

Date: June 9, 2025

## Community members invited to celebrate the Í:xel Sq'eq'ó (Together We Paddle) agreement at Fraser River Heritage Park on June 17

**S'olh Temexw**—A community celebration is being hosted by the Leq'á:mel, Matsqui, and Semá:th (LMS) Society with support from the City of Mission in honour of the historic Land-Back Agreement, Í:xel Sq'eq'ó, on June 17 at Fraser River Heritage Park.

This free event is open to all and will be an opportunity to learn more about the Í:xel Sq'eq'ó agreement, hear from dignitaries, experience cultural performances and music, and enjoy activities such as face painting and more.

The agreement, which finalized with the Province earlier this year, saw 60 hectares of traditional land returned to Leq'á:mel, Matsqui, and Semá:th First Nations under the LMS Society.

As part of the agreement, the lands have been subdivided to create a park parcel of approximately 50 hectares, which will be leased to the City of Mission to co-manage with the LMS Society for public use as a community park, and two 5-hectre development parcels, to be developed by the LMS Development Corporation to support housing in the area and increase economic and social opportunities.

The historic agreement was almost fourteen years in the making, and this event is an opportunity for community members from Leq'á:mel, Matsqui, and Semá:th First Nations, the City of Mission and beyond to come together and celebrate the bright future of these lands.

### Event Details:

**Date:** Tuesday, June 17, 2025

**Time:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Location:** Fraser River Heritage Park (7494 Mary St, Mission, BC)

**Speeches and remarks will be made by:**

- *Leq'á:mel First Nation Councillor Darrel McKamey*
- *Matsqui First Nation Chief Alice McKay*
- *Semá:th First Nation Chief Dalton Silver*
- *Leq'á:mel First Nation Chief Stacey Goulding*
- *Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs Ravi Kahlon*
- *Special Counsel to the Premier on Reconciliation Doug White*
- *City of Mission Acting Mayor Jag Gill*

- *City of Mission Mayor Paul Horn (video)*
- *And others*

Í:xel Sq'eq'ó is a Hul'qumi'num phrase, which translates to English as "Together We Paddle."

Quotes:

**Councillor Darrel McKamey, Leq'a:mel First Nation -**

"We are thrilled to invite the citizens of Leq'a:mel, Mathxwi, Semá:th, and Mission to celebrate the historic land back land transfer under the Í:xel Sq'eq'ó Agreement (Together We Paddle Agreement). This agreement to get our land back was a 13 year effort and celebrates our nation's citizens, past and present leaders, and ancestors that set our path forward. Please join us for some live entertainment, and keynote speakers about the journey and what the future holds!"

**Chief Alice McKay, Matsqui First Nation -**

"Matsqui is very proud of the work that has been done to get our "Land Back" meaning the 149 acres we acquired as the LMS. It has been a long and sometimes very hard journey but we accomplished what we set out to do. Our ancestors would be very proud of LMS setting precedence with the ability to do this work with "one heart and one mind." The work has just begun though. We have a long road ahead to make our members happy and proud as we pave the way for our future seven generations."

**Chief Dalton Silver, Semá:th First Nation -**

"The returning of these lands to our people I believe is a huge step towards building relations with our neighbours. I thank the provincial government for the recognition and for demonstrating their commitment to moving forward into the future alongside us, government to government."

**Mayor Paul Horn, City of Mission -**

"Mission is fortunate to be located on the shared territories of some of the most collaborative and forward-looking First Nations in this province and country. Today's achievement is a testament to what we can accomplish when we work together for the common good. Reconciliation is not just a word—it's action. It means working side by side to tackle our shared

challenges: building a stronger economy, creating affordable housing, protecting the environment, addressing poverty, and improving health outcomes for everyone. We are proud to mark this moment, but even more so, we are energized by what lies ahead. Together, we will build a future that brings opportunity and prosperity to all who call our shared territories home.”

-30-

To learn more about the LMS Society and this historic agreement, please visit the following resources:

- [Historic agreement brings together municipal, provincial, First Nations governments](#)