

# 2023 INDIGENOUS GRADUATE STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

## Reconceptualizing and Reclaiming Cumulative Effects Assessment and Management Through Differing Ways of Knowing

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The consideration of Indigenous Knowledge systems in the management of natural resources is growing in Canada to meet legal requirements, fill gaps in knowledge, and improve reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. The recent *Yahey (Blue Berry First Nations) v. British Columbia*, Supreme Court of British Columbia decision has brought cumulative effects to the forefront. In this presentation, I discussed three Indigenous frameworks that could be used to re-shape cumulative effects assessment and management.

While it is recognized there are complementary aspects of western science and Indigenous Knowledge, there remain questions as to how best to align these worldviews. Much of the recent natural resource management literature reviewing the bridging of Indigenous knowledge systems with Western science continues to be generated from the dominant colonial point of view. There is a need to ensure Indigenous Knowledge systems are reflected in an equal manner while allowing Indigenous communities and nations the necessary capacity and time to consider these pressures more fulsomely. Cumulative effects on their own are complex, broad, and pervasive and are not well considered in natural resource management processes. As a result of the complexity, the assessment and management of cumulative effects suffer from a lack of integrated baseline data, consideration of social-ecological thresholds and coordinating management responses. By exploring three examples of Indigenous worldviews, I demonstrate how cumulative effects assessment could be reframed to better address these complexities while supporting community level needs and interests.