

2024



LIVING LAB NETWORK FALL NEWSLETTER

Living Lab is a community-school-campus partnership supporting land-based learning/healing, eco-cultural restoration and Indigenous resurgence.



Greetings to all! This summer was an exciting time for the Living Lab network as it expanded locally and globally, supporting reconcili-action, restoration, and strengthening youth connections to ancestral lands, waters, and cultural traditions. As fall approaches, we're focused on gathering reflections, celebrating achievements, and planting seeds for projects in 2025 and beyond. Check out the inspiring images, project updates, and exciting funding news!

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Presentations and Team in Girona, Spain

Our 12-person team from the Living Lab Network and WSÁNEĆ youth/family members had an incredibly inspiring experience attending the bi-annual European-based Living Knowledge Network (LKN) community-campus conference in Girona, Spain. Thanks to a generous donation from UVic's Centre for Indigenous Research and Community-Led Engagement (CIRCLE), the Vice President Indigenous and the President's Office. We are deeply grateful to the LKN local organizers, especially Alicia, and the Catalan Institute for Cultural Heritage Research (ICRPC) and particularly Antonio, for their warm hospitality. A highlight of our trip was the extra public screening of CELÁNEN TTE TETÁCES, with Co-Directors SXEDFELISIYE Tye and the film's producer Alex Harris present. Catalan and European academics and NGOs, at the film screening, were deeply moved, seeing an Indigenous-led production for the first time. The trip strengthen community-driven research, partnerships, and youth exchanges with European and global partners. It also showcased a community-based Indigenous worldview of "Canada". Full report is out November 15th



Photos: Film Screening and Presenting in Girona, Spain.



PEPAKEN HÁUTW



Photos: Kyle Clarke (PH) at LKN, PH at SNIDÇEŁ

Restoring SNIDÇEŁ

Throughout the summer our team was diligently working to maintain and steward SNIDÇEŁ. Summer is the busiest time for our restoration team due to the vigorous growth that comes with the added sunlight!

Preparing for the new school year!

School is back in session, and we are ramping up for another year full of garden and restoration fun! Our team has been hard at work planning and organizing the upcoming workshops for the PEPAKEN HÁUTW Native Plant and Garden Program as well as the Restoration stream for WSÁNEĆ School Board students. Read the full report here.



TETÁCES Restoration Initiative

Our latest Reconcili-action project from the TETÁCES Team is called the TETÁCES Restoration Initiative. It follows up on the TETÁCES Climate Action and TETÁCES Revitalization Projects. TETÁCES means "Relatives of the Deep" and is the SENĆOŦEN word for the Gulf Islands.

The TETÁCES Restoration Initiative is a signage project and will enhance cultural understanding by installing signage and educational artwork at key locations on S,DÁ,YES (Pender Island) that hold significance for the WSÁNEĆ people. Each installation will feature place names in SENĆOŦEN and English, explain its traditional significance, and include a QR code linking to educational content about its importance to the WSÁNEĆ people. Rose Spahan from Tsartlip Nation is curating the project and engaging WSÁNEĆ artists. Read the full report here.



Photos: WSÁNEĆ community at project launch. L to R: PENÁWEN - Pena Elliott, STIWET - James Elliott, SXEDFELISIYE - Renee Sampson, J,SINŦEN - John Elliott.



SUMMER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Twenty-three Songhees and Esquimalt Nations youth participated in Living Lab Network summer camps and Intern Program. Eight youths also went off for a three-day, two-night camping trip to Tofino with John Harris and Rachel Trebilco! Ava George, Katessa Rice, Harmony Lecoy, Rylan Thomas and Ethan Farrell were our amazing summer Eco-Interns, supported the program team Jessica Joseph, John Harris, Kyle Clarke and Maeve Lydon. The camp's activities focused on learning and connecting to the lands, waters and heritage, fostering community engagement, and building new friendships.



On the water!



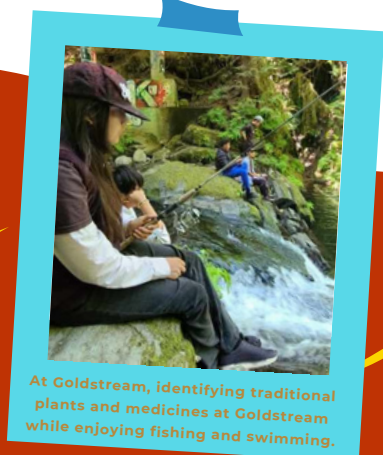
Learning in the classroom



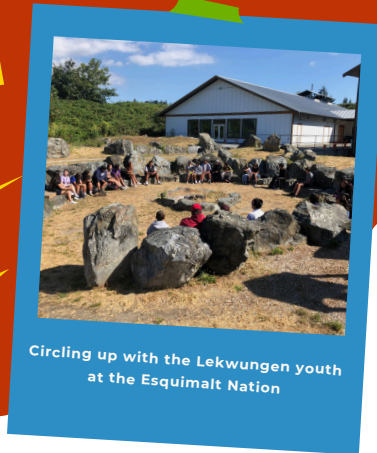
Visiting Discovery Island Park (cultural teaching with Lyndsey Joseph (TE, TES, TE) and archaeology with Darcy Mathews



Jessica Joseph, John Harris and EcoInterns 2024



At Goldstream, identifying traditional plants and medicines at Goldstream while enjoying fishing and swimming.



Circling up with the Lekwungen youth at the Esquimalt Nation

The summer camp concluded with a community feast cooked by the youth, celebrating the fantastic summer experiences with 80 family members from the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. Thanks to the Songhees and Esquimalt Education Department' staff who support the project, and parents and youth. Plans are underway for linking the youth program to school and employment goals, having seasonal outings and more food, fun, arts, cooking and camping! See our 2024 Living Lab Youth Report for more info.

ReconciliACTION in Oak Bay

In September, ReconciliACTION Oak Bay Network (ROBN) focused on honouring the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation; we collaborated with Oak Bay High School on the first school-wide ceremony to mark the day, attended by 1500 students and staff.

For the fourth year in a row, ROBN hosted a community ceremony on Sept. 30 at the Sno'uyutth Pole. It was attended by 200 residents, including all six Oak Bay Councillors and the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Murray Rankin. Personal pledges for Truth and Reconciliation were distributed to attendees. [Read the full report here.](#)



Photos: Songhees Knowledge Keeper Florence Dick at the Sept. 30 community ceremony at Oak Bay High School



Fall Reflections by Jessica Joseph

Living Lab Fall Network Celebration Thursday 28th November | 12-1:30 PM

Join us for a virtual network gathering to connect: Hear highlights from our education, schools, youth, and research projects, and share your updates! Register at livinglabproject@gmail.com or click on the [zoom link](#).

Recipes for Resurgence Tuesday November 19th | 3:30-5:30pm at Stelly's School Cafeteria

Living Lab is teaming up with the Salish Sea Environmental Education Provincial Specialists Association (SSEEPSA) for a cooking and connecting workshop to support local and Indigenous food systems, wellbeing and zero waste. Lead cooks include Eric Scholfield, Stelly's Culinary Arts Teacher, and John Harris, Indigenous Education District Elder and Indigenous Knowledge Facilitator (SD#61). [Sign up here!](#) Space Limited!



John Harris



Eric Scholfield



NOV

Living Lab Cards for Sale!

These beautiful cards designed by resident Living Lab friends, Sarah Jim, Jessica Joseph and Brianna Bear. All proceeds from card sales will directly support the ecosystem restoration and Indigenous youth programs of the PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation and Living Lab Project. Email us at livinglabproject@gmail.com to purchase a card!



Funding Update and Good News!

The WSÁNEĆ School Board, in partnership with the Living Lab Network, has been awarded a \$250k grant over two years from the Law Foundation's Indigenous Justice Grant Fund. This grant will support a new field and school curriculum education program titled ÁLENENEC "Homelands": A Legal Education and Resurgence Project. The project aims to restore WSÁNEĆ and regional/national First Nations' connection, access, and rights to traditional lands and waters and provide the education and employment needed for future generations to sustain themselves and protect the environment. It also fulfills the vision and dreams of the WSÁNEĆ community as outlined in [Learning from the Homeland: An Emerging Process for Indigenous Education](#) from Knowing Home-Braiding Indigenous Science with Western Science. In addition, the Ministry of Advanced Education's Aboriginal Service Plan has awarded \$30k in funding for 2023-2024 to support the Living Lab's core work, including frontline youth and restoration programs.

OUR GOALS

Educational Transformation

Develop land-based learning and school programs connecting sustainability and environmental/science education with student well-being and success.

Community -Driven Research

Lead and support community-driven research projects based on Indigenous and community knowledge and priorities, healing and wellness, and restoring the connection to lands and waters.

Restoration and Resurgence

Organize community-driven ecosystem and climate action projects which affirm Indigenous knowledge, rights, and access to/use of traditional lands and waters.

Capacity Building and Engagement

Create community skills, capacity-building activities, and a regional Indigenous eco-stewardship program focused on children and youth.

OUR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS



Songhees



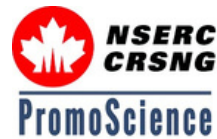
Aboriginal Service Plan
Ministry of Advanced
Education



island health



TETÁCES
Restoration
Initiative



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