



Semá:th
Sumas First Nation

Annual Report

- 2023 / 2024 -

Semá:th First Nation

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Message from Chief and Council

Dear Sumas First Nation Community,

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the resilience and strength of our community. 2023-2024 has been a year of growth, collaboration, and progress, as we continue to honor our heritage while looking toward a sustainable future.

Together, we have made significant strides in areas such as economic development, environmental stewardship, and cultural revitalization. Our partnerships with local organizations and governments have strengthened, allowing us to advocate for our rights and enhance the well-being of our members.

We remain committed to ensuring that the voices of our community are heard and that every member feels valued. Through various initiatives and programs, we aim to empower our youth, support our elders, and foster a vibrant community where everyone can thrive.

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Chief Dalton Silver
Councillor Clint Tuttle
Councillor Chris Silver
Councillor Troy Ganzeveld

Highlighting our Growth & Development

General Manager Annual Report

Semá:th First Nation is proud to present a year of growth in the community. We are committed to positive change, from cultural events and community growth to land-back agreements and environmental initiatives that honour our history.

General Manager Report

Introduction

It has been a great honor to serve the Sumas First Nation as General Manager over the past year. The 2023-2024 fiscal year has been a period of significant growth and development for our Nation.

This report highlights our key accomplishments and ongoing projects, reflecting the collective effort and dedication of our community, leadership, and administration.

Sincerely,

Brian Jones, Yelt'alh

General Manager
Sumas First Nation

General Manager Report

Key Accomplishments: Sumas First Nation Administration

Creation of Development Cost Charges (DCC) Law

We successfully established a Development Cost Charges (DCC) Law, which aims to ensure that new development contributes to the costs of infrastructure and services. This law represents a crucial step in managing growth sustainably and equitably.

Growth in Property Taxes

Property taxes have emerged as our fastest-growing revenue stream. This increase reflects our strategic focus on enhancing property management and development, contributing to a stronger financial position for the Nation.

Additions to Reserve Lands

Fooks-North Parallel and Atkinson Road: We have made significant progress in expanding our reserve lands with application to ISC for the addition of the Fooks-North Parallel and Atkinson Road lands. These additions are vital for our long-term development plans and community growth.

Completion of Lightning Rock Site Return

The Lightning Rock site has been successfully negotiated and will become Nation lands in the near future. This milestone not only holds cultural significance but also provides new opportunities for community engagement and development. Look forward to a community ceremony this coming year.

General Manager Report

Projects Underway

Ongoing Land Development Initiatives (southside lands)

We are actively pursuing several land development projects to enhance community infrastructure and support economic growth. These projects could include residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments aimed at meeting the evolving needs of our community.

Infrastructure Upgrades

Investments in infrastructure are underway to support both current and future growth. These upgrades are essential for maintaining high standards of living and ensuring that our community is well-equipped to handle increased demands. Along with increasing the overall value of our lands.

Cultural and Community Programs

We continue to develop and expand cultural and community programs that strengthen our heritage and support the well-being of our members. These programs are integral to fostering a vibrant and connected community. There are several community events in the planning stages to better understand intergenerational trauma and develop solutions to help each other.

General Manager Report

Conclusion

Professional Partnerships and Funders

The past year has been marked by substantial progress and achievement for the Sumas First Nation. The accomplishments detailed above represent only a fraction of our efforts and successes. Our commitment to growth, development, and cultural preservation remains unwavering. I look forward to continuing our work together and building on these successes in the years to come.

Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to the Sumas First Nation.

Sincerely,

Brian Jones, Yelt'alh

General Manager
Sumas First Nation

Building a Strong Financial Foundation

Finance Department

Semá:th First Nation's Finance Department plays a crucial role in ensuring the organization's financial health and sustainability by providing strategic oversight, managing budgets, and driving efficient resource allocation.

Finance Department

Overview

Highlights from the Finance Department

The 2023-2024 fiscal year had its share of change. The Cigarette Shop was moved to its new location in the Admin building; this allowed for the opening hours to be expanded to 5 days a week. The conclusion to the remediation of the brick plant was celebrated. The creation of the Emergency Management Department was another milestone during the fiscal year. As Sumas First Nation continues to grow new departments will emerge, and with this growth there will be new demands on the Finance department which will require the department to grow.

Finance relies on efficiencies in order to manage the volume of transactions that we process each year. That would be technological advances as well as finding efficiencies in workflow. Looking at 2023-2024 we worked hard to encourage Members to sign up for electronic cheque deposits; this is an ongoing project that we started a few years ago. We aim to have as close as possible to 100% of Members signed up for direct deposit.

As always, the role of Finance is to support Chief and Council, the department managers, staff, and members. More specifically, the fiscal year starts with implementing approved budgets, providing departments with timely reports so that they can assess the financial status of their department. Budgets were presented to Community during the fiscal year. After budgets are done, the next task on hand is the annual audit of the previous year end, and before we know it we're at the end of June. The Finance staff are all involved to some degree in the annual audit process and it's with their hard work and efforts that we continue to have a seamless audit process.

Manning Elliott was the accounting firm that performed the audit of the March 31, 2024 financial statements and expressed a "clean" or unqualified audit opinion; this means that Manning Elliott believes the consolidated financial statements fairly present the financial position of Sumas First Nation and the results of its operations and cash flows. These audited financial statements can be found on the Sumas First Nation website.

Finance Department

Overview

Highlights from the Finance Department

The 2023-2024 fiscal year was the fifth year for Sumas First Nation to be a part of the 10 Year ISC Grant, it can be said that the expected benefits of reallocating funds to where they are needed most and the reduction in reporting has been beneficial. We look forward to the coming years to see how the growth in the community is addressed through the Grant.

Staffing is always evolving. In Finance, we have several long term staff that have been committed to Sumas First Nation for over seven years, and in one case sixteen years. This speaks to the work ethic and dedication that is coveted by any organization.

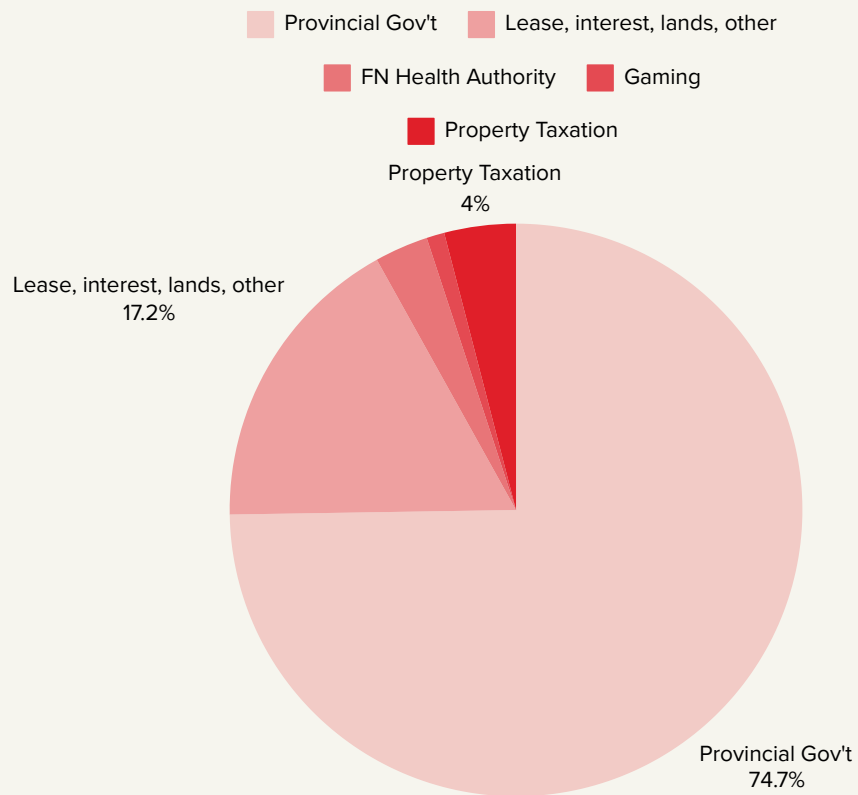
Sumas First Nation continues to be in a strong financial position. In fiscal 2023-24 the largest project that was completed in 2023-2024 and spanned over five years was the demolition and remediation of the Brickplant site with a cost of \$7 million dollars.

Looking forward to 2024-2025 we anticipate implementing Time and Attendance software to automate the timesheet process and obtaining Financial Management Systems certification.

Finance Department

2023/24 Annual Revenue

2023/24 Annual Revenue Sources



Name	%	Amount
Federal & Provincial Gov't	74%	\$ 17,013,460
Lease, interest, Lands, other	17%	\$ 4,000,967
FN Health Authority	3%	\$ 647,407
Gaming	1%	\$ 300,000
Property Taxation	4%	\$ 991,580
	<u>100%</u>	<u>\$ 22,980,414</u>

Head starts for a Brighter Future

Busy Bear Club Preschool

Busy Bear Preschool offers a secure, supportive childcare and early childhood education environment where children can thrive.

Busy Bear Club Preschool

Overview

Some of the key things our fully licensed programs offer for children:

- Flexible daily program that responds to the interests and curiosity of each child.
- Support for children's development across 4 domains: physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and language.
- Enhanced implementation of Indigenous culture and language.
- Nurturing and supportive relationships with staff.

The Busy Bear Preschool Club programs fall under the umbrella of Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR).

The 6 components of Aboriginal Head Start are:

- Culture and Language
- Education
- Health Promotion
- Nutrition
- Social Support
- Parents & Family Involvement

Busy Bear Club Preschool

Programs & Staff

Infant and Toddler Programs

- Under 36 months
- Runs January - December, Monday to Friday, 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM
- Licensed for 8 children

Daycare Program

- 30 months to school age
- Runs January - December, Monday to Friday, 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM
- Licensed for 20 children

Preschool Program

- 30 months to school age
- Runs September - June, Monday to Friday, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM
- Licensed for 20 children

Afterschool Club Program

- K-5 school age
- Runs October - June, Thursdays, 3:30 PM - 6:00 PM
- Licensed for 20 children

The Busy Bear Club Preschool Staff

The Busy Bear Club employs 12 employees which includes 5 community members, 3 of them former parents who have pursued Early Childhood Education Training. In addition, 5 staff members have their Foodsafe Certification.

- Early Childhood Education Manager
- Infant and Toddler/Special Needs Educators (IT, SN)
- Early Childhood Educator Assistants (ECEA)
- Early Childhood Educators (ECE)
- Support worker
- Bus driver
- Custodian
- Cook

Busy Bear Club Preschool

Professional Partnerships & Funders

Professional Partnerships and Funders

The Busy Bear Club continues to strengthen our relationships with various professional partners and funders enabling us to enhance our programs and facility.

- BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS)
- First Nations Health Authority, Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (FNHA AHSOR)
- First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations Schools Association (FNESC)
- Fraser Valley Child Development (FVCD)
- Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD)
- Aboriginal Infant Development (AIDP)
- Jordan's Principle
- Many Voice Once Mind (MVOM)
- Stó:lō Shxweli
- Children's Oral Health Initiative (COHI)
- Abbotsford Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR)
- Ministry Of Education and Child Care (MECC)



Busy Bear Club Preschool

2023/2024 Highlights

These highlights reflect a year of growth, development, and community engagement. We endeavour to provide an enriching and supportive environment for our children and families.

Fraser Health Licensing Report

A facility inspection report for Health and Safety is done yearly. A childcare center can receive one of 3 assessments: high risk (21-40), medium risk (14-20), low risk (3-13). **The Busy Bear Club was given a low-risk rating (5).** The licensing reports of childcare centers are posted for the public to review on www.fraserhealth.ca/childcare

Field Trip Bus

Secured funding from First Nations Educational Steering Committee (FNESC) and Jordan's Principle to purchase a new bus for field trips at the daycare.

New Playground Enhancements Installed and Designed by Habitat

- Play canoe
- Sandbox with cover
- Mini longhouse
- Climbing dome
- Wooden tables and benches

Upcoming Playground Enhancements

Substantial funding provided by FNHA and MECC has been secured for a new playground and bike track for children aged 3-5 years, to be constructed next to the daycare and accessible to the broader community.

Busy Bear Club Preschool

2023/2024 Highlights

Daycare Enhancements

- New fridges for preschool room and Infant and Toddler Room
- New stove for kitchen
- Commercial dishwasher for kitchen
- New dishwasher for Infant and Toddler Room
- New chairs to use for events
- Carpet Cleaner
- Vacuum cleaner
- Ongoing maintenance and repairs to ensure a well-functioning and safe environment

Cultural Materials and Toys

New toys and cultural materials purchased such as books, tabletop toys, bikes, helmets, etc.

Artisan Work

Cultural weavings done by a Sumas First Nation community member are displayed throughout the preschool.

Storage Bin

Storage bin purchased and adjacent to preschool for easy access.

Family Survey

Conducted a family survey to gather input for program improvements and created events based on suggestions.

Busy Bear Club Preschool

2023/2024 Highlights

Hot Lunch Program

Daycare provided nutritious hot lunches, breakfast and snacks on daily basis.

Events and Celebrations

- Baby welcome gifts given to new babies born in the community.
- Dinners with Knowledge Keepers organized.
- Preschool Graduation ceremony held for children moving on to kindergarten.
- Annual summer BQ held.
- Gifts, grocery cards, and activity kits given to families.
- Emergency Preparedness Workshop held for families at community hall. Emergency preparedness backpacks given to all families. Backpacks contained emergency supplies such as flashlights, first aid kit, etc.
- Traditional medicinal workshop held in collaboration with Elder and Knowledge Keeper from SFN community.

Emergency Supplies

Updated and replenished all emergency supplies at the daycare which are ready to be used in the event of an emergency such as an earthquake.

Culture and Language

Roxanne Dool from Stó:lō Shxweli has been providing weekly Halq'eméylem instruction. Both staff and manager have participated in Stó:lō Shxweli open houses and workshops. Various Halq'eméylem materials have been created, e.g. book with Halq'eméylem songs. The children visited elders at elder luncheon where they sang songs in Halq'eméylem and presented handmade gifts. Additionally, Elders and Knowledge Keepers have visited the preschool.

Busy Bear Club Preschool

2023/2024 Highlights

Supports

- Facilitated Speech and Language Therapy twice a week.
- Provided one on one support for children with extra needs.
- Worked with consultants from Aboriginal Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Infant Development in collaboration with families to provide strategies, supports, and resources for families.
- Facilitated visits from Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist to support children in the Infant and Toddler program.

Communication

- Staff meetings were held monthly.
- Team building activities organized with staff such as baby and wedding showers.
- Newsletters were sent monthly to families.
- Lillio App used to communicate with families.

Professional Development

Staff attended BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) conference, “We are One”.

Financial Report

The daycare reported a surplus for the 2023/2024 year.

Busy Bear Club Preschool

Goals for 2024/2025

Moving Forward

Busy Bear Club Preschool has several ambitious goals for the upcoming year. These goals represent our commitment to a safe, nurturing, and culturally enriching environment.

- Build partnership with Stó:lō Shxweli and other stakeholders that support language.
- Develop cultural and more extensive land-based curriculum for daycare in consultation with Elders/Knowledge Keepers and Healing Homes leadership.
- Develop Halq'eméylem language program, by increasing language displays throughout the daycare and encouraging conversations in Halq'eméylem between teachers and children.
- Provide Halq'eméylem language lessons for teachers.
- Create more opportunities for Elders and Knowledge Keepers to interact with children and staff in the daycare.
- Plan and implement workshops based on family interest while engaging families through events, Halq'eméylem sessions, parenting workshops, etc.
- Provide opportunities for Elders to participate in language learning.
- Complete criminal record check for visiting Elders, Knowledge Keepers that are involved in the daycare.
- Reintroduce swimming lessons for 4 yr. old children attending preschool.
- Create a parent advisory group.
- Provide planning time and professional development for staff.
- Strengthen and create partnerships with service providers and funders.
- Review and update policies in policy and procedure manual as necessary.
- Commit to continue providing an enriching and supportive environment for our children and families.

Building a Strong, Healthy Community

Sumas First Nation Health Department

Sumas First Nation (SFN) provides health and social care to support the membership through a variety of services. The report being provided is a result of funds that we receive from Stó:lō Nation.

Health Department

Department Staff

Health Department Staff

The Health Department employs a total of 11 staff to provide crucial Health & Wellness support for Semá:th First Nation.

- Health and Wellness Manager
- Community Health & Wellness Worker (CHR)
- Executive Assistant
- Home Maker (Uncertified)
- Education Administrator & Membership
- Social Development Worker
- Community Events Coordinator
- Certified Water Technician
- Addictions Outreach Worker
- Receptionist
- Youth and Cultural Worker

Health Department

Programs: Health Services

Primary Care

Our community continues to offer in-person services by two nurse practitioners. Overall, the services they provide are pivotal to nation members. SFN members still utilize the programs and services offered by Fraser Health in addition to those offered by Stó:lō Nation Health. Health services for all other primary health care needs can be accessed from Stó:lō Nation health and other providers such as Fraser Health Authority.

Public Health/Screening

The work that is done each year is continued in the following areas. Through Stó:lō Health, communicable disease screening, follow-up, and immunization programs are offered, along with the customary seminars, hearing and vision clinics. Mammograms were not part of this year's work as we could not plan the event.

Maternal and Child Health

The Community Wellness Worker for the SFN Health Department, Stó:lō Health, and FNHA Public Health are all able to provide in-home nursing visits for pre- and post-natal care as considered necessary.

Home & Community Care

Stó:lō Health offers help with personal care, in-home supportive nursing visits, and foot care. Sumas receives funds from ISC for Adult In-Home Care. We hired a Home Maker in February 2024.

Health Department

Programs: Health Services

Medical Transportation

Stó:lō Health is in charge of managing the medical transportation for SFN. SFN's Community Health Representative helps members apply for transportation assistance, and on occasion, they will drive them to local appointments.

Mental Health

Dr. Allyson Cushing, who has a long history of involvement in the community and is well-liked by its members, is under contract with SFN to provide counseling services. She will continue to treat her clients via phone call or virtual appointments and occasionally have seminars throughout the year for SFN.

Health Department

Programs: Child & Family Services

Children and Family Development

For SFN, Xyólheméylh is still offering child protection and family services. The Stó:lō Team Social Worker tasked with interacting with the SFN community and the Delegated Band Representative Troy Ganzeveld and alternate contact Carissa Silver, Xyólheméylh social workers in SFN are Maureen Thompson and Natalie Dahl.

Early Childhood Programs

All families who are nation members are encouraged to enroll in the Busy Bear Club Preschool, childcare, and head start programs that are run out of the center by SFN.

Employment Services

Although we weren't able to get many on-site sessions, SASET was offering support services as the year went on. We shared their brochures on our social media pages to bring more awareness to their training possibilities.

Income Assistance

We have a Nation member with the necessary training to deliver the services we need for our members. The organization has benefited from, and members have enjoyed, having a nation member assist our IA clients.

Health Department

Funded Programs

Brighter Futures

These monies are used to pay the wages of the community events organizer and to cover select activities. Additionally, it has encouraged our kids canoe club to train harder and participate in more competitive canoe festivals over the summer.

Building Healthy Communities

We held several food security activities involving canning of fish, peaches, jam and tomatoes during the summer. Community members showed up in large numbers to these sessions where they learned how to can food. It is planned to continue canning programs next year and extend to include staff canning.

Canada Prenatal

SFN continued to provide gift cards for families of children under one year old.

Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP)

As in most communities, our country's citizens may use counseling services. The main goal of this ongoing endeavor is to persuade members to undergo residential treatment.

Youth Solvent Abuse Program

The money is utilized to cover the elder and youth positions' salaries.

Health Department

Funded Programs

Community Health Representatives (CHR) Funding

The money goes toward promoting community wellness and health. With access to information from various healthcare professionals, the worker assists in educating our members. They bring in educational resources so that elders and families can learn how to make good decisions.

Home and Community Care & Administration Support

Funds are used to support CHR wages.

O&M Health Infrastructure

These monies are utilized to maintain and operate the health facility on a daily basis.

Health Planning and Management

These resources are used to augment our Health and Wellness Manager's salary. She provides the staff with leadership, direction, and support they need to advance our health, education, and social development services for the benefit of the community.

Environmental Public Health Drinking Water Safety Program

These contributions are utilized to boost our water technician's salary so that our community's drinking water satisfies or exceeds safety standards. There is only one residential neighborhood in SFN, and it gets all of its water from two wells.

Preparing Today for a Safer Tomorrow

Sumas First Nation Emergency Management Department

By planning for potential risks and coordinating swift actions in times of crisis, we ensure the resilience and safety of our organization and those in the community we serve.

Emergency Management Dept.

Overview

Quarterly Updates

This quarter has been a time of significant transition and intense activity within the Emergency Management Department. We are pleased to share key updates and achievements from April through July.

We have welcomed important personnel changes, including the promotion of Dale Ganzeveld to Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, a role that reflects her valuable contributions and worth ethic. We are also excited to introduce Jacqueline Silver as our new Recovery and Preparedness Assistant, who will play a crucial role in our recovery efforts. Additionally, Julie de Decker has joined us as a Policy and Safety Officer to address critical gaps in our Emergency Program, focusing on advancing policy development, implementation, and health and safety guidelines.

The quarter was marked by extensive training, conferences, and educational events, which significantly enhanced our team's skills and knowledge. Our commitment to community engagement remained strong, with various outreach efforts aligning closely with community needs.

A major highlight was the activation of our Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) for 12 consecutive days, during which we managed multiple emergencies. This period required working 12-hour days to effectively address and manage the challenges.

Overall, this quarter has been characterized by strategic advancements, enhanced capabilities, and a dedicated response to emergency situations. We are honored to share that the emergency management lead has been nominated for her work with Sumas First Nation, and there is also a joint nomination for the co-development of the ESS FN. Both nominations are for the Exemplary Service Award in the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Emergency Management Exemplary Service Award category.

We look forward to continuing our progress and further supporting the Sumas First Nation community with increased resilience and preparedness.

Emergency Management Dept.

Training and Skills Development

This year saw significant investment in training for staff, community, and leadership. Our emergency team participated in a wide range of training programs aimed at improving our emergency response, preparedness, and technical skills:

Key Training and Skills Development:

- **Wildfire Suppression Training:** Provided hands-on skills necessary to safely and effectively engage in wildfire response.
- **FireSmart Training:** Focused on wildfire prevention and home/community protection techniques to minimize wildfire risks.
- **Traffic Control Person Training:** Ensured that team members are well-prepared to manage traffic flow during emergencies, ensuring the safety of responders and the public.
- **Evacuee Registration & Assistance Tool Bootcamp:** A comprehensive bootcamp that equipped our team to use the new provincial registration tool for evacuees, which allows electronic registration and e-transfer of funds.
- **Emergency Support Services (ESS) Director Training:** Advanced training for leading ESS operations during emergencies and coordinating with regional partners.
- **Communications Equipment Training:** Focused on improving proficiency with critical communications tools, ensuring that our team is prepared to coordinate during emergencies.
- **Evacuation Route Planning Training:** Offered specialized knowledge on developing safe and effective evacuation routes in case of emergency.
- **Emergency Operations Training Level 2:** Advanced EOC training to enhance operational readiness and leadership during large-scale emergency events.
- **Psychosocial Training:** Training on how to provide psychosocial support during emergencies, helping both responders and community members cope with trauma and stress.
- **Psychological First Aid:** Taught our team critical skills to assist individuals experiencing emotional distress following a crisis.

Emergency Management Dept.

Training and Skills Development

Key Training and Skills Development Continued:

- **First Aid Level 3 – Remote/Wilderness:** Advanced first aid training specifically geared towards remote or wilderness settings, ensuring our team can provide effective medical assistance in isolated areas.
- **Swift Water Rescue Level 3:** Specialized training to safely conduct water rescues in swift currents and dangerous water environments.

These training sessions not only improved the technical expertise of our team but also prepared us for a wide range of emergency situations, ensuring we remain agile and responsive to the needs of our community.

Emergency Management Dept.

Key Achievements: April 2024

Emergency Support Services for Nations (ESS FN)

Our Emergency Management Lead co-developed ESS FN alongside Leq'á:mel First Nation Emergency Management Program Manager. Together, they serve as co-Directors of a team comprising 11 Mainland Coast Salish communities. This collaborative effort aims to enhance ESS response and overall Emergency Management. The team meets monthly and has successfully finalized the Terms of Reference, Memorandum of Understanding, and a Community Capacity checklist to bolster preparedness and mutual aid capabilities. Additionally, they are producing a video showcasing their ESS efforts both within their communities and as part of the regional ESS FN team efforts.

Provincial Certification

ESS FN received provincial certification through the JIBC and EMCR to operate the new Registration Evacuee and Assistance Tool, enabling electronic registration and e-transfer funds distribution during community evacuations. The ESS FN team also attended the Network of Emergency Support Services Conference in Kamloops.

Leadership Involvement

The Emergency Management Lead was appointed to the Interim Leadership Committee, facilitated by the Emergency Planning Secretariat.

Community Engagement

We participated in several key engagement sessions, including the EPS Hilekw Sq'eq'o Engagement Session, EMCR Seasonal Hazard Preparedness session, and the Southwest Region Response/Preparedness: Advancing Disaster Risk Reduction.

Emergency Management Dept.

Key Achievements: May 2024

Emergency Preparedness Week

We hosted our Second Annual Preparedness Fair, which was a massive success. The event was featured in the local Abbotsford news and received outstanding feedback from the community and partners, with many stating it was the best preparedness fair they had attended. We had 22 stakeholders and partner agencies set up booths, and over 200 members from our community and surrounding areas joined us. This day of learning was enriched by the inclusion of cultural elements, with the participation of Elders and Youth.

Training

Our staff completed JIBC Psychosocial training and hosted holistic training within the community focused on the Operations Section Chief role and Evacuation route planning, inviting staff and emergency program coordinators from other communities to participate. Our team also achieved certification in Psychological First Aid, completed Lightship GIS Training, and underwent FireSmart Representative training.

Engagement

Our department was asked to join and participate in the Abbotsford Community Resiliency Task Force and engaged with the Province on the new EDMA Regulations. We focused on outreach and our department attended and set up tables at the Chawathil First Nation and Leq'á:mel First Nation FireSmart Fairs.

Emergency Management Dept.

Key Achievements: June 2024

ESS FN

We finalized our ESS FN Logo, designed by our Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. We also completed the Terms of Reference and developed an MOU for consideration and discussion with our Leadership. In addition, we created community capacity checklists, which now allow us to understand the resources and abilities of all our neighboring communities in the event of an emergency crisis.

Training

We participated in several emergency management training sessions in other communities, including EOC training, JIBC emergency management training, communications equipment training, and Abbotsford Fire and Rescue Training. Additionally, we hosted a large-scale field team and EOC mock exercise, with participation from other communities, staff, and partners such as FNHA, ISC, and EMCR.

Engagement

We began the initial stages of creating family preparedness guides to assist with our community's education and awareness of local hazards and the procedures to respond to them if they should occur.

Emergency Management Dept.

Ongoing Projects

Cultural Safety and Humility

We have engaged with FNHA to host a workshop on understanding trauma and lateral kindness, followed by four sharing circles facilitated by an Indigenous facilitator in a culturally safe environment. These sessions will engage staff, community and leadership on how we can best support community members during crises. The feedback will be used to develop a mandatory training workshop for all external stakeholders who wish to engage with us. Additionally, the information, principles, and data gathered will be utilized on a provincial scale to inform the Justice Institute of BC's training programs related to emergency support services.

Emergency Support Services

We are outfitting our ESS Trailer with the necessary supplies and equipment and will be producing a video to showcase our ESS response efforts and highlight the ESS FN team.

Emergency Operations Centre

We are in the process of purchasing electronic equipment to better outfit our EOC, which includes additional training and engagement support.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Climate Adaptation Plan: We are collaborating with Clear Sky Consulting to develop our Resilience and Climate Adaptation Plan. In addition, we are working on a resilience report in partnership with a UFV research team that has collected data from Elders and staff. As part of this project, we hired a local artist to create illustrations of our recovery capitals, and we plan to honor his work at the end of the project with signage featuring his resilience artwork.

Emergency Management Dept.

Ongoing Projects

Indigenous Engagement Requirement

This project focuses on organizing joint emergency drills and exercises involving municipalities, regional districts, and Indigenous communities to test response capabilities and improve coordination. It facilitates regular meetings and dialogue to foster mutual understanding, and hosts community engagement events to gather input from First Nations on emergency preparedness. The project also aims to build formal agreements on communication protocols, support reconciliation efforts, and integrate Indigenous knowledge into emergency management, while enhancing self-determination and governance through cultural safety and humility training.

Kilgard Creek Project

The Kilgard Creek Project focuses on addressing flood mitigation challenges caused by the 2021 atmospheric river event. The project aims to implement sedimentation control measures, utilize bioengineering techniques, and stabilize the creek's banks to improve fish habitat. Additionally, the project includes upgrading three key culvert crossings to enhance water flow and resilience against future flood events.

Growing & Maintaining A Vibrant Community

Sumas First Nation Capital, Housing, and Public Works Department

SFN's Capital, Housing, and Public Works Dept. is committed to creating sustainable infrastructure, developing quality housing, and maintaining essential public services. Through strategic planning and dedicated execution, we build the foundation for strong, thriving communities that meet the needs of today while planning for the growth of tomorrow.

Capital, Housing, & PW Department

Staff

Management

Harmeet Rai
Capital, Housing, & Public Works Manager

Housing

Nancy Murphy
Housing Administrator

Paula Olmstead
Housing Assistant

Maintenance

Joe Silver
Water Operator

Jarrett Brozozog
PW Maintenance

Melvin Pennier
Maintenance Supervisor

Neil Silver
PW Maintenance

Sam Kelly
Housing Maintenance

Bentley VanderHoek
Housing Intern

Capital, Housing, & PW Department

Public Works Plan 2023/2024

Water System

- Water corrosivity study.
- Water management study and requirements for the next 10 years.

Sewer System Upgrades

- Complete the Inflow and Infiltration project.
- Liaise with the City of Abbotsford to increase sewer handling capacity.
- Sign new MTSA for sanitary and fire services.

Multiplex

- Complete the detailed design by May 2024.
- Start construction by July 2024.
- Secure additional funding:
 - Jordon's Principle
 - FNHA
 - ISC for common services and Child and Family Services Program.
 - City of Abbotsford joint collaboration.
- Soccer field and basketball construction work start.

Brick Plant

- Start phase 2 site remediation for the balance of the parcel by July 2024.
- Design and construction of Brick Plant Commemorative Park by May 2024.
- Plan for site development based on Community needs.

Capital, Housing, & PW Department

Public Works Plan 2023/2024

Integrated Storm Water Management Plan (ISMP)

- Study Phase –Jan 2024 to December 2024.
- Construction Phase –January 2025 to July 2026.
- Project scope: Road and Drainage, sidewalks, stormwater management, safeguard fish-bearing habitats.

ACRES Projects. Implement project requiring needs in ACRES. (2022/23)

- Road resurfacing in Residential and Office areas.
- Buildings renovations.

Community Hall Renovations

- New HVAC system through CleanBC funding-March 2024-April 2024.
- Hall renovation through own sources-April 2024-June 2024.

Slope Stabilization Mitigation Project

- ISC-sponsored project, presently in the feasibility approval stage.
- Move to the Design stage by May 2024 and the construction phase by July 2024 –Sep 2024.

Flood Mitigation Projects

- Immediate need to update existing road and house infrastructure to avoid water ponding on roads and near houses.
- Rebuild of the abandoned house: 2778 Sumas Mountain Road.

Capital, Housing, & PW Department

Public Works Plan 2023/2024

Asset Management Plan

Under process with an external consultant. Once complete, the plan will provide existing infrastructure and the requirements for future needs. This is an ISC-sponsored project.

Complete Health Building Renovations

Addition of a generator.

Long-term Development Projects

- Capacity building to cater to the growing need for water for the entire community including south-side parcels.
- Proposal to build own Sewerage Treatment Plant and become independent of the City of Abbotsford.
- Develop Kilgard Road west to a paved surface with sidewalks.
- Develop a maintenance team with the necessary equipment to handle the menace of blackberry.

Capital, Housing, & PW Department

Housing Plan 2023/2024

2023-24 CMHC Renovations Completed

- CMHC ERP (Emergency Repair) Renovations 2 units \$60,00.
- CMHC National Co-investment Funding was received to be allocated towards the ISC 2022 20-Renovations. \$153,850.
- CMHC One-Time Special Contribution \$150,000 –Renovations for the 6 units in Phase 6.

2023 ISC – HSP Renovations

- ISC Project: ICMS #9-00131146 Health & Safety Renovations 7 Units \$348,850.

ECAP Program – BC Hydro’s Energy Conservation Assistance Program

Continuing program, all houses that applied under the program received fridge, furnace, attic insulation and bathroom fans based on assessment needs.

Repairs & Maintenance

Band Owned Rentals, Pre-97-Ph 6 and Member Homes: Received additional funding of \$180,000 in December 2023.

Capital, Housing, & PW Department

Housing Plan 2023/2024

Additional Highlights

- Oversee the ISC HSP Governance Projects.
- New management staff capacity development.
- Continue the BC Hydro ECAP Program.
- Submit 2024/25 Renovation Applications.
- Research proposal calls, apply for applicable projects.
- Complete the Housing Policy Update.
- Update the Housing & Lot Needs Assessment Plan.
- Planning for future housing lots.

Creating Connections, Celebrating Culture

Sumas First Nation Healing Homes

Healing Homes provides foundational workshops and programs designed to provide solutions to the social, cultural, spiritual, and general wellbeing needs of Sumas First Nation community and/or band members.

Healing Homes

2023/24 Highlights

Back-to-School Coastal Jam

The Coastal Jam Initiative has become a cornerstone of cultural revitalization and community wellness in the Fraser Salish region. It brings together Indigenous peoples from diverse nations to celebrate traditional singing, dancing, and cultural practices. Originating with humble beginnings, these gatherings have grown substantially, now attracting over 400 participants from various First Nations communities and beyond. The events not only celebrate Indigenous culture but also serve as vital platforms for youth engagement, health promotion, and community building.

Coastal Jam is a way to provide a safe and supportive environment for youth to connect with their cultural heritage, reducing the risk of substance abuse and promoting positive self-image. The event fosters holistic wellness by integrating cultural practices into health and wellness initiatives, promoting physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

This year at the Sumas Coast Jam we saw a great turn out. Many of the surrounding community members and families came out to participate.

Coastal Jam Learn to Dance

We had approximately 200 children ages 2 - 13 come out and learn to sing and dance. We had 3 groups of teens from Musqueam, Skowkale, and Seabird Island step up to perform their own songs and solos. The children learned to dance. We were surprised to see so many new faces and especially so many young children, but everyone had a great time. A group home and their youth attended and the youth said they were allowed to come to the Coastal Jam because it is a safe place where there is no drugs or alcohol.

Healing Homes

2023/24 Highlights

Canoe Journey

We had some members go on the Canoe Journey during the summer and participated on the canoe.

Mini Indigenous Queens and Mini Warriors

"Mini Indigenous Queens and Mini Warriors" is a tailored youth program aimed at supporting Indigenous children and teenagers as they navigate the challenges of life, focusing on fostering a reconnection to their cultural roots while embracing the joys of youth. Through a diverse range of activities, including self-esteem building, leadership training, enjoyable pursuits, essential life skills development, and traditional cultural engagement, participants embark on a journey of personal growth and empowerment within a supportive community environment. This is an ongoing group that helps support youth in building self-esteem, understanding and maintaining relationship, education, and learning new skills.

Community Canning Days

The community spent an entire day coming together to can tomatoes and make salsa. This gathering was a great opportunity to spend the day together, learn a new skill, and create something together that everyone got to benefit from.

Hat Painting with Nikki Larock

We hosted a community evening of hat painting, which included dinner and snacks. We had over 30 attendees, which was a wonderful turnout. There was a lot of laughter, sharing of stories, and reconnecting with community.

Soup Kitchen

Hosted every Wednesday, the Soup Kitchen is open to anyone in need of a hot meal. This program was started at the beginning of September.

Healing Homes

2023/24 Highlights

Naturopathic Workshops w/ Dr. Jeanne Paul

The “12 Screaming Babies” Naturopathic Workshop with Dr. Jeanne Paul has been offered on a monthly basis to interested community members at no charge. Dr. Paul has specialized in botanical studies as a Naturopath Physician student, giving her the essential medical background to pursue the path of teaching others about traditional medicines. Dr. Jeanne Paul has spent 20+ years specializing in making herbal medicines that are still used by many Indigenous peoples in all of the Americas. Sumas FN will be hosting the year’s final two day workshop to complete the “12 Screaming Babies” course on October 26 & 27.

Understanding Trauma & Lateral Kindness w/ Dr. Allyson Cushing

Staff took part in a 2-day workshop on Understanding Trauma & Lateral Kindness. The objective of this training series is to enhance their understanding of the history of Indigenous people in Canada and the resulting impacts of colonization. Inherent in the design is a strong commitment to trauma informed service delivery.

The workshop establishes a foundation for understanding how current community standards have come to be normalized and somewhat accepted, and helps to develop an understanding of the root causes of maladaptive behaviours prior to formulating a plan to address presenting symptomatology.

Seminar 1: Retracing History

A historical review of Indigenous peoples in Canada

Seminar 2: Understanding Trauma

Examining the current impacts of historical trauma and understanding how intergenerational trauma influences parenting

Seminar 3: Understanding the Significance of Attachment

Understanding the importance of early child development in our adult relationships

Seminar 4: Lateral Kindness

Exposing the unobserved harmful acts and practices associated with lateral violence and offer skills for healthy conflict management

Healing Homes

Upcoming Projects & Programs

Upcoming Seasonal Programs & Projects for Youth

- Bead work: For the last two weeks of October we will be learning to bead! The older youth can work on medallions with our Indigenous beader, and our younger members will start with more simple projects.
- Seasonal outdoor work with youth will be starting soon.
- The youth will soon be learning small projects such as a start to weaving, macrame, and painting.
- Coming in November: Survival month! Youth will learn essential survival skills, such as how to build a fire and basic plant identification, with one of our experts. With this, they will learn about their personal relationship to nature and culture so that they can continue to understand the significance of the world around them.

Dr. Gabor Maté Workshop

Will be attending a workshop by Dr. Gabor Maté (Trauma, Illness, & Healing in a Toxic Culture) on November 18 at Máthxwi First Nation.

Gerald Keisman Staff Workshop

A 2 day workshop for staff will be held on October 28 & 29. The training will provide an understanding of how trauma has impacted the mind (brain structure), body, (nervous system, organs and muscles), endocrine glands (hormones), and the development of the brain structure. You will gain practical healing exercises and communication skills to be able to better support community workers. This training will also assist community workers who experience vicarious or secondary trauma.

Wellbriety

We bought some Wellbriety books and will soon be starting classes. Details on these classes are coming soon.

Healing Homes

Upcoming Projects & Programs

Language Nest/Family/Cultural Center

A current work-in-progress, the “Language Nest” will be located near the Community Hall and will provide a space for Halq'eméylem language lessons to take place, as well as being a dedicated space for other family and cultural programs to take place. Funding and building plans are still being finalized.

School District 34 Indigenous Center

We started working with Baker View post secondary and the Indigenous Center to better reach indigenous students. Our aim is to foster a comprehensive support system that nurtures Indigenous youth through balanced development in all aspects of their lives. By addressing their physical, intellectual, emotional, and cultural needs, we seek to propel them beyond survival mode into a space where possibilities and opportunities abound.

Stewardship and Sustainability

Governance and Natural Resources Department

The GNR team is dedicated to protecting the terrestrial, aquatic ecosystems, and fisheries resources of the Semá:th people. The right to land, to fish, to hunt and gather, and to self-government is necessary for nation-building.

Governance and Natural Resources

Summary

Summary

The Governance & Natural Resources Department acts as the primary point of contact for consultation between Semá:th and government and industry carrying out initiatives and proposing projects that trigger the duty to consult. We work with the community Elders and Knowledge Keepers, Chief and Council, and Membership to understand concerns, determine the consultation process with the Nation, and restore and preserve all fishing and habitat projects within the Semá:th territory.

GNR facilitates the collection of Semá:th Indigenous knowledge and conducts numerous assessments and studies on the impacts of Semá:th Aboriginal Rights & Title on traditional territory. We also work with federal, provincial, and municipal governments and industry to avoid or minimize potential adverse effects on Semá:th Reserve and Traditional territory.

Governance and Natural Resources

Introduction: Governance

Governance

Semá:th Nation is at the crossroads of decolonization and self-determination. A strong Government with a great Governance system enables Semá:th to assert their inherent right to self-determination and self-governance – the path to Indigenous Nationhood.

People

Distinguish our People – collecting information on who we are for effective planning— programs, and services needed by our citizens to support Semá:th Nationhood building.

Governance

Sanction our modern constitution (Semá:th Declaration) based on our traditional laws and practices. Creating a governance development plan for our Nation with a timeline and resources.

Government

Setting goals to assert authority and jurisdiction over our lands and citizens. Establish revenue goals that foster self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

Land

Developed a detailed description and map with traditional names of sites in our territory. Continue to develop our land management and administration functions in our territories.

Economy

Implement economic strategies, policies, and programs that foster prosperity.

Governance and Natural Resources

Introduction: Natural Resources

Natural Resources

The work of the GNR department is to strengthen the working relationship of Semá:th as it relates to fisheries management, resource management and extraction, and stewardship. The GNR team works towards collaborative fisheries management processes with Crown governments and facilitates discussion between all levels of government about the recognition of First Nations' inherent rights to fish and water. Our goal is to promote and support the management of a robust and expanding fishery for the Nation and support our cultural and spiritual traditions for future generations.

Project activities have included water quality monitoring, support with the development of a standardized water quality database collection methodology, bank stabilization work including implementation of the fieldwork, data management, and reporting, and fish monitoring.

Governance and Natural Resources

Milestones

Conservation, Guardianship & Harvest Program (CGH)

We recently completed our 5th year of the CGH plan! This couldn't have been possible without the two new techs and bio that we hired this year; they were fundamental in running the CGH site, Weir site, and other field operations.

Following our prototype weir and trap box last year, we installed a more robust Weir and Trap box scientific platform that was semi-operational for just over a month. This platform was an amazing opportunity to better understand the challenges of an ever-changing system. We developed relationships with many community members through community engagement and weir shifts and had the chance to showcase a lot of the dedication and effort our team and external contractors have put into hopefully matching the goals of the Nation.

The weir and trap box scientific platform/Food, Social, and Ceremonial (FSC) platform was designed to provide a sustainable FSC fishery for the community through selective targeting.

Vedder Fish Study

In response to the Vedder gravel extractions following 2021 ARE, we advanced the need and requirement for further studies to better understand the impacts of migrating salmon through Semá:th S'ólh Téméxw. Driving the Semá:th vision, mission, and values forward, we enacted operational changes and requirements for environmental contractors leading the extractions, with a strong focus on salmon protection, habitat enhancement where feasible, and the addition of novel monitoring techniques. We worked to receive funding from ENV to undertake a Salmon Survivability Study, working with UBC's Center for Indigenous Fisheries, and the LFFA to beach seine salmon, radio and PIT tag, and assess overall health while they migrate upstream to spawning grounds – working to gain more knowledge on the cumulative impacts salmon face including but not limited to gravel extraction, changing temperatures, drought, and angling pressures.

Governance and Natural Resources

What's Next

The next step is for Semá:th to determine which areas we want to have legislative authority over. Unlike the provinces, there's no clear list of jurisdictions for First Nations.

1. **Legal Expertise:** Many First Nations lack access to the same level of legal expertise available for federal or provincial legislation, resulting in poorly drafted laws that may obscure fundamental legal issues.
2. **Decision-Making Advice:** There is an overreliance on external legal advice, which leads to a narrow, legalistic approach to practical challenges. A more balanced mix of professional policy advice is needed.

With these items in mind, Semá:th has taken steps towards ensuring our legal council is not only provided by outside experts but also in-house through the continued development of our people.

3. **Judicial Capacity:** Current courts are not adequately equipped to manage the intersection of Indigenous legal systems and Crown law, which hampers the effective enforcement of laws.
4. **Fiscal Capacity:** Sustainable self-governance requires realistic assessments of program implementation costs and robust funding arrangements. There's a notable shortage of skilled personnel in the civil service due to the proliferation of new government organizations.

The GNR department has and will continue to source funding streams to continue the critical work of self-government.

5. **Collaborative Support:** First Nations are encouraged to collaborate through shared institutions to build capacity and support effective governance without undermining their autonomy.

Governance and Natural Resources

What's Next

“We have to take care of everything that belongs to us’ / We have to take care of everything that belongs to everyone.”

Semá:th’s commitment to building and strengthening relationships with both existing Stó:lō communities and other First Nations. This approach aims to enhance knowledge sharing and support among Indigenous groups, fostering collaboration and unity in our efforts. By pursuing new relationships, Semá:th seeks to create a broader network that can contribute to their growth and resilience.

For Indigenous nations to govern effectively, they need better access to legal expertise, a diverse range of decision-making advice, improved judicial resources, and collaborative frameworks to enhance fiscal capacity and skilled personnel availability. These are the steps that the GNR department will continue to work towards diligently for the continued betterment of the community.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Governance

Over the past year, the Governance Department at Semá:th has undertaken significant initiatives aimed at advancing the well-being and rights of our community. These initiatives span policy development, strategic planning, flood mitigation, resource conservation, and cross-government collaboration. Below is a summary of key accomplishments:

Legal and Compliance

We remain committed to ensuring legal compliance and upholding standards:

- Ensured stakeholder adherence to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA).
- Ensured adherence to the Semá:th Declaration in all our legal and non-legal workings.

Strategic Planning and Funding

We successfully secured and managed funding to support Sumas First Nation's growth and development:

- Negotiated and managed projects funded through Federal and Provincial grants.
- Developed strategic plans providing guidance and oversight for cross-departmental initiatives, ensuring effective resource allocation such as the Water Quality grant we received for which we collaborated with the Lands Department.

Data Analysis and Communication

We have utilized data to support effective decision-making and keep stakeholders informed:

- Analyzed and presented data to leadership, offering valuable insights that guided our initiatives.
- Contributed to publications that enhance understanding of governance priorities within our community.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Governance

Policy Advocacy and Development

The Governance Department has actively engaged in policy advocacy and development efforts to ensure that the rights of Semá:th are recognized and upheld. Key initiatives include:

- Building strong relationships with diverse stakeholders to advocate for legislative changes.
- Successfully negotiating recognition of First Nations' rights at various government levels.
- Developing comprehensive policies that address the needs of different departments, including Governance, Environment, Administration, Education, Health and Wellness, Emergency Management, Finance, and Human Resources.

Natural Resource Conservation and Traditional Territory Management

The stewardship of our land and resources is a top priority:

- Led research and directed consultants in fieldwork focusing on the stewardship, conservation, and restoration of over 600 acres of Semá:th lands.
- Directed Cultural and Heritage Studies to promote the gathering, validation, and sharing of Indigenous knowledge.
- Reviewed and reported on diverse environmental issues, integrating traditional, scientific, and technical perspectives.

International Coordination and Representation

Our involvement extends beyond our borders:

- Participated as key technical and policy members within national and international taskforces on flood recovery and mitigation, strengthening our position as a leader in flood governance.
- Organized meetings with political appointees and elected officials, advocating for policies that directly impact the safety and resilience of our community.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Governance

Flood Governance: Sumas River Watershed Flood Mitigation Plan (SRWFMP)

In response to the ongoing threat of floods, we actively contributed to the Sumas River Watershed Flood Mitigation Plan:

- Collaborated with Leq'ámel and Mathxwi First Nations, the Cities of Abbotsford and Chilliwack, and the Province of British Columbia to reduce flood risks and enhance ecosystem resilience.
- Signed the Sumas River Watershed Flood Mitigation Collaborative Framework in 2023, focusing on reducing flood risks and restoring habitats for the benefit of all communities.
- Guided by the Halqemeylem principle of LETS'EMÓT (One Heart, One Mind), we committed to mutual actions to reduce flood risks and pursue ecosystem restoration in the spirit of reconciliation.
- Early initiatives include upgrading critical infrastructure, conducting hydrological modeling, performing flood-risk assessments, and balancing cultural, social, environmental, and economic values.

Executive Member of the LMS Society

Economic growth through land management remains a priority for the Governance Department:

- Oversaw the management of 60 hectares of Crown land for economic development purposes, fostering growth and promoting self-sufficiency for our Nation.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Governance

Collaborative Relationships with Ministries

Our involvement extends beyond our borders:

- Established working relations with several key Ministries, including Transportation and Infrastructure, Agriculture and Food, Emergency Management, Environment and Climate Change Strategy, Indigenous Relations, and others.
- These partnerships demonstrate our ability to work effectively with government agencies and stakeholders, advancing shared goals and supporting the needs of Semá:th.

Lightning Rock Land Purchase

The Semá:th people have long sought to protect the Lightning Rock site for heritage and cultural purposes. Earlier this year, The Province purchased 36 hectares of undeveloped private property in Semá:th territory for the purposes of conservation. The Lightning Rock site holds deep cultural and spiritual significance, serving as a repository of traditions and narratives passed down through generations.

“We are pleased to hear that the Lightning Rock site has finally received the recognition it deserves as a sacred site for the Semá:th people,” said Semá:th Chief Dalton Silver. “We extend our gratitude to Semá:th, the S’ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance (STSA), John Glazema, Cold Water Ranch and all those within the government who played a role in moving this forward. This acknowledgment marks a positive step in the right direction towards reconciliation.”

We want to recognize and thank all those who were involved in this process. We are eternally grateful for the dedicated efforts of our staff and for the voices and support of the community that led us to this historic agreement.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Communications

Leadership and Collaboration

SFN Communications led SFN's internal and external communications, providing strategic guidance to leadership and staff across all departments.

Government Relations and Community Engagement

Effective government relations were fostered through Ida's work as a liaison between SFN, its members, and Provincial, and Municipal government communications teams. This was done through community meetings, surveys, and feedback mechanisms.

Media Coverage and Documentation

Executed comprehensive media coverage for SFN's events, capturing key moments through photography and videography to document successes and milestones. A highlight was the production of the "Sumas Clay Products" documentary, which is currently in post-production. This project involved extensive research, planning, filming, and editing, and it aims to tell the story of the brick plant's historical and cultural significance.

Community Events and Engagement

Semá:th Communications played a vital role in organizing and promoting various community events that fostered a sense of togetherness and pride within Semá:th. Ida ensured these events were well publicized through newsletters, flyers, social media, and direct community outreach. Events such as cultural celebrations, health and wellness programs, and youth engagement activities were successfully documented, and highlights were shared with the community to celebrate their success. Additionally, the department collaborated with other teams to gather community stories, ensuring that the voice of the community was included in SFN's public communications.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Communications

Crisis Communication

SFN Communications played a critical role in crisis management, particularly during the 2021 Atmospheric River Event. Ida was instrumental in developing and implementing crisis communication strategies, managing potential reputational risks, and ensuring that both internal and external stakeholders were informed during the crisis.

Media Relations and Partnerships

Ida's initiatives strengthened relationships with local, regional, and national media outlets, including collaborations with CBC and Global News. This ensured consistent and positive media coverage of SFN's programs, events, and initiatives such as the Conservation, Guardianship, and Harvest Program. Ida also served as the main point of contact for media inquiries, further enhancing SFN's reputation for openness and engagement.

Content Creation and Social Media Management

A key focus of the year was producing high-quality, culturally aligned content that adhered to the Semá:th Declaration, UNDRIP, and DRIPA principles. Ida led the creation of newsletters, news releases, social media content, flyers, community bulletins, and website updates. This ensured that SFN's messages were engaging, informative, and aligned with core cultural values.

Data Analysis

SFN Communications leveraged communication metrics to evaluate the impact of various campaigns and initiatives, allowing data-informed adjustments to improve communication strategies and overall outreach effectiveness.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Communications

Community and Knowledge Holder Engagement

Building relationships with Community members, Elders, and knowledge holders remained a priority. Ida facilitated the documentation of community events and traditional knowledge shared by Elders, ensuring its preservation for future generations.

Summary

SFN Communication's accomplishments in the past year have significantly contributed to strengthening community engagement, visibility, and preserving the cultural heritage of Semá:th and we anticipate great work that will come forth from the new staff we have onboard. If you have any stories you would like to showcase within our newsletters or on our social media platforms, please reach out to Communications@sumasfirstnation.com

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Natural Resources

Advancing our relations with DFO and strengthening our stewardship over resources in the traditional territory as exemplified through our multi-year funding agreement (PSSI - \$~700,000), exploring and piloting more selective methods of salmon harvest.

- Weaving traditional and indigenous knowledge with Western science techniques through our ongoing CGH plan, and incorporation of sonar and underwater video.
- Bringing DFO stock assessment and Chilliwack hatchery to the table, working together to understand Semá:th's needs and future goals.

Completion of Phase 1 of our Lower Sumas Restoration and Stewardship Project

- Through our TCEI funding, we completed a Clayburn Creek headwaters field investigation and restoration scoping, with a community engagement session to better understand the historical and cultural significance of the watershed.
- Closing out our TCEI funding, we completed the first half of our Clayburn Creek headwaters restoration design and implementation with the installment of Post-Assisted-Log structures in-stream to create habitat complexing and enhance salmon habitat. To accomplish this, we utilized natural materials from felled cedars on Reserve.
- We kicked off the AHRF funding component of the Stewardship Project with field investigations on Kilgard, McKay, Marshall Creek, and lower Sumas River working to understand environmental flow needs with the installment of hydrometric monitoring stations, habitat assessments, and comprehensive water quality monitoring analyzing basic WQ parameters, bacteriology, heavy metals, and emerging contaminants of concern such as hydrocarbons and tire chemical run-off. The work will conclude this fiscal, utilizing our culmination of newly gained knowledge of these systems to develop additional habitat restoration scoping, planning, and future concept designs.

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Natural Resources

Continued 2021 ARE flood response works with the City of Abbotsford, notably the completion of bank repairs on SP-52 – the 1km stretch along the Sumas River at Atkinson, opposite McKay Creek. This project marked a great example of collaboration from the get-go with the government, consultants (KWL), and SFN. Here we pushed the boundaries of 'status quo' riprap for dike bank protection and worked with engineers to pilot a novel approach of a vegetated bank, complete with plantings of Semá:th suggested native species. Early collaboration made this project a success, with cooperation from the City, Diking Authority, and regulators. Plantings of native species along the fortified dike allow for mature plant growth to create salmon refuge, food supply through the overhang, cooling temperatures through shading, and in-stream, the toe of dike complexing with large woody debris and boulder placement.

SRWFMP work at the technical table – Amanda collaborated with experts on the final environmental report, and formulation of the environmental objectives and balancing principles.

TFI tech and habitat sub-group work on salmon passage and habitat connectivity cross-border. Amanda hosted the tour in June to US delegates highlighting areas of concern impacted by flooding, current initiatives, and future potential restoration opportunities.

Establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships with several ENGOs: Resilient Waters, Watershed Watch Salmon Society, Lower Fraser Floodplains Coalition, Fraser Valley Conservancy (recent involvement in endangered Oregon Forest snail surveys with the Lands Dept. and foundational changes to their mandate of working with First Nations), Fraser Valley Watersheds Coalition, etc. Many of these relationships have fostered our ability to be present at the decision-making tables for restoration opportunities in our traditional territory, to provide support, and to receive funding to accomplish these goals. Examples: Through the numerous PRRO files Cheyenne flags and manages for input and consultation, and the funding support from Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation for the Bert Brink Wildlife Management Area, "Restoring Floodplain Forest in the Heart of the Fraser."

Governance and Natural Resources

Last Year's Results: Natural Resources

Clayburn Creek Restoration

The Clayburn Creek restoration project is a collaboration between Semá:th First Nation and the LFFA, funded by the Aquatic Habitat restoration Fund. The challenges at Clayburn Creek is lack of juvenile rearing habitat, disconnection due to road development, slope instability and erosion, invasive species, and suburb development.

This project hit the ground running, with John and Amanda playing a huge role in its success. This past week, habitat enhancements were done to Clayburn Creek that will in time, create salmon habitat, with plans later this year for some bank stabilization as well.

Stewardship

- The GNR and Emergency Preparedness departments collaborated to successfully lead a fish salvage in response to a toxic spill in Stoney Creek. Eva and Kira led teams on site, Amanda conducted background research and reviewed the reports, and Natasha relayed information from the emergency meetings with external parties.
- This year in CGH we adapted our angler surveys to be more efficient and insightful for angling efforts on the Chilliwack/Sumas River. We transitioned from counting anglers and measuring fish to doing interviews with anglers about their fishing activity and measuring their catches.
- We extended our sonar monitoring window from a few weeks during the end of July and beginning of August, to running operations until the summer chinook and sockeye run was complete. These changes in our data collection methods will give us a more robust understanding of salmon stokes migrating through the Chilliwack/Sumas River.
- Fish salvage was successfully completed by GNR for the Kilgard Creek culvert removal project.
- At the end of this month, we will be completing our interviews regarding species at risk with community members in partnership with SRRMC (and if community members express an interest in participating in an interview, please encourage them to contact me). These interviews will help inform staff where to focus research and how to pursue various conservation opportunities on Sumas Mountain.

Governance and Natural Resources

Conclusion

Throughout the past year, the Governance & Natural Resources Department of Semá:th has been instrumental in ensuring the protection of our rights, securing necessary resources, managing critical projects, and collaborating at all levels of government. Rights and traditions will define Indigenous governance of the future. Together, we continue to pave the way for a resilient and thriving community, rooted in our culture, heritage, and the sustainability of S'ólh Téméxw - our land.

Preserving & Protecting Semá:th Territory

Lands Department

The Lands Department is responsible for Managing the Reserve Lands and Resources under the Land Code. The Lands Department is committed developing policies and procedures to better administer SFN Laws as they pertain to Semá:th First Nation Lands.

Lands

Staff

New Staff

The SFN Lands Department has added one new member to our team: Donna Blair. Donna joined us in May 2024 as the Legacy Coordinator and Communications Assistant.

As mentioned in the 2023 Lands Annual review, a Legacy Funding with LABRC submission was submitted and approved; this enabled Jennette to post the position and hire Donna as the Legacy Project Engagement and Communication Assistant.

Donna began with a review of each parcel of land in Sumas First Nation to see what SFN 'inherited' from Indian Affairs while they oversaw the lands of our community.

She will work to identify areas of concern, such as surveys and encroachments, and will continue to work through each area as the year progresses, ensuring a thorough and comprehensive review. You will see more information in Donna's submission in this article.



To the left: Jennette Pierre Lands Manager, Chantal Douglas Lands Officer, April Schwartz Environmental & Archeological Monitor, Sasha Tuttle Environmental Compliance Officer



To the right: Donna Blair the Legacy Coordinator & Communications Assistant

Lands

Lands Advisory Committee

Lands Advisory Committee Meetings

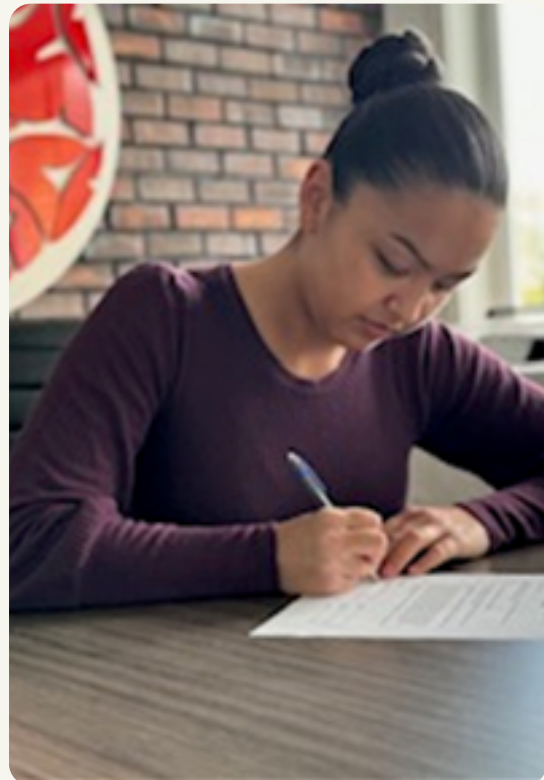
Chief and Council appointed Jacqueline Silver to the vacant LAC seat on March 26, 2024. Jacqueline has been a valuable asset to the LAC and has made significant contributions to the monthly LAC Meeting discussions. It has been refreshing to have her youthful energy at the table! The photo below is of Jacqueline signing her Oath to Office.

SFN Lands Advisory Committee

- Audrey Silver (Chair)
- Larry Ned Sr.
- John Kelly Sr
- Melvin Williams
- Jacqueline Silver

LAC Meetings for 2023 - 2024

- November 7, 2023
- December 5, 2023
- February 16, 2024
- March 26, 2024
- April 16, 2024
- May 22, 2024
- June 25, 2024
- July 22, 2024
- August 29, 2024
- September 16, 2024



It has been a pleasure collaborating with the Lands Advisory Committee. They are a knowledgeable group, and we have learned a great deal from one another.

Lands

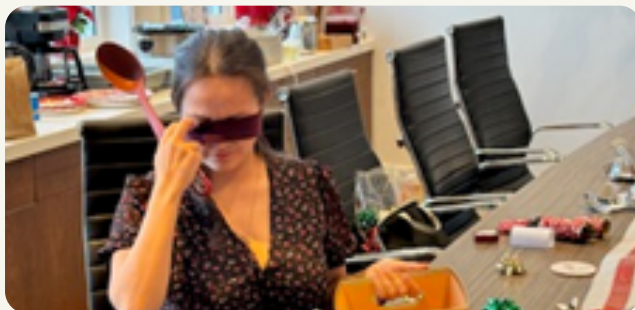
Christmas with the LAC

Jennette and Chantal schedule a special annual meeting for the Lands Advisory Committee. They decorate the meeting room to create a festive atmosphere for the committee to enjoy a turkey dinner and share in laughter.

The meeting begins with important discussions before transitioning into a fun-filled afternoon. At the December LAC Meeting we played a few games and spent quality time together, expressing gratitude for the committee's hard work throughout the year.

This gathering serves as a way to unwind and show kindness to each other, as the LAC and Lands Staff handle emotionally taxing and challenging jobs. It's a rare opportunity for them to relax and enjoy each other's company.

The Lands Department Staff look forward to spending another Christmas Meeting together and we will be sure to take more photos this time round!



Lands

Links to Learning Conference

Lands Advisory Board Links to Learning Conference in December 2023

In December 2023, Chantal Douglas, SFN Lands Officer, and Jennette Pierre, Lands Manager, attended the LABRC Links to Learning Conference at the Westin Bay Shore in Vancouver.

There were several breakout sessions to choose from at this National Lands Conference. Jennette chose "Additions to Reserve, Land Governance, Framework Agreement Additions to Reserve, and Reform Proposal & Discussion." The two-day conference was packed with information and they took back a wealth of new knowledge!

Chantal has provided more information in her annual report, which is written in the following pages.



Lands

Department Highlights

Works with Ministry of Transportation MOTI

This past year has been nothing short of a whirlwind, filled with numerous meetings with the Ministry of Transportation to discuss the much-anticipated widening of Highway 1 and the interchange at Sumas Way in Abbotsford. However, one particular meeting truly stands out: It was the meeting where Sumas sat down with MOTI to discuss the conversion of Marshall Lonzo at Sumas Way. As we gathered at the site earmarked for the upcoming works, representatives from Máthxwi and Kwantlen joined us.

The camaraderie and shared sense of purpose were truly uplifting as we strolled through the land together, immersing ourselves in the ambitious plans ahead. We candidly voiced our concerns. Subsequently, contract negotiations with GNR commenced. Additionally, Sumas' Environmental & Archeological Monitor and GNR representatives will be closely overseeing the site once the work begins. The journey to this point has been long and arduous, but we remain steadfast in our belief that the creek will emerge from this transformation to meet higher environmental standards.

Additions to Reserve

Sumas submitted an application for Additions to Reserve with Indigenous Services Canada nearly a year ago. Among the responsibilities outlined in the application, Jennette appointed a Vector Surveying to complete the survey of the 80-acre property at Atkinson Road which is nearing completion and is poised for inclusion in the ATR package to ISC.

Additionally, Jennette was tasked with overseeing the Phase 1 Environmental Assessments for both the 80-acre Atkinson Road parcel and the 50 Acre Fooks Road properties. These assessments have been meticulously completed by IBI (formally Teranis) in strict adherence to ATR requirements. As we transition into the Phase 2 Environmental Assessments, although a time-consuming endeavor, we are actively setting the groundwork to ensure successful completion.

Lands

Department Highlights

Habitat Restoration Project

In 2021, Jennette Pierre took on the role of Land Manager, which involved reviewing Archaeological Reports conducted by the Stó:lō Resources Centre. These reports highlighted the importance of returning space to the community members when the land is being developed. When development occurs on SFN land, we aim to incorporate traditional uses of the territory. The reports suggested the creation of walkways with signage to showcase the traditional uses of the property. Jennette started looking into this wonderful idea because it is a great way for developers to give back.

A few developers have approached Jennette to encroach into the 30-meter setback to the creeks on the northern parcels of Highway 1 land base in 2022. In response, she proposed the idea presented in the Stó:lō Archaeological Reports of the Pathway. This presented an exciting venture, albeit a costly one. As part of the proposal, the developers are expected to replace the Himalayan blackberries and overgrowth with traditional plants of our territory, such as ferns, huckleberries, thimble berries, salmon berries, cedars, and other native/medicinal plants, and trees. While the setback area limits our ability to develop to the fullest capacity, which is a loss for both Sumas and the developer, the habitat restoration projects also rejuvenate our waterways, resulting in a win-win-win situation.

Upon Sasha's arrival in the Lands Department team in 2022, Jennette shared the visions from the Stó:lō Archaeological Reports. Together, they engaged in discussions with developers in the community, promoting inclusivity and collaboration. Once the idea was generated on paper the report was brought to the Lands Advisory Committee for further input and approval.

So far, the developable area has been completed and the riparian area is partially complete. More organic fill material is required for the riparian area. The trail will then be constructed in conjunction with the upgraded stormwater management plan and plantings will then be installed. It's truly exciting to see this project come to life. The creation of a pathway on the southeastern portion of the Marshal Lonzo Creek is a testament to this collaborative effort.

The habitate restoration project on the southern side of Marshall Lonzo is expected to be complete near the end of 2025 the paved walkway will be equipped with traditional plants, berries, medicines, benches, and solar lighting for all community members to enjoy. We hope you enjoy the photos of the habitat restoration project, showcasing our collective progress thus far!

Lands

Department Highlights

Habitat Restoration Project



Lands

Department Highlights

Land Use Plan 2024

The Land Use Plan has been presented to the Chief and Council and is undergoing a few additions, which is to include the Semá:th Sacred Sites: Lost Lake, Lightning Rock, and the Thunderbird Caves. Once the additions to the report are complete, the Land Use Plan will be brought back to the Membership for review and approval via referendum. Please watch for updates soon!

Thank you goes out to Murray Ned for providing photos of the Thunderbird Caves!



Thunderbird Caves Sacred Site

Lakeview Drive House Sale

A Sale Notice was sent out on September 13, 2024 for the home and the CP and house located at 37481 Lakeview Drive, Abbotsford, BC. The one-and-a-half-year-old house on Sumas IR #6 completed construction under the Semá:th CP Law in 2023. The house and land were conditionally granted to a Sumas Member who defaulted on their mortgage payments. Semá:th took the home and land back as set out in the agreements.

As per the Semá:th CP Law and direction of the Chief and Council, the home and land have being offered for sale to members of the Sumas First Nation. The Lands & Housing Department have received several requests for information on the home and have been working through each request as they cross our desks.



Thunderbird Caves Sacred Site



37481 Lakeview Drive

Lands

Department Highlights

Sumas First Nation Law Revisions

Jennette, Chantal, and the LABRC representatives of our nation have been reviewing the Cannabis Law, Certificate of Possession Law, and the Fee Schedules. The review sessions of the Cannabis Law are lengthy as we go through the law line by line. Next we will be reviewing the CP Law because exercising the Law we noticed that it doesn't flow as it should with the Housing Policy. Once our reviews are complete, the team will bring the proposed changes to the LAC at the Law Extravaganza. Here, the LAC will review the suggested changes and make any necessary revisions. Once the review and minor revisions are complete, the laws will be brought to the Chief and Council for approval.

Jennette's Message

As you continue to read this Annual Update you will notice the wealth of information provided by the Lands Department Staff; this is a result of the dedicated input from Jennette and the Lands Department representatives. We are a formidable team of women, and Jennette takes immense pride in each and every member of the Lands Team. Her work wouldn't be possible without the invaluable contributions of each team member. Jennette extends our heartfelt thanks for everything they do; they are the guardians of the environment, waterways, and one of Sumas' most precious assets: the land. Her hands go up to the Lands Department Team for their unwavering dedication!

Lands

Report: Chantal Douglas

Lands Advisory Board Resource Centre

Throughout the year LABRC has held several meetings and conferences. In December of 2023, they held their annual Links to Learning conference at the Westin Bayshore hotel in Vancouver. This conference is an opportunity for staff to meet with other Lands Managers and Lands Officers from reserves across Canada and learn about various topics from LABRC representatives.

They held a Land use Planning conference at the Radisson Vancouver Airport Hotel. At this conference they had panels of people speaking on various different topics pertaining to land use planning; they ranged from LABRC employees who specialize in LUPlanning to people from different reserves across Canada. Every three months LABRC will hold regional meetings in different communities in the lower Fraser Valley; here we gather and listen to what other reserves and LABRC have been working on in the last three months, share experiences and learn different strategies on how to deal with certain issues we are dealing with in our community. It is an excellent learning opportunity for all those involved. The meetings this year were held at Cheam, Franks Italian Chilliwack, Sts'ailes (Chehalis), and Ch'íyáqtel (Tzeachten). LABRC also hosts an Annual General Meeting for all Active Land Code Communities across Canada.

First Nations Lands Registry

The First Nations Land Registry System (FNLRS) is the central repository for registering various land-related documents for First Nations communities. This year, several documents were registered by Chantal, including:

- Transfers of land
- Permits
- Sub-leases, modifications of leases, mortgages, assignments, and Band Council Resolutions (BCRs)

When a document is registered, the developer must pay a fee. The amount of the fee depends on the type of document being registered but the fee ranges from \$250 - \$2000.

Lands

Report: Chantal Douglas

First Nations Lands Registry (Cont'd)

The FNLRS is also where Parcel Abstract Reports can be obtained. These reports show who the Certificate of Possession (CP) holders are and what leases have been registered on their land parcels. These reports are important for demonstrating land ownership and tenure.

Overall, the FNLRS serves as the central registry for managing and tracking various land-related transactions and interests within First Nations communities.



Invoicing

Throughout the year, various developers bring in soil to raise the land out of the flood plain. This year, two lots - Lots 82 and 160 have been raising the land. The developers of these lots must keep track of the number of trucks coming in and the load they are carrying. At the start of every month, the developers are invoiced for the previous month's amount of fill brought in. Additionally, developers are invoiced for any environmental work done on the lot, which includes the time spent by environmental monitors when remediation is required, soil testing, and other fees such as legal, environmental, soil samplings, etc.

Sumas sends out invoices for other services as well, such as:

- Permits
- Registry work
- Monitoring for environmental works off-reserve

This comprehensive invoicing system ensures that Sumas is properly compensated for the various services and materials provided to the developers throughout the year.

Lands

Report: Chantal Douglas

Business Permits

Businesses operating on reserve must renew their permits annually in accordance with the business permit law. In December, Chantal will send out renewal reminders along with invoices to these businesses; the amounts vary depending on the type of business.

Currently, there are over 30 businesses on reserve, with more than half of them located in Kilgard Business Park. Two of the other businesses are run by community members, who do not have to pay a fee but must submit their renewal applications. The remaining businesses are developers operating on CP lots, the majority of which are associated with Sumas Park Estates.

Wills and Estates

In 2023, Sumas received \$50,000 in funding from the ISC (Indigenous Services Canada) to assist members with creating or updating their Wills. To facilitate this, the Sumas hired the law firm Woodward & Company to work directly with members. Over the course of the year, the Woodward & Company lawyers met with members on five occasions:

- January 8, 2024
- January 9, 2024
- February 13, 2024
- May 1, 2024
- June 19, 2024

During these meetings, the lawyers worked with members to start new Wills, review and approve draft Wills, and finalize and execute completed Wills.

In total, the lawyers met with 24 members and have finalized 17 Wills. They will be returning to finalize the last set of drafted Wills and begin working with the remaining CP Holders who still require a Will.

This project was made possible by the \$50,000 grant from ISC and has been a valuable service for the Sumas members, helping them ensure their final wishes are properly documented and legally protected.

Lands

Report: Chantal Douglas

Training

Over the course of the year, there have been several valuable training opportunities. One such training was the 2-day ArcGIS course conducted in collaboration with Dillon Consulting. This training focused on navigating the ArcGIS platform, including updating and creating maps.

- GIS Working Group with LABRC. This session provided an overview of various land management applications and a introduction to GIS workflows.
- Chantal and Jennette attended an emergency department training session, where they learned about the use and range capabilities of satellite phones.
- Chantal and Sasha attended a Survey Development Program as a refresher of the Survey Program completed two years prior.
- Regular Regional Lands Meetings with LABRC.

These training opportunities have allowed the team to enhance their skills and knowledge across a range of geospatial, land management, and emergency response domains. The professional development gained through these sessions will undoubtedly prove valuable in the team's ongoing work and projects.

Lands

Report: Donna Blair

Survey Project #1

- Grant applied for and approved by LABRC for internal survey of Kelly Rd and Kilgard Way in the amount of \$22,024.00.
- The informational part of survey is complete.
- Presented to Lands Committee August 29th for recommendations.
- Requires a BCR from Chief and Council to move forward to complete survey.

Survey Project #2

- Applied for secondary grant from LABRC for internal survey and pin placement on Lakeview Drive subdivision.
- Grant approved for \$17,660.00 on September 13, 2024.

Sumas Land Inventory

- Continuously working with LABRC to create a complete version of all of Sumas First Nations land inventory.
- Identifying all parcels that are and or need to be registered in the FNLR, First Nations Land Registry to include, but not limited to CP holders, lease holders, leases, band land and any Instruments that should be registered on said lands.
- Currently identified numerous lots that require a BCR prior to being registered in the FNLR. In process.
- Identified six civil address that did not line up with the City of Abbotsford. Rectified the problem with the city. The importance of this is for any emergency where first responders may be required to be able to have a coherent and living document that will reflect Sumas First Nations land use.
- Other Historical Issues.
- Researching and working to resolve historical CP issues and estate concerns.
- Starting the process on what is required to protect and preserve Sumas First Nations historical burial grounds.

Lands

Report: Sasha Tuttle

Klassen

- Increased fire prevention measures on site to reduce risk of additional fires breaking out.
- Reviewed and approved a plan to manage the leachate that comes off of the compost piles.
- Removed materials from 30 m buffer zone on east side of property and partially restored using topsoil from Matcon. Full restoration is pending.
- Removed mushroom manure from site so there is only woody debris being composted.

Lafarge

- Review Lafarge's stack emissions testing schedule and methods to ensure that they were in compliance with their permit.
- Ensured Lafarge is performing routine groundwater and surface water testing in compliance with their permit requirements.
- Assisted Lafarge in the development of a new, Site-specific EMP.
- Worked with Lafarge to create "sensitive habitat" signage for truckers.

Handlers

- Remediated hydrocarbon contamination on site and tested groundwater twice. Found no impacts from the previous spills.
- Still waiting on new stormwater management plan from Mark Perry.

Cropac

- Guided remediation of hydrocarbon contamination on Site twice this year.
- Ensured that damaged infrastructure on site used for extraction of groundwater was repaired to provincial standards.
- Continue to monitor and remind management to clean up solid waste (i.e., litter) found on site.

Lands

Report: Sasha Tuttle

Matcon

- Ensured that the Site is practicing adequate ESC measures and there is no track out onto public roads.
- The Site closely follows its permit and causes little to no issues. There was one minor oil stain this year that was remediated quickly.

Polytubes

- Remediated a few hydrocarbon stains this year. Fairly minor.

Lot 160

- Allowed clearing of vegetation following a nesting bird survey.
- Shut down due to deviation of site plans, development of stormwater management system without a development permit and failure to implement adequate ESC measures and dust suppression measures.

Permitting

- Permit for works in Kilgard Creek (KWL).
- Demolition Permit for Lot 21-3 (house adjacent to office).
- Soccer Field Permit.
- Building Permit for Pattison Sign (Lot 161).
- Sumas Park Estates SPEA Project.
- Tree Clearing Permit for GNR.

City of Abbotsford

- Worked with COA staff during the dredging of Marshall Creek. Ensured that bird nesting surveys were performed.

Lands

Report: Sasha Tuttle

Community Engagement: Environmental Management Plan Discussion Event

- Organized and hosted this event with assistance from LABRC to determine what the community's greatest environmental concerns and priorities were.
- Gathered information through questionnaires and in house activities to use in the EMP 2024 Amendment.

Collaboration with SFN Elders

- Attended two separate Elder's Lunch Meetings to 1) gauge what plants are culturally important to SFN Elders that could be used in our riparian restoration projects and 2) hand out questionnaires to gauge their environmental concerns for the 2024 EMP amendment.

Fraser Valley Conservancy (FVC)

- Assisted GNR with relationship building with FVC
- Working together to establish an MOU between SFN and FVC

SFN Governance & Natural Resources Department

- Assisted GNR with an interview series they were conducting on Species-at-risk and of concern to Sumas First Nation members and leadership.
- Assisted GNR with Sumas Prairie Water Sampling program funded by BC ENV.

Fraser Valley Regional District

- Reached out to connect with staff from FVRD as per one of the goals of the 2013 EMP.
- Started discussion around how SFN's air quality concerns can be addressed and what we can do in house to better our air quality.

Lands

Report: Sasha Tuttle

Professional Development Training

- ArcGIS Software Training
- Active Bird Nest Survey Training

Conference attendance

- BC Links to Learning Symposium (Dec 2023)
- Skagit Headwater Conference hosted by the Stolo Service Agency (June 2024)

Successful Grant Applications

- BC Hydro Regreening Program (\$2,000)
- LABRC Environmental Management Plan Funding (\$80,000)

Pending Grant Applications

- Watershed Security Fund (up to \$150k)
- LABRC Solid Waste Management Funds (up to \$70k)

Law and Policy Development: Tree Protection Law

- Presented to the LAC twice on the Tree Protection Law to amend the draft version created by previous staff.
- Presented to C&C once and am waiting for Chief Silver to recover before presenting a second time.

Lands

Report: Sasha Tuttle

Additional Initiatives

- Establishment of Community Garden by Health Bldg.
- Cleaning and organization of half the storage room for office use.
- Documentation and treatment of knotweed on reserve.
- Documented illegal dumping on Lot 80 and approached LABRC for funds to remediate (application pending but likely to be successful).
- Worked with Harmeet and farmer at Lot 80 to install a gate in front of the bridge to prevent further illegal dumpings.

Esép' te sXwōXwiyám

“To End”: Closing Statements

Looking Forward

Semá:th First Nation is prosperous and self-sufficient, reclaiming our Xwe'Imexw way of life and maintaining governance over S'ólh Téméxw. This proud Nation strives to provide accurate and timely information to both membership and to the public for transparent reporting.

If there are inconsistencies, errors, or additions to this document that you would like to see rectified, please contact us at communications@sumasfirstnation.com.



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