



## Kitsoo/Xai'xais Stewardship Authority

### Kitsoo/Xai'xais Filming and Photography Policy

*The Kitsoo/Xai'xais have lived in this territory since time immemorial. Our foundational legal principles of respect, reciprocity, interconnectedness, and intergenerational knowledge underpin all stewardship of the territory. We have a responsibility to teach people about our legal tradition and the type of behaviours it encourages and discourages. These legal principles, developed over thousands of years, are not just a set of rules; they are a manifestation of our worldview.*

*We welcome the many visitors that come to experience the beauty and wildness of our home and ask that you follow these practices as you endeavor to take photographs and videos away with you. If you intend to sell or distribute commercially any media products, you must also obtain a [protocol agreement](#) with the Kitsoo/Xai'xais Stewardship Authority.*

#### ŁOOMSK [RESPECT]

No part of this territory is untouched; it has been lived in, protected, utilized, and stewarded for millenia by the Kitsoo/Xai'xais people, our ancestors, and the plants and animals you wish to document. You are a visitor in our home.

- Make every effort to respect and accurately represent the cultural values and traditions of Kitsoo/Xai'xais subjects.
  - Seek the appropriate permissions from your human subjects.
  - Carefully fact check writing that you publish in association with your visit, including when posting on social media. Ensure your published works are respectful to Kitsoo/Xai'xais people, culture, and values.
  
- Wildlife should not be filmed or photographed if doing so might expose it to threat of physical harm, predation, stress, or lesser reproductive success. Special care must be afforded to breeding animals to avoid having a negative impact on reproduction or add to the risk of predation.
  - Wildlife should not be manipulated or handled in any way for the purposes of video or still photography.
  - Nest & den photography is prohibited.
  - Feeding or baiting wildlife of any kind is prohibited. This can lead to habituation, illness, aggressive behaviour, and have strong negative effects on animals. This can also lead to dangerous interactions with humans and often leads to the animal having to be put down.

- Drone use in Kitasoo/Xai'xais territory is not permitted in the Territory without prior written permission from the Kitasoo/Xai'xais stewardship office.
- Treat the environment with care and respect. Make every effort to minimize your impact on the land and water.
  - Leave No Trace – pack out everything you pack in.
  - Travel slowly and quietly when in the presence of wildlife.
  - Watch your step - please avoid disturbing or trampling fragile plants and ecosystems. Stay in your vessel or stick to established paths where they exist.
  - For boaters - anchor in depths greater than 100' if you have a windlass (60' without a windlass) to avoid disturbing sensitive aquatic habitat such as eelgrass beds.

### SITYAAW [RECIPROCITY]

Consider ways that you can give back to the people and places that you take your photographs and videos from.

- Donate to a local non-profit working to protect Kitasoo/Xai'xais Territory.
- Compensate the people that make your work possible.
- Clean up garbage you encounter.

### SAGAYT K'UULM GOOT [INTERCONNECTEDNESS]

We believe everything in Kitasoo/Xai'xais territory is inextricably connected; we will only be healthy if our territory, the plants, and the animals are healthy too. Each visitor is only one person, but the thousands of visitors that come to our Territory are interconnected. Any impacts, however small, on the people, wildlife, land, and water (positive and negative) are cumulative. Some locations in the Territory experience overcrowding and have reached carrying capacity. Many places in the territory are sacred, spiritual, and/or cultural sites. Some are highly sensitive and many have been disturbed, damaged, or destroyed either intentionally or unintentionally.

- Always maintain a safe distance from animal subjects. Crowding or chasing animals is prohibited; if an animal puts more distance between you, do not continue to advance.
- When publishing or posting videos and photos, remove location/GPS data and avoid using specific place names. Use more general place names such as: 'Kitasoo/Xai'xais Territory,' 'Central Coast,' and 'Great Bear Rainforest.' Sharing specific locations can significantly increase traffic to these areas.
- If an artifact is discovered, leave it in situ. Mark the location and report it to Kitasoo/Xai'xais Stewardship Authority as soon as possible.

## GUGWILX'YA'ANSK [INTERGENERATIONAL KNOWLEDGE]

The Kitasoo/Xai'xais hold a great deal of knowledge about the Territory and the subjects you may wish to document. Consider sharing your knowledge of these best practices, and of ethical photography more generally, with others that you encounter in the territory.

- Consider hiring a local guide or visiting Spirit Bear Lodge.
- Do your homework and know your subject(s). Doing research before your visit to the Territory will increase your knowledge and make you a more respectful visitor. If you are photographing wildlife, knowing the signals of aggression, stress, ease, and comfort in your subject species will help make your visit safer for all parties.
- Share your knowledge with others you encounter in the territory.

### SOURCES AND REFERENCES:

[Alena ES Photography](#)

[International League of Conservation Photographers](#)

[National Geographic – How to photograph wildlife ethically](#)