

TUESDAY TECH TIP

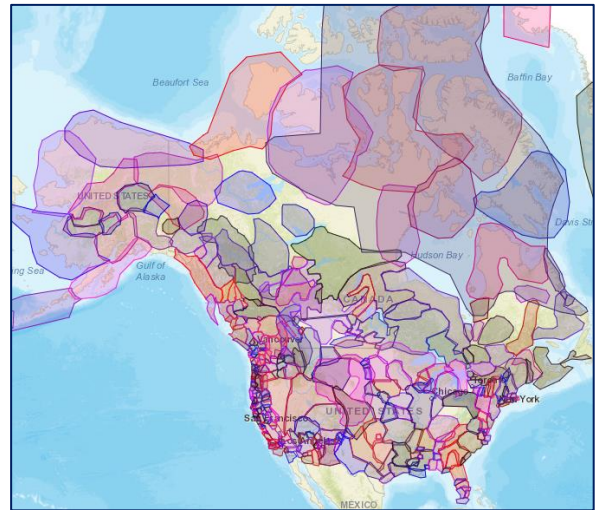
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NOVEMBER 28, 2017: NATIVE LAND

If you often find yourself wanting to know more about the Native American tribes in our area, but have a hard time finding reliable resources or piecing information together on your own, Native Land (<https://native-land.ca/>) is a great tool for you.

Native Land is a web app that allows users to identify native tribes on a map of North America. In addition to providing information to tribes for a certain area, it also covers languages and treaties.

According to the *About* page on Native Land, it was started by one man named Victor. Victor decided to create this web app as a way to learn about the many native tribes in North America, and visualize where boundaries are. Native Land is careful to warn users of the dangers of relying on maps without critically thinking about the data displayed:



I am concerned about many of the issues raised by using maps and colonial ways of thinking when it comes to maps. For instance, who has the right to define where a particular territory ends, and another begins? Who should I speak to about such matters?

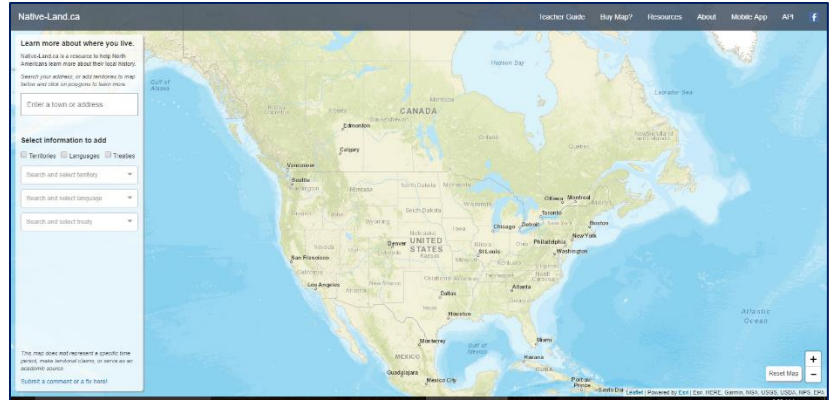
There are over 630 different First Nations in Canada (and many more in the USA) and I am not sure of the right process to map territories, languages, and treaties respectfully - and I'm not even sure if it is possible to do respectfully. I am not at all sure about the right way to go about this project, so I would very much appreciate your input.

I feel that maps of Indigenous nations are very often inherently colonial, in that they delegate power according to imposed borders that don't really exist in many nations throughout history. They were rarely created in good faith, and are often used in wrong ways. I am open to criticism about this project and I welcome suggestions and changes. [Email me](#).

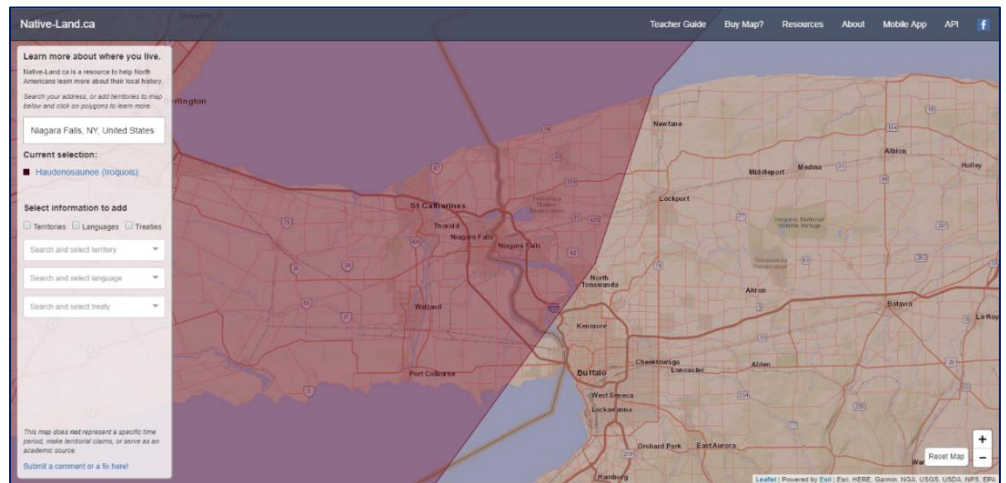
That being said, maps might also be useful for Indigenous nations and others in all kinds of initiatives, such as [this one by Amazonians](#) and many others found around the web. It's complicated!

Despite the admitted pitfalls of using a map to understand past events and current issues, Native Land hosts a great repository of information about native tribes, languages, territories and treaties. Each piece of information in the tool is accompanied by a [link](#) to outside resources on the particular topic.

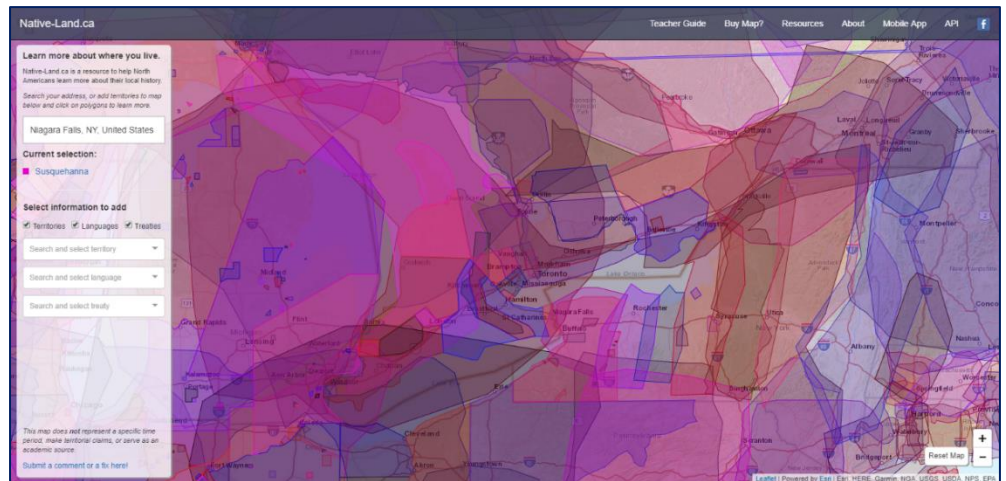
The first image you see when you navigate to <https://native-land.ca/> is a rather plain map of North America. Depending on what options you add during your session, this map will soon be very colorful!

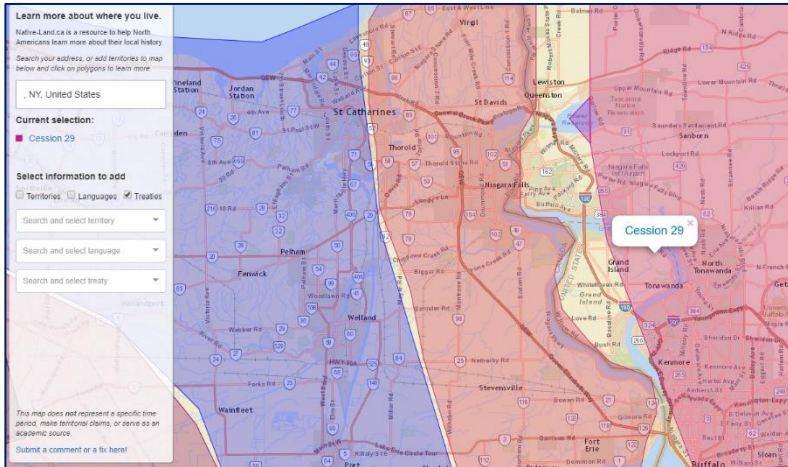


For this example, we will try to find information about native tribes in the Niagara Falls area. You can either zoom using the scroll wheel on your mouse, or type an address or location into the search bar. The map will automatically zoom to your selection.



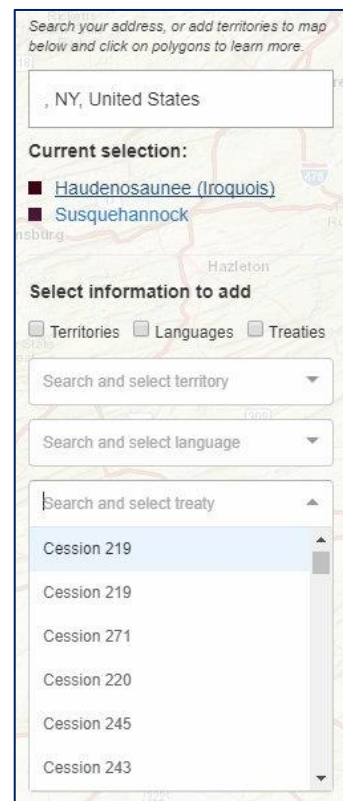
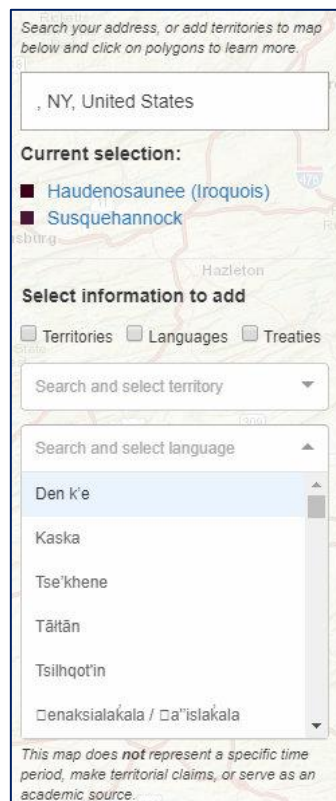
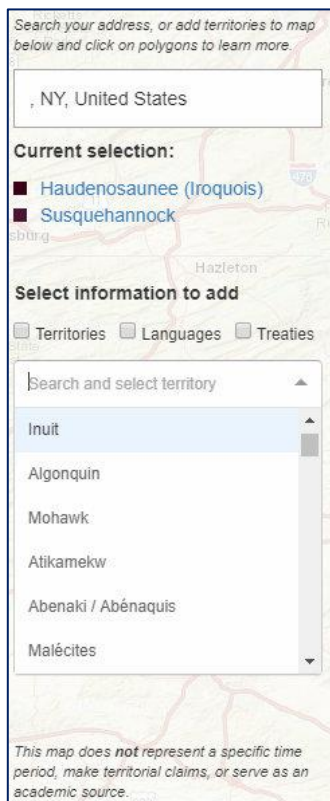
After selecting a geographic area, we can then add layers to the map for: Territories, Languages and Treaties. You can select one or all three.





Each layer represents a different piece of information. Hovering or clicking on the colored area will activate a pop-up including a label which can be clicked to find more information on the topic. In this example, only the layer for Treaties was selected. The red layer is the area encompassed by Cession 29. Clicking the text label will lead to a National Park Service webpage [Indian Land Cessions 1784-1894](#) where users can find more information about Cession 29.

In addition to adding individual layers to a geographic area, users have the ability to search for specific territories, languages and treaties using the drop-down menus.



For more on using the tool, refer to the [Teacher's Guide](#) provided by Native Land for educators.