

# GVGS Recap of 2021



A project of the **Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society**  
in partnership with **Coast Salish Wisdom Keepers**

# Connecting People to Nature

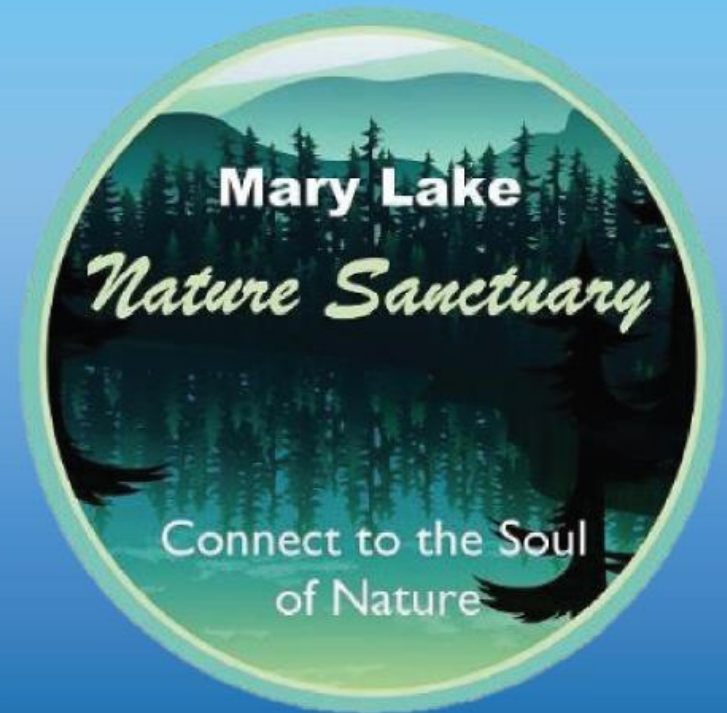
for wholistic conservation, restoration and cultural expression



Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society



=







## Conservation Covenant

- To ensure the protection of the property in perpetuity for the future generations, a conservation covenant that includes acknowledgement of traditional indigenous land management principles and cultural use is being created.





## 27 acres added to Highlands protected area

“Armstrong said the new property will be added to the Mary Lake Sanctuary and go a long way to helping organizations such as the Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society connect natural habitats”

# Preliminary Cultural Archeology Report



Feb - Jan 2021

Culturally modified trees (CMTs) are living trees that have been visibly altered or modified by Indigenous Peoples for usage in their cultural traditions.

Simon Smith JR of the Tsartlip Nation did a preliminary cultural archeology walkabout to assess the land.

He was surprised to see a large number of various CMTs on the property which indicate the area was frequently used by Coast Salish people.





# First Nations Partnership Development



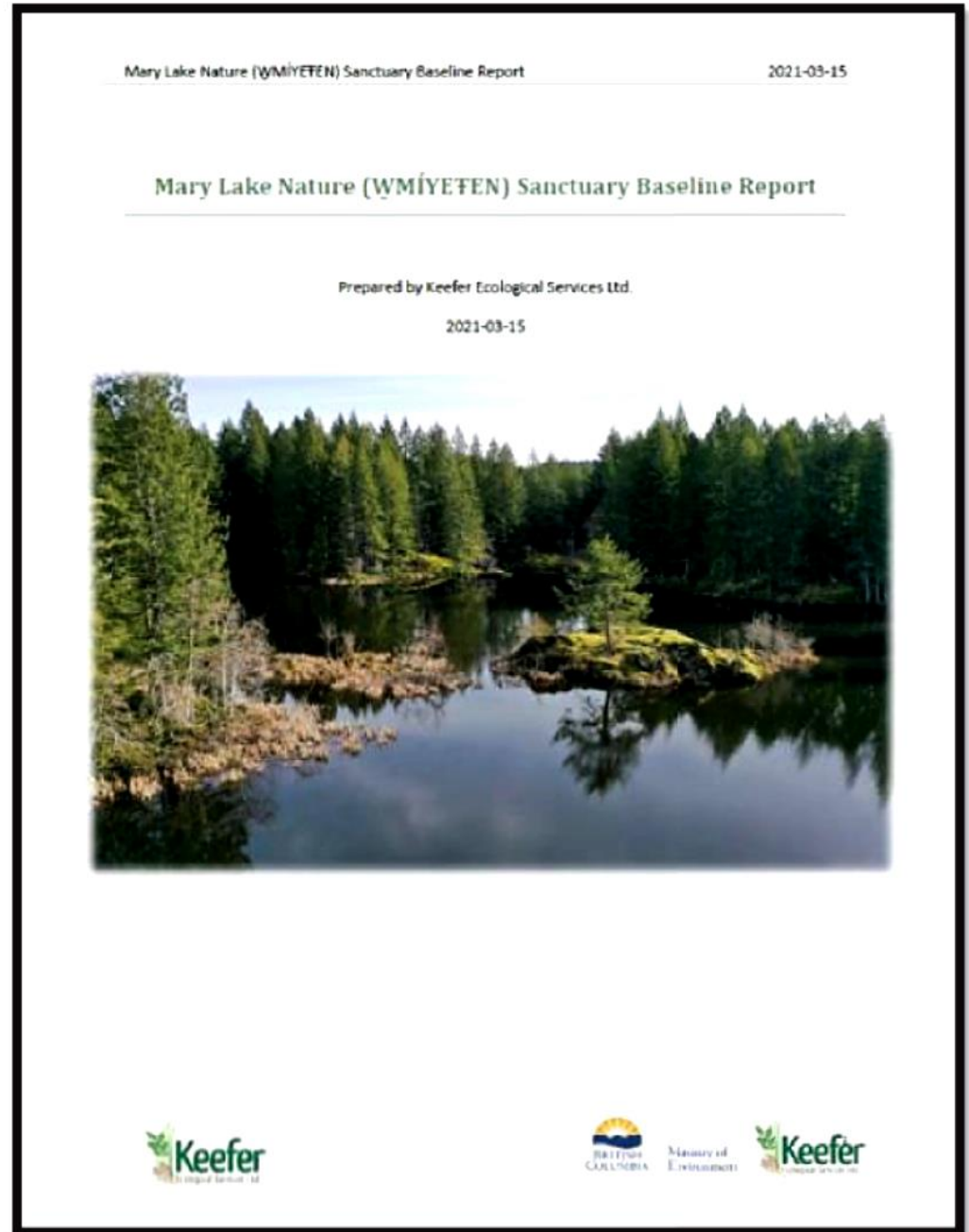
## committees' recommendations are:

- protect the sanctuary ecosystems from the impacts of human overuse.
- develop a culturally informed scientific ecological research framework.
- continue to provide a space in nature for the regional community to deepen their connection to nature.
- restore the cultural and ecological integrity of the land.
- reconnect First Nations youth and other community members with their culture and ancestral territories.
- provide opportunities for experiential activities led by Elders and knowledge keepers, sharing a unique opportunity for place based, cross-cultural learning for everyone.
- support knowledge transfer to youth of traditional plant medicine, mapping, harvesting and restoration. .
- work with Elders, Tsartlip First Nation members, community volunteers and ecosystem rehabilitation experts to support animal and native plant life on the property.

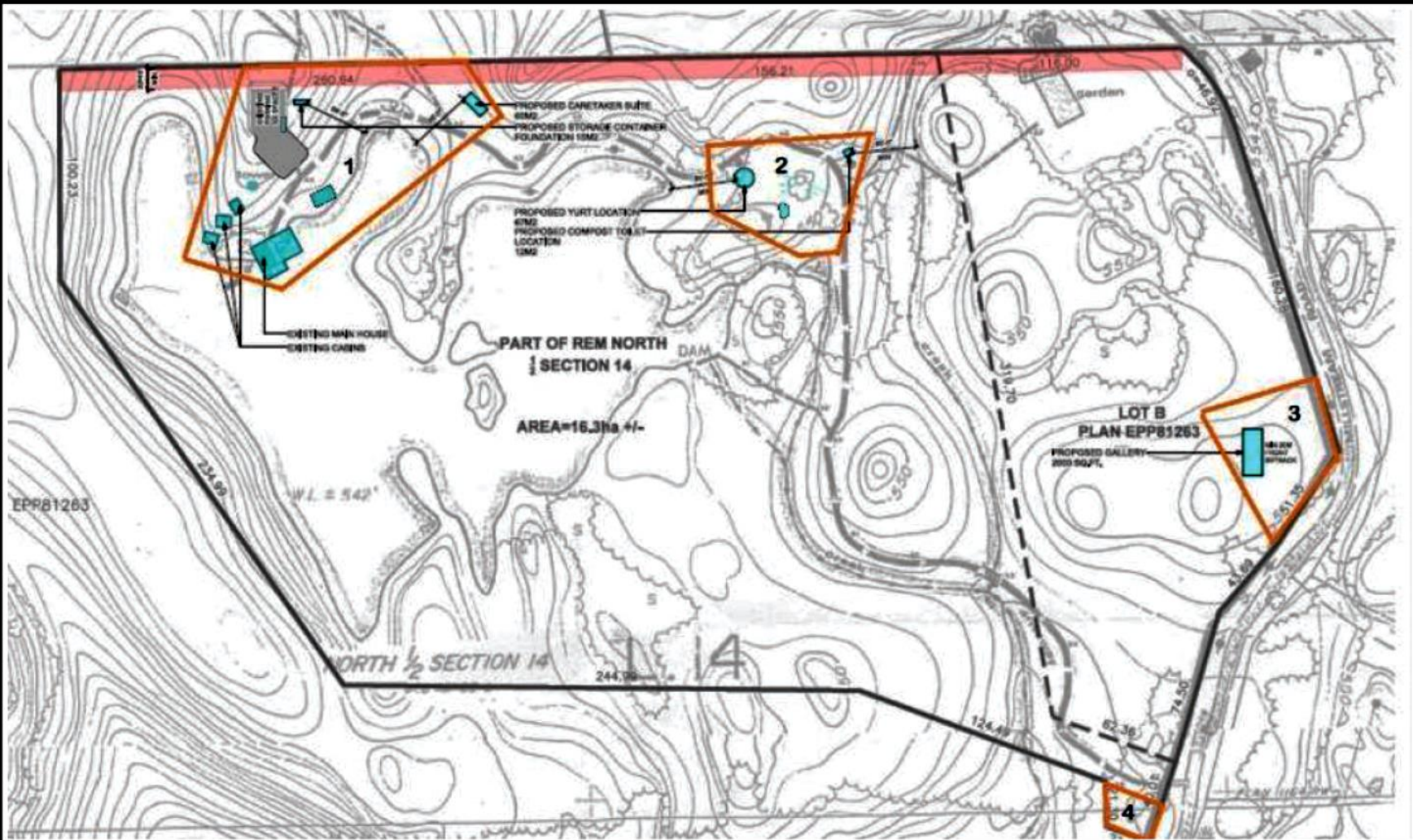
Completed

# Ecological Baseline Report

Will be used to  
monitor the  
ecological health of  
the property



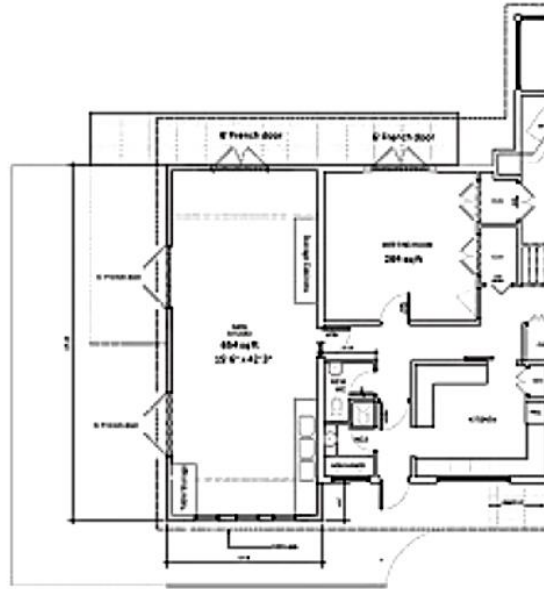




Designated Human Activity Areas  
 all other areas will be left in their natural state



# Future Art Studio



A \$75,000 grant was confirmed in the spring of 2021 from the BC Arts Council.



**BRITISH  
COLUMBIA  
ARTS COUNCIL**  
Supported by the Province of British Columbia

**Bateman  
Foundation**

CONNECT IN NATURE.  
INSPIRE OUR WORLD.



Engaged Architect Nicole Parker and Skyline engineers to develop construction plans

# Coho Salmon Fry Release

On Feb 24, 2021, the Peninsula Streams Society and Goldstream Salmon Hatchery released Coho salmon fry into the lake at the Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary.



**Bill Thomas with Goldstream Hatchery and the Peninsula Streams Society catches salmon fry for release into Mary Lake.**



# Collaboration for the Salmon



*Peninsula* **S** *treams*



**Greater Victoria  
Greenbelt Society**



**TLC** The Land Conservancy  
of British Columbia

# Maintained integrity of cabin roofs until future refurbishing







# Little Brown Myotis

Both samples of bat guano collected at Mary Lake last year were identified as *Myotis lucifugus*, Little Brown Myotis.

BC Community Bat Project Coordinator

# Research



Salmonid Habitat and Fish Passage Assessment of Millstream Creek from Matson to Mary Lake, Victoria BC

Capstone Project

Melissa Robson, Zulma Ayala, Tamara Donohue

6/24/21

ENW 208B

Earsman Reach 1 (0 – 291 m)

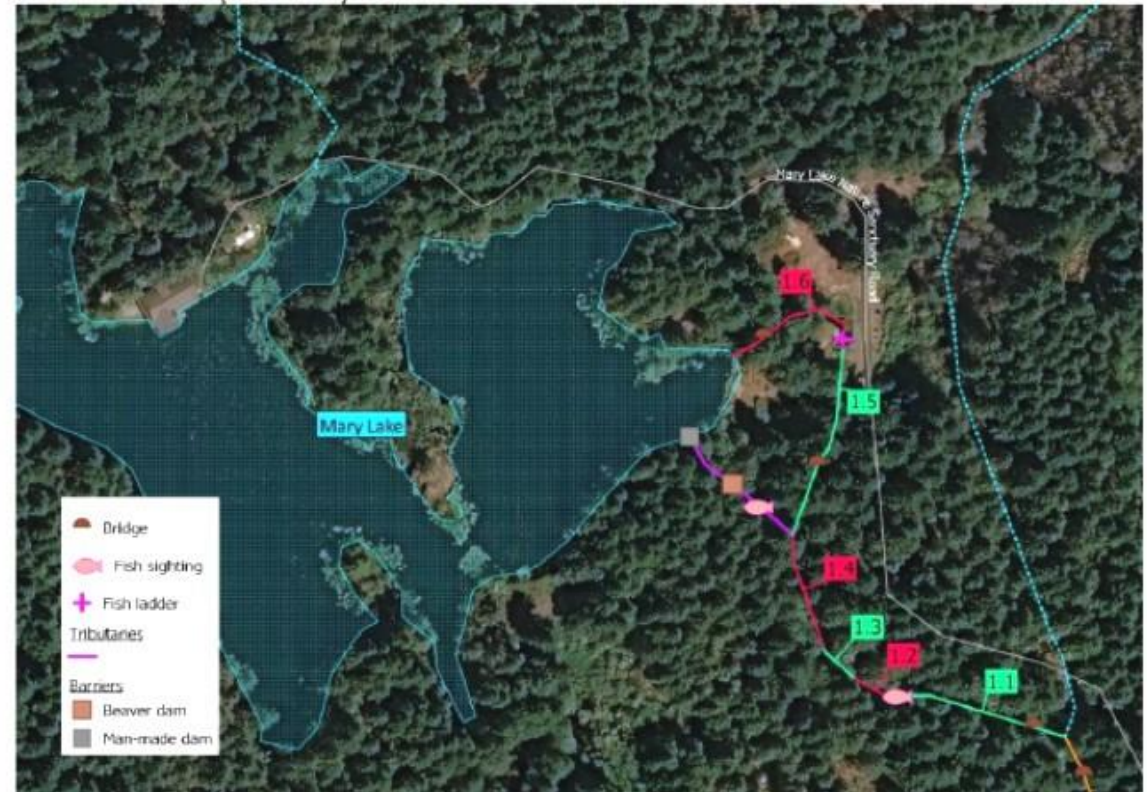


Figure 84. Map of Earsman habitat units 1.1 - 1.6



Visiting  
Organizations



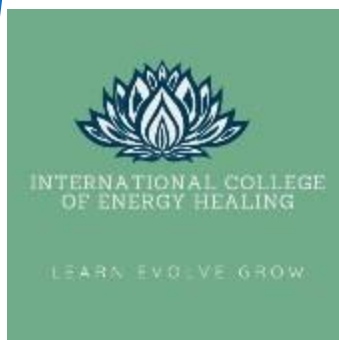
**BRIDGES**  
FOR WOMEN SOCIETY



**Personnel Support Programs (PSP)**



**Hulitan**  
Family & Community  
Services Society



Vancouver Island  
**Quakers**



**Human-Nature**  
Counselling Society



The Victoria School  
for Ideal Education

This poetry reading under the trees unfolds at Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary in the Highlands. Surrounded by fir and arbutus, passing alongside creeks and the lakeshore, this is an immersive sensory experience. Led by Yvonne Blomer and Beth Kope, the poets Dallas Hunt, Linda K. Thompson, Isabella Wang, and Terence Young will offer their own explorations of landscape and memory.



## Victoria Festival of Authors

---

Walk with Darrel, M.A.C., and Carla and listen to them read from these compelling books. Rain or shine, this is an outdoors event—under the boughs and over the roots of the trees at Mary Lake.



Date:

**Oct. 2nd @ 10am**

### Forest Poet-Tree Walk

with:

Dallas Hunt  
Linda K Thompson  
Isabella Wang  
Terence Young

Curated & Hosted by:

Yvonne Blomer and Beth Kope



Date:

**Oct. 3rd @ 10am**

### Getting to the Roots

with:

M.A.C. Farrant  
Carla Funk  
Darrel J. McLeod

Hosted by:

Yvonne Blomer





# Monthly Guided Nature Walks

500 + people attended



# Permissive tax exemption granted



DISTRICT OF HIGHLANDS  
BYLAW NO. 432

A BYLAW TO EXEMPT CERTAIN LANDS AND IMPROVEMENTS FROM TAXATION  
FOR THE YEARS 2022-2026

WHEREAS section 224 of the Community Charter provides that land and improvements which are owned or held by a charitable, philanthropic, or other not for profit corporation and the Council considers are used for a purpose that is directly related to the purposes of the corporation, may be exempt from taxation.

NOW, THEREFORE, The Municipal Council of the District of Highlands, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

- Each parcel of land as described in Column B, C and E of Schedule A of this Bylaw and any improvements on such parcel shall be exempt from taxation under Section 197(1)(a) of the Community Charter for the term specified in Column D.
- This Bylaw may be cited as the 'Permissive Tax Exemption Bylaw No. 432, 2021.'

READ A FIRST TIME THIS 27<sup>th</sup> day of September , 2021  
 READ A SECOND TIME THIS 27<sup>th</sup> day of September , 2021  
 READ A THIRD TIME THIS 27<sup>th</sup> day of September , 2021  
 ADOPTED THIS 4<sup>th</sup> day of October , 2021

  
MAYOR

  
CORPORATE OFFICER  




SCHEDULE A  
PERMISSIVE TAX EXEMPTION BYLAW NO. 432, 2021

Column A Owner/Occupier	Column B Roll Number	Column C Civic Address	Column D Term (Taxation Year)	Column E Extent of Exemption
Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society	362.15039.000	1772 Millstream Road	2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	All land and improvements
Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society	362.15039.002	1760 Millstream Road	2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	All land
The Land Conservancy of British Columbia	362.15070.000	721 Lorimer Road	2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026	All land



+

0



# Indigenous Law Program Visit

- **May 2021**
- Koi Neah of GVGS shared a slideshow presentation about the evolving partnership with local First Nations for the protection of the land with students from UBC and UVIC.
- Storytelling and knowledge sharing with Elder Tom Sampson about the local area known as WMÍYEFEN.

WMÍYETEN  
Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary

A Report Regarding WSÁNEĆ Law  
By Dave Gill and Jack Jones



Cover Art SMIEŦ by Sarah Jim, Reproduced with permission

## Incorporating W SÁNEĆ Law into Land Care

---

1. Conduct a macro (literature review) or micro (case study) to:

- a. Highlight local and global examples of Indigenous Land Stewardship, and Shared Land covenants, in contexts similar to WMÍYETEN Mary Lake; or
- b. Kin-centric, relational projects that focus on Indigenous epistemologies around relationships with land.

These two options directly relate to supporting policy change regarding conservation covenants, so that conservation covenants can include Indigenous priorities for land protection.

---



# Carolyn Sampson

## First Nations Representative

---

In Sept of 2021 we welcomed Carolyn Sampson of Coast Salish and Nez Perce heritage to our Board of Directors. She was born and raised on the Tsartlip First Nation and attended both UVic and Gonzaga University. Carolyn works for Correctional Services Canada as an Indigenous Community Development Officer, with a strong and lengthy volunteer history in the human services area. She is passionate about traditional plants and medicines as a way of life and to heal the body, spirit, and soul by walking with the natural rhythm of the ancestors.





Mapping sensitive ecosystems through an Indigenous kinship lens.

Interweaving W̱SÁNEĆ and Western knowledge.

Opportunities for ecocultural restoration, education, citizen-science research, and capacity-building in Indigenous communities.



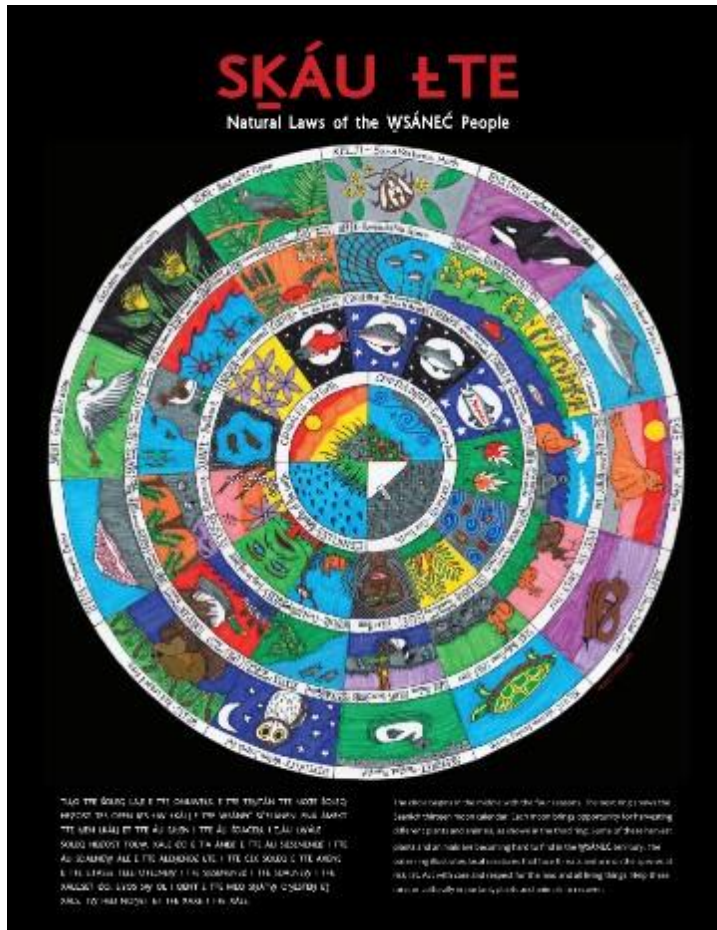
Johansen Larsen Foundation





# WMÍYEFEN - Mary Lake: Kinship Mapping

Working with WSÁNEĆ Elders, Plant Knowledge Keepers and the SENĆOŦEN Language





Trailmark Cloud is the innovative web-based software Indigenous communities are using to protect and manage their heritage and traditional territories. It 's an all-in-one solution for environmental field data collection, community -based research, archives management, referrals, web mapping and more.







## Nature Recognized as Partner

In Sept 2021 GVGS adopted a guiding principle that we will allow nature to remain undisturbed by humans 50% of the time, and that regulation of human uses shall give priority to conservation and preservation.





Nov. 2021  
Atmospheric  
River

---

Impacts on  
Infrastructure





## Driveway Flooding at Earsman Creek

- High water flow has undermined the foundation of the road.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....



## High Water Damage at Millstream Culvert

- Displacement of upstream abutment
- Impacts on road base





## Impacts on South Earthen Dam

- within 30 cm of being overtopped



## Impacts on Concrete Dam

- Expansion of spillway
- The concrete dam was overtopped by 15 cm



# Rising Water Levels

Flood the Nature House  
Crawl Space



Special Thanks to all

**WSÁNEC Knowledge keepers and community members:** The WSÁNEĆ First Nations: WJOLĒLP (Tsartlip), WSIKEM (Tseycum), SĀAUTW (Tsawout), and BOKĒĆEN (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

