

April 2024

# Lands and Resources



## Pal7míntwał i ucwalmícwa múta7 ti tmicw

The land and people are together as one

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By: Casey Gonzalez

áma sqít! In an effort to address and manage the overwhelming number of visitors to Pipi7iyekw, Lil'wat Nation, N'Quatqua and BC Parks formed a working group under the Visitor Use Management Strategy. The need to protect the environment is of the utmost importance for Lil'wat Nation. We were never consulted in the creation of this park within our territory. With recent political developments and adoption of UNDRIP and DRIPA, we now have better working relationships with the Province of BC government to collaborate on ensuring our share goals of protecting the land while acknowledging our differences in land use.

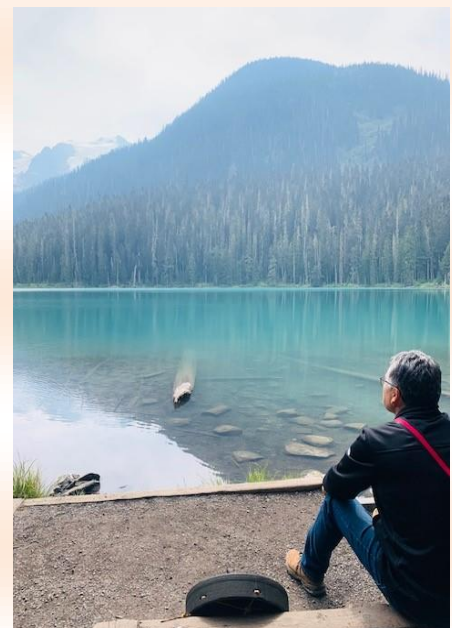
Lil'wat Nation has a deep-rooted connection to our territory, and we understand that we have a responsibility to take care of the land so it can in turn, take care of us.

As we enter into our second season of celebrations, we are excited to see what benefits the closures will bring to Pipi7iyekw and to Lil'wat7ul. By allowing the land to rest, we are honoring our responsibility to protect our land. We are taking this opportunity to set a precedent within our territory to practice our inherent rights. We are demonstrating to our youth that we must walk what we talk; that we are the stewards of this land. Demonstrating Lil'wat7ul are valued and have unextinguishable rights to freely enjoy their territory, to build on their relationships with the land, to learn from the land, and to protect the land and its resources.

We in the Lands and Resources department are excited to see the years of hard work and persistence of the working group coming to fruition and make the big announcement to the community.

While Lil'wat7ul enjoy Pipi7iyekw, please share your experience with everyone and use the hashtag **#Pipi7iyekwreconnection2024** on all of your preferred social media platforms.

- Nilh ti7



# Pipi7íyekw (Joffre Lakes Park) Press Release



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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2024ENV0020-000628  
April 25, 2024

Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy  
Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation  
Lil'wat Nation  
N'Quatqua

### **Working together to preserve the natural beauty of Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park**

PEMBERTON - A partnership between BC Parks, Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua for Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park will maintain a protective balance between supporting the growing number of people who want to visit this summer, and sustainably conserving the natural and cultural values that make the land special.

Click here for pronunciation of Pipi7íyekw: <https://www.firstvoices.com/lilwat/words/dfe88534-e668-4588-af04-57078e87a659>

The park is collaboratively managed with Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua with the primary goal of maintaining the park's natural environmental state. It is managed to protect Indigenous cultural values, including n'ákmen (meaning "our ways"), and ensures resource protection as well as public safety.

"Snek·wnuk·wa7, Pipi7íyekw has been a sacred place for our community since time immemorial, providing sustenance and cultural value, integral to our livelihood," said Kukwpi Škalulmecw, Chief Dean Nelson of Lil'wat Nation. "By implementing these closures, we are striving to reintroduce our community to an area where they have been marginalized. The time and space created by these closures will allow our youth, elders and all Lil'wat citizens to practise their inherent rights while reconnecting with the land. The Province's commitment to listening and collaborating under the shared goals under the Visitor Use Management Strategy, demonstrates a true step in our shared journey of reconciliation. Kukwstum'ulhkalap Nilh ti7."

George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, said: "British Columbians understand this land has been First Nations' territory for thousands of years. As more and more people arrive to enjoy the incredible beauty of Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park, there is an impacting result on the environment. We have deep appreciation for the collaboration that has gone into welcoming visitors to the park from summer to Labour Day long weekend, while ensuring First Nations communities have the time and space to connect with the land, their culture and traditions in a meaningful way."

Kúkwsturn̓ckacw, Chief Micah of N'Quatqua, said: "Our territory has always been our focus, the land that we walk on, the waters we drink, the mountains where we hunt. All of these were taken care of by our ancestors. Now it is our duty to take care of them for the future generations, so they have the same beauty that we do. By closing Joffre for the times we chose, gives the land a break, a time to rejuvenate, to heal. It is a very special place; the world comes to see it, we need to keep it beautiful. Our ancestors left to us to protect, 'we shall remain.'" Since December 2018, BC Parks, Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua have been working together on park and visitor-use management, and have developed a joint Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Park Visitor Use Management Strategy to improve the overall visitor experience and protect natural and cultural values.

Together, BC Parks, Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua have closely monitored the environmental effects of visitors on the landscape. The evidence shows a need for enhanced visitor-use management to ensure that the beauty and values that draw visitors, and are so important for the First Nations, are not degraded by unsustainably high human traffic. Building on this evidence, the 2024 Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Operations Plan will continue to allow for day-use and camping this summer, while ensuring the park's ecology has time to rest from human impacts.

Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Park and the larger Duffey corridor is known to the Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua as the "banquet place" where minerals and plants can be gathered, berries harvested, animals such as mountain goat and deer hunted, mammals trapped, and fish caught. It is important to ensure that this ecology and environment remains protected for generations to come.

As part of the 2024 operations plan, three Pipi7iyekw Reconnection Celebration time periods will provide time and space for Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua to exercise their rights. This is in keeping with the provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and will enable Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua to reconnect with the land and carry out traditional, sustenance, cultural and spiritual practices.

During these periods, the park will be closed to recreational visitors. Closure dates include:

- April 30 until May 15, to support Indigenous-led cultural celebrations, including Stl'atl'imx Days - a celebration of the Declaration of the Lillooet Tribe on May 10, 1911.
- June 14-23, to support summer solstice and Indigenous Peoples' Day celebrations.
- Sept. 3 until Oct. 6, to support Indigenous fall harvesting practices and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Public access to the park begins May 16. BC Parks will continue the free, day-use pass program at Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Park, which began in 2020. Adults and youth, 12 and older, will need to reserve a free day-use pass to visit the park, which will ensure the park is used sustainably. BC Parks uses a free day-use pass system at busy parks, like Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes, to reduce visitor impact on the natural environment. The free passes ensure that there is adequate and safe parking, and provide visitors a more enjoyable experience by reducing congested trails. Day-use passes also give visitors travelling the typically long distance to the park peace of mind by booking ahead.

This year, 500 free day-use passes, as well as camping opportunities at 26 tent pads will be available each day Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park is open for recreational use. The free day-use passes will be available for reservation starting at 7 a.m., two days before a planned visit, and are available online: <https://reserve.bcparks.ca/dayuse/>

Camping can be booked up to four months in advance of arrival: <https://camping.bcparks.ca/>. The Province is committed to collaborative partnerships with First Nations to ensure the recognition and application of Aboriginal rights throughout the province. BC Parks, Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua will continue to work together to plan for future years of use at Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park.

Kukwstum'ulhkalap (thanks from all of us to all of you).

#### **Quotes:**

##### **Murray Rankin, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation -**

"Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua have been stewards of Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park since time immemorial. It is vital that we work together to make sure the natural and cultural values of the park are preserved, so that this remarkably beautiful park can be enjoyed by future generations of British Columbians."

##### **Jen Ford, board chair, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District -**

"The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District Board is inspired by the work that has gone into prioritizing the cultural and environmental protection of Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park for the Nations of Lil'wat and N'Quatqua. This agreement honours the original peoples and stewards of the land, revitalizing cultural practices for elders and all future generations, while ensuring the area remains accessible to those who wish to appreciate, respect and experience it. We honour and acknowledge the meaningful collaboration that has resulted in this important agreement."

##### **Mike Richman, mayor of Pemberton -**

"On behalf of the Village of Pemberton council, we are pleased to witness this collaboration between the Lil'wat and N'Quatqua Nations and BC Parks. Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes Park is an incredibly special place, and we stand in support of this agreement, acknowledging the importance of honouring and respecting the Nations inherent right to the land and its cultural significance."

##### **Cole Burton, associate professor and Canada research chair in terrestrial mammal conservation, Department of Forest Resources Management, University of British Columbia -**

"British Columbia's parks provide important refuges for the province's unique wildlife. Many animals react to the presence of people in their environment, changing their behaviours when human activity is high. With rapid growth in visitor numbers in parks like Pipi7íyekw/Joffre Lakes, there is concern that sensitive species can be disturbed and displaced. Periodic closures and other collaborative stewardship efforts are needed to ensure that parks can continue to provide benefits for people without negatively affecting wildlife."

##### **Farhad Moghimehfar, BC regional innovation chair in tourism and sustainable rural development; professor, Department of Recreation and Tourism Management, Vancouver**

## **Island University -**

"Managing the overall daily visits to a park can be good for the park and the visitor experience. The visitor experience is generally improved when there is less crowding and more opportunity to experience the park's values without competing for space. When park visitation is over capacity, the usage tends to impact the facilities and the ecosystem, for example, people going off trail to enjoy a quiet place away from the crowds."

## **Tori Ball, conservation director, Land and Fresh Water Program, Canadian Parks And Wilderness Society - British Columbia -**

"Maintaining healthy ecosystems and supporting First Nations rights and practices go hand in hand. We're pleased to see a visitor strategy that will support public access and ongoing cultural connection for Lil'wat and N'Quatqua to Pipi7iyekw. We hope to see more proactive planning that centres reconciliation and builds up the next generation of nature advocates by spending time in BC's parks and protected areas,"

## **Sandra Riches, executive director, BC AdventureSmart -**

"Sometimes closing one door is opening another and creates a chance for reflection, planning, growth and respect. As BC Parks closes one park door, for a short time, they do so with respect to the land by providing a unique opportunity for the park to rest, and they do so with respect to Indigenous communities, and also with public safety front of mind."

## **Vicki Haberl, hiker, Sea to Sky volunteer, retired BC Parks planner -**

"I applaud BC Parks for having the courage to take action that truly reflects reconciliation. It is important to come to terms with the impacts of our exploring the traditional, unceded territory of our Indigenous neighbours. Supporting Indigenous communities exercising their rights to enjoy traditional ways and activities can lead to stronger, richer relationships, and greater stewardship of the special places that we all want to protect."

## **Quick Facts:**

- Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Park has become one of the busiest parks in the province.
- In 2019, the park reach an all-time high of 196,300 visitors, an increase of 222% since 2010.
- Over-parking, over-use, litter and campfires have had negative impacts on the park's biological diversity and sensitive habitats, which include old-growth forest estimated to be more than 250 years old.
- A collaborative approach between BC Parks, Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua is being taken to implement the strategies in the 2021 Visitor Use Management Strategy.
- The annual day-use pass system resumes May 16 where users reserve a free day-use pass online to visit the park, which will ensure the park is used sustainably.
- Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Park will be temporarily closed to recreation to provide time and space for Lil'wat Nation and N'Quatqua to reconnect with the land and carry out traditional, sustenance, cultural and spiritual practices at the following times:
  - o April 30 to May 15;
  - o June 14 to 23; and
  - o Sept. 3 to Oct. 6.

**Learn More:**

For more information about the BC Parks Day-Use Pass Program, visit: <https://bcparks.ca/reservations/day-use-passes/>

To view the Pip̓i7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Park Visitor Use Management Strategy, visit: <https://bcparks.ca/joffre-lakes-park-> To learn more about responsible park visitation, visit: <https://bcparks.ca/plan-your-trip/visit-responsibly/vums>

**Contact:**

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envmedia@gov.bc.ca  
250 953-3834

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Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [news.gov.bc.ca/connect](https://news.gov.bc.ca/connect)

[vums](#)



### **Pipi7iyekw – Joffre Lakes Protocols**

Please remember that we must all respect the environment when visiting Pipi7iyekw, please follow these protocols and encourage others.

- No dogs in the park or on the trails
- No smoking in the park or in the trails or rest spots
- No loud music/Bluetooth speakers (lets appreciate the peace) – instruments accepted.
- Do not feed the animals.
- Pack out what you pack in, this includes used toilet paper along the trail.
- Use designated outhouses
- Tag any photos using

**#pipi7iyekwreconnection2024**

**Kúkwstum'ckacw - Thank you**



May 2024 Tea and Walk

**Lilwat Lands and Resources with  
BC Wildlife Federation  
Presents: TEA AND WALK**

**Wetlands and Botanical Workshop at  
Grandmother Slough, Aides Lake, and Xet'olacw Mud lake**

**When: Wednesday May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 9:00 am to 4:30pm**

If you are interested in learning about wetlands, plants, and stewardship skills, then this workshop is for you!

You will take away an in-depth understanding of the importance which wetlands provide such as filtering water, mitigating flooding and providing critical habitat for wildlife in your own backyard.

Space is Limited ~ Transportation Can Be Provided~ Sign Up Is Free~ Bagged Lunch Provided

Please reach out to Mary Buttigieg, [mary.buttigieg@lilwat.ca](mailto:mary.buttigieg@lilwat.ca) or call 604.894.6115 to for more information and sign up by MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> 2024 end of day.



**Don't miss out on  
this opportunity  
to become a  
steward in your  
community!**



## INTRODUCTIONS: Referral Committee Member

Kalhwá7acw,

As the Community Member at Large, I am the newest member of the Land Use Referrals Committee. My Ucwalmicwts name is Ekya7 and my English name is Feron Wallace. I am a member of the Lil'wat Nation. My ancestry also includes the 'Namgis Nation of the Kwakwaka'wakw, Tahlitan Nation, and Heiltsuk Nation.

I am new to serving on committees and boards as a member but have assisted them in lesser roles in the past. While I am more comfortable working behind the scenes, I wanted to challenge myself and step outside of my comfort zone. I believe that this is an excellent opportunity for me to do so. Earlier this year, I put my name forward for Community Member at Large to become more involved in our nation. I want to learn more about what is happening in and around our communities and the surrounding areas of our lands.

I look forward to working with everyone contributing to the work of the Land Use Referrals Committee and serving our nation as best I can.

Kalhwá7acw,



## Referrals Coordinator



My name is Kammi Wallace, a proud member of the Lil'wat Nation. A new member of the Lands and Resources Department as the new Referrals Coordinator as of December 2023. Before this position I worked at the Joffre Lakes Provincial Park Pipi7iyekw as a trailhead ambassador. Working at Pipi7iyekw had opened a new passion I have for our territory and wanting to be a protector for our land. I also wanted to learn more about what is happening in and around our communities. This job has already taught me so much and I am grateful to work alongside my other team members that have the same passion and that want to be guardians for our territory.

# Administration Assistant – Lands and Resources

Hello Everyone,

We are very pleased to welcome Mary Buttigieg to the Lands and Resources Team.

Mary is our new Admin Assistant. She is originally from Melbourne, Australia where she was raised by her parents, who were born in Malta. Mary has worked in several industries throughout her life, collecting admin experience in different fields. Her purpose is to be a helper and a person of service, this is where she thrives and how she feeds her soul. In her personal time Mary loves travelling and has seen many places.

She is dedicated to self-growth and expanding as a human being. She believes in always being open to learning, change, to having integrity, being tenacious, caring, loving and strong.



-Kukwstum'cká'ap!

## Training For Field Technicians

We are pleased to announce that our incredible Field Technicians are currently undergoing training in the Land Guardian Program and Old Growth Forestry Stewardship Program through the Natural Resources Training Group. Gaining extra knowledge supports the enhancement of their current skill set. Using evidence-based case studies to better monitor and nurture the land. A big shout out to our team Darren Bikadi, Andrew Pascal, Stanley Jim and Brodey McMillian attending the Old Growth Forestry Stewardship Program. To Tamie Jenkins, Slade Wallace, Misha Gabriel and AJ Nelson for engaging in the Land Guardian Program. Thank you all for your stewardship and ongoing commitment to preserving our resources for the next 7 generations.



## On-Reserve Lands

The On-Reserve Lands Manager will be available WEDNESDAYS ONLY for in-person appointments.

Please call or email Amie Waelchli at **604 894 6115** or [amie.waelchli@lilwat.ca](mailto:amie.waelchli@lilwat.ca) to schedule an in-person appointment ahead of time.

As always, inquiries or assistance via phone or email will be available on all days.

**Kúkwstum'ckacw - Thank you**

# Lands & Finance All Staff Outing: Strawberry Point



**FUN IN THE SUN!**





## Contact List for Lands & Resources:

Casey Gonzalez	Director	Casey.Dick-Wyatt@lilwat.ca
Maxine Bruce	Territory Stewardship Manager	Maxine.Bruce@lilwat.ca
Lisa Pedrini	Territory Land Use Manager	Lisa.Pedrini@lilwat.ca
Amie Waelchli	On-Reserve Lands Manager	Amie.Waelchli@lilwat.ca
Roxanne Joe	Projects Co-Ordinator	Roxanne.Joe@lilwat.ca
Mary Buttigieg	Administration Assistant	Mary.Buttigieg@lilwat.ca

