



The Sn[^]ayckstx (Sinixt)
Confederacy

P.O. Box 150, Nespelem, WA 99155

The Confederated Tribes of
the Colville Reservation

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Sinixt Confederacy and Colville Tribes Call for Change on the Columbia River

NESPELEM, WA. Jarred-Michael Erickson, Chairman of the Sinixt (Arrow Lakes) Confederacy and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR), is calling for change on the Columbia River system in Canada after Sinixt/Arrow Lakes staff recently viewed the impacts of low water levels on the Arrow Lakes.

Chairman Erickson said the Confederacy and CTCR are very concerned about the low water levels on the Arrow Lakes after fisheries and archaeology staff, based out of their new Nelson office, toured the lower Arrow Lake:

We share the concern of local residents about the impacts of low water levels in the Arrow Lakes, which is the heart of our traditional territory in Canada. The ramifications of raising and lowering water levels include a broad range of ecosystem impacts, ranging from fish kills and stranding, preventing access to spawning streams for Kokanee, and changes in water temperature and predation issues. In addition, we are very concerned about impacts on Sinixt archaeological resources. It is well documented that 80-90% of our archaeology, including multiple village sites and gravesites, were inundated by the various dams along the Columbia River system, without any effort of relocation or even consultation with the Sinixt. To this day, our ancestors continue to be uncovered without acknowledgement of that history, and a steadfast refusal to let us take the lead in their repatriation.

Chairman Erickson added that the low water levels are only one aspect of a larger and more fundamental issue – the complete exclusion of the Sinixt from discussions and decision-making about the impacts of the dams, despite the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark decision in *R. v. Desautel*:

It has been two and half years since the *Desautel* decision was handed down, where the Supreme Court of Canada recognized the Sinixt as an Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, and acknowledged the truth of our history and traditional territory. Yet the Sinixt continue to be on the outside looking in, while we watch other Nations receive financial payouts for impacts occurring predominantly in our territory. This despite the fact that we have considerable experience and expertise in managing and mitigating these issues in Lake Roosevelt behind the Grand Coulee Dam in Washington State. This has to change, and change now.

Chairman Erickson says that the Confederacy and CTCR are calling on the federal and provincial governments, along with BC Hydro, to immediately convene a negotiating table to begin working through these important issues. “The Sinixt are still here, and always will be. If we don’t see immediate action, we will return to court. Change will come, one way or the other.”

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To learn more about the Sinixt and their history, please see our new website at www.Sinixt.com or visit us in Nelson at 202-514 Vernon Street.

More about the Sinixt (Arrow Lakes) Confederacy

On April 23, 2021, the Supreme Court of Canada handed down its decision in *R v. Desautel*, recognizing the Sñŋaýckstx (Sinixt/Arrow Lakes) as an Aboriginal Peoples of Canada with a constitutionally protected right to hunt in their traditional territory in British Columbia. As the Supreme Court specifically confirmed, that territory “ran as far south as an island just above Kettle Falls, in what is now Washington State, and as far north as the Big Bend of the Columbia River, north of Revelstoke in what is now British Columbia” (for visual depictions of Sinixt territory, see the attached place names map, a map prepared by provincial experts in 1956 depicting Indigenous territories in 1850, an Indigenous lodge use map prepared by noted anthropologist Verne Ray, along with a location map of the dams prepared by BC Hydro). The Court also recognized the Arrow Lakes tribe, one of the twelve constituent tribes of the CTCR with approximately 3,500 members, as a successor group to the Sinixt.

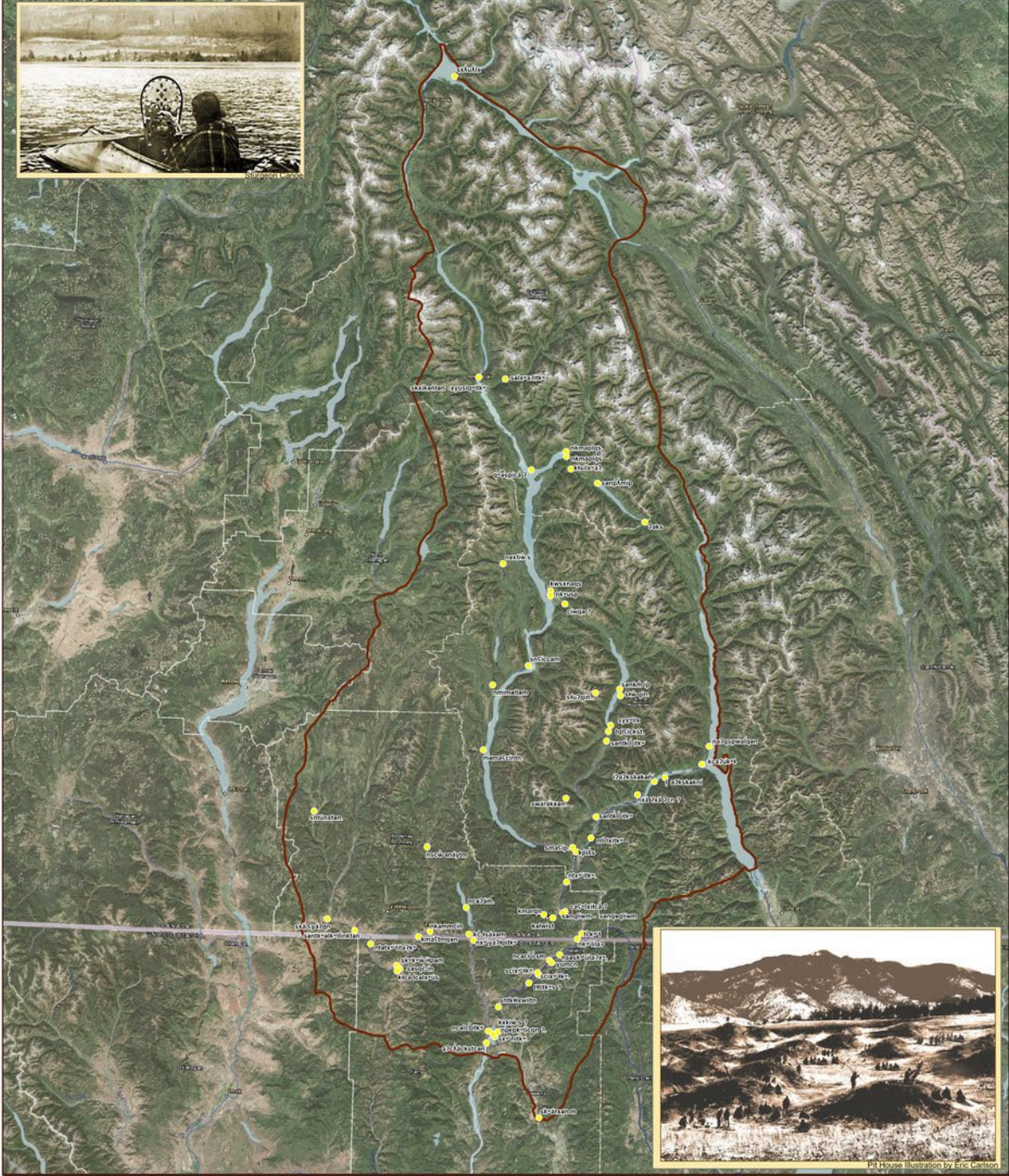
CTCR has formed the Sinixt Confederacy, formerly known as the Arrow Lakes Aboriginal Society, to represent Sinixt people on both sides of the international border, regardless of tribal or band affiliation, in a manner consistent with Indigenous law and traditions.

More about the Colville Tribes:

Today, more than 9,460 descendants of 12 Indigenous tribes of Indians are enrolled in the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. The twelve tribes which compose the CTCR include: ščəlám̓x̓x̓w (deep water) or Chelan; walwáma (Wallowa people) or Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce; s̓x̓w̓y̓ʔil̓p (sharp pointed trees) or Colville; šnt̓iyátk̓w̓x̓w (grass in the water) or Entiat; sñŋaýckstx (speckled fish) or Arrow Lakes; m̓tx̓w̓u (blunt hills around a valley) or Methow; škwáx̓č̓n̓x̓w (people living on the bank) or Moses-Columbia; nspilm (prairie) or Nespelem; uknaqin (seeing over the top) or Okanogan; palúšpam (people from Palouse) or Palus; s̓np̓ŋ̓w̓ilx̓ (grey mist as far as one can see) or San Poil, and šnp̓əšq̓w̓áws̓x̓w (people in between) or Wenatchi.

SINIXT TERRITORY MAPS

Colville Confederated Tribes sñçayckstx (Lakes) Traditional Territory & Place Names

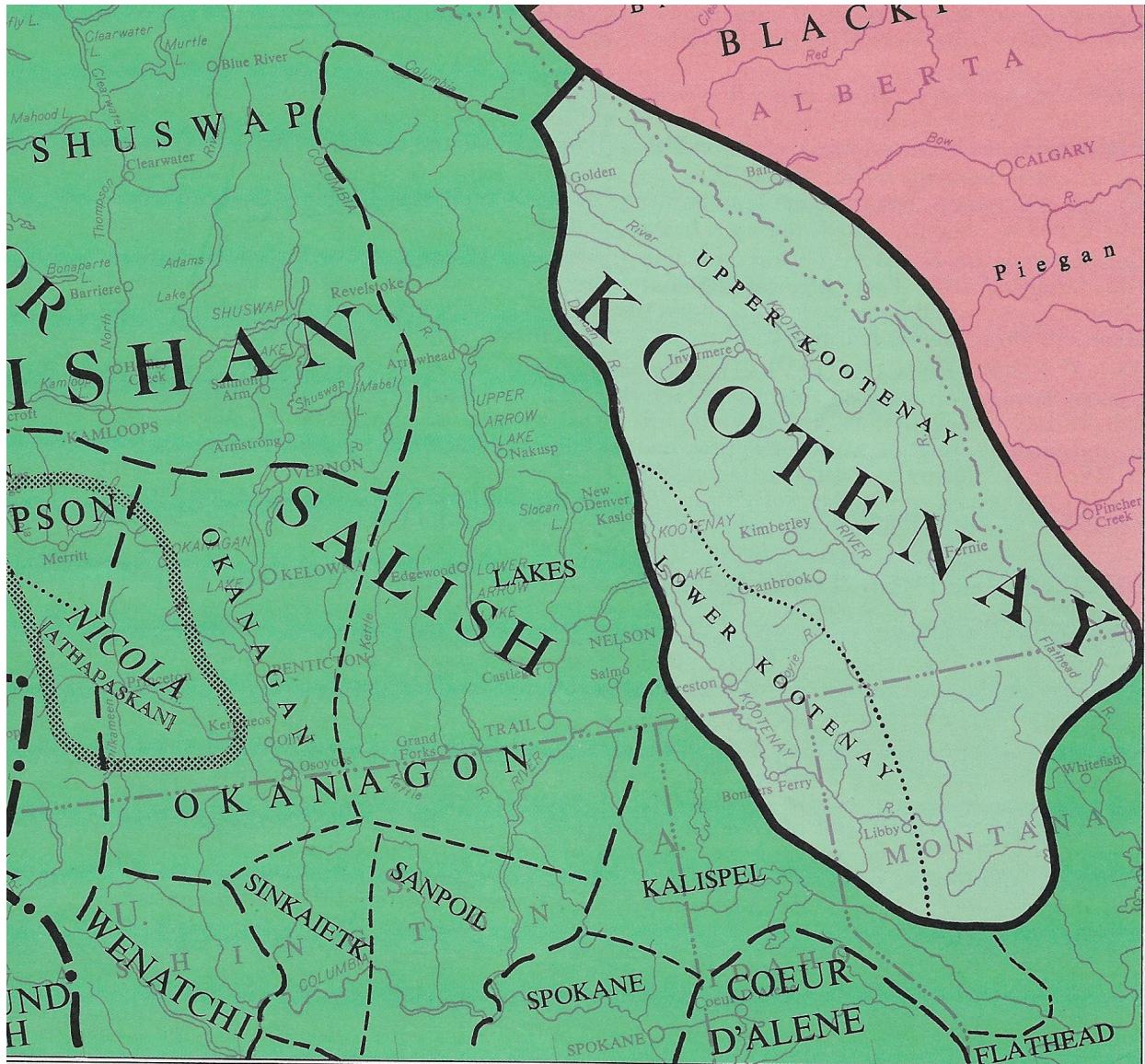


Legend

- Lakes Traditional Territory
- Lakes Place Names

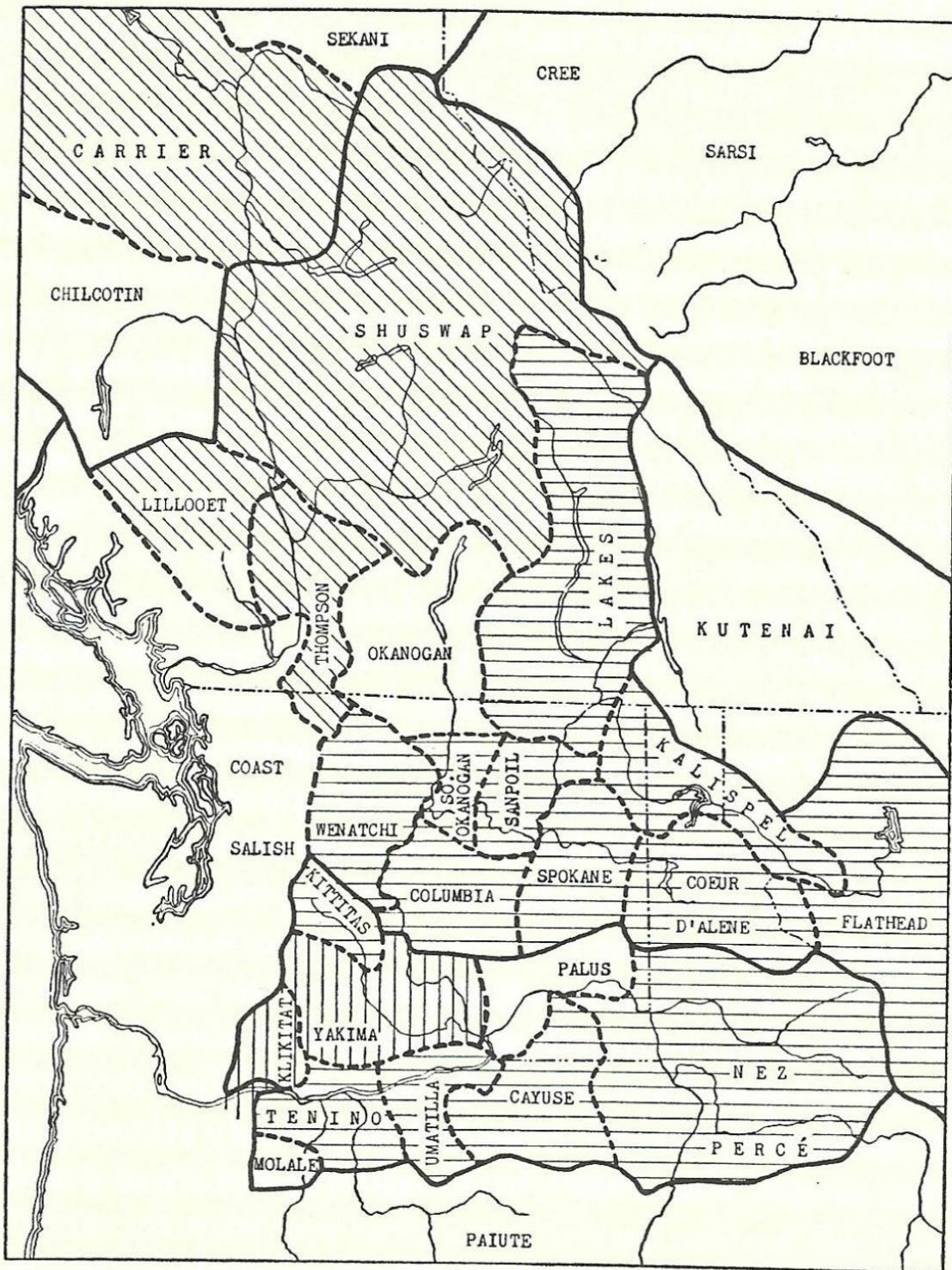



 This map is for display purposes only.
 It does not represent an on-the-ground
 survey and represents only the approximate
 relative locations. 5/9/22
 Created by: Trisha Johnson GIS Analyst
 Colville Confederated Tribes History & Archaeology Program

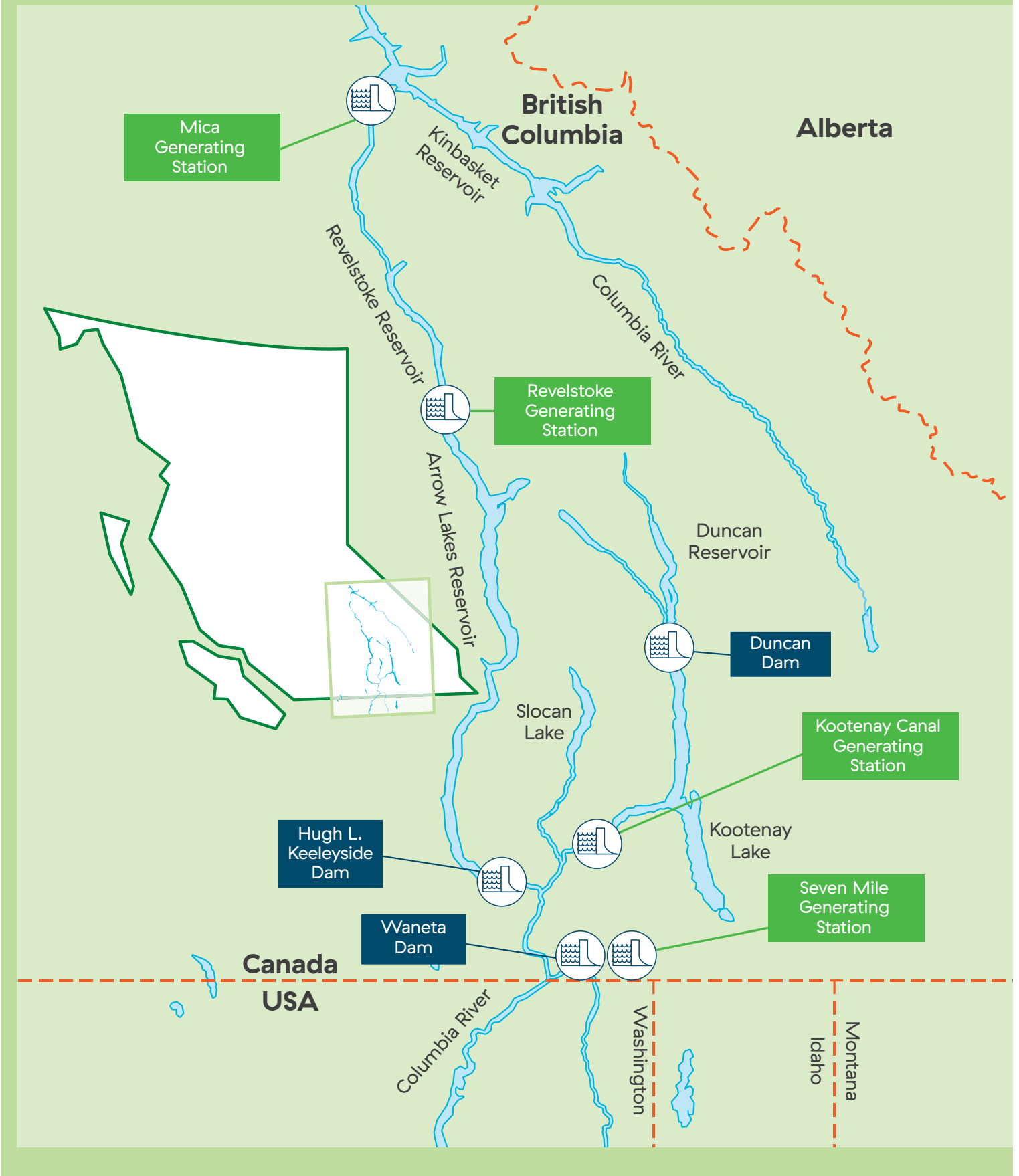


Map detail from: British Columbia Natural Resources Conference. *Transactions of the Ninth British Columbia Natural Resources Conference*: Victoria, B.C.; 1956, unnumbered introductory pages.

Ray, who studied tribal territories and attributes in the Pacific Northwest, mapped them in his important work *Cultural Relations in the Plateau of Northwestern America*,⁴ including in the following:



MAP. 19. Mat lodges. *Diagonal hatching*: inverted-V section, rectangular plan; *horizontal hatching*: inverted-V section, plan with parallel sides and rounded ends; *vertical hatching*: vertical walls, gable roof



**Kootenay Canal
Generating Station**

**Seven Mile
Generating Station**