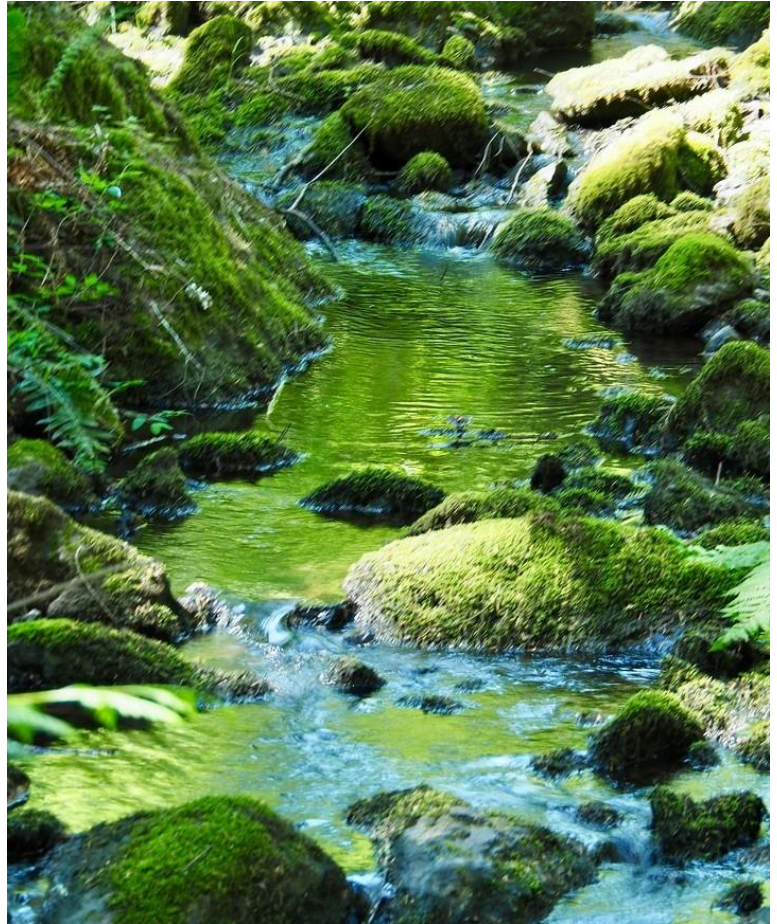


2023

Year in review

WMÍYETEN
Nature Sanctuary Society



Updated Mission

“To foster respect for nature and promote the protection of natural areas for the benefit of all future generations through environmental conservation, restoration, education, and cultural activities in alliance with local First Nations.”



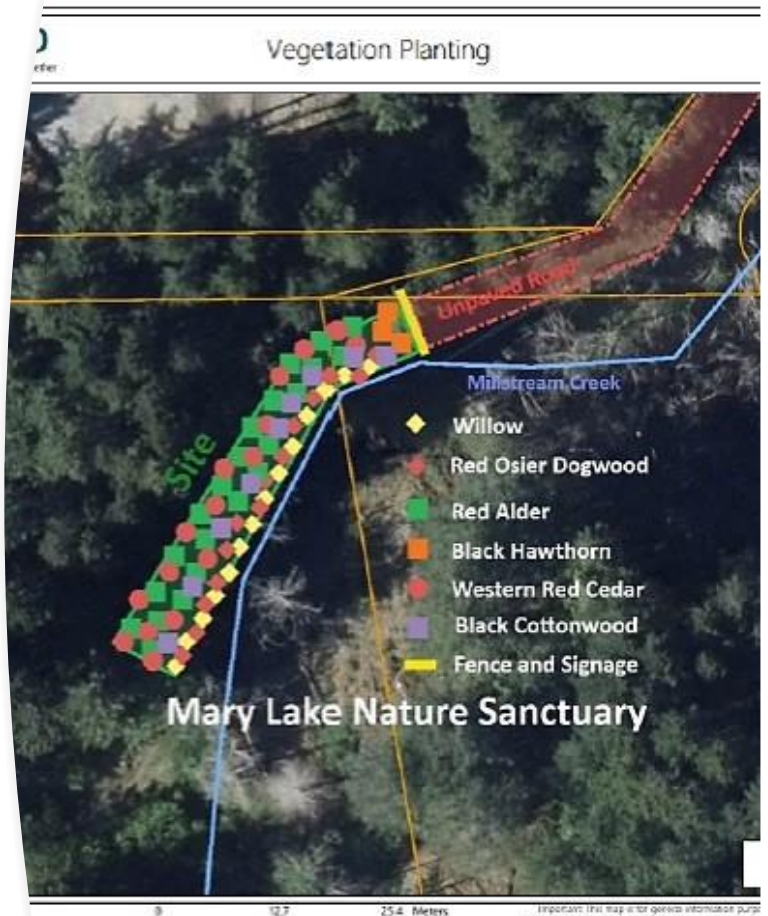
The WMÍYETEN Nature Sanctuary Society considers the natural world to be a precious and necessary partner to the healthy existence of all beings including humans. We believe that all aspects of nature deserve to be respected and protected now and for future generations.

Riparian Habitat Restoration Plan

Restore the Site to a riparian habitat beneficial to Millstream Creek by:

- Increasing shading to regulate water temperature and improve habitat for fish.
- Providing native trees that contribute nutrients for invertebrates in the creek through falling leaf litter.
- Discourage trespassing onto MLNS from the north via the access road.
- Reduce the ability of invasive species to establish themselves.
- Stabilize the streambank to reduce erosion and maintain water quality.

By Rob Shoemaker student of Restoration of Natural Systems at UVIC



Royal Roads University School of Environment and Sustainability

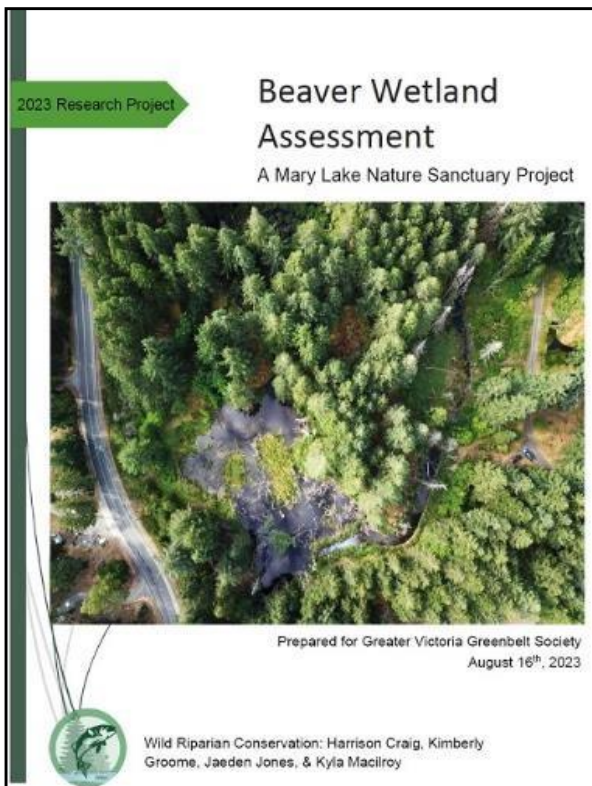
RRU students focused on the wetland on the east side of the property adjacent to Millstream Rd which has the Millstream Creek running through it.

The report showed "All the road site samples exceeded the guidelines for copper, chromium, nickel and vanadium. Zinc, lead, cadmium, and arsenic were within normal ranges within the road site samples."

It is possible that this contamination is attributed to road runoff since research has shown that zinc, lead, copper, cadmium, chromium, nickel as well as iron and manganese are the metals commonly found in road runoff (Marsalek et al., 1997)."

This research will help to inform future remediation of the area.

[CLICK ON IMAGE TO REVIEW REPORT](#)





Snowberry



Oceanspray



Western Red Cedar



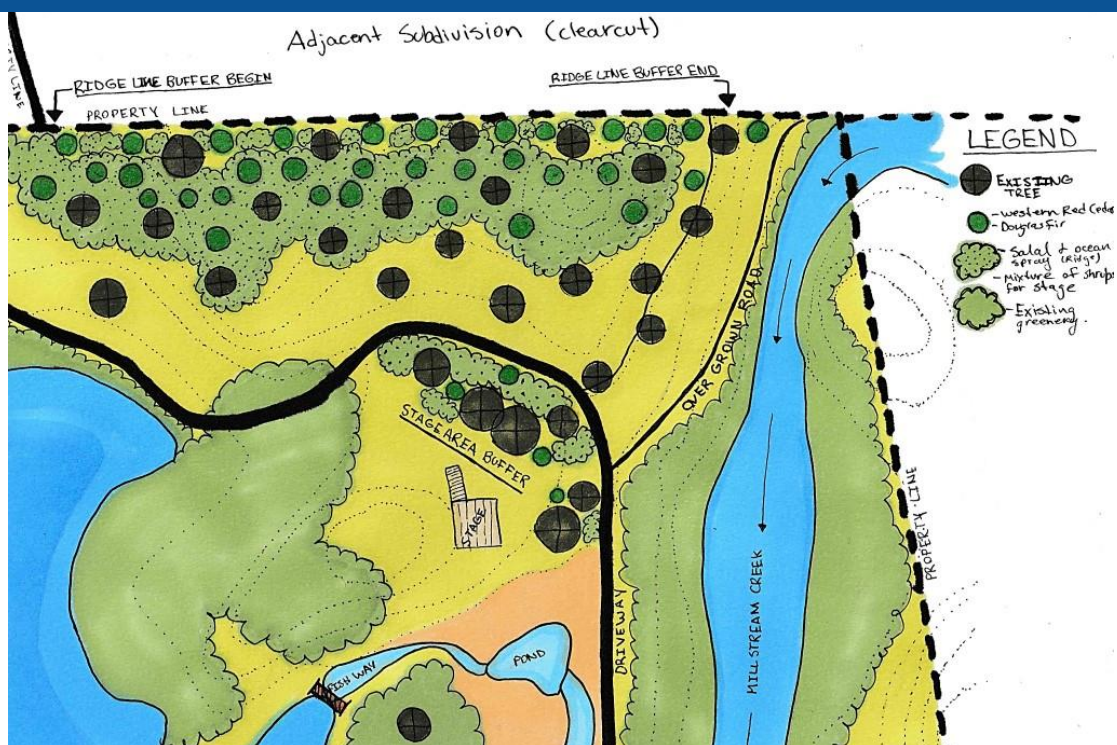
Western Honeysuckle

Ecological Restoration – Planting Buffer Zones

The purpose is to create two ecological buffer zones, one along the sanctuary's property line adjacent to a recent housing development (Ridge line buffer about 16,400 sq ft (100m L x 15m W), and the other bordering the driveway to create a sound buffer and wildlife habitat surrounding the presentation/ teaching stage area (Stage buffer) to mitigate the current and future effects of an adjacent housing development on the ecosystems of the Nature Sanctuary.

Future hands-on land-based learning opportunities for the regional communities. The focus on native species for restoration will support the new movement towards rewilding that is crucial for the maintenance of local ecosystems for these species.

Map of Buffer Zone Planting Areas



Ecological Restoration – Planting Buffer Zones

Initial Steps

These first 20 seedlings - Arbutus and Garry Oak are just the beginning of a buffer zone that will eventually contain 260 native trees and almost 400 native shrubs.



Contact us if you are interested in learning how to create Ecological buffer zones on your property or would like to volunteer for this important work.

[Link for Volunteer Application](#)



California Hazelnut Propagation

WMÍYETEN Nature Sanctuary is a resource site for California Hazelnut research by Nathan S. Fisk Restoration Ecologist, Resource Management Officer for Parks Canada - Fort Rodd Hill Rd. who is working with the 2 Billion trees initiative.



Kinship to the Land: Programs - Year 2



Programs supporting **WSÁNEĆ** youth, elders and families to reconnect to the land after 135 years of separation due to colonial settlement.





ŁÁU, WELŃEW Tribal School - 50 students from the SENĆOŦEN language immersion program - drawing at emotional mapping workshop



UVic Community Mapping Collaboratory



“What is Kinship with the Land”

Opportunity to strengthen a sense of place and connection to the land.

Initial Workshop with 15 regional participants to begin reconnecting with one’s own and ancestral relationship to the land. Artistic and Emotional journaling inspired by quiet reflection and focused observation.



UVic Community Mapping Collaboratory

Emotional Mapping Event at WMIYETEN

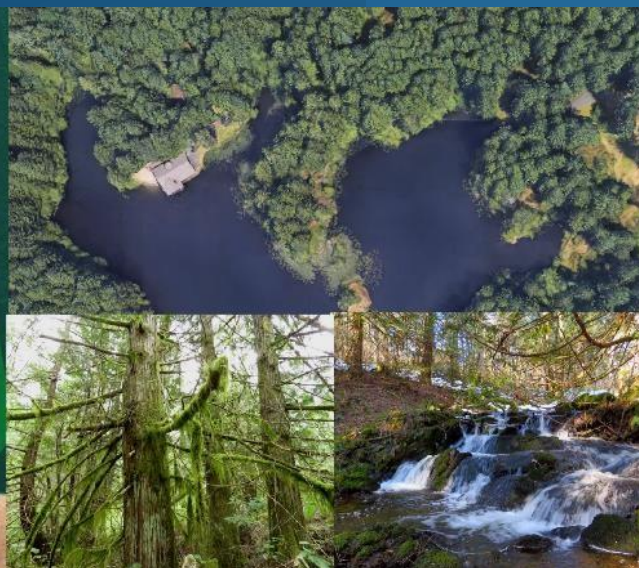
Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary

A Community Mapping Workshop

In a collaboration between University of Victoria Geography students and The Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society we welcome you to attend a workshop dedicated to learning about these lands and strengthening our sense of place.

Saturday, March 11

12:30 - 3:30 PM
1772 Millstream, Victoria, BC
Snacks and Refreshments will be provided!



Cultivating Kinship in the HIGHLANDS/ WMÍYEFEN (Place of the Deer)

We continued relationship building with WSÁNEĆ elders and a smaller core gathering(15) of local protectors of the land from the local settler community.

January , March, and May

Listening and learning what has been lost in the process of colonization and what is needed by the First Nations community for reparations.



Cultivating Kinship: participant feedback

"I am so grateful for the space that you and the Mary Lake Board have created for these gatherings. I have had virtually no significant interaction with First Nations people over my lifetime and have found the opportunity to be in the room together deeply moving. To hear directly about the impacts of colonization is very impactful. The words 'We have nowhere to go ', 'We are tired' and a knowledge keeper recalling of the impact on her great grandson of being at Mary Lake stand out for me. Being in the room together also gives me a direct experience of differences in our cultures – in relation to time, process, and naming. All of this begins to create, in a very rudimentary way, a sense of what the world feels like and is experienced within a First Nations perspective. And from that, a sense of how much we, of settler descent, need to shed in order to move forward as partners, being present without the frameworks of time, process, and outcome that we are so used to. Each opportunity to be together in this way feels like building the foundation for partnership. "

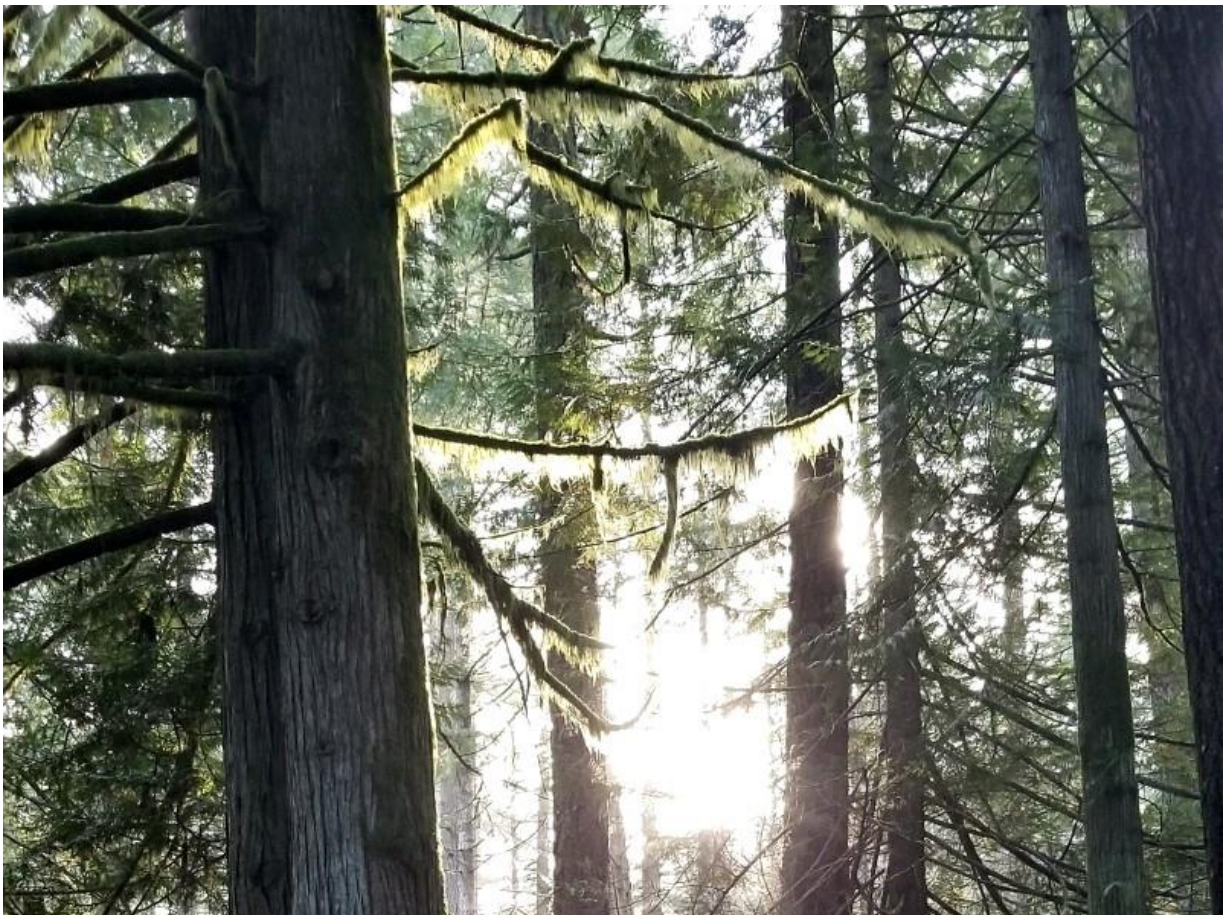
Libby McMinn - WNSS board member- District of Highlands resident

Sacred Site Designation

XÁXOĆE, XOĆEFENOT (haw -haw-ten-ot)

Sacred Lake of the Sacred Woman

Working in collaboration with a Council of 12 local WSÁNEĆ (wh-say-nich) Matriarchs – Knowledge Keepers & Respected Teachers who speak of the necessity for their communities and especially women to have culturally safe natural spaces to gather.





New Indigenous Name

Sanctuary name change to the **W̱míyēfen Nature Sanctuary** (wh-my-eh-then: Place of the Deer) (formerly Mary Lake) in recognition of our allyship with local First Nations and the traditional SENĆOŦEN language.

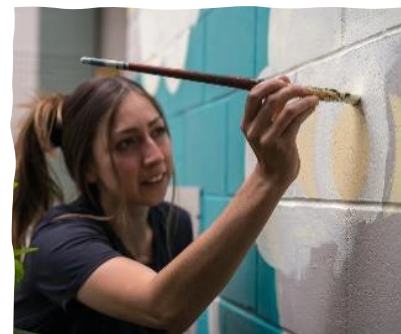
SMÍEŦ (deer) logo

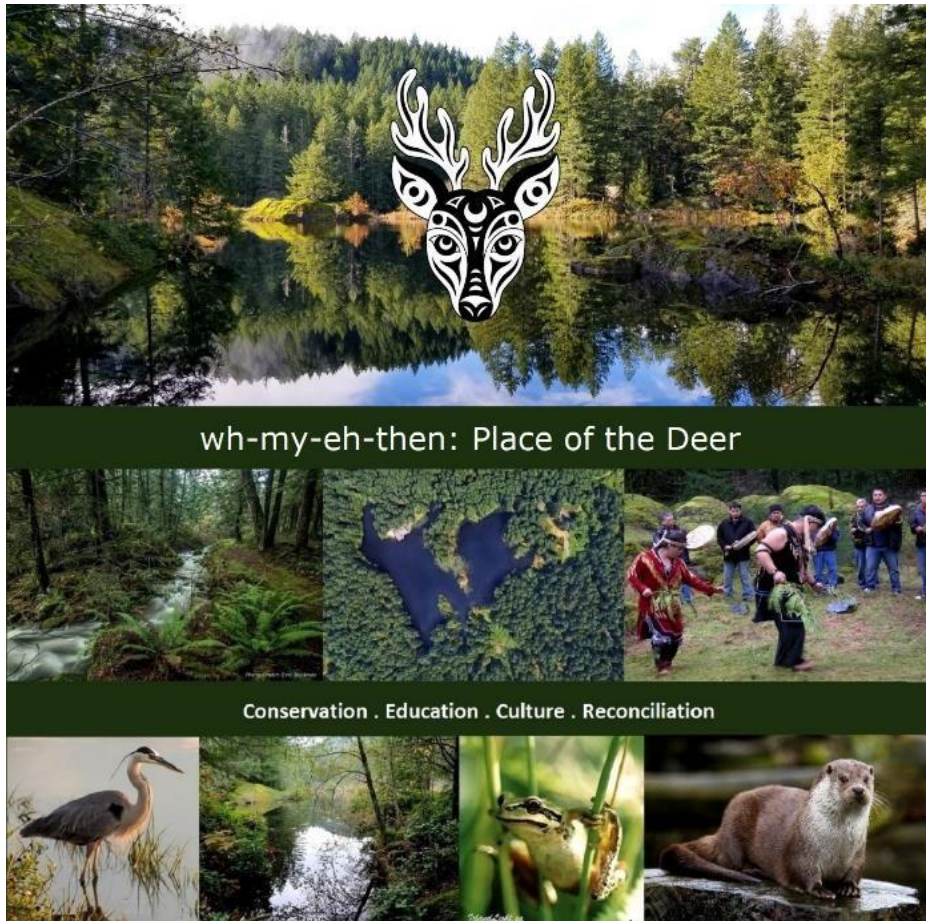
Logo by Sarah Jim a visual artist of mixed ancestry from the small village of Tseycum in W̱SÁNEĆ.

She's received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Victoria and works in the field of environmental restoration.

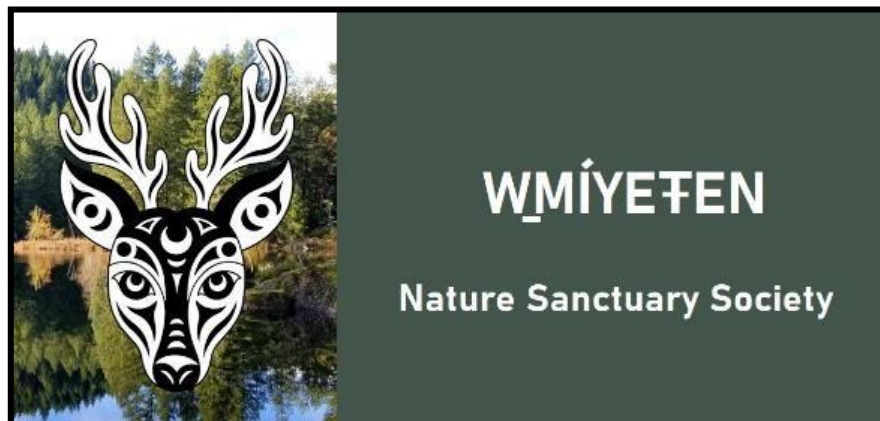
Her creations reflect and advocate for the beautiful land, sea, and skies that the W̱SÁNEĆ have stewarded since time immemorial.

Here is a link to her website <https://www.sarahjimstudio.com/>





Society Name Change



Previously Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society

2023

Visiting
Organizations



BRIDGES
FOR WOMEN SOCIETY



Hulitan
Family & Community
Services Society



Human-Nature
Counselling Society



**Vancouver Island
Quakers**

2023

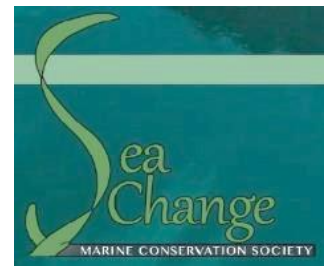
Visiting
Organizations



**ABORIGINAL
COALITION
to end
HOMELESSNESS**



S.A.L.T.S.
SAIL AND LIFE TRAINING SOCIETY



Oct. 14 10 am & 2pm



Victoria Festival
of Authors

—
2023

Oct. 15 10 am & 2pm

Morning Session

Sat., Oct. 14, 10:00 a.m.

**Forest to Poet/
Tree Walk**

with:
Robert Bringhurst
Wanda John-Kehewin
Samantha Nock
Russell Thornton

Hosted by:
Kate Braid and Beth Kope









WMIYETEN Nature Sanctuary (f. Mary Lake)
Tickets \$25/\$15 -- (low-income/unwaged)
No latecomers






Morning Session

Sun., Oct. 15, 10:00 a.m.

**An Enchanted Walk
Through the Writing of
Our Natural Landscapes**

with:
Luanne Armstrong
Jess Housty
Natalie Virginia Lang


Hosted by:
Jennifer Manuel







WMIYETEN Nature Sanctuary (f. Mary Lake)





THRIVING ROOTS
Wilderness School



Wild & Alive: Adult Program



Learning to
weave with
plant material.

PROTECTING NATURE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



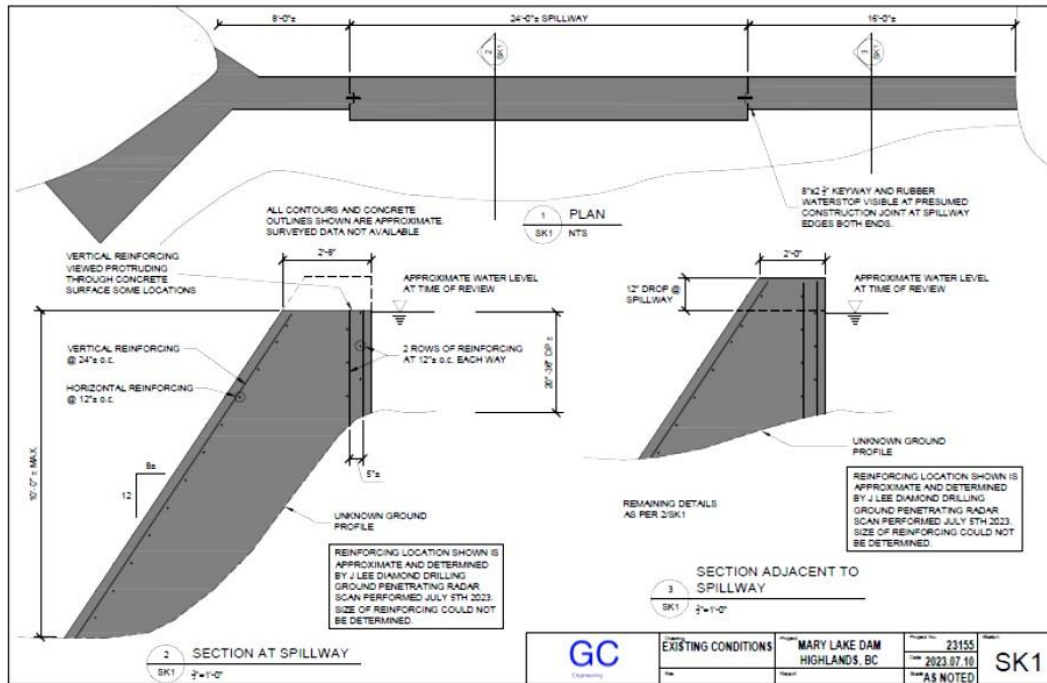
The land gives us so much through its beauty and harmony, oxygen to breathe, a sink for carbon and home space for endangered species.

Your donations are a gift of reciprocity that supports all of our land-based opportunities for ecocultural restoration and learning.

Click To
Donate

Dam research continues

Results of ground penetrating radar on concrete dam.



Final Assessment

HYDROGEOLOGY OF MARY LAKE

Nov. 2023 – assessment completed

Final Results:

The hydrotechnical analysis of Mary Lake indicates that the existing structures meet the design criteria requirements, and upgrades are not required to convey the design flows and provide adequate freeboard.


It is recommended that the WNSS continue with the dam safety reviews and maintenance as required of dam owners in the province.



Preparing for Rezoning

We met with numerous local experts (some had previously been involved in the 2018 CRD subdivision) to plan budgets and time frames for the various aspects of the rezoning process.

Consultants	
Area	Professional
Nature House (Architect)	NsqArchitecture Ltd. Nicole Parker, Architectural Technologist, AIBC, Partner 1065 Meares Street Victoria, BC, V8V 3J4 O: 250.362.5622 E: n.parker@nsq.ca
Nature House (Structural Engineer)	 Wade Griffin, P. Eng., LEED AP, Principal Principal/Senior Structural Engineer 330-4243 Glenford Avenue Victoria, BC V8E 4B7 Tel: (250) 560-4133 ext 103 Email: wgriffin@skya.com
Nature House (Geotechnical Engineer)	 Scott Currie, P. Eng. Geotechnical Engineer/Principal Unit 46 - 40 Cadogan Avenue, Victoria BC, V8L 1T2 Office: (250) 475 5151 Email: scott@ryzuk.com www.ryzuk.com

Consultants	
Area	Professional
Total Parcel (Surveyor) a. Septic Field b. Dry Hydrant (Engineer)	Phillip, C. Buchanan, P.Eng. J.E. Anderson & Associates 4222 Glenford Avenue Victoria, B.C. V8E 4B7 Phone: (250) 727-2224 Email: pc@jehamcrae.com
Total Parcel a. Biological Assessment b. RAR	Thomas Roy, R.P. Bio., GFP Cascade Biological Services 772 Goldstream Ave / PO Box 2709-4 Victoria, BC, V8S 5S1 Phone: (250) 474-0102 (250) 488-4804 Email: troy@cascadebio.com
Nature House (R.P. Bio)	 Sarah Stallard BSc, AS cT, Envr. Tech. Swell Environmental Consulting Priscilla Lane Malvern BC, R.P. Bio Phone: (250) 480-0272 Email: sarah@swell.ca

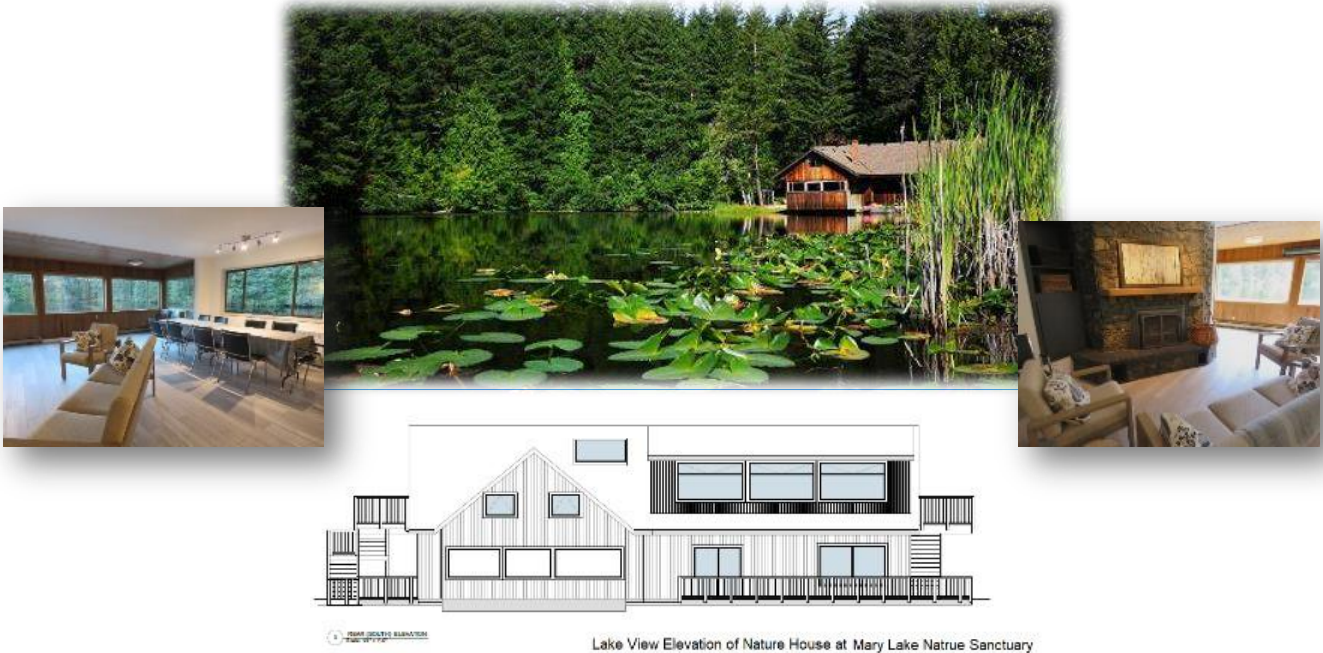


Application for Rezoning Submitted

- Future Uses - Capacities
- Traffic Impacts – Study
- Parking -
- Noise
- Septic - evaluation
- Water test for capacity

Transforming the Nature House

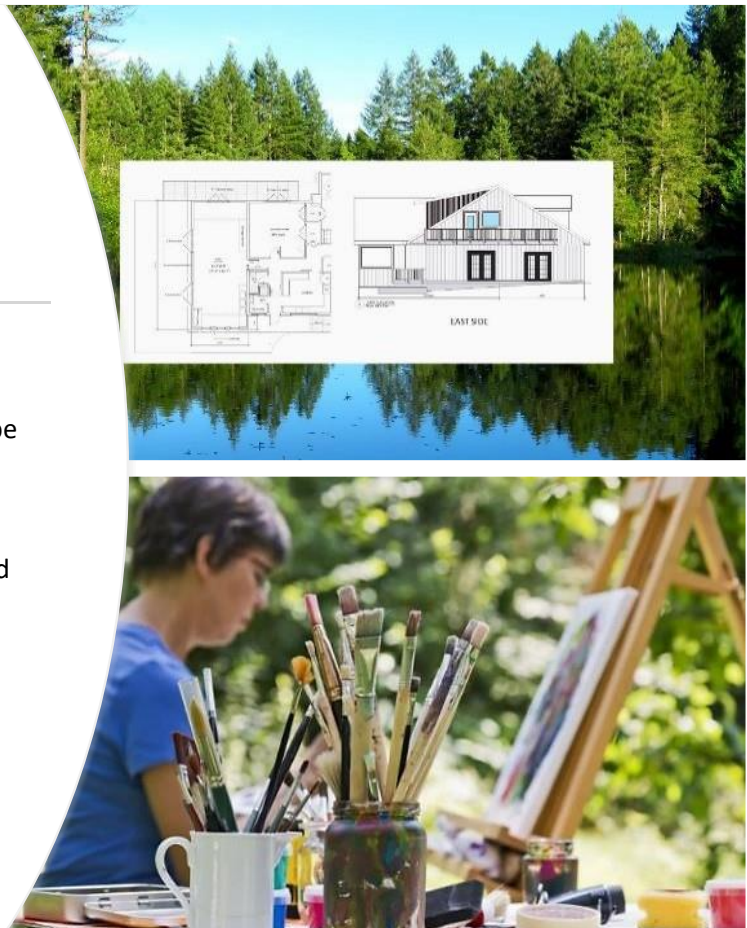
Upgrading the Lakeside Nature House to meet Public Assembly use codes for safety will support future income generation through rentals to like minded community groups, schools and nonprofits while creating a warm place for Elders to meet.



Studio Space for Nature Inspired Art

We have partnered with the Westshore Arts Council to adapt the existing carport to a Studio that can be used for art and other classes with beautiful lake views.

They have already received \$ 75,000 grant from the BC Arts Council toward the cost of creating that space.



Special Thanks to all

WSÁNEC Knowledge keepers and community members: The WSÁNEĆ First Nations: WJOŁEŁP (Tsartlip), WSIKEM (Tseycum), SXÁUTW (Tsawout), and BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin).

Researchers, Schools, Teachers, Organizers, Board members, Funding Foundations, Community Organizations, Partners, Project Managers, Professional Consultants and Donors who support a vision of harmony with nature and all that it requires.

Thank you for your support!



WMÍYETEN
Nature Sanctuary Society