



Volume 1. Issue 2.

# JUNE 2021 Newsletter



## Kitasoo/Xai'xais Stewardship Authority

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*"An eye for an eye, only  
ends up leaving the whole  
world blind.."*

# Director's Message



Hello Klemtu,

2020 turned out to be a challenging year due to Covid, which forced us to alter a number of our programs. We turned our focus to financial stability and job security while continuing to advance stewardship for the Nation.

2021 is shaping up to be a better year for Stewardship already as we are on the verge of signing off on the federal reconciliation agreement. This signing will change our world in the marine environment as it will create more job opportunities in fisheries, support local entrepreneurs, provide a seat for Klemtu on the government to government decision making table on all fisheries, and allow community members to make a living fishing in our backyard. We are now in the process of expanding our staff on the marine and communications side of things.

We also recently joined the First Nations Coast Guard Auxiliary and received \$252,000 to beef up our capacity for emergency response. We used these funds to purchase a new vessel called *Ksm Wut'siin* (Mouse Woman) and refitted all of the stewardship vessels to be capable to assist in a marine emergency. Many of the stewardship staff participated in Incident Command System 200 and 300 training so our personnel are in a better position to assist in a marine emergency as well.

Our Guardians worked super hard to pass the required BCIT course this past winter to have authority under the BC Parks Act and the Wildlife Act in addition to carrying out their continued monitoring of the territory for the Nation (more information on the next page).

We recently received another \$90,000 from the province to support youth programs in 2021. This year we are going to focus on increasing the SEAS summer program and create new youth summer opportunities in our science and Guardian Watchman programs.

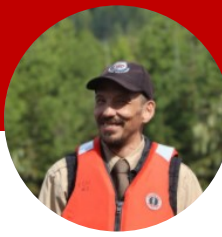
I invite any community members interested in learning more about the work we do and the upcoming employment opportunities to call or visit our office: Monday –Friday , 9am-4pm, 250-839-1096. You can also follow our Facebook page '**KXSA - Kitasoo/Xaixais Stewardship Authority** ', '**Kitasoo Xai'xais Languages Working Group (KXLWG)** ', and on Instagram **@kxstewardship**.

Respectfully,

Doug Neasloss







## Guardian/Park Ranger Initiative

The Kitasoo Xai'xais Nation and BC Parks are embarking on a new management relationship that will enhance the participation by the Kitasoo Xai'xais Guardians in compliance monitoring within protected areas in the Kitasoo Xai'xais territory.

A first of its kind model in the Great Bear Rainforest and in Canada, the Kitasoo Xai'xais and BC Parks are establishing a framework for the development and implementation of shared compliance and enforcement responsibilities within parks and protected areas, specifically an Indigenous Guardian/Park Ranger Authority Pilot Program and associated management direction recommendations.

Under a Memorandum of Understanding between the Kitasoo Xai'xais and BC Parks, the Indigenous Guardian/Park Ranger Authority Pilot Program will enable Kitasoo Xai'xais Guardians the ability to assume the authorities of Park Rangers under the *Park Act*. In addition to carrying out the Nations' own laws and policies, the Park Ranger appointment will provide the Kitasoo Xai'xais Guardians

with certain powers and authorities to carry out compliance and enforcement activities within parks, conservancies and protected areas in the territory. Three Kitasoo Xai'xais Guardians passed the requisite courses and will be eligible for the Park Ranger appointments, and if all goes as planned they should be wearing their Park Ranger flashes on their uniforms this summer.

This new relationship, and the pilot program specifically, furthers reconciliation by supporting Indigenous rights and responsibilities in protecting and conserving ecosystems, and continuing the profound connections between land, water and Indigenous culture. It is also considered as a further step in meaningful collaboration with BC Parks.

**“Three Kitasoo Xai'xais Guardians passed the requisite courses”**

## Marine Debris Cleanup

Spirit Bear Lodge and a number of commercial operators that have protocol agreements with the Nation are currently underway collecting hundreds of tonnes of marine debris from beaches throughout the territory for the second year in a row. We identified community use and culturally sensitive areas for the commercial operators to avoid due to cultural, health, and safety concerns, where the Kitasoo Xai'xais crews focused on these areas. In 2020, 26 people were employed on the Kitasoo Xai'xais crew over 21 days of beach clean up, cleaning up 19.5km of shoreline!



Left: Example of marine debris on the beach. Right: Part of the 2020 Kitasoo Xai'xais cleanup crew (Photos: Jack Plant)

# Languages Revitalization Project

## Kitasoo Xai'xais Languages Working Group (KXLWG)

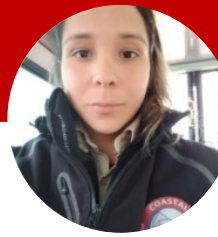
The KXLWG have officially started a brand-new grant project as of April 1, 2021. This new grant program is called Pathways to Language Vitality Program (PLVP) and was combined into one grant stream from BCLI and ILG grant programs. We are just finishing the 2020-2021 FirstVoices grant program as of June 30, 2021. FPCC merged the FirstVoices grant program with the Digitization grant program and is newly named Language Technology Program (LTP). FPCC's intent to combine the language programs was to limit any administrative strain for project leads or program administrators/coordinators and based on feedback to FPCC from program recipients.

### Current Projects

Here is a list of our projects that we are leading under our 2021-2022 Pathways grant program:

- Xai'xais Language Documentation
- Sgüüxs Language Transcription
- FirstVoices Language Archives
- Resource Development:
  1. Food Wheel,
  2. Xai'xais stories and recipes,
  3. Sgüüxs stories,
  4. Food Wheel Language lessons, and
  5. Medicinal Plant Guide

**-Chantal Pronteau, Project Supervisor**



Yáu, Híkuxvs kvqlá Łm̓du, Klemtu, Hello, good day

### Xai'xais FirsVoices Archive update:

This month Cassandra's priority was to re-submit the KCS Phrases Batch upload – The resubmission was due to duplicates which stalled uploading, and the duplicates on the spreadsheet were removed and sent back to FirstVoices. The sum is now 284 phrases, which brings the archive to a new breakdown of:

447 words + 284 phrases = 732 words/phrases

In late May she received confirmation that the upload is complete. – in ongoing progress, Cassandra will be adding audio files to existing content, listening to audio recording sessions and editing them so that their clips can be added to FirstVoices in time.

**Giaxsixa,**

**Cassandra Willie**

**Xai Xais Language Revitalization Project Intern**



### What is new?

Krista Duncan and Cassandra Willie have been tasked with getting to know KXLWG's camcorder camera! This equipment purchase will be used for current and future material development language projects and to assist in documentation and other activities carried out by the KXLWG. In mid May the Resource Stewardship team went seaweed picking, which was a great opportunity to test drive the new gear. *See photos above.*

As always, the Klemtu's Languages revitalization teams invite you to visit us at the Stewardship office if you had any further inquiries or questions for our ongoing language project initiatives. We are more than happy to elaborate on the listed projects above and received any insight.





## Sgüüxs First Voices Archive Update

'Niit Xlmduulxk

This month I have not yet uploaded any words or phrases onto the archive, previous batches are still pending and waiting to be uploaded by a First Voices tech in Victoria.

337 Phrases + 174 words = 511 Phrases/Words

Currently uploaded onto the First Voices archive:

228 Phrases + 208 Words = 436 Phrases/Words

It takes time for me to upload words and phrases of the Sgüüxs language as I am editing and clipping audio recordings of late Violet Neasloss, who was the last fluent speaker of the southern Tsimshian peoples.

Angel works tirelessly on transcribing the words and phrases which is difficult at times as we only have recordings to go back to and no one to confirm words and phrases of Violet speaking the language. I am now learning to transcribe what I can to help speed up the process as well.



Above: The Sgüüxs yet's'isk sa'winsk (Animal book) printed for every Klemtu household.

Right: Example of Kitasoo Xai'xais Languages Working Group (KXLWG) Facebook page outreach content.

## Community Outreach Update

We have managed to hand out a majority of our Xyets'isk sa'winsk (Animal books). Angel and I worked closely on this; we are super excited to have been able to make this possible for our community members of each household. We could not have made this possible without the funding that was set aside for this and of course our local artists who have put time into their art pieces to help with this project. excited to share future projects to share with our community.

I have uploaded some content onto our Kitasoo Xai'xais Languages Working Group (KXLWG) Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/kxlwg> small words or phrases to match the season or day in the Kitasoo language. I mainly work with Microsoft Word and Power point and use pictures from past photo entries to the language group and are taken by local community members.

I am open to suggestions you may have for outreach ideas, learning and materials development, you can always come and see me at the Stewardship office or email me.

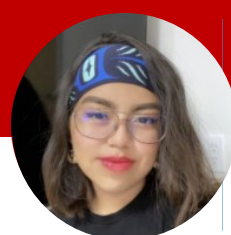
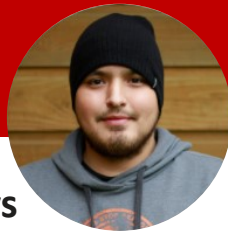
Come on by and visit me to see the work I am doing for our community, we can always set up a date for a visit and see what I am working with.



-Krista Duncan

Email: [KristaDuncan@kxsa.ca](mailto:KristaDuncan@kxsa.ca)





## Cultural Features Inventory (CFI) Surveys

Great job crew! Heather R, Vernon B, Stephen N, Troy R, Mitch D, Mitch H, and Rosie C.

### What is a CFI Survey?

Kitasoo Xaixais Stewardship Authority conducts forestry surveys for the Nation to inventory cultural features prior to industrial activities in the territory. Lets make sure all of these resources remain accessible for future use and/or retain healthy stands that will allow for old growth continuity.

For forestry, we survey the area that is projected to be logged and identify and document the cultural features we find. This information informs leaderships' decision making about approving cut blocks. This information not only documents our ancestral footprint but has the potential for even more investigation and future work for the nation.

### What are Cultural Features?

The CFI crew are in search of culturally modified trees, habitation sites (villages and camp sites), burials, canoe trees, clam gardens, canoe skids, and important Kitasoo Xai'xais resources such as large (100cm + diameter) monumental cedar (straight grain with a face useable for cultural purposes without many defects) and yew wood (used for tools or medicinal purposes, often planted and owned by families). We also document large accessible patches for important food and medicine plants such as devils club (*wi'gas*), indian hellibore (*ok'sa'li*), high bush cranberries (*dulx*). We also survey for bear dens which has its own criteria of protection (spirit, grizzly, and black bear) and document all den features such as its bed(s), fur, bite/scratch marks, fecal plug (solid bear poo). These are often found under old growth and in mountain elevation areas.



Vern and Heather after a day of CFI surveying. Photo: Rosie

### Recent Finds!

Our crew recently surveyed *Skay'a'lax* (Griffin Passage) proposed logging areas. We know *Skay'a'lax* was an important Xai'xais winter village with documented habitation sites, fish traps and culturally modified trees. Our CFI surveys in this area over the past two months added to this knowledge and included: monumental cedars, clam gardens, camps/villages, canoe runs, culturally modified trees, a bracelet, petroforms (rock seating areas, odd rock formations), an arboglyph (totem carved into a live tree or stump), a burial island, and a partially carved canoe tree. If you're interested in more details of the different feature types please come to the KXSA Office.



Stephen assessing a monumental Cedar (Photo: Rosie)



Clam garden (Photo: Vern)



Arboglyph (Photo: Heather)





## Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards (Summer SEAS)



SEAS 2020. (Photo: Vern)

### Research Team

The research team is gearing up for the season and will be in the field shortly. We have an experienced and hardworking crew this year including Vernon Brown, Sierra Hall, Mercedes Robinson, Heather Robinson, Jamie

SEAS will be hiring 6 interns, 1 assistant and 1 skipper this season. The start date will be the week of June 21st and ending Aug 13th of 2021. We're looking forward to another summer of exploration and work ahead! Please get your resume ready & commit yourself to a season of fun opportunities.



### Bear Research

Our first project of the season is setting up wildlife remote cameras in the territory to monitor bear behavior in the absence of tourism. This information will help inform tourism management plans that are least disruptive for bears in the territory. For example, this project will provide information on where and when tours should take place to minimize impact on the bears. In addition to this work, over the coming months we will be keeping our skills sharp with training in Wilderness First Aid and Swiftwater Rescue.





# Indigenous Laws Program



This year your Indigenous Law department has seen a growing desire from other governments to learn about the Indigenous law of the Kitasoo Xai'xais and other First Nations in BC. The University of Victoria has graduated a cohort of lawyers that have dual degrees in Canadian law and Indigenous law, the first in Canada. These lawyers are starting to work with other First Nations and First Nation aggregates like CCIRA and CFN to create statements of Indigenous law that help the provincial and federal governments understand the rules that should apply in each Nation's Territory.

**“this statement of laws will help with constitution building and gaining more control over your Territory”**

## Kitasoo Xai'xais Statement of Indigenous law

With your help we have worked to create a draft Statement of Kitasoo Xai'xais Indigenous law. Just before the pandemic hit in March 2020 we had a very productive committee of community members and knowledge holders that were participating and advising on the final document. This summer we would like to re-convene that committee, along with anyone else who would like to join, and seek to finalize the Kitasoo Xai'xais Statement of Indigenous law. Finalizing this statement of laws will help with constitution building and gaining more control over your Territory.

Please keep an eye out for postings about the **“Indigenous Law Committee”** and a community meeting to be held later in the summer.

## Communications & Klemtu Museum



Klemtu bighouse. Photo: Evelyn

My name is Evelyn Edgar. I have worked here at the Resource Stewardship office for over a year, and am currently shifting into a new position. I am the Cultural Communications Manager here at the Stewardship Office. I recently completed a “Caring for Museums Collections” course at the University of Victoria, along with Angel, and I am looking forward to getting the Museum up and running, repatriating artifacts, and opening a new avenue to showcase our history as Kitasoo Xai'xais people. I want to help bring to light our history, as well as preserve it for the next generations. Working here at the Stewardship office has opened my eyes to the resources that surround us, and how valuable it is. I enjoy working with the Stewardship team and gaining more knowledge along the way. I am excited about the future, while uncovering artifacts that hold so much wisdom of our ancestors.

Giaxsixa!





## Moore Islands Archaeology Research

Archaeologist Bryn Letham will be leading a research crew out to *len'gunaks* (Moore Islands) for the second year of a joint Kitasoo Xai'xais— Gitga'at research project documenting archaeology sites. They learned this islands were ice-free at least 16,000 years ago and sea level has only changed by around 10m in height, making this an ideal location for finding ancient archaeological evidence. The oldest site dated had lithics (stone tools) that were 9,500-10,800 years old! Visit the Stewardship office or email Rosie ([engagement@kxsa.ca](mailto:engagement@kxsa.ca)) to learn more and read the full report.



Stone tools found on Moore Islands. Photo: Bryn Letham

## Klemtu Artifact Returns Home

A small carved and painted model wooden canoe (26" long) is being returned to the Nation from the Museum of Vancouver and the Maritime Museum. According to the donor, this canoe was hand-carved in Klemtu (then China Hat) and given to the donor, Mr. E.A. Fenton between 1910-1915. Visit the Stewardship office if you would like to view this canoe in person.



Carved model canoe returning to Klemtu (Photo: Rosie)

## Documenting Kitasoo Xai'xais Archaeological Sites

Since 2017, KXSA has been recording archeology sites throughout the territory that have never been registered with the Province, or further documenting existing provincial sites. With the help of KXSA staff and many generous community members we have located and mapped 246 sites so far! These sites include pictographs (rock paintings), petroglyphs (rock carvings), canoe runs, fish

traps, burial sites, camps and villages, culturally modified trees and more. To contribute to this growing database, please report any cultural findings to the Stewardship office with the location and photographs if possible. KXSA can use this information to respond to referrals to make sure activities in the territory do not negatively affect these important cultural sites.



Boulder with bowls/Rick Neasloss Jr.; Petroglyph/KXSA SEAS 2019; Pictograph/Doug Neasloss; Pictograph/Sandie Hankewish & Ernie Mason





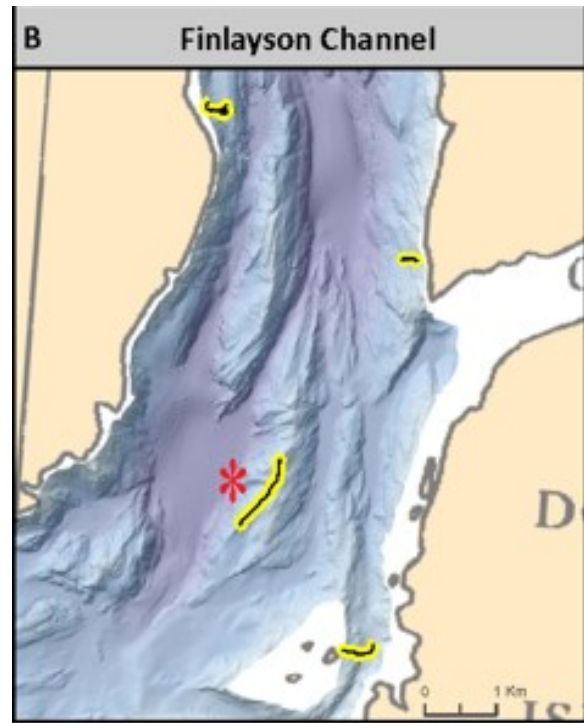
## Making History

The DFO research team aboard the Vector recently wrapped up their surveying efforts in KX territory. Among other field work, the DFO team, led by Tammy Norgard, used a remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV) to search for deep water coral aggregations and sponges.

An ROV transect in Finlayson Channel revealed a massive, healthy *Lophelia pertusa* coral reef. This is the **first** cold-water coral reef discovered in Pacific Canada and the first pristine *Lophelia pertusa* reef found in all of Canada, and it is right on our doorstep. Another first for Kitasoo Xai'xais! Before this discovery, *Lophelia* reefs were thought to be extinct in this region.

*Lophelia* reefs support an abundance of marine life by providing nursery, refuge, and feeding habitat for a diverse array of wildlife. DFO hopes to survey this area again in the future as they suspect that there is more *Lophelia* reef in the immediate vicinity. Stewardship is currently working with DFO on a plan to communicate out this exciting discovery to the public.

Sone large, pristine glass sponge reefs were also found in KX Territory near Pidwell. Some scientists said they were more impressive than the ones found in Hecate Strait back in the 1980's.



Survey lines (transects) in Finlayson Channel and location of *Lophelia* reef



Left: *Lophelia* Reef in Finlayson Channel; Right: *Lophelia* reef and sponge.

## Preparing for the worst

As part of marine response planning preparation, several Stewardship staff members were trained in the Incident Command System (ICS), which is a method of response management organization that is used internationally by responders for marine and land-based incidents. Staff took a mix of ICS 100-200 level training (introduction to ICS) and ICS 300 level training (intermediate ICS). This provides managers and responders with the basic skills necessary to mount an organized response to an incident within KX territory using ICS.





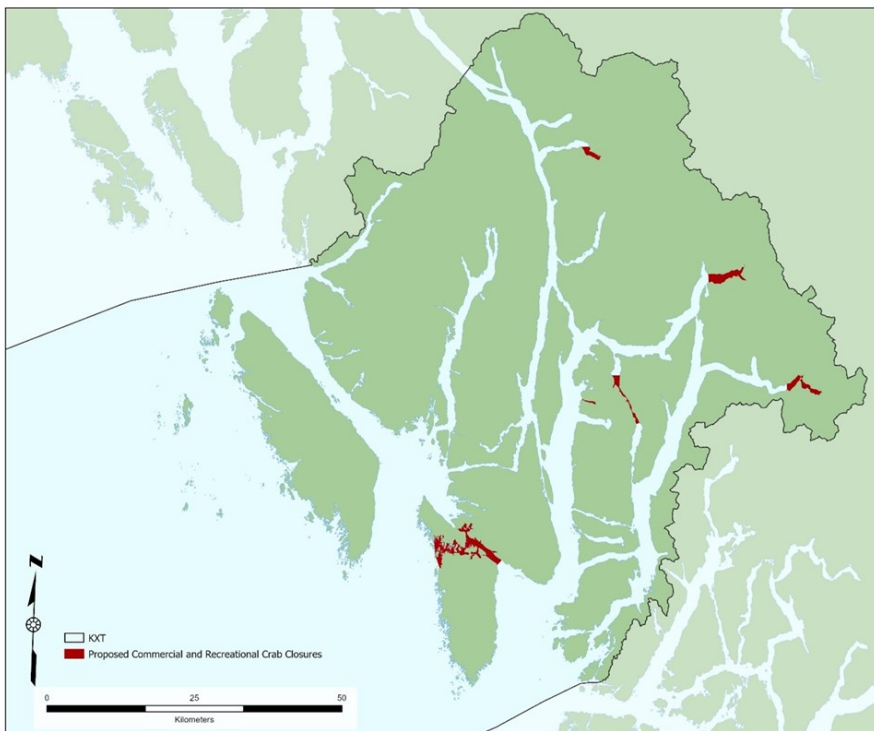
## Crab closures—Protecting our Rights

After many years of negotiations, we have successfully closed several areas to both commercial and recreational crab fishing year-round in order to improve local First Nation access. These Crab Closures are not only finalized in DFO Regulations but our signs to notify boaters on the water are now up in all six of our closed areas. If you see any non-locals crab fishing in these areas just point the towards a sign. They will get the picture!

Please notify the Guardian Watchmen or the Stewardship Office of any non-local crabbing activity in these areas.

Doug Fraser and Victor Reece installing crab a crab closure sign in Kynoch Inlet. Photo: Deirdre Leowinata

Right: Map of the six crab closures (map: Rosie)







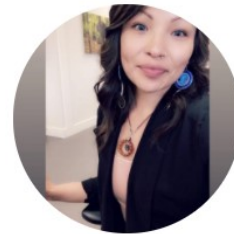
**Doug Neasloss**  
Director



**Vernon Brown**  
SEAS & Outdoor Coordinator



**Evan Loveless**  
Land/Marine Use Policy  
Advisor



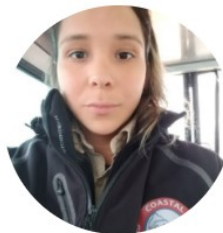
**Santana Edgar**  
Administration  
Office Manager



**Evelyn Edgar**  
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Coordinator



**Angel Edgar**  
Sgüüxs Lágax Algyax  
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Languages Project Supervisor



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**Cassandra Willie**  
Xai'xais Language Intern



**Roslee Child**  
Data & Engagement  
Coordinator



**Victor Reece**  
Guardian Watchman



**Meddy Robinson**  
Guardian Watchman



**Doug Fraser**  
Community Marine Use  
Coordinator



**Brady Stjerneberg**  
Kitasoo & Mussel Guardian



**Laurel Sleight**  
Marine Planning Coordinator



**Sam Harrison**  
Barrister & Solicitor  
Indigenous Laws Coordinator



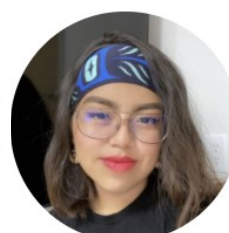
**Christina Service**  
Wildlife Biologist &  
Science Coordinator



**Sierra Hall**  
Research Technician



**Mercedes Robinson-Neasloss**  
Lead Research Technician



**Jamie Mason**  
Research Technician



**Heather Robinson**  
Field & Research Technician