

Communities Working Together

Contributed by Tammy Peters, Samahquam Nation

I live along the In-SHUCK-ch Forest Service Road in the Lower Lillooet River valley that runs between the Lillooet and Harrison Lakes. There are five small, isolated First Nations communities dispersed along both sides of the River. We travel into the Village of Pemberton to access health care, public schools, and grocery stores.

This summer we celebrated the construction of Eco Depots in each of the main villages at Q'aLaTKu7eM (Samahquam), Skatin, and Tipella (Xa'xtsa).



Tipella community clean-up day



Q'aLaTKu7eM Eco-Depot on the grand opening day

Growing a Successful Waste Reduction Program in Kitasoo

Contributed by Andrew Wallis, Melody Robinson and Jamie Pond, Kitasoo Band



Andrew Wallis with early recycling efforts using a mini-baler.

Kitasoo's landfill was capped off in 2012, after we began shipping waste to Rabanco in Washington State.

After some early growing pains, and trial & error with our recycling program, we now have a brand new recycling shelter, electricity hook-up for a baler, and a community greenhouse.

Our future goals are to begin composting for the greenhouse operation, implement a Free Store and achieve a high recycling rate. We are seeking to lower the cost of outgoing refuse and recruit more community volunteers. We want to succeed in having a cleaner and healthier and more beautiful community.

Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada began the B.C. First Nations Solid Waste Program in 2008 after an assessment showed that the communities have similar needs and challenges. A common theme is the desire for recycling, composting and waste reduction activities. Solutions are developed locally and in cooperation with many different Regional Districts, product stewards and service providers.

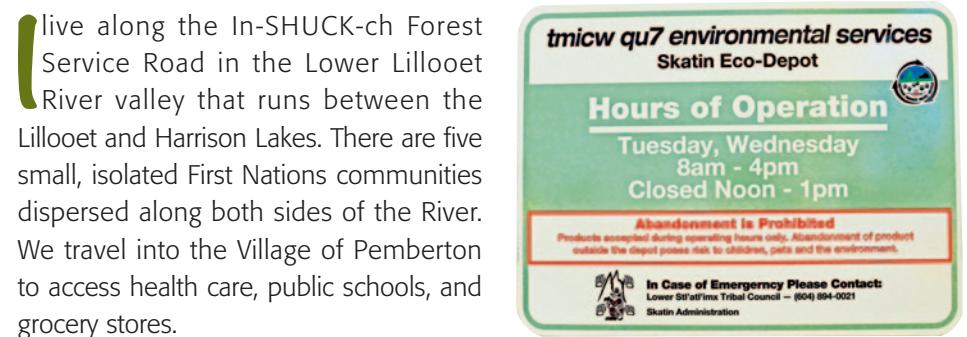
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Merganser duck artwork by Alex Jamieson



Skatin Eco-Depot signage

These will provide us with modern recycling facilities that will add to our practice of minimizing our footprint on Mother Earth. Our own company (shared by the communities) will operate the new waste management system so efficiency will be key, as will full and proper participation by the residents. Less residual garbage means fewer trips to the nearest facility in Whistler to dispose of it.

Incorrect recycling will mean lost revenue and added expense for our company.

THE Merganser



Fall 2015
Reports on First Nations Waste Management Programs in British Columbia, Canada

The Merganser is a diving duck found in coastal waters and lakes all over BC.

New "First of its Kind" Zero Waste Training!

Contributed by Alda Nicmans, Administrator, SWANA Pacific Chapter, BC & Yukon

Everywhere in BC there is a move afoot to close small local landfills and replace them with transfer stations and Eco-Depots to reduce waste. As well as recycling, these facilities may also have free stores, or bale plastics and paper, or include composting and household hazardous waste storage.

First Nations communities are building new "Zero Waste" centres and have a common need for trained operators. The Solid Waste Association of North America, Pacific Chapter – BC and Yukon (SWANABC) is very pleased and proud to be involved in the "first of its kind in BC" Transfer Station and Eco-Depot operator training program.

SWANABC volunteers and several First Nations communities met over the past year to design this training program with support from Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.



In September, the Lil'wat First Nation, the Regional Municipality of Whistler and local industry hosted educational tours for 10 First Nations trainees.

This fall, over 20 First Nations operators were trained with help from regional partners (see photos). Stay tuned to find out when this training will be available for your community's "zero waste" operators. We look forward to seeing you then!



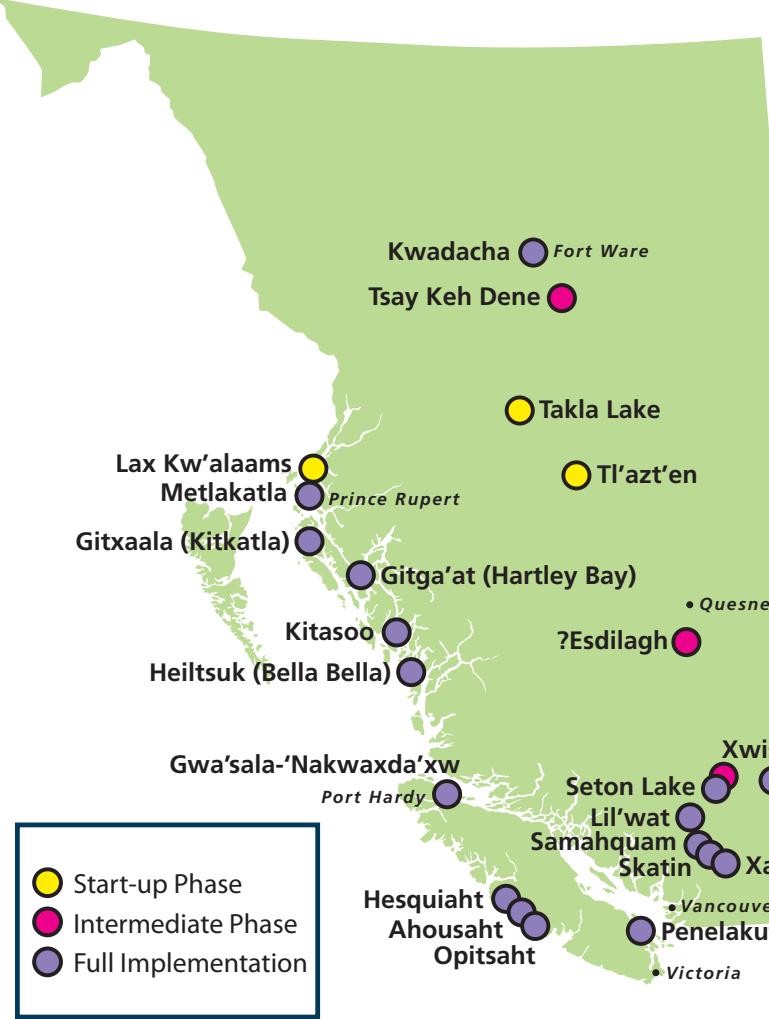
In October, the second training session in Prince George included visits to the Regional District of Fraser Fort George and Cascades Recovery sites.



Roger Vickers of the Gitxaala Nation created this image specifically for the training manual to represent both the southern first nation style (the dancer) and the northern first nation style (the totem) as the training is suitable for all communities throughout the province.

Community Updates

Welcome to our new program communities Tl'azt'en, Takla Lake and Lax Kw'alaams.



Landfill Closures Underway

The latest landfills to be closed are in Seton Lake (Shalalth), Xwisten (Bridge River), ?Esdilagh (Alexandria), Tl'azt'en (Tache), and Lax Kwa'alaams (Port Simpson). To date, 14 landfills have been replaced by transfer systems.



Xwisten (Bridge River)

Contributed by Allison James, Xwisten Solid Waste Working Group Member

Xwisten (Hoisht-en) is one of 11 First Nations Communities in St'át'imc (shtat-leeuhm) Nation, from Lillooet to Mount Currie BC. Xwisten prioritizes self-sufficiency and protecting the environment in our Comprehensive Community Plan. Xwisten is located a few kilometres north of Lillooet, and has approximately 450 members although only half live on our reserve. Thanks to our solid waste management plan, the Xwisten landfill is closed and we recycle most of our household garbage.

Now Xwisten is environmentally responsible in how we manage solid waste. This aligns with our priorities in a meaningful way. As a member, and



Xwisten ("The Smiling People") Solid Waste Working Group

somebody who completed an undergraduate degree in environmental studies, I can say the solid waste management plan at Xwisten instills a sense of pride in me. The plan is opening doors for Xwisten in terms of economic development as well. In the future we may generate revenue from collecting recyclables.

PINK (People I Need to Know)



Name: Leo Lawson

Community/Nation: Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw in Tsulquate, BC (near Port Hardy)

What I do: As Capital Manager, I manage construction projects for housing, infrastructure and community buildings. I am also a member of the AANDC Capital Committee.

Best part of my day: In the morning while sipping my coffee before work, when I compile a mental to-do list, it is very rewarding to reflect on what I have accomplished for Tsulquate community.

Biggest challenge right now: At this moment, I am challenged with learning a powerful, new financial software designed specifically for First Nation communities. My challenge is setting up the Housing and Asset Management component.

Operations tip: Reach out to other depots in your area and establish a working relationship. We can extend service for our communities and reduce our footprint on our planet.



Name: Calvin Jameson

Community/Nation: Lil'wat Nation in Mount Currie, BC

What I do: Since 2009, I've been the Public Works Superintendent. I look after a crew of 10. I spend most of my days working alongside my crew or overseeing the tasks at hand. It could be anything from laboring to running the equipment.

Best part of my day: Is being part of making Lil'wat Nation a good and safe place to be for our children.

Biggest challenge right now: Getting people to recycle and put their garbage in correct recycling bins.

Operations Tip: Don't be scared to get out there in the field and get dirty with the crew. The only way to understand the full needs you have is to be up front and in control.