

Shxwlistexw te Sqwá:la Shxwelí

Care for the Life Spirit of the Hope Slough

As we wrap up the first full year of Hope Slough restoration, we reflect on the many accomplishments. One that stands out is the recent offer of additional funding from DFO, as they listed our project as one of the most successful in their program! Here are updates on the work happening in our five pillars:

- 1. Improved Flow Through Sqwá:la:** Using the information gained from the geotechnical studies, designs for two holding ponds have been completed. We have moved into the contractor bidding stage for construction and will keep the board apprised of the results. Work will be completed in the 2024 fish window to follow regulatory guidelines.
- 2. Riparian Area Restoration:** Over the winter, we have been developing relationships with key stakeholders in Chilliwack agriculture. These leaders are supporting us by introducing us to farmers along the slough. These new relationships, partnered with the strong Pelólxw community bonds, are essential for ensuring the long-term health of Sqwá:la shxwelí. Invasive removal and planting of native plants is currently underway at several new farm locations, led by Pilalt Enterprises and Quillicum Environmental.
- 3. Fish Habitat Restoration:** With our completed designs for five coho and chum spawning beds, we are in the process of hiring contractors for construction and environmental monitoring. Work will be completed in the 2024 fish window to follow regulatory guidelines. The DFO community restoration and provincial permitting teams have joined our project and are supporting us with two additional spawning beds and permits. The positive impact and care for Sqwá:la shxwelí continues to grow!
- 4. Water Quality Monitoring:** Respected biologist Mike Pearson has joined our water quality program. He has supported our Wildlife and Watershed Technicians with invaluable training and increased the impact of our work. The data collected will be featured on datastream.com and pollutiontracker.org to ensure the impact of this important study grows over time.
- 5. Community and Youth Engagement:** Our spring break youth event is almost here! From March 18-23, 20 Pelólxw youth will spend six days with elders, knowledge keepers, and scientific experts exploring “Restoration – Language and Land.” The event prepares the youth as future stewards of our lands, waters, and resources. This month, we also hosted a table at a community event to share the good news of the project. We hosted youth and guardians from Seabird and Chawathil on a canoe tour to support them in starting restoration projects in their own community.

Please reach out if you have any questions,
Roxanna Kooistra, PM

Through this project, we have hired and provided training for eight community members, two as part-time employees and six as contractors. We are in the process of accepting bids from 5 Pelólxw businesses for all project construction work.



Thank you for supporting the excellent work of Shxwlistexw te Sqwá:la Shxwelí!