discussed in more detail

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data be deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you be corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with *The Arctic University of Norway (UiT),* The Data Protection Services of Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- *The Arctic University of Norway (UiT) Department of Social Science* via *Brynhild Granås, thesis supervisor, brynhild.granas@uit.no*
- Our Data Protection Officer: *Annikken Steinbakk,*

  personvernombud@uit.no or 00 47 776 46 153

If you have questions about how data protection has been assessed in this project by Sikt, contact:

- email: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 73 98 40 40.

Yours sincerely,

Brynhild Granås (Researcher/supervisor) Rachel Rebonne (Master Student)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project *Indigenous Involvement in National Park and Outdoor Recreational Management- The Case of Edmonton as a Contestant to Welcome a New National Urban Park* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in *an interview*

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end of the project.

(Signed by participant, date)