

By Maureen Cooper

Ten of British Columbia's recycling stewardship agencies have come together to create the First Nations Recycling Initiative (FNRI), a project designed to assist First Nations with recycling challenges. The FNRI is available to support communities with recycling resources and transportation of collected items, for example, through community clean-ups. FNRI reps can also help present information on recycling programs in BC, and how to join individual programs for regular services.

The following stewardship programs are partners in the First Nations Recycling Initiative:

- Call2Recycle
- Canadian Battery Association
- ElectroRecycle
- Electronic Products Recycling Association
- Health Products Stewardship Association
- Major Appliance Recycling Roundtable
- Outdoor Power Equipment Institute of Canada
- Recycle BC
- Return-It
- Tire Stewardship of BC

Contact us by email at [info@fnri.ca](mailto:info@fnri.ca) to explore recycling opportunities for your community.

More info can be found online: [RecycleBC.ca/First-Nations-Recycling-Initiative](http://RecycleBC.ca/First-Nations-Recycling-Initiative).



Major appliances collected and ready for shipment out of Takla Nation.

## Zero Waste and Earth Day Grant Awards

By Genevieve Lindsay

Indigenous Services Canada (BC Region) offers two annual grant programs to support community and school-based zero waste and environmental projects: the Zero Waste Grant and the Earth Day Grant. It is always heartwarming to read the completion reports after each year and see how grants are often used to bring multiple generations together for neighbourhood cleanups, awareness-raising events, unveiling of community gardens, and a variety of other innovative projects. Then came the COVID-19 pandemic. As expected, First Nations are showing great resilience in the face of an unprecedented challenge and are constantly finding ways to adapt. For example, Xwisten (Bridge River) carried out the community cleanup by picking up items roadside from households rather than having individuals come to the big bins at the band office. If your community is having trouble completing the grant projects due to COVID-19 complications, please do not hesitate to reach out. Together, we can find a solution (call 604-347-6627).



Students visit the Yunes'tin community greenhouse.



Klahoose First Nation Squirrel Cove marine debris removal project.

Indigenous Services Canada began the B.C. First Nations Zero 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.

# THE Merganser



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

Fall 2020

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

## Zero Waste Circuit Rider

By Lucinda Phillips and Emily Chu

Indigenous Services Canada has funded the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG) to conduct the Zero Waste Circuit Rider pilot program. The program helps maintain successful operations of community waste management systems and promotes landfill waste reduction.

Qualified Zero Waste Circuit Riders are contacting the 12 First Nations in the pilot to provide:

- On-site training for operators and where needed, operators will receive formal training through IZWTAG's resources;
- Practical recommendations to the community's administration;
- Funding and support to implement minor works to address safety and environmental concerns;
- Connections to resources from government, product stewards and other service providers;



Experienced Zero Waste Circuit Riders help operators with on site recycling and other waste management questions.

- Follow-up to help troubleshoot daily operations and maintenance concerns.

The program hopes to recruit and train additional Indigenous Zero Waste Circuit Riders. Extension of the program depends on evidence of benefit from the pilot as well as federal funding allocation decisions. For more information, please contact Lucinda Phillips, IZWTAG Executive Director at [exec.izwtag@gmail.com](mailto:exec.izwtag@gmail.com)

## izwtag.com

By Lucinda Phillips and Emily Chu

IZWTAG's website, [izwtag.com](http://izwtag.com), went live earlier this year! Since that time, visitors to the website have commented on the impressive visual design and the depth and richness of content provided.

The website highlights the many community recycling resources, and examples and videos from First Nations

around the province, which communities can really relate to. Recycling topics covered include:

- Waste reduction
- Reuse
- Composting
- Household hazardous waste
- General recycling
- Oversized items
- Construction debris
- Illegal dumping

To become an IZWTAG member or partner, or to register for training, go to the Programs and Partners section. IZWTAG runs several training courses for waste system operators and recycling champions, and provides eligible trainees with subsidies to attend.

An upcoming feature on the website will be on-line zero waste education resources for teachers and students in First Nation schools. Thanks to Indigenous Services Canada for sponsoring the website and to the team that worked to design and produce [izwtag.com](http://izwtag.com). Questions? Please email [info@izwtag.com](mailto:info@izwtag.com).



Visit the About Us page of the website to learn more about IZWTAG.

# Community Updates



Official grand opening of Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation's Dog Creek Eco Depot. The ribbon cutting was a community celebration!



Gerald Quash checks out the new worm composter at the Tahltan Transfer Station in Telegraph Creek.



The communities of Gitanyow (left) and Sik-E-Dakh (Glen Vowell Band) (right) launched their mobile eco depots in the summer.



Moses and his team of fabulous summer students at Klahoose First Nation assembling reusable recycling bags in the summer sun on Cortez Island. The team helped to launch the new Mobile Eco-Depot at Klahoose.



Bruce Shiel oversees the set up of the household hazardous waste collection shed at the Seton Lake Transfer Station.



Recycling Champions in the matching orange coats they received at the end of the Community Recycling Champion training held at Williams Lake in September 2020.



Wooden boxes once used for garbage collection in Halfway River have been repurposed for sorted recycling collection. Residents' garbage now goes in the green cart.



**Welcome**  
to our new program communities

- Aitchelitz
- Ashcroft
- Kanaka Bar
- N'Quatqua
- Peters
- Simpcw
- Tseycum
- Whispering Pines/Clinton
- Yakwekwioose

## How to Join the Program

The B.C. First Nations Zero Waste Program is funded by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). The funding available varies from year to year. Since the Program began in 2008, nearly 80 First Nations have participated to improve their community waste management systems. If your community is interested in joining, please contact Rachele Ormond, ISC Project Engineer ([rachele.ormond3@canada.ca](mailto:rachele.ormond3@canada.ca)) or call Emily Chu, planner, at 604-347-6627.

