

“OUR WAY ”

3rd Annual Coast Salish Gathering
Tulalip Washington

Table of Contents

1. 2008 Coast Salish Gathering Executive Report
 - Page 3
2. 2008 Coast Salish Gathering Outcomes
 - Page 4
3. 2008 Coast Salish Gathering Canoe Journey Water Quality Gathering Project
 - Page 8
4. 2008 Coast Salish Gathering News Article: Indian Country Today
 - Page 14
5. Our Coast Salish Gathering History
 - Page 16
6. Our Coast Salish Gathering Environmental Inventory of Concerns
 - Page 22

2008 COAST SALISH GATHERING EXECUTIVE REPORT

In February 2008, the Coast Salish People gathered in the Tulalip traditional homelands to speak with One Voice for the protection of our ancestral homelands and waters of Salish Sea. We shared our common concerns on environmental impacts that are destroying our rich lands and resources and, developed our strategy of how we, as One, would take action to restore and protect our Mother Earth. Our focus was to find means of resolving critical issues together and to strengthen the environmental policies and practices in our homelands. Coast Salish leadership made it clear that the Gathering is not a form of a government-to-government consultation process, but rather, a culturally appropriate process for an open dialogue to reach consensus and advise policy makers of issues of concern.

Over 300 Coast Salish elders, chiefs, chairmen, mothers, grand mothers, and environmental staff participated in the Gathering, sharing concerns, developing an action agenda and recommending environmental policies to restore and protect the Salish Sea Eco Region. As One Voice, our leaders, protectors and policy makers, worked in collaboration to share issues and concerns within our shared homeland and waters with representatives from Environment Canada, US Environmental Protection Agency, Province of British Columbia and Washington State. The Gathering sustained a spirited policy dialogue that generated a mission and expansive prologue statement to guide Coast Salish environmental actions. These discussions produced a vigorous environmental action plan focused on the protection of our shared ecosystems and related activities that will sustain the capacity of the Coast Salish effort.

OUTCOMES FROM THE 2008 COAST SALISH GATHERING

1. APPROVED COAST SALISH GATHERING PROLOGUE AND MISSION STATEMENT

Adoption of a Coast Salish Gathering Prologue

We, the indigenous peoples of the Salish Sea, honor and respect our sacred trust to restore, preserve and protect our culture, treaties, aboriginal rights and the land, air and waters of the Salish Sea. Our sacred trust has been given to us from our ancestors and defines our role as protectors of our Mother Earth. We are entrusted with the protection and sustainability of environment and natural resources of our ancestral lands, watersheds, and estuarine waters of the Salish Sea. Our ancestors have passed down the traditional teachings of songs, dances, and spiritual ceremonies that reflect our relationship to the natural world and depict our identity and strengths of our peoples. Over the decades our lands and waters have been severely impacted by pollution that affects our culture, food, health, and economy. Most importantly hurting our elders who have relied on these since the beginning of time and threatening the life ways of our children's future.

We have always defended and protected our ancestral lands and waters, we seek to acknowledge our sacred alliance so we may work together as one proud nation. Our elders, leaders and community members have given us a strong message that our homelands and waters need to be protected, preserved and restored for future generations. With our commitment to our Sacred Trust, we will work together with the six governing bodies of the Salish Sea to overcome the environmental challenges to our shared homelands.

Adoption of a Coast Salish Gathering Mission Statement

We, the indigenous peoples of the Salish Sea, our autonomous status as sovereign Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations and our inherent responsibility as protectors of our Mother Earth, will continue to work together and speak with One Voice for the preservation, restoration, and protection of the Salish Sea Eco Region for the sustainability of our sacred inherent family rights and values that have been passed on to us by our ancestors.

2. APPROVED ACTIONS

Coast Salish Gathering Environmental Action Plan

Outcome: To conserve and restore the Salish Sea ecosystem to a level that ensures the sustainability of the Coast Salish People and our cultural life ways.

A. Coast Salish Priorities: Adequate clean air, water and land to sustain and protect the health of our Coast Salish People.

- Traditional Foods ~ Toxics and Depletion
 - Adequate terrestrial resources to sustain the diet, ceremonial, medicinal and cultural crafts of our Coast Salish People.
- Water ~ Quality and Quantity
 - Adequate marine resources to sustain the spiritual, subsistence, and economic endeavors of our aboriginal Coast Salish communities of the Salish Sea.
 - Clean water quality to sustain the Coast Salish communities of the Salish Sea
 - Clean water quantity for the present and future Coast Salish communities of the Salish Sea.
- Climate Change Impacts and Planning for Coast Salish Communities
 - Adequate planning and support to address the impacts of climate change in the Coast Salish communities.

B. Coast Salish Actions:

- Governance/Policy Actions
 - Equality in the shared roles for the Federal, State, Provincial and Coast Salish Tribes in the planning, implementation and management of Salish Sea eco region restoration and protection efforts.
 - The incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge in the restoration, implementation and management of the Salish Sea eco region.
 - The incorporation of climate change variables as critical factors in the planning of conservation and restoration efforts in the Salish Sea eco region.
- Ecosystem Priorities
 - An adequate supply of riparian waters Salish Sea of a quality sufficient to maintain a healthy functioning estuarine ecosystem habitat.
 - Reduction of toxic depositions in Salish Sea to a level that supports a healthy functioning ecosystem.
 - Restoration and conservation of adequate marine and near-shore habitat to support Coast Salish goals for the Salish Sea.
- Technical Priorities (examples)
 - Reduction to elimination on non-essential hard-armoring of the Salish Sea shoreline.
 - Adequate buffers and storm-water management practices to improve water quality in riparian systems.
 - Adequate in-stream flows to provide sufficient fresh water to maintain the estuarine character of the Salish Sea.
 - Eradication of invasive species that damage the Salish Sea ecosystem.

- Adequate funding to address and plan for Climate Change impacts in the Salish Sea Eco Region.
 - Ample funding to support environmental program and project capacity (policy and science) building for the long-term sustainability of Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations.
-

3. APPROVED ACTION PROJECTS

A. Coast Salish Environmental Information Sharing Project

A collaborative effort based coordinated by the Coast Salish Gathering to support and develop a website based information sharing program with GIS capabilities between Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations. The Coast Salish leadership has joined forces to begin the process of gathering information on all Coast Salish environmental projects, issues, and actions that have been or are being developed and implemented throughout the Salish Sea Eco Region.

Outcome: An information sharing website for the Tribes and Nations with access under a secured system.

Capabilities: The website will provide the project abstracts, location and contact information as a research tool for the tribal participants.

B. Water Quality Information Gathering Project

A collaborative effort coordinated by the Coast Salish Gathering to support and develop a water quality gathering project by the Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations. The Coast Salish leadership has joined forces to begin a unique process of gathering and sharing water quality information from the Salish Sea.

The Annual Canoe Journey is a traditional gathering of Coast Salish peoples, who travel through the water ways of the Salish Sea. The project proposes to collaborate with several canoe participants and request their permission to equip the canoes with water quality gathering tools and staff. The purpose is to gathering water quality information throughout the Salish Sea: from the waters of Bella Coola, British Columbia, through the Straits of Juan DeFuca and Puget Sound.

The outcome of the Water Quality Information Gathering Project will be an extensive gathering of water quality information that can be shared between the Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations. The long term objective will be to establish an annual collaboration with the Annual Canoe Journey to collect and provide water quality information through out the Salish Sea.

Capabilities: The information will be gathered and stored under the secured Coast Salish Gathering website and will be annually maintained and managed under the responsibility of the Coast Salish secretariats.

C. Coast Salish Environmental Indicators Project

A collaborative effort based under the Coast Salish Gathering to support and develop a Coast Salish Environmental Indicators project between the Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations. The Coast Salish leadership has joined forces to begin the process of gathering and developing environmental indicators that incorporate modern and traditional science from the Salish Sea. The outcome is to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) with the science based environmental indicators of the Salish Sea. The blending of modern and traditional science will provide the leadership with information to develop policy to protect and sustain the culture of the Coast Salish Peoples.

Capabilities: The information will be gathered and stored with the Coast Salish Gathering website and will be annually maintained and managed under the responsibility of the Coast Salish secretariats.

OUTCOMES of action plan and Information sharing projects

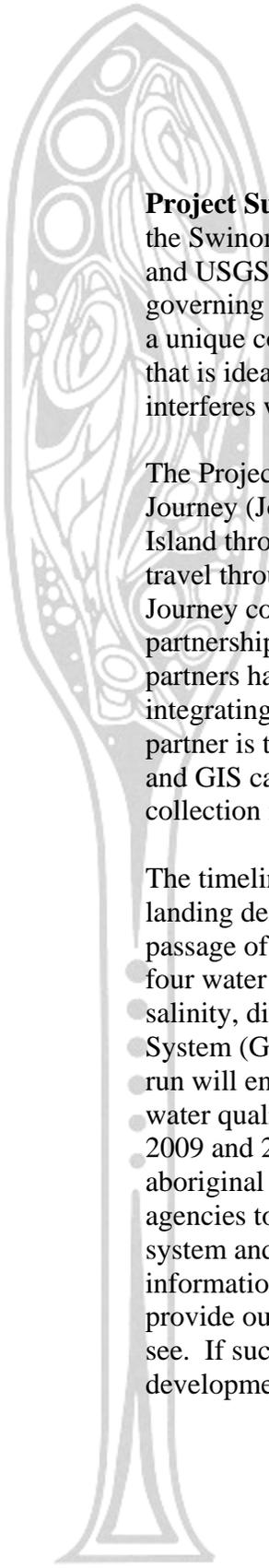
Outcome 1: The Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations will share environmental platform nation wide to protect the Salish Sea Eco Region and with the shared responsibility will develop, manage and implement environmental policy to sustain the Coast Salish way of life.

Outcome 2: The Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations will streamline shared information and projects that will support the shared efforts of protecting and restoring the quality and quantity of the environment in the Salish Sea.

Outcome 3: The Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations will develop the policy and protocol for a Coast Salish TEK Environmental Indicator Plan that will be shared by the Coast Salish People to protect and restore the Salish Sea Eco Region.

The 2008 Coast Salish Water Quality Project A BLENDING OF SCIENCE AND TRADITION





Canoe Journey Water Quality Project Proposal

Project Summary: The Canoe Journey Water Quality Project (Project) is a unique opportunity for the Swinomish Tribal Community, Coast Salish Canoe Journey Families, the Coast Salish Nation and USGS to provide significant water quality information that will support Coast Salish Nation and governing bodies to be better informed of the conditions of the Salish Sea Ecosystem. The Project is a unique concept that brings tradition and science together to accomplish a data gathering process that is ideally done with a canoe, eliminating the impacts of boat engine and exhaust disturbance that interferes with data collection and quality.

The Project's success relies upon the leadership and support from the Annual Coast Salish Canoe Journey (Journey), which includes over 44 First Nation canoes that travel from north of Vancouver Island through the water ways of the Georgia Basin and 29 western Washington Tribal canoes that travel through Puget Sound. The Project has an enormous spatial domain (water area) that only the Journey covers on an annual basis. The Coast Salish Gathering leadership has established a partnership with the Canoe Journey Committee and Captains/Skippers to support the Project. Both partners have approved the Project with consensus and embraces the Project as a way of sharing and integrating traditional ecological knowledge responsibility to protect Mother Earth. Our third partner is the United States Geological Survey (USGS) who will be providing the science, technical and GIS capability for the Project. USGS provides a solid science background for the data collection methods, processing and analysis capacities of the Project.

The timeline of the Journey is from July through the first week of August. Each year a different final landing destination is chosen. For 2008 the final destination will be Cowichan, located in the inside passage of the Georgia Basin, on Vancouver Island. We are planning to do a first year test run with four water quality probes in the 2008 Journey to measure water temperature, pH, conductivity, salinity, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity. These data will be merged with Geographic Positioning System (GPS) position and time information along each of the four "test run" canoe paths. The test run will enable us to create a baseline water quality study for the Salish Sea, identify "hot spots" of water quality concern if they exist, and to plan for the two journeys listed in the grant project for 2009 and 2010. The Project, at this capacity with the Canoe Families, is best conducted by the aboriginal tribes and nations of this area, as it would be difficult for any governing or academic agencies to coordinate and complete this type of water quality data gathering for this large water system and across political borders. We plan to assist the governing agencies by sharing our data information. Our timeline reflects the period of data collection, analysis and reporting, and we will provide our baseline study to governing agencies and publish the data and results for the public to see. If successful, the Project will be an annual tool for the Coast Salish Nations to support policy development and implementation in the Salish Sea Ecosystem.

Project Objectives and Activities

Develop a baseline strategic plan and timeline that includes consistent growth and planning to manage the project:

1. Establish Canoe Journey Routes, Landings and Canoe Equipment Carriers
 - a. Meet with Canoe Journey Committee to finalize routes and landings
 - b. Finalize Canoe Family selections for carrying equipment/data gathering
 - c. Coordinate with Canoe Families to define project participation
 - d. Develop and Implement quality control and assurance procedures
 - e. Finalize plans with the Project Team and USGS
2. Develop, review, and approve data collection methods and tools
 - a. Collaborate with USGS to develop, review and approve data collection methods
 - b. Coordinate with Northwest Indian College for water quality technician internships
 - c. Coordinate rental of data collection equipment
 - i. Train water quality technicians on equipment and procedures
 - ii. Introduce equipment to Canoe Family Captains/Skippers
 - d. Finalize the plans with Project Team, USGS and Canoe Captains/Skippers
3. Plan and Conduct the Journey
 - a. Plan and finalize Journey travel plans
 - b. Coordinate with Swinomish and USGS for Support Boats in the north and south Salish Sea region.
4. Analyze and Share Information
 - a. Analyze data and review for reporting , publishing, and dissemination
 - b. Analyze and synthesize information into maps
 - c. Create interactive GIS data layers
 - d. Develop database and examine results to identify hot spots of water quality concern
 - e. Download information into CSG Shared Information Database

Initial Project Data Parameters & Analysis

In year 1, baseline data will be analyzed to characterize summer water quality conditions that existed along Salish Sea Canoe Journey pathways in July 2008 and to identify any hotspots of concern. For example, many areas are known to have low oxygen and increasing surface water temperature owing to increased warming and/or reduced summer stream runoff associated with lower snow packs. In addition, high turbidity from increased summer transport of fine sediment (glacial flour) commonly channelized through river floodplains may be leading to changes in light availability, depth of the photic zone, productivity and benthic substrates. Combined, these stressors may create harmful conditions for migrating young salmon, forage fish spawning, and submerged aquatic vegetation.

Initial phase parameters of interest include water temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, salinity, turbidity, location and time along Traditional Canoe Journey routes. The Canoe Journey data will be analyzed and synthesized into maps, GIS data layers, and databases and examined to

identify hot spots of water quality concern. Plans will be made for the science to accompany the 2009 Salish Sea Canoe Journey. The 2009 Salish Sea Canoe Journey science plan will be conducted.

Outcome:

The outcomes of the Project will support the Coast Salish Nation's effort to address the environmental impacts upon our own communities. As the aboriginal owners of the Salish Sea Ecosystem, we are responsible for the well being and health of our communities and we want to ensure sustainability of the environment and its resources for our families and be able to live a safe life today and in the future.

Funding Contributors:

- a. Northwest Straits Foundation (TBF): \$25,000

The Northwest Straits Foundation is a non-profit organization established to support the scientific, restoration, and education projects and programs of the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative. The Foundation's mission is to protect and restore the marine resources of the Northwest Straits by supporting research, monitoring, restoration, stewardship, conservation and education programs and projects both at the local and regional level.

The Foundation seeks funding for projects and programs in partnership with the Northwest Straits Commission, the seven County Marine Resources Committees, Tribes, federal/state/local agencies, universities, other non-profit organizations and businesses.

The Northwest Straits Foundation was created in 2002 to augment the ability of the Northwest Straits Initiative to pursue funding for its programs and projects. The Foundation works closely with the Northwest Straits Commission and the Marine Resources Committees to set priorities and develop projects to achieve its marine conservation objectives.

- b. US Geological Survey (TBC): \$11,739

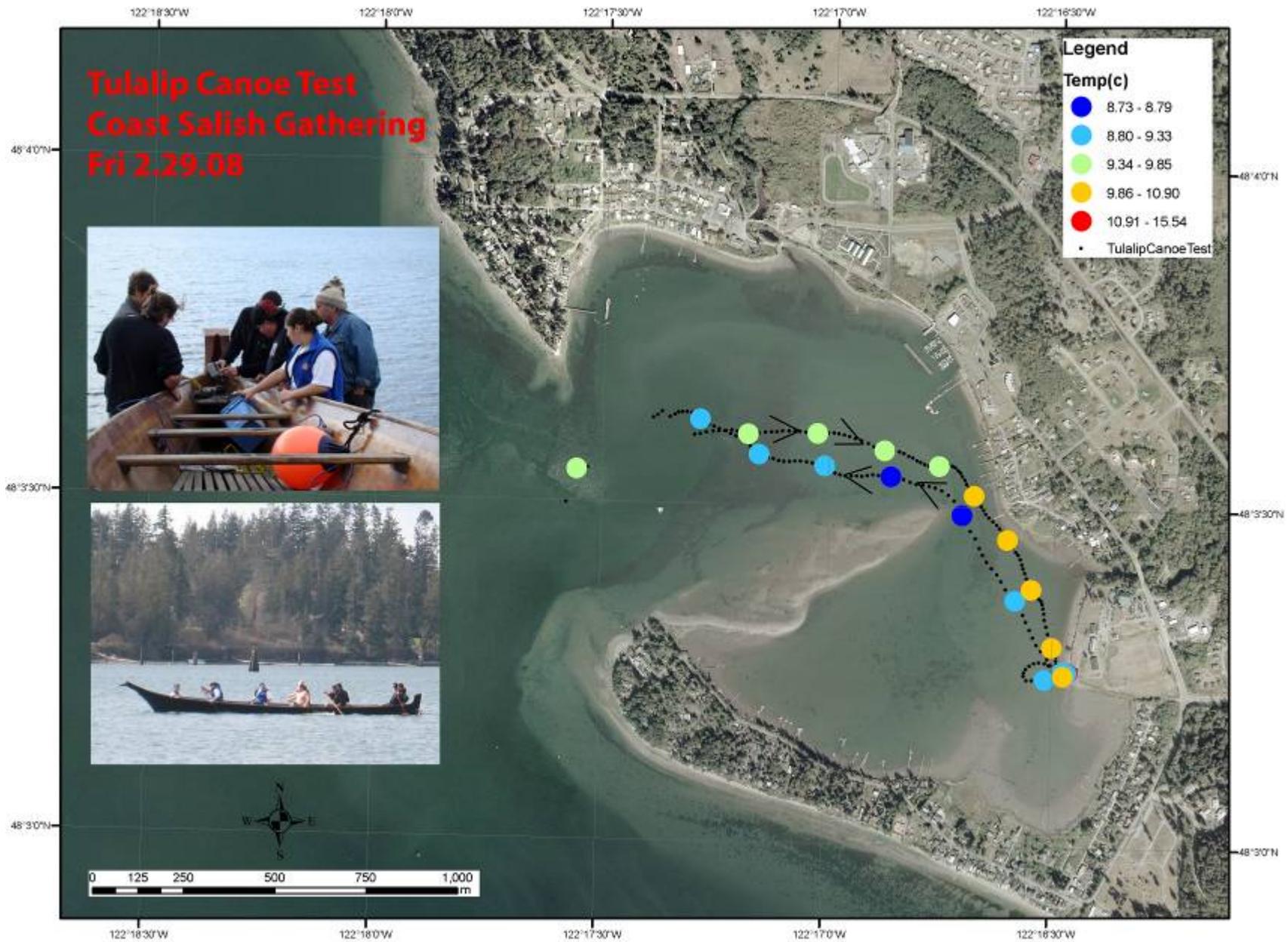
- i. USGS is the Nation's largest water, earth, and biological science and civilian mapping agency, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) collects, monitors, analyzes, and provides scientific understanding about natural resource conditions, issues, and problems. The diversity of our scientific expertise enables us to carry out large-scale, multi-disciplinary investigations and provide impartial scientific information to resource managers, planners, and other customers.

- 1. Program Mission: The Mission of the USGS Cooperative Water Program is to provide reliable, impartial, and timely information needed to understand the Nation's water resources through a program of shared efforts and funding with State, Tribal, and local partners to enable decision makers to wisely manage the Nation's water resources.

- 2. Contacts:

- a. Charles O'Hara, Planning Director and Coast Salish Gathering Steering Committee

- b. Debra Lekanof, CSG Coordinator and Coast Salish Gathering Steering Committee
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
 - 360-466-7200
 - cohara@swinomish.nsn.us
 - dlekanof@swinomish.nsn.us



COAST SALISH GATHERING ARTICLE: INDIAN COUNTRY

Coast Salish leaders commit to environmental action

 [Email this page](#)  [Print this page](#)

Posted: March 10, 2008

by: [Staff Reports](#) / Indian Country Today

TULALIP, Wash. - "Enough talk, it's time for action." Billy Frank Jr., chairman of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, summed up the consensus at the second day of the Coast Salish Gathering at the Tulalip Tribes Feb. 27 - 29.

"We are the Indian people, the Coast Salish Indian people, who live on all the watersheds, on the headwaters and on the bays throughout the Salish Sea region. We've got a message for all the nontribal governments and communities and we're delivering it."

In the second full day of planning, Coast Salish leaders from British Columbian First Nations and western Washington tribes committed to a goal of environmental action, including a Salish Sea-wide information sharing database, a water quality information gathering project, and a Coast Salish environmental indicators project. (Visit www.coastsalishgathering.com.)

Brian Cladoosby, co-chair of the Coast Salish Gathering and chairman of the Swinomish Tribe, said: "We are true leaders here. True leaders have the confidence to stand alone if they must, and make tough decisions. We want to work with the other governments and other communities if we can, but we will continue to look to our traditional strengths and tie our culture to our objectives."

"Our objective here is to turn the tide on all the environmental destruction that the white society has heaped upon us over the past 150 years. Our objective is to speak with one voice as Coast Salish people, and to adopt action plans that will make a difference," said Tom Sampson of the Tsartlip First Nation in British Columbia.

Cladoosby also pointed out that over the past 150 years of environmental deterioration, there has been a philosophy that people must make as much money as they can without regard for the environment. Thus, he said, we have seen a destruction of the air, water and plants. "Mother Earth is not a commodity to be dominated and exploited, but rather a gift to be loved and respected."

"We're on a journey here that has no end," Frank said. "We're the only ones who are willing to do it. The other governments haven't done it. We are the Indian people, people of the land. We know what the problems are and we're trying to address them in an honorable way. If we have to take things into our own hands, that's what we will do," he said. "Action is needed right now if we are to have any hope to have a healthy environment for the future."

"We tell the truth. The U.S. government does not tell the truth. The Canadian government does not tell the truth. The states don't tell the truth. They lie to their people. They say, 'It'll scare the people and hurt the economy, so let's just lie to them.' Well, we won't lie to our people, and the other governments cannot fool us. We know where our trail is, and we've got to stay on that trail - together."

One component of the Coast Salish Gathering Environmental Action Plan calls for greater controls and tribal consultation on fish farming - a form of aquaculture that has become commonplace in Canada and is being explored in the northwest United States. The tribes voiced deep concern about the sea lice problem that is hand-in-hand with fish farming, a major challenge to fish survival. The consensus at the gathering was to oppose continued destructive fish farms and to continue working toward the replenishment of natural runs.

The delegates to the gathering determined to collectively urge the United States and Canada to adopt the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a statement of principles that took 25 years to develop. The declaration represented fundamental changes in international policies toward indigenous peoples. It calls for the human rights of the 370 million indigenous people in the world to be respected.

The United States and Canada joined Australia and New Zealand as the only four nations to oppose the declaration. One hundred and forty-three countries adopted it. Since then, Australia has issued an apology for its position and has indicated it will support the declaration. There is a strong movement in Canada moving in the same direction.

However, the United States has not altered its position.

In the climate change arena, state and federal guests at the gathering acknowledged that the tribes' long-term memory of the region offers the only opportunity to gain comprehensive historic data. "Non-tribal environmental data only goes back to the 1930s," said Terry Williams of the Tulalip Tribes. "Ours goes back thousands of years. Without our traditional knowledge, nobody truly has the ability to compare the status of fish and wildlife habitat today with its condition before the white man came."

Williams said such traditional knowledge is just one example of the values tribes bring to natural resource management. The representatives at the gathering concurred that tribes must receive more equitable management funding to deal with climate change conditions. "These are tribal resources being destroyed," Williams said. "We have got to have the ability to build the capacity and staffing necessary to help clean up the mess, even though the tribes didn't create it."

OUR COAST SALSH GATHERING HISTORY

The Annual Coast Salish Gathering is an environmental policy forum for the Coast Salish Peoples to continue to speak with One Voice for the preservation of our culture and the protection of the land and waters of our aboriginal homeland. Our event will host 49 Coast Salish British Columbia First Nations and 29 Western Washington Tribes and will provide a policy platform for dialogue that will focus on the need for strengthening environmental policies and practices in our homelands. The Coast Salish Gathering extends its invitations to Environment Canada, US Environmental Protection Agency, Washington State and Canadian Provincial agencies to hear our deliberations and policy recommendations. We value the input of all participants and believe, together, we can encourage a successful policy dialogue that will generate actions to advance the protection of our shared ecosystems. We do not observe the gathering as a government to government consultation process, but merely a means of coming together to find common grounds on environmental and natural resources issues, concerns and projects.

1. The common concern

The Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations are surrounded in the every growing urbanization of the Georgia Basin area. The Gathering provided a table to discuss the steps towards the collaboration of First Nation and Western Washington Tribal of the Salish Sea environment concerns, issues and projects in the international trans-boundary region consisting of the Puget Sound region in the United States and the Georgia Basin in Canada, including the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The leaders discussed the need to collaborate and find, protect and develop policy to address mutual concerns regarding environmental stressors and human responses that account for the present state of this shared ecosystem. The Gathering provided a place for a common understanding of the current state and trends in the Tribal ecosystem in an integrated way across the Canada-United States boundary. It provided for all participants the information that can help them make better decisions for the future of this richly endowed, yet fragile region the Canadian First Nations and American Tribes share.

The Salish Sea Gathering consisted of Policy Builders from Tribes, First Nations, Environment Canada, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington State government representatives and Canadian Government officers. The discussion was held at the highest level of Policy Dialogue, and provided opportunities to develop policy and actions to uphold the protection of the shared Georgia Basin Region.

The shared concern is the lack of recognition by the policy and regulatory makers to the rightful owners of the shared eco region. There are policies and regulations being made on Coast Salish homelands with out their participation at the table. The Gathering shared testimony from leaders, delegates, elders and children who describes the segregation of their life ways due to regulation and policies being developed with out

their input or consent. The way of life for Coast Salish is depleting around them; gone are the fish, deer, sheep, berries and the quietness. Their cultural existence is being pushed to the brink of extinct and the challenge is how do they stop it before it is too late.

2. Our steps towards a solution in 2005 and 2007

The 2005 Coast Salish Gathering initiated a dialogue regarding Tribal/First Nations environmental concerns, issues and projects in the international Trans-boundary region of the Salish Sea. Our Elders reflected on the Salish Sea of their youth and the changes they have witnessed. Our dialogue shared our aboriginal perspective on the current state and trends of the environment in this unique estuarine ecosystem that we call “home”. The objective of the Gathering was to provide a forum for Tribal and First Nations leaders to collaborate on environmental issues and share that information with governmental policy makers to assist them in making more protective and cultural sensitive decisions concerning the future of this richly endowed, yet fragile, region that we share, the Salish Sea.

The Gathering delegation moved to develop the Coast Salish Aboriginal Council which would consist of the Coast Salish Leadership. The purpose of the Council is to provide a policy dialogue to discuss environmental and natural resources issues and recommend policy and actions to federal and state agencies. The second outcome was to appoint several secretariats to the Gathering who would manage the administrative and financial needs for the Coast Salish Leadership. The secretariats would provide support and follow through for the Coast Salish Leadership and coordinate discussion at the federal and state level on policy and action issues. The third outcome was the establishment of the Coast Salish Steering Committee; which consists of representatives from either side of the border to coordinate the next gatherings. The purpose of the Committee is to share the responsibility to support the Coast Salish Gathering and Coast Salish Aboriginal Council’s in our shared effort to sustain the Coast Salish life ways.

The Gatherings provided the environmental policy platform for the five government bodies of the Salish Sea Region; i.e. Tribal, First Nations, State, Provincial and Federal, to discuss and determine the effective participation of Coast Salish peoples in the various treaties, agreements and polices that protect the Salish Sea Ecosystem. The overall conclusion was the Coast Salish People were not being included as decision makers by the federal, state, provincial and policy organizations at the environmental policy development and implementation levels.

- Federal Joint Statement of Cooperation: The policy between the US Environmental Protection Agency and Canadian British Columbia Environment Canada only requires the policy to “engage the tribes and first nations”. There is no formal

agreement between the federal governments and the Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations to develop and implement environmental policy and actions together for the Salish Sea Eco Region.

- State and Provincial ECC: The MOU between US Washington State and Canadian Province of British Columbia includes participation from the NWIFC representation through the International Trans boundary Task Force. There is no formal agreement between the state, provincial, Tribes and First Nations to develop and implement environmental policy and actions together for the Salish Sea Eco Region.

By no means is the gathering considered a government to government discussion, but rather, the gathering provides a place for Coast Salish Leadership to share their environmental issues and concerns and provide a unified voice to protect the shared homelands and waters.

3. 2008 Coast Salish Gathering continued steps towards solutions

The past two Coast Salish Gatherings have provided the five governing bodies with the opportunity to find common grounds to develop and discussion environmental policies and actions that protect the ancestral homelands and waters of the Salish Sea Eco Region.

The upcoming Gathering will provide the next step between the Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations:

- Establish a formal mutual understanding of agreement in the environmental policy and actions of their rightful ancestral homelands and water.
- Adopt the Coast Salish Gathering Prologue and Mission Statement
- Adopt and implement the Coast Salish Environmental Action Plan
- Adopt and implement the Coast Salish Environmental Information Database Sharing Program and the Coast Salish Water Quality Information Gathering Project
- Approve the 2008 Tribal Salish Sea Environmental Indicators Project

4. Measurable Accomplishments

- The past four years the Coast Salish Gathering has brought together the six governing bodies of the Salish Sea for a meaning full dialogue on environmental issues and policies. The efforts has strengthened the relationship and networking between the Coast Salish Tribes and Nations, enabling future discussion and planning for projects, information sharing and collaboration on supporting shared environmental issues.

- The establishment of the Coast Salish Aboriginal Council is to amplify their individual voices and find collective solutions to protect their homelands that do not put one groups well being against one another. The leaders who formed the CSAC continue to focus on traditional shared decision making and unify to protect shared interests and concerns.
- The future recommendations to develop a shared and unified policy to address the environmental issues will be addressed in the 2008 Gathering. The unification recommendations will support the development of Coast Salish shared projects and information sharing tools, enabling Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations to sustain the protection of their homelands and waters.

2005 and 2007 Coast Salish Inventory of Environmental Concerns

A historic gathering of Coast Salish Leaders and representatives of United States and Canadian Government, and environmental organizations convened at the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribal Community Center. The Gathering brought the British Columbia First Nation Chiefs and the Western Washington Tribal Chairmen and council members of the Salish Sea Region together to express their environmental concerns on problems confronting the long-term sustainability of their culture and the shared eco region that supports their cultural diversity.

Participants met to discuss the protection of the Salish Sea’s rich marine diversity and other resources unique to the area that stretches from the Georgia Basin, down through the Pudget Sound and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. These diminishing resources are essential to sustaining the cultures, economies and homelands of the tribes in western Washington and First Nations in British Columbia, and are under significant pressure from population growth, industrial expansion and climate change. The Salish Sea Gathering was a Tribal policy dialogue regarding tribal environmental issues, policies and projects in the trans-boundary region. Participants discussed the need to collaborate in determining the impacts and human responses that shape the state of this shared eco-region. The Gathering’s objective was to provide government officials with the perspectives of the indigenous people of the region to better inform decision making processes regarding the future of the fragile Salish Sea.

The ongoing collaborative efforts of Tribes and First Nations to protect their diverse eco region is found in the jointly development of the Treaty of Indigenous Peoples International in 1994. This Treaty was an initial step towards the development of the Joint Statement of Cooperation on the Georgia Basin Puget Sound Ecosystem, which was signed January 2000, by the minister of Environment Canada and the administrator of the EPA. The Gathering was a symbolic formalization of the unity of Tribes and First Nations to further strength and sustainability of their homelands.

The Gathering was supported with funding from the Environmental Protection Agency, Environment Canada, Canadian Consulate, the Office of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Tribes and First Nations. The efforts of the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Tulalip Tribes, and the Coast Salish Initiative to host, coordinate and facilitate this policy dialogue on the cultural and spiritual concerns impacting the Coast Salish People.

The government and municipal representatives were welcomed and asked to share their thoughts, issues and ideas to the congress ion. Many representatives were moved by the Gathering and were able to share knowledge and show commitment to the Georgia Basin Action Plan of “engaging Tribes and First Nations”. The monumental testimonies was a time for the non Tribal policy makers to realize how important the environment is incorporated into the Coast Salish life ways and their survival.

The Coast Salish People stretch from north of the Powell River, down through the Georgia Basin and through the waters of the Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The Coast Salish People live their life interdependent with the land, air and water and the resources the ecosystems provide. The protection of the environment is ingrained in their traditions and life ways. Their culture and existence depends on the fish running through the rivers and bays, the shellfish in the tidelands, the deer in the woods, the native plants for their medicine and the noiseless woods for their spiritual places. Without a healthy productive environment, their way of life has no foundation and will cease to exist. The importance of protecting the ecosystems of their homelands is a priority for Tribes and First Nations. If the denigration of the environment is allowed to continue, they risk the loss of their voice, bodies and souls.

The 2005 Gathering brought the Coast Salish Leadership together to discuss their shared environmental concerns and after two days of heart-filled testimony, the assembly of Coast Salish spoke with "One Voice"; the leaders of the Coast Salish resolved to form a list of prioritized environmental concerns and issues, the Coast Salish Inventory of Environmental Concerns. The leadership further extended their commitment to the continuity of protection for their homeland by establishing the Coast Salish Aboriginal Council.

The next step in the process of articulating concerns and implementing protections will be to expand and refine the Coast Salish Inventory of Environmental Concerns (CSIEC). This process will include coordinating with the Tribes and Nation's environmental leaders to engage their guidance in the refinement of concerns and development of action plans to address the identified issues. The process will include networking through face to face meetings to discuss and critique the CSIEC, sharing their knowledge and project experience, and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge to support the drafting of a unified Coast Salish Environmental Action Plan (CSEAP).

Presently, there are a variety of treaties, environmental action plans and initiatives in the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin Region that are supported by either the US governments, Canadian governments and other non-governmental organizations. These plans, programs and initiatives include; the Puget Sound Partnership, EPA and EC Statement of Cooperation, Puget Sound Action Team, and Northwest Straits Commission; Marine Resource Committees, People for Puget Sound, to name a few. But none include comprehensive participation from all 26 Western Washington Tribes. Although most groups have included a Tribal representative to provide an aboriginal voice on their committee, comprehensive tribal representation is limited in the area of policy development for the protection of the ecosystems that are the foundation of their homeland.

The shared issues are categorized by the following:

- Overarching Issues
- Governance Issues
- Capacity Issues
- Development Issues

Over-arching Issues

- The environmental degradation impacts on the traditions and life ways of Coast Salish Tribal and First Nations people today and for generations to come. The degradation of the environment causes the loss of tribal traditional foods such as salmon, shellfish, elk, deer, berries and native medicines. The loss of our traditional foods is a leading cause of health issues for tribal members. The concern is if the degradation of the environment continues the Coast Salish traditional life way risk extinction. The action may be to develop a Tribal Environmental Protection Action Plan to protect the shared homeland's environment and natural resources.
- The degradation of the environment causes the loss of tribal traditional rights such as hunting and fishing. Tribes have been the rightful owners and managers of the natural resources of the shared region; Tribes have taken the initiative to collaborate to restore the habitat and natural sources that have been mismanaged by non-rightful owners. The concern is the Tribes have rebuilt their capacity to protect their environment and have the capacity to develop policies and actions plans to protect their shared region however they have not been brought to the policy development and making level. The action may be to collaborate with one voice to bring recognition and due rightful policy placement to the Coast Salish Leaders.
- The Coast Salish Tribes have been long tied together through bloodlines that stretch north of the Powell River and down through the Straits of Juan de fuca, and down the beaches of Makah and down the coast of through Quinault. The concern is the Coast Salish culture has sustained burdens of disease, wars, death, and assimilation. Now we face the degradation of our environment, and the threat of extinction of our tribal culture. The action may be is the Coast Salish People will develop a long term Coast Salish Environmental Action Plan to begin the long journey of regaining the policy making seat to restoration and protection of the shared homeland and to establish the long-term sustainability of the their culture.
- The Coast Salish Tribes will need tools to expand and develop the Inventory of Tribal Environmental Concerns; and to support the Coast Salish Environmental Tribal Action Plan. The tools are important to the long-term sustainability of the Plan and protecting their life ways.
 - Needed Tools
 - Language: The Coast Salish language supports the grass roots of our culture. The Coast Salish language provides the guidelines of

the families, governments, policies, health, and history. The language provides the historical terms and knowledge needed to support the Plan.

- Collaboration: The Coast Salish Tribal Organizations are supportive of a common goal: to protect our environment, restore our rightful fishing and hunting habitats, and protect our cultural life ways. Through these two organization we will create a Tribal Environmental Coalition for BC and Western Washington to work through the organization to develop and support the Plan.
 - The Western Washington Tribes have collaborated to establish the NWIFC to support the recovery, restoration and protection of the Salmon and our life ways. The commissioners represent a majority of the Western Washington Tribes and are a leading force in environmental and salmon protection.
 - The newly created Coast Salish Aboriginal Council consists of one nation, the Coast Salish. The Council holds 81 seats, 54 BC First Nation Chiefs and 26 Western Washington Chairmen.
 - Funding: The concern is the lack of funding to support the capacity to protect the environment and with the current cut back in environmental funding, the Tribes and organizations will need to develop a funding plan to sustain the efforts of the Plan.

Governance Concerns and Issues

- The Salish Sea is the only eco region that contains one aboriginal nation, the Coast Salish. The eco region is managed by multi transboundry governments managing one, with difference environmental action plans, difference government types, different regulations and policies. The rightful landowners of the eco region, the Coast Salish, share the same culture that has been shared through generations and teachings from shared bloodlines and stories. The Coast Salish Peoples share the same environmental teachings and natural resource management style, same governance styles, same family bloodlines and the same values.
- The US and Canadian border and the governance issues has separated the alliance of Coast Salish Tribes and First Nations which has resulted in loss of the control of policy development in our homelands. The Coast Salish Tribes and Nations have restarted the alliance of knowledge, strength and support to regain their rightful place as the owners of the land, water and air of the shared eco region. One nation, one eco region, one policy, one plan.

Capacity Concerns and Issues

- The US and Canadian Governments have established several agreements, task forces and action plans to manage and protect the Georgia Basin Puget Sound Region. In the past three years, there are native organizations that have invited

Coast Salish Representation to assist and advise the policy makers in developing environmental policies. The concern is the lack of representation of Coast Salish Tribes and Nation on the international trans boundary environmental policy development. The action may be to increase the awareness and due rightful place for Coast Salish People to sit at the policy development table; to implement the Coast Salish Environmental Action Plan to the present and future environmental action plans, task forces, councils, committees and policy making decisions entities.

- The Coast Salish People have a historical tradition of gatherings; whether it is canoe journeys, potlatches, naming ceremonies, or spiritual ceremonies. The traditional networking system of the Coast Salish is a process and place for the Coast Salish leaders to gather, network, share information and establish quorums for important policy and protection decisions to be made. The concern is the lack of funding to support the traditional gathering process; the past and current funding resources will not fund the traditional gathering process and events; and we will need to develop and action that provides to the funding resources a tribal policy to respect, honor and support our gathering process and event.
- The Coast Salish Tribes and Nations have many successful environmental tribal projects and programs. We do not have a centralized storage area that contains the projects and programs; and with today's technology, management and security capacity there is an opportunity to increase our shared efforts through a secure comprehensive database of Coast Salish Tribal and First Nation environmental projects and programs. The concern is the lack of funding to develop a database of this magnitude, and the action may be to incorporate a shared trans boundary funding resource to provide the technical and money to support a project. The second concern is the lack of technology to those smaller Tribes and Nations who do not have the capacity to participate in the shared database, and an action may be to coordinate with trans boundary funding agencies to support the technical capacity issues.
- The Coast Salish Tribes and Nations have been building their capacity to manage their own environment and natural resources. The government agencies have provided funding capacity through the stop and go funding sources. The concern is some Tribes, Nations have reached their capacity, and now realistic needs for funding resources are needed for implementation, long term planning and action planning, which are not available by current funding resources. The action may be to coordinate with funding resources to re evaluate and re construct new funding opportunities to fit the realistic needs of those Tribes and Nations who have reached their capacity levels to be effective managers of their environment and natural resources.
- Coast Salish belief in the circle of life, the dirt is the body and the water is the blood running through her veins. The belief is Mother Earth is the creator and provides all the resources and needs for the Coast Salish to live and survive in harmony. When we pollute her lands, her waters, and her air, we are killing our creator. The concern is non-tribal policy makers lack the knowledge and cultural significance of Mother Earth to the Coast Salish People. The importance of the environment to the survival of the Coast Salish is not clearly understood or

- respected by outside policy developers and the action may be is to develop an outreach and education program. The program will coordinate and support the establishment of a long-term process to guide the non-natives in understanding the cultural significance of Mother Earth to the Coast Salish Peoples.
- The collaborative efforts of the Coast Salish Tribes and Nations have been evident in the success the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and the Aboriginal Fisheries Commission. They have provided an organized environmental protection of the salmon and the environment. These organizations have a long-standing history with the Tribes and Nations; and when the funding cutback occurs; they are the first to be effected. These organizations may not be a Tribe or a Nation; but they are the warriors that fight for our Coast Salish fishing and hunting rights and to protect our environment. When their funding resources are cut back, our ability to stand together with one voice is smashed into multiple voices with no leader. The concern is the funding cut backs effect the Coast Salish representation and efforts to protect the environment and natural resources. The action may be to collaborate with the funding agencies to develop funding opportunities that fit our organization's realistic needs and future goals.

Development Issues

- The Coast Salish People have lived for centuries without a border across their lands; they shared their hunting and fishing rights depending on traditional family, land and bloodline rights. In the past 150 years the Canadian and US Governments have drawn a border that has divided the Coast Salish People and brought land, fish and hunting wars to a harmonized nation. The Tribes and Nations have rekindled their bloodlines through their traditional gatherings of canoe journeys, potlatches, naming ceremonies, and spiritual ceremonies; this has allowed them to strengthen their voices to support their political needs to protect their shared homeland. The rekindling of the Coast Salish People has brought the environmental protection issues into full speed; and the Tribes and Nations are struggling to share their knowledge, projects and programs. The shared efforts need to be developed into a stable program that supports trans boundary projects, policymaking, and protection of their homeland. The concern is we are lacking the funding resources to support trans boundary environmental program. The action may be as the Coast Salish establish their position in policy development committees and councils, whom support shared trans boundary projects, they can begin to implement the process for a stable shared environmental program and begin to support and coordinate in shared projects and policy development.
- The Georgia Basin/ Puget Sound Region is rich in a diverse array of ecosystems and species unique to this area that sustain the life ways of the Coastal Salish Tribes and First Nations. Salmon are an excellent example of the integral and yet vanishing connection the people and their land. The concern is as the shared

homelands are under significant pressure from population growth, industrial expansion and economic demands. The action that may be the political stand and policy management plans will need to be developed and recognized by the government agencies.

- The Coast Salish People have shared the water ways of the shared eco region. The trans boundary pollution movement between the land, air and water is evident in several river systems, the Fraser River, Skagit River, and Marine Waters. The concern is the Tribes do not have a developed process or system to share the information needed to restore, protect and manage the problems. The action may be to develop an online networking system and establish a security system and host to develop a website to network and share information.
- The Diesel Emissions policy making is not effectively managed by both governments; and each emission decision is not directly related to the overall health of the environmental, but rather the price of oil and oil company owners. The concern is the diesel emission's policy making process is not environmentally friendly. The action may be to collaborate with EPA and EC to support the increase of diesel emissions policy making problems, in hopes of strengthening the protection of the environment with one collective voice.
- Agricultural run-offs
 - Bio-accumulative Toxics in marine life
 - Health Risk Assessments
 - Not sensitive to indigenous lifestyles

Tools to Succeed

- Consensus
 - The need to establish a prioritized list of shared issues, tools, and long term plan to protect and preserve our homeland's environment and resources.
- Communication
 - Establish a means of an Ongoing Communication Network System
 - Use our existing system to come together
 - Gatherings
 - Families
- Collaboration
 - Shared Information
 - Joint Projects
- Language
 - Our Language is an essential tool that ties us to the our lands and our culture Use our language to establish our rightful place at the table
- Funding
 - Long term planning
 - Sustainability
 - Implementation Funding

