

Pandemic Participation: Revisiting Three Central Tenets of Good Practices in Participatory Mapping in Times of COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

This article revisits the three foundational principles of participatory mapping practice identified in good practices in participatory mapping. These include processes that strive for transparency, are unencumbered by time, and prioritize trust: the ‘Three T’s’. Authors Kelly Panchyshyn and Jon Corbett analyze the relevance of these principles under the spectre of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This reflection is carried out within the context of Kelly’s Master’s research. Over the course of 2020, Kelly worked with staff and citizens of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation to map Indigenous and non-Indigenous plant harvest foodways within Łu Zil Män, an expansive stretch of land on the edge of Whitehorse, Yukon. In exploring both the barriers and opportunities created by conducting this project during a pandemic, the authors determine that the ‘Three T’s’ remain essential for conducting meaningful participatory mapping. However, they also argue that each T takes on new dimensions within contexts of isolation and social distancing, particularly for Northern and Indigenous communities.

KEYWORDS

COVID-19, Participatory Mapping, Plant Harvest Foodways, Time, Transparency, Trust, Whitehorse, Yukon

INTRODUCTION

This article revisits the three foundational principles of Participatory Mapping practice identified in *Good practices in participatory mapping* (Corbett, 2009). These principles include establishing mapping processes that strive for transparency, are unencumbered by time, and prioritize trust between researchers and mapping participants - the ‘Three T’s’ - transparency, time and trust. Together, the authors explore the robustness and relevance of these principles under the spectre of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The authors’ reflections on this topic emerge from their work together on the *Creative and Collaborative Land Planning in Canada’s North: Supporting Plant Harvest Through Participatory Action Research in Whitehorse, Yukon* project over the Spring, Summer and Fall of 2020. This project focused on documenting the harvest of wild plant foods and medicines by Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents of Whitehorse, a town of 33,893 people located just above the 60th parallel

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(Government of Yukon, 2021, p. 3). As the capital city of Yukon, Whitehorse is home to roughly 79% of the territory's overall population and is considered Yukon's only urban hub (Government of Yukon, 2021, pp. 1-3). In partnership with several staff and citizens of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) the researchers worked to develop planning supports for the practice of wild harvest in Łu Zil Män, a popular green space on the periphery of city's urban center. As of late 2021, the area of Łu Zil Män is about to undergo a land planning process and although the lakes, forest and tundra mountains found there may not be a typical of most urban environment, spaces like these are a key aspect of day-to-day life for many residents and help to give Whitehorse its identity as the 'wilderness city' (Department of Tourism and Culture, Government of Yukon, 2021). Thus, planning in this area is an important step in supporting the well-being of many Whitehorse urbanites. However, it is important to note that in Canada and elsewhere, there is a systemic exclusion of Indigenous voices from planning and decision-making (Monosky & Keeling, 2021).

The research team chose to use a participatory mapping approach to better understand local harvest ways and how to ensure that they are incorporated into the Łu Zil Män planning process. In practicing this method of community engagement, the project team sought to uphold the best practices set forth by the Three T's. However, the team also had to consider how best to apply these principles while carrying out research during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first section of this article covers the basic principles followed in the practice and research of participatory mapping. The second section introduces and discusses the project's application of participatory mapping within the context of the pandemic. The final section reflects on how to expand beyond the Three T's with regards to research and participatory mapping within Indigenous and northern communities like Whitehorse, Yukon.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Participatory mapping, in its broadest sense, is the creation of maps, both paper and digital, by local experts (Corbett, 2009). The term 'expert' here, does not necessarily mean academics or government officials, rather, it means community members with the embedded knowledge and experience needed to map a particular place and the environmental or social histories embedded within it (Chambers, 2006).

Participatory maps represent unique ways of understanding and relating to space and place (Brown & Kyttä, 2018). These ways of knowing are rarely, if ever, depicted in mainstream maps or the planning initiatives informed by such maps. What unites practitioners is their belief that representing spatial knowledge and communicating it through the media of maps can have profound implications for those whose perspective of place and space are marginalized by conventional mapping (Tosi Roquette & McCall, 2021). When properly undertaken, maps produced by the community can become interactive conduits for networking, discussion, information exchange, analysis, and decision making (García-Díez et al., 2020). They can stimulate innovation, and ultimately, they can encourage positive social change.

The use of participatory mapping with Indigenous communities is a particularly relevant component of the practice. In Indigenous contexts, participatory mapping can provide a mechanism for representing the deeply rooted relationship between Indigenous communities and the lands they steward (Pyne, 2020). Within a decolonial framework, mapping can yield "profound insights about Settler-Indigenous relations and may even contribute to a shift in power toward Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups" (Altamirano-Jiménez & Parker, 2016, p. 91). As Mishuana R. Goeman explains, this shift in power comes when we use maps to investigate the "epistemologies that frame our understanding of land and our relationships to it and to other peoples" (2013, p. 3). Such an investigation can then be used to better understand the processes that have come to define "our current spatialities" and how we might begin to challenge them (p. 3). In this sense, Indigenous mapping or 'remapping' offers a starting point for identifying and confronting the systems of colonization that shape community member's relation to the land and to one and another.

However, participatory mapping never offers a guaranteed victory in the fight for social justice and Indigenous rights (Sletto, 2009). In fact, maps can easily be subverted. University researchers are often accused of this as they use the processes embedded within participatory mapping to simply collect data, without taking into consideration the systemic challenges to power that are so important for Indigenous communities in their need to exercise and express their ancestral and contemporary rights to lands and resources (Corbett et al, 2020). Similarly, corporate entities may use participatory mapping as a superficial form of consultation, in which spatial information is collected not to improve the lives of community members but to document how a company might gain leverage over the community. Undertaking participatory mapping with the explicit intent to challenge the systems of oppression faced by Indigenous communities and many others (Crampton, 2010) requires a commitment to *transparent* research processes that prioritize *quality time* spent in and with community and that foster *trusting relationships* between researchers and community partners.

The principles of time, transparency, and trust in the practice of participatory mapping were first raised during the *Mapping for Change International Conference*, held in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2005 (Corbett et al, 2006). The conference brought together researchers and practitioners to develop a set of protocols that would shape the practice moving forward. During the conference, working groups sought to establish a better understanding of enabling and disabling environments focusing on policies and funding, building solidarity and a common vision among practitioners, but ultimately to create a set of ethical practices (see Rambaldi et al., 2006). A series of publications emerged from the conference, among them a co-authored paper about the importance of transparency, time and trust (Corbett et al., 2006). In the context of mapping, each of these T's is understood as follows.

Transparency

Transparency refers to the type of communication necessary for good participatory mapping. It implies timeliness, clarity, accountability, the use of simple and understandable language, and transparent procedures such as open meetings and capacity building in terms of use and access to technology. It respects the need for communities engaging in the process to be informed of all the potential drawbacks that might be associated with the application of the tools.

Time

Sufficient time is needed throughout the process to: build meaningful relationships between mapping intermediaries and local community experts, in order to enable local communities to take ownership over the tools, and to maximize the positive impacts derived from participatory mapping initiatives. There must be recognition of the need for a substantial investment of time. Academics, funders and developers will often prioritize their own timelines. Tight time frames, imposed to meet outsider agendas often serve to undermine a project and impact participation by community members. Practitioners need to recognize differing agendas and be open to accept the everyday pressures faced within a community and not to permit a process of 'othering' to take place. Rushed projects also prevent communities from fully understanding the technologies and the potential drawbacks or benefits of their use.

Trust

Trust refers to the relationship between the different groups and individuals. It is a critical ingredient for undertaking participatory mapping. Trust helps all actors to understand the different motivations of others and predict whether their behaviours "will conform to one's expectations and the goodwill of another" (Sabherwal, 1999). Trust expands relationships beyond the bounds of a participatory mapping project - it creates bonds, a sense of responsibility, and it makes it easier for people to work together. This in turn greatly impacts the success of a mapping initiative and its ability to influence positive change (Diallo & Thuillier, 2005).

Despite the somewhat dated nature of these findings, the principles of transparency, time and trust remain deeply embedded within the practice of participatory mapping, including where it is used as a research tool to obtain information and data. However, it has also become necessary to reflect on whether these principles remain true within the context of a global pandemic, with strict rules concerning social contact and protective measures, and whether these principles are relevant when working with vulnerable communities living in remote urban areas. Within the context of the *Creative and Collaborative Land Planning in Canada's North* project, each of the three T's assumed a new form due to the pressures of the global COVID-19 pandemic, and as these principles change so too must the practice of participatory mapping.

RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA

The *Creative and Collaborative Land Planning in Canada's North* was jointly initiated by a UBC Graduate Student Research and team of Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN) staff and citizens. This qualitative study was guided by Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodologies. As a community-based research framework, PAR positions researchers and community partners as co-investigators and uses tools like participatory mapping to mobilize the knowledge and experience of community members around the goal of creating social change (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, pp.51-58). This means that the design and implementation of the research was collaboratively developed by both academic practitioners and KDFN staff and citizens. By engaging partners as coinvestigators, the project seeks to center Indigenous involvement in local planning initiatives and move away from the notion that knowledge production is the sole domain of academic researchers or institutional authorities (Caine & Mill, 2016, pp. 124-125; Smith, 2012, pp. 117- 121). In this way, the project aims to generate community lead solutions for planning local green spaces.

This research project took place on the Traditional Territories of the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (TKC) and KDFN, in an area recognized as Kwan Lin, but perhaps more widely known as Whitehorse, Yukon. Here, both the citizens of TKC and KDFN have cultivated a longstanding relationship with local plant communities through the traditional and contemporary harvest of wild plant foods and medicines, such as cranberry, wild sage and morel mushrooms. It is through harvest that these citizens tend to the land, to the needs of their families, and to their traditions. Wild plants are also harvested by other Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents. In fact, a 2017 survey of Whitehorse residents indicated that over 60% secure a portion of their food from foraged sources (City of Whitehorse, p. 6). Yet, strategies for the protection of the practice are seldom addressed within local land planning and, as a result, harvest grounds are threatened by development. As Whitehorse expands in size and population, wild spaces are being lost to development and increasing pressure is placed on those spaces that remain.

The impact that development has had on wild harvesting spaces and practices is reflected in the words of Kwanlin Dün Elder, Dianne Smith, who explains that:

When my mother, sister and I go out on the land, we find plants dying due to over harvest or over-use of the area. There is less and less to harvest, and we have to go further and further from home. When you know about the traditional plants it is hurtful to see them suffering, ripped up or run over. You look at your grandchildren, and the only teaching you can offer them is that you cannot harvest here today because the plants need time to heal. (qtd. Panchyshyn, 2020, p. 10)

The experience of having harvest grounds contaminated or lost because of development and over-use was widely reported by participants in this study. Like Elder Smith, many Indigenous participants also indicated that reduced access to harvest spaces harmed their food security and their ability to pass their cultural traditions onto the next generation (Panchyshyn, 2021, pp 79-88). Community

members repeatedly articulated that poor planning has corrosive impacts on not only the environment, but also to local networks of food security and cultural knowledge (Panchyshyn, 2021, pp. 88-92). There is also no ignoring the ways this neglect perpetuates the colonial suppression of Indigenous land, food, and governance rights. With this reality in mind, the project worked to disrupt the systems of colonization that privilege the settler presence on the land and address the lack of consideration for wild harvest spaces and practices within contemporary planning processes.

Over the course of 2020, a community-based research team worked to examine the impact of continuing to omit harvest from decision-making processes and worked with Indigenous and non-Indigenous harvesters to explore opportunities for planning interventions through participatory mapping.. The team was composed of KDFN Elders Judy Anderson, Margaret McKay, and Dianne Smith, KDFN citizen and project participant Rae Mombourquette, KDFN Lands, Heritage and Resources staff John Meikle and Roy Neilson, and Kelly Panchyshyn, UBC Okanagan Graduate Student Researcher. The aim of their work was to advocate for the inclusion of plant harvest within the upcoming planning process for Łu Zil Män, an initiative jointly led by KDFN and the Yukon government (YG).

The citizens of KDFN have ancestral ties to Łu Zil Män that span over 8000 years and continue to live, gather, and harvest there. However, the 460 square kilometer area is also a popular harvest and recreation site for many non-Indigenous residents of Whitehorse. To understand Łu Zil Män through the lens of wild plant harvest, nine one-on-one mapping sessions, 10 interviews, two focus groups and four mapping sessions on the land, observations were held with 9 members of the harvest community. All of the observations and two of the mapping sessions and interviews took place in person and outside. All other interactions with participants took place over the phone or over Zoom. The participant group size and level of engagement met the standards of qualitative community-based graduate research projects working with Indigenous communities.

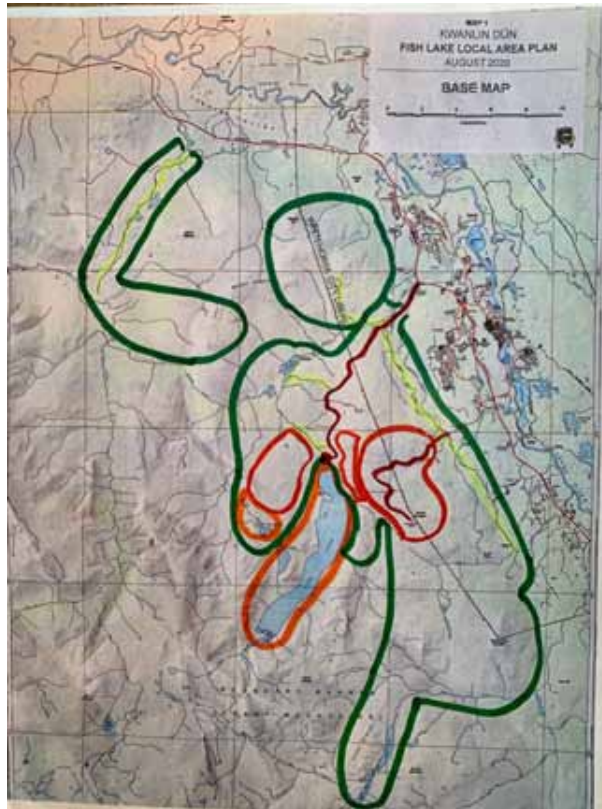
All of the information collect through participant engagement was used to create a spatial snapshot of the relationships that harvesters hold to the area and documented the challenges they face. The sketch maps produced by participants documented their harvest sites and the routes they use to access these locations. Participants also documented sites where they had witnessed conflict between users, over-harvest, or environmental degradation. These maps where then compiled into a single aggregated map, where color coding was use to indicate which harvest areas were of high or moderate concern do to resource scarcity, environmental disruption or social conflict (see Figure 1). Areas that did not encounter these issues were identified as low concern. The aggregated map was then shared with a focus group of participants to ensure it reflected their understanding of the space. During the focus group, researchers used this map to guide the group in a discussion on what constitutes successful management indicators in areas of low concern and what was indicative of failure in areas of high or moderate concern. As part of this discussion, researchers also had the group explore the tensions and opportunities around the convergence and divergence of Indigenous and non-Indigenous harvest ways in the area. These discussions then flowed into the collaborative development of policy recommendation that were later shared with the planning committee for Łu Zil Män

This work with the harvest community of Whitehorse, Yukon, helped to highlight the importance of ‘The Three T’s’ embedded within the participatory mapping process. However, each T took on an entirely new dimension within contexts of isolation and social distancing. These points are discussed below.

Transparency

Transparency was the most difficult pillar to uphold over the course of project. Early in the pandemic all participant engagement had to be conducted online. Transparency is about ensuring all members of the community have easy access to project information and equal opportunity to engage with it on their terms. However, limited levels of digital literacy and access to digital resources among the

Figure 1. Aggregated map of harvest areas were of high or moderate concern



community, meant that it was difficult to achieve full transparency under these conditions (Shepherd & Henderson, 2019).

In the past, the KDFN staff on the research team have experienced a great deal of success in recruiting participants in-person, through community events and spaces. This style of recruitment is an effective way to increase familiarity between researchers and potential participants. In small northern communities like Whitehorse, face to face interactions can help participants to recognize or situate researchers or other potential participants within their social networks and this typically goes a long way towards building trust. It also helps to lower the barriers to participation as no technology is required and forms can be printed, read aloud, signed, and collected in a single effort. However, with the closure of public spaces, restrictions around gatherings and concerns about minimizing risk, these methods of recruitment were not available at the onset of the project. The research team members also suspected many potential participants were experiencing digital fatigue at this point in the pandemic (Bennett et al., 2021).

The research team had also hoped to engage several KDFN Elders as participants, but the pandemic made this difficult to do so in a way that was safe and accessible for them. UBC did not allow in-person research with those most at risk of experiencing serious complications from COVID-19, like those with underlying health conditions or over the age of 65. Unfortunately, many of the KDFN Elders that the team had hoped to engage fell into these categories and showed little interest in conducting interviews or mapping sessions remotely. Achieving greater transparency within this project would have meant ensuring all members of the community had the chance to engage with the project using avenues of communications that best suited them. Without this kind of transparency, it is difficult to

gain trust. However, ensuring more in-person engagement would have required more time, a resource the research team did not have.

Time

The authors of this paper continue to assert that ample time and flexibility is essential to conducting equitable participatory mapping. However, those practicing participatory mapping must also reflect on how to balance the need for this time with the very real need for swift action on the social and environmental challenges facing northern and Indigenous communities. While the research team would have loved to have conducted the project in a time that allowed for more on-the-land community data collection, waiting for such a time was not an option. Early in the pandemic it was determined that the Łu Zil Män planning process would proceed as planned. The KDFN community was frustrated with the slower pace taken by past planning projects and feared that more damage would be done to Łu Zil Män if a plan was not brought in sooner. In fact, the increase in recreation witnessed in the area due to the pandemic highlighted the immediate need for some sort of management strategy. Thus, the research team determined that while it may be imperfect, any intervention on the inclusion of harvesters was necessary. In the end, this path worked well for the community because the stories shared by harvesters allowed the research team to mount a strong case for more engagement with the plant harvest community at a later stage of the Łu Zil Män planning process. Their group reflections on the research challenges brought by fewer opportunities for in-person community interactions also helped them to demonstrate the need for this style of engagement as soon as restrictions ease. As discussed later in this paper, the quality of the time spent mapping as a community is more important than how much time you have together.

Ultimately, participatory mapping timelines need to be sufficiently dynamic and flexible enough to meet both the short-term and long-term goals of the community. Thus, as the practice of participatory mapping shifts under the pressures of COVID-19, the authors recommend that researchers consider staggered timelines, meaning that project outputs are stacked in a way that provides researchers and community partners with an opportunity to jump on immediate needs while still allowing for the option to build on that work in future. However, this requires researchers to stick around past the initial project stages and community members to trust they will do so.

Trust

Rushed timelines, and restrictions on how and when those involved in the project can engage with one another certainly did not make trust building easy. However, the project could not have taken place without trust between members of the research team and participants. In fact, trust takes on a whole new dimension when it comes to COVID-19. It means that research partners and participants must trust one another with their physical health. Moreover, threats to the physical health of participants within small northern and Indigenous communities, translate into threats to the health of local knowledge systems. Researchers must work with all those involved to design protocols and to balance the need to keep people safe with the need to have them involved in the study.

As the project unfolded and restrictions allowed for the reopening of the KDFN offices in the winter of 2021, allowing for the increased involvement of KDFN Elders Judy Anderson, Margaret McKay, and Dianne Smith. While in-person research with participants over the age of 65, was not allowed members of the community research team were allowed to meet in person in the KDFN offices. This did not increase the risk faced by team members as it constituted part of their normal day to day activities as all three Elders regularly visited the KDFN office to lend their expertise to ongoing projects. When it was safe to do so, the research team met in a KDFN boardroom that had been arranged to allow for 2 meters of spacing between occupants. Here the student researcher and KDFN staff walked through the project findings, collecting the Elder's questions, feedback, and guidance when it was offered. This meant that Anderson, McKay, and Smith had a chance to shape the project and see their knowledge reflected in it. At all times, the research team's actions abided

by the latest safety restrictions in place by KDFN, UBC and YG. Working together to find a way for the team to meet in person also gave them an excellent opportunity to build trust.

BEYOND THE THREE T'S

The difficulties encountered while conducting participatory research in during a pandemic reflect the dimensions of participatory mapping that are not fully captured by the three T's. Often, participatory mapping resources are filled with images of large groups of people gathered around a map or out on the land together. The *Good practices in participatory mapping* document provides an example of this (Corbett et. al., 2005, pp. 7, 14, 16, 18). However, no such photos were captured during this project. Due to COVID-19, the project participants and partners were not able to gather and map or harvest as a community.

In the Summer of 2021, one of the project researchers found themselves in conversation with friend and harvest mentor, Ta'an Elder Shirley Adamson. While discussing the challenges of the 2020's, Adamson explained how gathering to harvest as a family or community is key for effective teaching and learning on harvest itself. Elder Adamson went on to note that COVID-19 made this kind of knowledge exchange exceptionally difficult (phone call with the author, August 11, 2020; email to the author, January 25, 2021). Her words helped to characterize something the research team had been struggling with over the course of the project: the format in which knowledge is being gathered for the project felt distant from the way knowledge on this subject is typically shared. After all, how does one conduct a community-based, land-centric research project without the ability to gather with the community on the land? Without these types of interactions, it is difficult to witness the unique relationship held between community and land, and this is certainly not something that can be easily replicated on the individual level or reconstituted in digital spaces.

The importance of the community-land dynamic has highlighted during an on-the-land observation between one of the project researchers and two of the project participants. Being related and inside each-others' COVID-19 'bubbles,' they expressed an interest in conducting their observations together, in their family's cranberry patch.¹ Upon learning that these two were going picking, one participant's parents decided to join. With their unexpected arrival in the patch, the group size triggered the researcher's institutionally ingrained COVID-19 protocol alarms. However, they decided to resist these alarms, knowing that it would be rude to leave a patch she had been invited to and unthinkable to ask any member of the family to stay away from the area. They also knew that this would mean interfering with the natural happenings of this family's berry harvest practice.

Thinking on the spot, the researcher determined that the two parents were already in the same COVID bubble with both participants and thus the risk encountered by participants had not increased. So long as the researcher kept two meters distance from them along with the areas they picked, and reminded them to do the same, the situation could be managed. This turned out to be the right move because the family's interactions with the land, each other, and the researcher illuminated several key insights around the ways knowledge transmission, memory, trust, reciprocity, and community cohesion are linked to harvest. The stories and ideas shared during this outing helped the research team to build recommendations on how and why to include and support harvest in the Łu Zil Män planning process. Experiences like this lead the team to conclude that conducting meaningful participatory mapping on harvest practices within the context of Whitehorse, means actioning a commitment to transparency, time, and trust by finding ways to prioritize engaging communities out on the land. Without these types of interactions, it is difficult to create mapping outputs that embody the unique relationship held between community and land, and it is certainly not something that can be easily replicated on the individual level or reconstituted in digital spaces. As pandemic restrictions fluctuate and the popularity of digital research tools continues to rise, the importance of community-land interactions cannot be overlooked. This is not to say that digital tools have no relevance to Indigenous and northern communities, quite the opposite in fact, digital approaches have help to moderate the

spread of COVID-19, allowing research and community organizing to continue despite restrictions on in-person gatherings. However, when it comes to research on the relations between land and people, digital tools simply cannot replace methods that support on-the-land connections between community members and researchers. Tensions and complexities like this demand practitioners of participatory mapping carefully consider the impacts of conducting participatory mapping projects using digital tools, particularly within Indigenous and northern communities. As pandemic restrictions ease, it will be instrumental to maintain balance between digital and in person participation.

CONCLUSION

This article explores the relevance of the foundational Three T's in participatory mapping practices under the conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In reflecting on the application of transparency, time and trust within the *Creative and Collaborative Land Planning in Canada's North* project, the authors maintain that these principles continue to be relevant and important for conducting ethical participatory mapping. However, each T is complicated by the social distancing measures brought in during the pandemic. When undertaking participatory mapping in-person is not an option, transparency between researchers, community partners, and participants, may be difficult to achieve through digital engagement alone. This is particularly apparent in Indigenous and northern communities where access to and interest in digital tools is limited. Limitations imposed on in-person gatherings may mean that participatory mapping projects need additional time to conduct adequate community engagement. However, if a community is using participatory mapping to address pressing and immediate social and environmental concerns (ongoing or exacerbated by the pandemic), timelines need to account for this urgency. Collaborative decision making between researchers and community members is needed to strike a balance between allowing enough time for meaningful community engagement and moving at a pace that will support the project's goals. In fact, finding ways to navigate the research barriers created by the pandemic allow for an important opportunity to build greater trust between those involved in the project. Practitioners of participatory mapping must also stretch beyond the Three T's, to ensure that mapping projects reflect the systems of knowledge exchange and knowledge production unique to the communities at the heart of these types of projects.

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ENDNOTE

- ¹ 'Bubbles' refers to the pandemic term used to describe a small grouping of family and friends who regularly see each other in unmasked situations with less than two meters of distance between them. At the time that this research took place during the pandemic, the Government of Yukon was recommending Yukoners keep bubbles of six individuals or less.

APPENDIX

Additional Note

Throughout this document the authors use the term ‘wild harvest’ to refer to the harvest of plants grown outside of a conventional agricultural setting. This is the term used locally around Whitehorse, Yukon, to refer to the practice. However, it is important to note that the term ‘wild’ emerges from Settler understandings of land that are built around a dichotomy of domesticated and developed human habitat and undeveloped and untamed ‘wilderness’. The authors wish to acknowledge that far from being untouched by human activity, many ‘wild’ spaces have long been under Indigenous methods of ecological management and cultivation (Turner, Spalding & Deur, 2020, pp. 4-5).

Kelly Panchyshyn, in 2017, received a Bachelor of Arts in Cultural Studies with a minor in Indigenous Studies, from UBC's Okanagan Campus. Following graduation, she successfully applied for the Jane Glassco Northern Fellowship. As a research fellow, Kelly's work focused on the inclusion of wild plant foraging in northern food security strategies for her hometown of Whitehorse, Yukon. In 2019, her desire to build on this research, led her to pursue a Master's in Community Engagement, Social Change and Equity at UBCO. Here Kelly's SSHRC funded research drew on feminist and decolonizing frameworks to examine and disrupt the power dynamics within northern land and food planning. She successfully defended this research in August of 2021.

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