



Living Lab Network



SUMMER 2026

It's summer, and it's a welcome opportunity to be outdoors, (especially for younger generations) on the lands and waters, nourishing our bodies, spirits, and communities. We are planning youth and community outdoor learning and harvesting activities and catering a summer feast at Esquimalt-Xwsepsum Nation on August 13th. Read on for updates on LLab Network planning, the TETÁĆES-SDAYES Reconcili-Action Place Names Project, WSÁNEĆ School Board-led, LLab-supported ÁLENENEŁ Field Camp visits, and ongoing school and community activities in Lekwungen territories and School District #61.

Photo Credit: Alice
Meyers "Connecting with
XO'XDEL" June 2026

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

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ÁLENENEÇ - WSÁNEĆ Youth and Schools Spring Program

Visit to XO,XDEŁ June 12-13

This June 12-13th, students participated in two ÁLENENEÇ school trips to XO,XDEŁ (Mandarte Island), with a focus on WSÁNEĆ Science, WSÁNEĆ food sovereignty, and SENĆOTEN language learning. We had the opportunity to learn from WSÁNEĆ Knowledge Holders about traditional foods, including KŁO,EL (camas), KENI (gull eggs), and ŁEKES (red lava seaweed). A memorable moment from both trips was sighting KELŁOLEMEĆEN (orcas). Our visit to XO,XDEŁ included learning about one of the longest-running ecological research projects from Peter Arcese (UBC Professor Emeritus) and how decades of monitoring have helped scientists understand relationships between bird populations, ecosystem health, and environmental change. HÍSWKE to Hawəlk^{wk}wəlaʔ, STOLCEŁ and YÁYELMEW for the opening song, to TELXEMKEN Sr, Orion and his crew from STÁUTW



Left: Learning about red lava seaweed **Middle:** Boat Transport **Right:** Bird Sightings

Written by: Daniella Roze des Ordones, ÁLENENEÇ Research Program Team *Photos by:* Alice Meyers



WENÁNEĆ Field School (June 2-4, 2026)

The SENĆOTEN immersion students of the WSÁNEĆ Leadership School spent three days and two nights at WENÁNEĆ this past month. They were there for ÁLENENEÇ, land-based learning, and joined by WSENĆOTEN,ISTW students who taught language lessons, clam digging, tea making, cedar bark weaving, wool weaving, the bone game, the phases of the moon and how to identify constellations. In the evenings around the fire, came songs and drumming from the students. Students and staff were well fed and worked together to haul gear, food, water, and themselves along the trails and beaches of WENÁNEĆ.

This year's field school was also an archaeological site for cedar plank houses. The shell deposits in the shoreline are evidence of thousands of meals from hundreds of generations, where the students learned, slept, ate, sang, drummed, and spoke SENĆOTEN in a place that's seen WSÁNEĆ youth for millennia. HÍ,SWKE HÁLE. The field school wouldn't be possible without the work of many people. The work is vital to keep the students always learning, always returning.



Top Right: Learning to cord redcedar on WENÁNEĆ **Bottom Left:** WSÁNEĆ Leadership Secondary Students sharing their clam collection. **Bottom Middle:** Singing around the campfire at WENÁNEĆ **Bottom Right:** Collecting Clams at WENÁNEĆ

Photos by: Nick Stanger *Written by:* Walter Homewood, ÁLENENEÇ Research Program Team



CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT NEWS

TETÁĆES

SDÁ,YES May 7th Cultural Ceremony
and Placename Project

TETÁĆES means "Relatives of the Deep" and refers to the Gulf Islands. The Living Lab Network supports the inspiring resurgence of Indigenous knowledge, decolonizing education, Land Back initiatives, and community-led infrastructure projects across the Gulf Islands.

This includes the work of the TETÁĆES Reconcili-Action Team, the Pender Island Truth and Reconciliation Circle, and the S,KƧAKƧ (Mayne Island) community.



Left Photo: Tsawout Elder Belinda Claxton (SELILIYE) explaining the cultural importance of the SENƧOTEN name for Pender Island (SDÁ,YES), which means a happy place for wind-drying salmon.

Right Photo: WSÁNEĆ artist Addie Elliott (STOLƧELOT) who created the images for the signs shares some of the inspiration that went into the creation of the panels. *Photo Credit: Kenta Kikuchi*

Living Lab Network Gathering

On May 27th, LLab Network partners gathered at the WSÁNEĆ Cultural Building to learn, celebrate, and fine-tune our priorities for 2026-2030. We were blessed with the presence of WSÁNEĆ Elder and community advocate Carl ZWIZUT Olsen, and Lílwat Elder and academic and language leader Lorna Wanosts'a7 Williams, who opened and closed our session with profound insights and guidance for our collective movement.

Visit livinglabproject.ca for more information. One vital takeaway was the need for more in-person gatherings, so stay tuned for a Fall 2026 Community Feast and an ÁLENENEƧ Research and Resurgence Roundtable.



L to R : Addie Elliott, Bruce Kilpatrick, John Harris, Sarah Jim, Kyle Clarke, Tye Swallow, Darcy Mathews, Jess Joseph

Middle : Tricia Roche, Jennifer Iredale, Daniella Roze des Ordones, Peter Arcese, Dominique James

Front: John Lyall, Lorna Williams, Ruth Lyall, Carl Olsen

Missing: Emily Olsen, Kaleb Child, Maya Hamel, Leanne Kelly, Erich Kelch, Kendra Underwood, Nick Stanger, Walter Homewood, Maeve Lydon

Oak Bay Community Green Map



Above: Songhees Nation community leader Florence Dick with Opening Address to FOBC AGM **Below:** Sam Mason, UVic Geography Student /Community Mapping Team

Songhees Nation member and community educator Florence Dick opened the AGM for Friends of Bowker Creek (FOBC) on May 27.

FOBC is a partner of ReconciliAction Oak Bay and, together with the Living Lab Network, we are re-creating the Oak Bay Community Green Map with Ləkʷəŋən place names, artwork, and community participation.

Visit oakbaycommunitygreenmap.ca for more information.



Watch our Spring
2026 Living Lab
Webinar
[YouTube Link](#)

EVENTS AND RESOURCES

New Indigenous Art Card Coming This Summer

WSÁNEĆ artist and musician Addie Elliott, who works with the WSÁNEĆ School Board, has joined WSÁNEĆ and Lək̓wəŋən artists Sarah Jim, Brianna Bear, and Jessica Joseph in creating a new addition to our Indigenous art card collection. The new card will be available for purchase this summer.

Artist Statement by Addie Elliott

STOLÇEŁOT ƧE NE SNÁ, ČSE LÁ, E SEN ET WSÁNEĆ. I love creating digital artwork that reflects the way I see our homelands, waters, and the living beings that surround us. Through my work, I hope to inspire a deeper appreciation for the natural world and the stories it holds. The camas flower is one of our most treasured plants. For generations, it has been an important source of nourishment and a symbol of the care and stewardship passed down through generations of women who cultivated and maintained this vital food source. This illustration is my way of honouring the beauty of camas and the matriarchal knowledge that has helped sustain our communities.



Above: Addie Elliott
Left: Camas Flower



Download our Plant, Marine, and Insect Guides.

Coming soon: Our online Bird Guide co-created with Peter Arcese, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology/Merlin App, and WSÁNEĆ Knowledge Keepers.

Email us at livinglabproject@gmail.com to purchase art cards

GOALS

Educational Transformation

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

Restoration and Resurgence

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

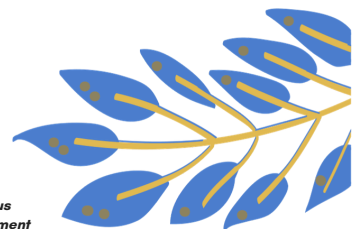
Community-Driven Research

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.

Capacity Building and Engagement

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

OUR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS



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