



Skwlāx te Secwépemc

NEWSLETTER

December 2025 / Issue 1

What's Inside

Message from Chief & Council

Administration

finance

Membership

Education

HR

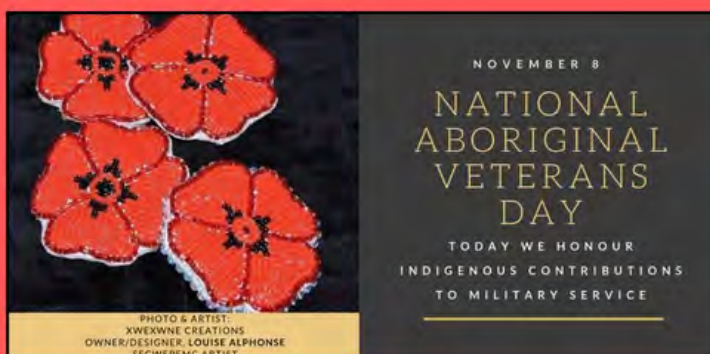
TRS

Economic Development

Wellness

Upcoming Events

Updates



We pay tribute to those veterans that fought in the wars to ensure

the safety of those who stayed at home

John Anderson • Tommy Andrew • Peter Arnouse • N Robert August • Bert Basil • Joe Basil • Harry Bell

• Joseph Bell • David Charles • Frank Harris • Frank Harlson

• Wilfred John • Dan Philip • Peter Sylvester

Peter Tomma • Simon Tomma • Barney Williams • Phillip Barney Williams

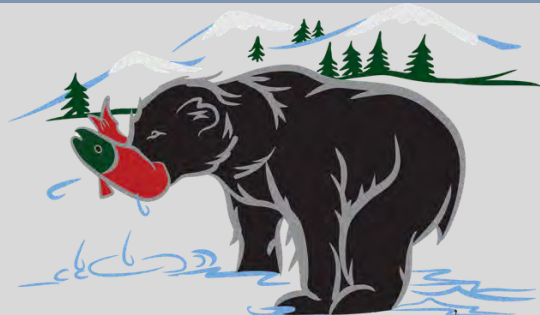


Remembrance Day Ceremony at the Skwlax Cemetary, November 11, 2025



Photo by Helen John

left to right: Tk'wam7ipla7 Dawn Francois, Tk'wam7ipla7 Julie John, Kukpi7 Dianne Francois



Skwlāx te Secwepemcúlecw

Announcements



A Message Fom Kukpi7

Have a safe holiday season to all families and I look forward to the Skwlax band member Christmas dinner. Have a Happy festive New Year for 2026!

kukstemc., Kukpi7 Dianne Francois

Tk'wam7ipla7 (Councillor) Dawn Francois, MBA

Waytk'p (Hello Everyone):

I hope all is well with everyone! My overall goal is to provide Economic Freedom for our band members and forge our own path.

We are developing our own Children's Jurisdiction Law, a long-term goal we are actively pursuing. The Skwlāx Jurisdiction team engaged with the National Plan to Permanently End Canada's Discrimination in First Nations Child and Family Services. Kukpi7 and Council participated in a workshop which asked questions on how to end discrimination against our First Nations children across Canada and we submitted our answers Nov. 16, 2025.

We are also developing our own processes with our corporate businesses and to ensure our dividend (financial distribution) plans come to life. This is an ongoing process as well.

With that, I want to welcome our new staff and contractors to Skwlāx.

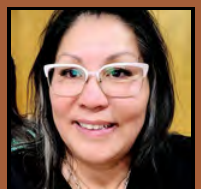
- CEO for Skwlax Group Limited, Salman Azam. He will be leading the corporate side of our businesses by organizing structures and reporting. He will develop solid budgets and hire new personnel to strengthen the corporate entities.
- On the band side, I also want to welcome a new contractor, Miya Inkster, Tax Administrator, to our Skwlax team. She will assess our current taxation systems, and items related to lands. She will also support a mentorship opportunity for the lands officer.
- New Human Resources Manager, Kelly Day. She joins us with a solid knowledge and experience base.
- A new communications/newsletter coordinator has been hired, she is band member Destiny Van Oirschot (John) please contact her through her email.

By the time you read this, our 2024 Audit will have been presented to band members on November 19, 2025, any band member can request a copy through Kelly Ballard, CFO. Her email address is: Kelly.ballard@lslb.ca



Contact

Dawn Francios, Councillor
dawn.francois@lslb.ca



Announcements

Tk'wam7ipla7 (Councillor) Dawn Francois, MBA

Update:

October 7-9th Council attended First Nations leading the Way National conference. Various First Nations from across Canada shared their stories about fiscal independence, improved financial management, how they accessed financing, and land governance experiences. We all walked away with greater insights for our next steps.

October 28-30th I attended the First Nations Health Caucus Interior Region for health. 7 Interior Nations met, the Dākelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, n. St'át'imc, Syilx, Tsilhqot'in all gathered and stood together on a decision. Normally there are 3 representatives that have a voice at the Interior Region Nation Executive (IRNE) table, however, we all recognize that all nations are similar yet different. All voices need to be represented. One of the n. St'át'imc Kukpi7s stood up and sternly voiced this to FNHA and changed the process. All chiefs and proxies voted and supported this motion to have 7 representatives and not 3. It was inspiring to witness and participate in. Skwlāx voted in favour of this motion.

Hunting camps were held **November 8, 9** at Forest Service Road 670 at 12km marker it was awesome 1 buck was knocked down by Darrel Dickie (Tomma) and even the kids helped pull the buck out of the bush. We also gathered at Skimikin Provincial Park on **November 15**, both had food and bonfires and good stories. I'd like to thank the TRS team (Tess Tomma and Dale B. Tomma) and Wellness team (Jennifer Jack) for organizing.

Skwlax Children's Jurisdiction path has been an ongoing discussion since 2023. Desira John has presented potential paths multiple times at various band meetings. A band member working group has been organized and they meet regularly.

Our annual Holiday (xmas) Party will be held Sunday, **December 14, 2025, at 5pm** at the Quaaout Lodge. We'll have an MC, DJ, Santa and gifts. This year we request that members limit your guests to spouses and children only due to capacity of tables and chairs.

Cheque distributions will be done electronically (e-transfer) preferred, if you cannot produce a void cheque to Chrissy Bell, a paper cheque will be made available on Monday, Dec. 15, 2025. Please call Chrissy Bell to send your void cheque for EFT (e-transfer).

The annual holidays closure for the band administration and wellness buildings will start:

- Friday, **December 19, 2025**, at 12:00pm and re-open
- Monday, **January 5th, 2026**, at 8:00am.
- Limited O&M essential services such as, garbage, recycle, water and sewages will be maintained contact Les Anthony for more info.
- Security will be available throughout the holiday season, contact Darryl Riva

Please recycle, update your email and mailing address.

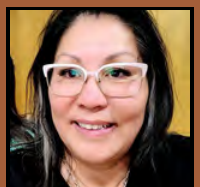
If you have any questions, please email me at dawn.francois@lslb.ca

Kukstamc,

Tkwam7ipla7 Dawn

Contact

Dawn Francios, Councillor
dawn.francois@lslb.ca





Announcements

Tk'wam7ipla7 Councillor Julie John – Update:

I am happy to have our newsletter back up, thank you to Destiny!! This is important to keep our band members updated and, in the loop, along with our band member update meetings.

We are currently wrapping up our Council strategic planning that took place in Kelowna with our leadership team, Executive Directors and band member's input. Once this plan is complete, we will book a community session to share. Stay tuned for more information.

Housing

Current priorities include our permanent rebuild and communication flow to our home builders needs to be increased and regular. Our next steps include the process of hiring a project manager to take over and get this moving again. At our last band member update meeting members requested regular updates and/or meetings. Once the project manager comes on board, this can start happening.

Another challenge is funding being held up with ISC, but prior to this cleaning up all the documentation from the rapid rebuild. Taking a little longer than anticipated, but our Executive Director is working diligently on this to keep things moving along.

Education

Our education manager has been busy, getting the new post-secondary policy out to our membership. There have been a few sessions presented here in community and in Vancouver. If you'd like a copy of the new policy, please contact our education department.

There will be a band member education dinner hosted in Vancouver on December 6. Please call Cassandra to let her know if you can attend.



Membership

On Tuesday, November 18, "A Senate committee has voted ten to one to pass amendments to the government's BillS-2, ending what's known as the second-generation cut-off and implementing a one-parent rule, that allows anyone with status under the Indian Act to pass their legal identity and rights on to their children"

Along with this news, our legal team from Forward Law is working on amending and aligning our policies for membership, elections and Chief & Council Terms of Reference so they all speak the same language, and one isn't contradicting the other. They will be doing some community engagement in the New Year to work with band membership, stay tuned for dates and times.



WELCOME TO THE TEAM Salman Azam

*Skwlax Group Limited
Chief executive Officer*



WELCOME TO THE TEAM Kelley Day

Human Resources Manager

Kelley is a versatile human resources and senior administration professional with over 20 years of experience in the public sector, First Nation Communities, and Advanced Education. Kelley is skilled in employee relations, workplace investigations, staff engagement, recruitment, and all aspects of executive-level support. Kelley describes herself as a trusted partner with senior leaders with the ability to navigate complex organizational challenges, reduce turnover, increase retention, and build high-functioning teams. Kelley is proficient in developing and implementing rehabilitation & wellness plans, coaching strategies, corrective action, and has contributed to COR Safety Audit success and OHS initiatives.

Kelley joins us as a valuable addition to the team and will lead our HR initiatives, support the staff, and help strengthen our organizational culture. We are confident that Kelley will bring fresh perspectives, dedication, and expertise to this vital role.



Hunting camp 2025

photos by Dawn Francois



LES TOMMA
236.313.2959



LTOMMMA.CARVEDEARTH@GMAIL.COM



CUSTOM ELECTION AND GOVERNANCE CODE Open House CONSULTATION

with

Forward Law LLP



December 10, 2025 | Quaaout Lodge

December 11, 2025 | Tappen Hall

Drop in anytime between 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Join us

Ask your questions, provide your thoughts, and complete an anonymous feedback survey to help shape the direction of the referendum.



Skwlax te Secwepemcúlecw

SKWLAX BAND
MEMBER

Christmas PARTY

DECEMBER

SUNDAY 14 AT 5 PM

QUAAOUT LODGE

RSVP kpollock@lslb.ca
or scan QR code

This is a registered event for
Skwlax Band members
(spouses) and their
Children



Contact

Kristy Pollock
Executive Assistant of Administration
kpollock@lslb.ca



Skwłāx te Secwepemcūlecw
presents the 3rd Annual:



JOB & CAREER FAIR

FEBRUARY 25, 2026



SCAN ME!



**VENDORS
REGISTER NOW**

Location: 1663 Little Shuswap Lake RD
"Quaaout Lodge at Talking Rock Resort"
Event Time: 12 pm - 6 pm
Email: cassandra.kearley@LSLB.ca



KINGFISHER
Interpretive Centre

STEP
Small Business Development Centre

acres
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

THOMPSON
RIVERS
UNIVERSITY

BCEHS
British Columbia Emergency Health Services

UBC
University of British Columbia

BC
British Columbia

BC
British Columbia



Skwłāx te
Secwepemcūlecw



TALKING ROCK
GOLF COURSE
AND QUAABOUT LODGE

2nd GOLF

TOURNAMENT
SAVE THE DATE

Proceeds go towards Education Supports and Activities



EVENT DONATION
& SPONSORSHIP
INFORMATION



For more information:
250-679-3203

Email:
cassandra.kearley@LSLB.ca



POST SEC PLANNING & PIZZA

Hey Grade 9-12 students!
The SteS Education Department is
coming to your school for Post-
Secondary & Career Planning Sessions

**Drop In at
Lunch to**

- Explore your post - secondary
and career options
- Get help with college and
university applications
- Learn about scholarships,
bursaries and funding
- Ask questions and get
personalized advice

• Dec 9th 2025
SAS Sullivan 12:45pm- 1:20pm

Indigenous Lead Workshop but
open to all students!

Cassandra.Kearley@lslb.ca

250-679-3203

REGISTER
NOW



SCAN HERE

FREE PIZZA

Stop by, grab a slice and start
planning your future



POST SEC PLANNING & PIZZA

Hey Grade 9-12 students!
The SteS Education Department is
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**Drop In at
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- Explore your post - secondary
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- Get help with college and
university applications
- Learn about scholarships,
bursaries and funding
- Ask questions and get
personalized advice

Jan 9th, 2025
SAS Jackson Campus 12:00pm- 12:45pm

Indigenous Lead Workshop but open to
all students!

Cassandra.Kearley@lslb.ca

250-679-3203

REGISTER
NOW



SCAN HERE

FREE PIZZA

Stop by, grab a slice and start
planning your future

EDUCATION

Contact: Cassandra Kearley
cassandra.kearley@lslb.ca





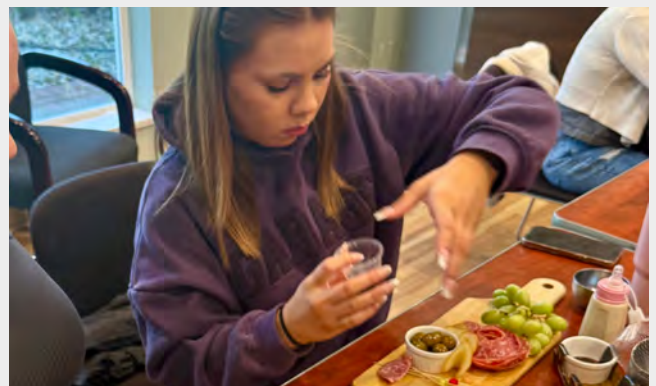
Kukpi7 Dianne Francois, Tk'wam7ipla7 Dawn Francois, and Tk'wam7ipla7 Julie John in Toronto at the Leading the Way Conference .

Notice from Housing

If you're planning to be away for more than 2 days, please notify Housing so we can keep an eye on your home for any cold-weather leaks.

Baby Circle: Charcuterie board making

Photos by Nichelle



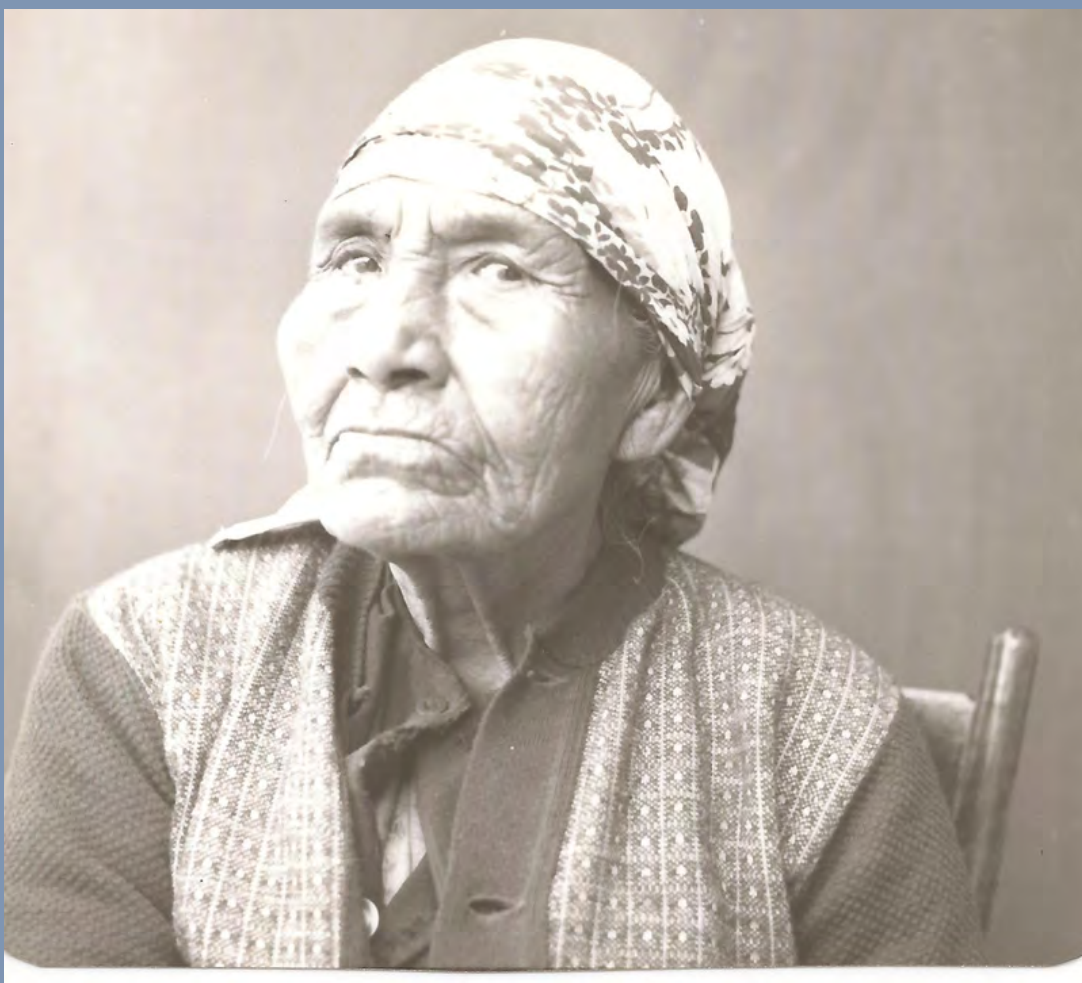
Assistant Residential Property Manager

Joni Elias
housing@lslb.ca
250-679-3203 ext. 102

Assistant Residential Property Manager

Emily Everson
emily.everson@lslb.ca
250-679-3203 ext. 162





Membership

Please send
confirmation of
information or new
changes to:

Beverly Narcisse,
Indian Registration
Administrator (IRA)
1886 Little Shuswap
Lake Rd, Chase BC
VOE 1M2

Phone: 250-679-3203 *

Email:
membership@lslb.ca

Contact

Beverly Tomma
membership@lslb.ca

Finance

Happy Holidays from Finance! We've all been busy with our regular daily tasks and we've also been working hard to get the March 31, 2025 audit complete so all our audits are up-to-date and we are fully caught up in Finance since the wildfire of 2023. We hope to have the last of our delayed audits finalized by March 2026 so we can present it to community in the spring.

Finance Team

CFO – Kelly Ballard

Financial Analyst – Chrissy Bell

Financial Analyst – Brian Finlay

Payroll Administrator – Danielle Jenkins

Accounts Payable – Whitney Jim

Accounts Payable – Dana Palmer

Accounts Receivable – Tracy Lutz

Accounting Assistant – Jacob Seymour

Have a great
Christmas and
Finance will
leave you with a
couple
Christmas
“Dad” jokes for
2025:



How much did
Santa's sleigh cost?
Answer: It was on the
house



What do you call a
reindeer with bad
manners?
Answer: Rude-olph



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

from all of us at
Skwlāx Aggregates



FROM OUR LAND TO YOUR FOUNDATION

As the year comes to a close, we want to thank our amazing customers for your continued support. You've made this year one to remember! Wishing you and your families a joyful holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

We look forward to serving you again in 2026!

Winter Hours – Open Year-Round! 7:00 - 4:00 Mon-Fri ·

Keep your projects moving no matter the season. Our yard
is ready for winter pickups and deliveries.

📞 672-910-0202



SKWLAXAGGREGATES.COM

SKWLĀX RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE



Skwlāx Resource Management Ltd. proudly accepted the Community-Owned Business of the Year – One Entity award on November 5, 2025, at the 17th Annual Indigenous Business Awards, presented by the BC Achievement Foundation.

SRM was honoured to be part of the ceremony and to accept this meaningful recognition alongside so many inspiring Indigenous businesses and leaders. The Indigenous Business Award program celebrates excellence in Indigenous entrepreneurship and innovation, recognizing leaders who drive transformative change in their communities and beyond. It highlights the vital contributions of Indigenous businesses to B.C.'s cultural and economic strength, fosters meaningful relationships across economies, and inspires the next generation of leaders through stories of success, creativity, and resilience.

Together we celebrate this achievement with all the Secwépemc people



Photo (Left to Right):

Tsetasiya Geena Jackson – Shíshálh Nation (Sechelt), Co-Director of Ceremonies.
Kúkpi7 Dianne Francois – Skwlāx te Secwepemcúlcw.

Trevor Delorey P.Eng. – CEO, Skwlāx Resource Management (SRM).

Dave Kitazaki (Xaxl'ip) – dk Architecture, 2022 Business of the Year Recipient.

Kúkwpí7 Willie Sellars – Williams Lake First Nation, Co-Director of Ceremonies.

On September 17th, 2025, Lytton First Nation and SRM came together for the Nuautin IR2B Subdivision Ground Blessing—a meaningful step toward new homes and a stronger future for the community.

Earlier in the day, the Lytton FN Capital Projects Open House & Job Fair brought members together with local career opportunities, featuring an Opening Prayer, Drum & Song by Ernie Michell, followed by remarks from Chief Niakia Hanna, Councilor Jason Robertson, and SRM CEO Trevor Delorey.

We extend our heartfelt Kukstsémc to Lytton First Nation, Chief and Council, and all partners who contributed to this important event.

The Ground Blessing ceremony led by Chief Niakia Hanna and David Sjodin with ceremonial golden shovels that symbolized unity, partnership, and shared purpose. Together, we are breaking ground not just on new homes, but on hope, opportunity, and long-term community resilience.



56-Lot Subdivision – 34 New Homes 2026

BUILDING A BALANCED & PROSPEROUS FUTURE



Materials

- Pit Run
- 5/8" Pea Gravel
- Winter Sand / Bedding Sand
- Golf Course / Septic Sand (C33)
- 25mm Clear Crushed Rock
- 25mm Crush SGSB
- 25mm WGB (MOTT spec)
- 25mm HFSA (MOTT spec)
- 75mm SGSB / BEF (MOTT spec)
- Cobble
- 19mm (3/4") Clear Crushed Rock
- High Fines (MOTT spec)
- Concrete Rock (5–20mm)
- BC Hydro Pit Run Sand
- 12mm (1/2") Crusher Chips
- 19mm (3/4") Drain Rock
- Manufactured High Fines

Trucking Services

- Tandem Dump Truck (12 yards)
- Truck & Pup (26 yards)

Disposal Materials

- Clean Concrete
- Clean Asphalt
- Topsoil
- Stumps / Brush
- Common Material
- Hydrovac Slurry Disposal

Skwlāx Aggregates - From our Land to your Foundation

At Skwlāx Aggregates, we're dedicated to providing top-notch sand and gravel products to our community. We cater to a diverse range of clients, from small businesses and corporations to municipalities, industries, and private customers. Whether you're working on a small project or a large-scale development, we've got the high-quality materials you need.

Our products are drawn from the heart of Skwlāx te Secwepemcúlecw, and meet stringent MoTT and MMCD specifications, ensuring your projects are built on solid ground. Get in touch with us to learn about our products and services, and to arrange for delivery or pick up options.

Let's build a stronger community together - One load at a time.

Band members receive 20% off products (excluding trucking fees)

672-910-0202

Launching Soon | Skwlāx Aggregates

Skwlāx Resource Management Ltd. - *BUILDING A BALANCED & PROSPEROUS FUTURE*

At Skwlāx Resource Management, we're proud to align our work with the strategic business and social priorities of Skwlāx te Secwepemcúlecw. Our team provides a wide range of services that help drive economic growth, support community goals, and strengthen long-term development in the region.

Industrial & Mining

- Site Maintenance
- Overburden Removal
- Tank Farm Construction
- Substation & Duct Bank Construction
- Haul Roads
- Early Access & Development
- Tailings & Dyke Construction

Construction

- Demolition
- Commercial / Institutional / Industrial Projects
- Renovations (Support)

Forestry

- Road Building & Deactivation
- Road Maintenance
- Clearing & Grubbing
- Mechanical Site Preparation
- Bridge Installations
- Wildfire Fighting & Reduction
- Fireguard Construction & Rehabilitation

Capacity Support & Management

- Contract Labour
- Equipment Supply
- Project Management
- General Contracting
- Crushing & Aggregate Operations

Environmental Services

- Landfill Construction
- Reservoir / Lagoon Construction
- Remediation & Reclamation
- Archaeology Excavations
- Vegetation Management

Civil & Infrastructure

- Site Development
- Road & Highway Construction
- Road Maintenance
- Underground Utilities
- MSE & Retaining Walls
- Slope Stabilization
- Multi-Plate & Culvert Installation
- Technical Excavation & Backfill

Our One Team Approach is at the core of our success, fundamentally transforming how an Indigenous company can capture value for its members, community, and region. By strongly emphasizing prosperity, economic sovereignty, and cultural identity, we're not just building projects, we're building a brighter future for Skwlāx te Secwepemcúlecw and all its members, now and for future generations.

View our current Job Opportunities: CAREERS - Skwlāx Resource Management





Territorial Resource Stewardship

Territorial Resource Stewardship Department:

The Territorial Resource Stewardship (TRS) department is strategically planning the new building to house the staff (35 + staff/crew) and several intriguing projects for this upcoming season 2026. At the moment the TRS staff is located at the main administration building, finance building, Secwepemc Resource Management (SRM) site, and Tappen Community TRS is actively involved with all projects from forestry, fisheries, environmental issues, lands on-reserve, lands off-reserve, referrals, cultural heritage/archaeology, data management, governance strategies, and bylaw development. Over the past year of 2025, the Band had several meetings introducing several of these issues and concerns withing the TRS looking for feedback from the membership. If you have any other concerns, please do not hesitate to communicate back to our department with your concerns, issues, or questions.

Tappen Highway Expansion:

The Ford Road to Kault Hill Highway expansion project is progressing quickly by EMIL Anderson and Ministry of Transportation. There are several changes each day to detours of entering and exiting to the Silketwa (Tappen) Community, so please be alert and careful of reading signs on the highway. In 2026, the Tappen Community streets will be paved and have adequate lighting and speed bumps. Through community benefits ,the Tappen Community will also have a playground, trails, recycling area, fencing, and maintenance yard. The future endeavors for the Tappen community is to have economic development opportunities such as a RV/Boat Storage, car wash, café, mill work, boat launch, campground, and gas station. The community has been continuously meeting on regards to opportunities and housing expansion for the Silketwa, as it continues to grow.

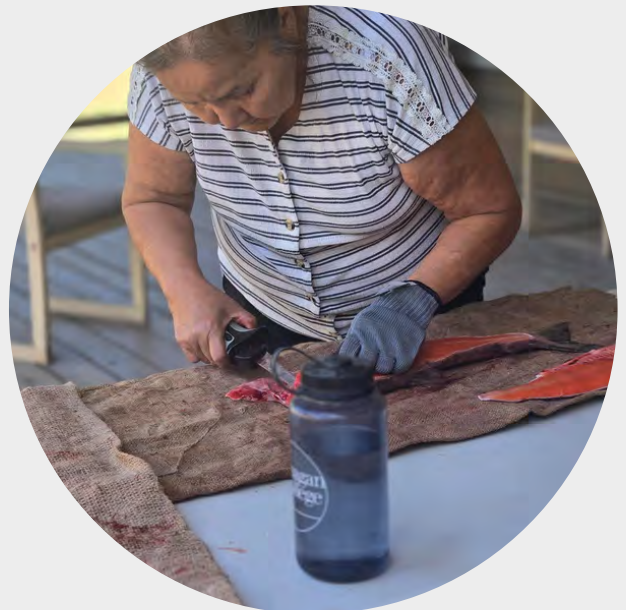
Contact: Tess Tomma
Office Manager TRS
ttomma@lslb.ca

Fall Season:

On August 18th, the community celebrated the First Fish Ceremony with neighboring Bands at the Skw'lax Cultural site. Several stories were shared along with a small feast and then offerings back to the water for prayers to the water and the salmon people.

Salmon was donated and harvested at Boston Bar First Nations, Wallasheen – Bonaparte First Nations, Adams Lake Indian Band, Scotch Creek, and Little River. The community gathered at Skw'lax Pow Wow Arbor and the Tappen Community Hall to process salmon (sockeye, chinook, and pinks) for the community freezers and homes.

The Band participated in the Salmon Celebration at Twutswecw Park this Fall. The Guardians opened the Winter Home, and we had a Bannock Booth at the main Park. We are now in the planning season for the 2026 Salute to the Sockeye event. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Tess Tomma, we would sure appreciate your help.



Contact: Dominic Fiorenza
Executive Director of TRS & Forestry Manager
dfiorenza@lslb.ca



Photos by Dawn Francois
Hunting Camp 2025

Open House - All Welcome

Community Engagement Sessions

Territorial Resource Stewardship Community Building



Join us for four community sessions to share your vision for this new project. Your input on design, features, and cultural considerations will shape this important community space.

Tappen 751 Tappen Subdivision Rd, North Bay 5, BC V1E 3A3

Quaaout Band Hall at 1886 Little Shuswap Lake Road, Chase, BC, V0E 1M

Can't make it in-person? Join Online! 

1	2	3	4
November 25	November 27	December 12	December 15
Tappen	Quaaout	Quaaout	TBD
6-7:30pm	6-7:30pm	6-7:30pm	

Summer Season:

This summer season has been bountiful on berry and medicinal plant harvest. The Skw'lax Guardians have reported and supported the communities on harvesting huckleberries, soupallie, and medicinal herbs from our traditional territories. The summer weather in the Shuswap was quite nice and many enjoyed the waters and the territory.

The TRS and Cultural Department joined together to set-up a hunting site at Forest Service Road 670 at Scotch Creek and Skimiken Recreation site. One buck was harvested at Scotch Creek, and two bucks were at Skimikin – Charcoal. Community joined together to butcher the deer at the Tappen Hall – Thank you to All who helped and learned how to butcher and process the animals.

Hunters are still out in the territory hunting, please remember your safety protocols and all the best to you and your families.

Self Determination Committee (SDC):

The Self Determination Committee is looking to add more family members (head of families) to the Committee. They meet once a month to discuss governance/bylaws, territorial land issues/concerns, election regulations, membership code, economic development opportunities, and several other initiatives involving the Band. If you are interested, please contact Domenic Fiorenza or Tess Tomma.

Guardian Program - Territory Patrol

The Skw'lax Guardians have been very busy with training (rope rescue Level 3, swift water, forestry, fisheries, and much more) as well as patrolling the Skw'lax Secwepemcu'lecw territories. The Guardians have been involved and supported the Forestry and Fisheries department, along with one of our bigger projects: BC Salmon Restoration Initiative Funding (BCSRIF) – This is a 3-year project that aims to restore the health of the sockeye salmon spawning beds into the Lower Adams River.



Cultural Heritage Protection Department

2025 projects

Skwlāx Cultural Heritage Centre – Feasibility Study (2025 – 2026)



Photo 1: Expedition – Justin Rousseau, Maxwell Harrison, Mark Hentze; Quaaout Lodge – Rhys Laug; Skwl̓x CHD – Nola Markey, Linda Mattson; TRS – Tess Tomma and Domenic Fiorenza

Tappen MOTT Highway Expansion Project (2018 – 2026/27)



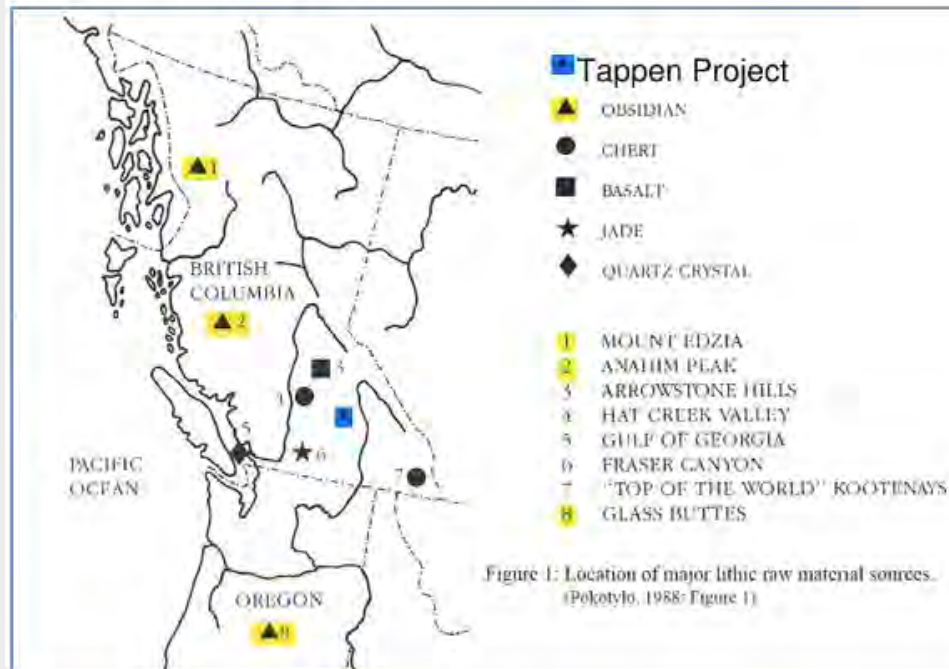
Cultural Heritage Protection Department

In 2024, a partial mandible (a portion of a lower jaw) was uncovered in the slopes along James Road (part of site EeQt-78); no additional remains were found. It is possible that when the original Sunnybrae or James Road was constructed, an ancestral burial was disturbed. Radiocarbon dating of a tooth returned an age of approximately 6,400 years, making it the oldest date recorded in the Shuswap Lakes region.

We also submitted obsidian artifacts from sites on Tappen IR 5, Quaaout IR 1, and Chum Creek IR 2 for X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) source analysis. The results show that Skwłāx ancestors in these areas were part of extensive trade networks that connected them to obsidian sources located at:

- Mount Edziza, northwest B.C. (over 1,000 km away)
- McKenzie Pass and Anahim Peak in the Western Cariboo/Coastal Mountains (over 500 km away)
- Multiple source areas across central Oregon (roughly 750 km away)

Location of Tool Stone Sources



In addition, we have visually identified Arrowstone Hills basalt (near Cache Creek), Hat Creek chert (sites 3 and 4 on the map, up to 150 km west of the Tappen Project), Shuswap Banded chert (approximately 90 km southeast of Tappen), and Kootenay Argillite (approximately 250 km southeast of Tappen). These findings continue to demonstrate the deep time depth of Skwłāx presence in the region and the wide-reaching cultural networks of Secwépemc ancestors.



photo 2: Team: Phoebe Murphy, Howie Wood, Meaghan Griffith, Aubrey Cartier, Elton Arnouse

Tsutswecw Park Wildfire Restoration Project (2024 – 2026):

In 2024, at the request of BC Parks, we completed Phase I of the project, which involved an archaeological inventory to survey portions of the Study Area, revisit previously recorded sites, and identify new ones. This work supported the development of a Wildfire Restoration Management Plan aimed at guiding the protection of archaeological and cultural heritage values while considering environmental and climate change impacts.

Phase II was carried out in 2025 and expanded the archaeological survey while also establishing baseline research on bird species within the park, recognizing that birds can serve as important indicators of forest recovery. This phase also created a valuable opportunity to incorporate Secwépemc knowledge of bird species and behaviour—an element often missing in previous studies. Phase II results are currently being finalized; to date, the team (Photo 2) has revisited 79 documented archaeological sites, expanded 20 sites, recorded 9 new sites (including some dating up to 3,500 years old), and identified 101 bird species to help link Skwłāx community knowledge with western science. Data collected on the presence and behaviour of these birds contributes to understanding how species are using the landscape during post-fire succession.



FPCC Braided Knowledge Project that focused on Birds (2025/26)



This project was undertaken in 2025 that identified 96 bird species from Quaaout and Silketwa communities. The goal of this project is to develop a pamphlet with approximately 20 birds and their names in Secwepemctsin. The pamphlet will include knowledge about each bird from archival research and interviews with Skwlāx Elders from the summer. Bird surveys were led by Aubrey Cartier, Micky Tomma, and Elton Arnouse. The pamphlet will be ready for the community by early 2026.

Magna Bay Pictograph EfQt-3 – Proposed Stair Removal (2025 – 2026)

Our department was contacted by a homeowner in Magna Bay regarding the Pictograph Site (Photo 3), which had been reported as being in non-compliance with the Heritage Conservation Act (1996). A previous property owner had constructed stairs down to the lake, and the current owner is now required to remove them. Our team assessed the condition of the pictograph site after concerns were raised about possible vandalism and a missing panel. Fortunately, with the use of enhanced imaging technology (D-Stretch), we confirmed that all panels remain intact and that the staircase was not built against the rock face (Photo 4). The technology also allowed us to identify additional symbols on the existing panels, which will be added to the site record. We have proposed archaeological monitoring during the staircase removal in 2026, after which a final report will be completed. The team consisted of Ramsay McKee, Howie Wood, and Meaghan Griffith.



Photo 3: Pictograph with 5 panels

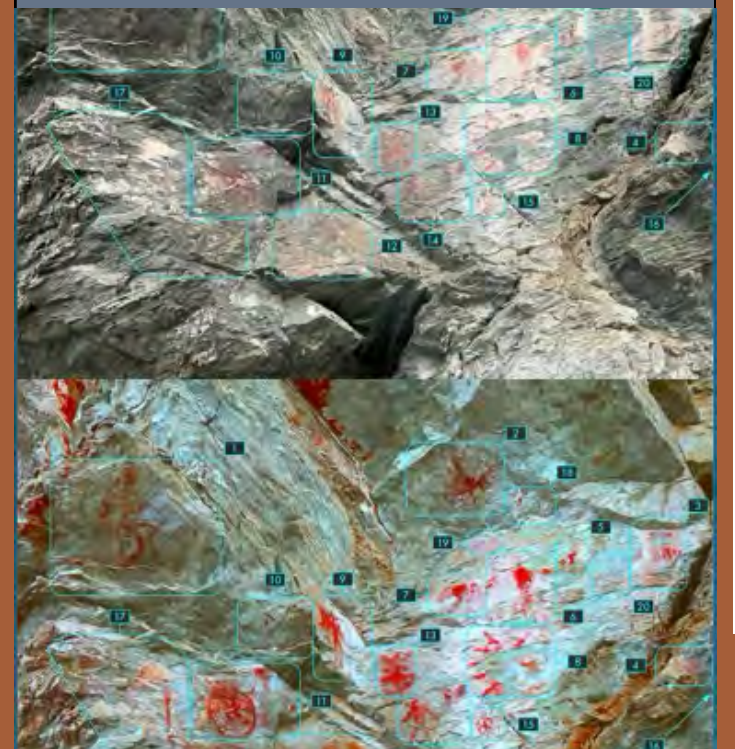
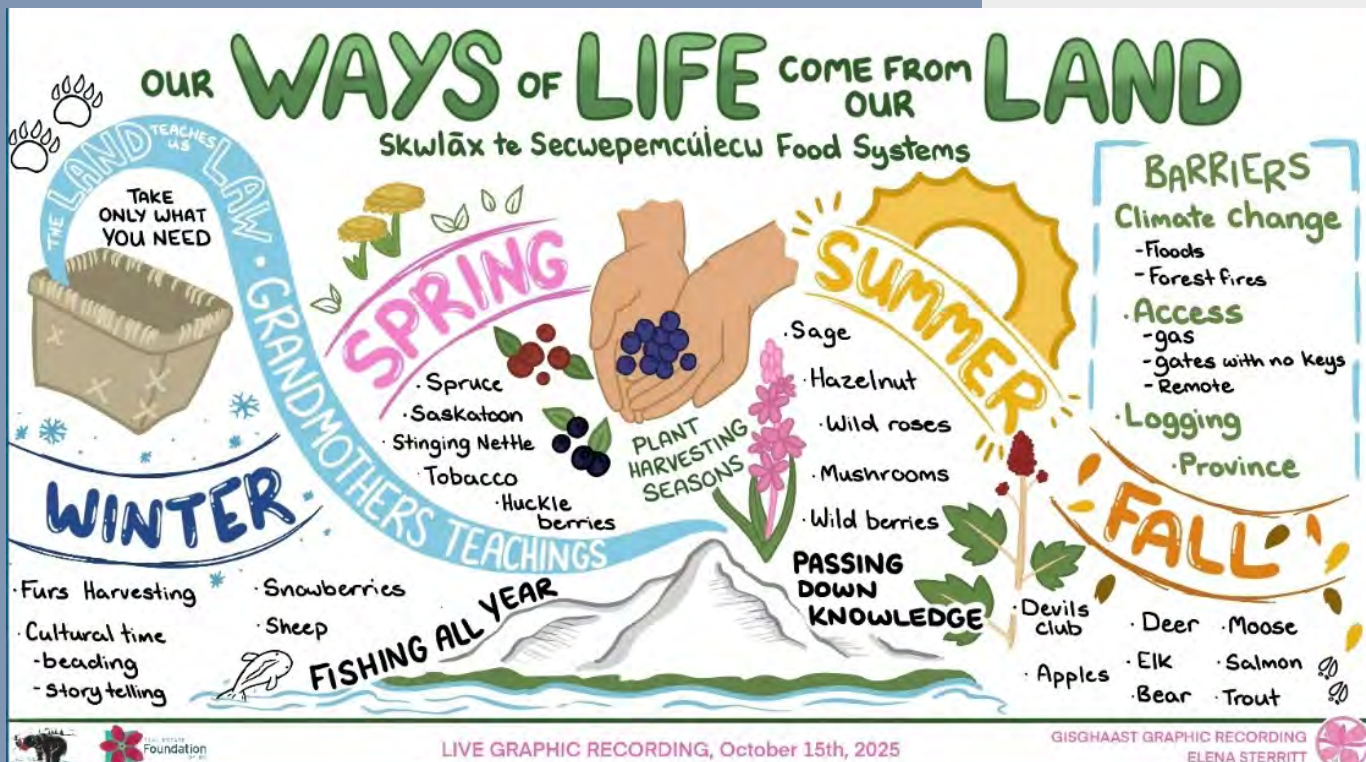


Photo 4: Panel 2



Cultural Heritage Protection Department



Our Ways of Life Come from Our Land: Skwłāx Food Systems Engagement (2025)

The team worked on developing a food sovereignty strategic plan showing main barriers community members experience when accessing land-based foods, and directions for the future. This project also included a video and workshop demonstrating birch-bark basket making, hosted at Quaabout Lodge. The community engagement session was held in October 2025, and the draft strategic plan will be presented back to the community in Spring 2026 for feedback. This live graphic recording was a result of community feedback in October:

Skwłāx Cultural Heritage Protection Department – The Crew



Howie Wood, Tyrone Saul, Simon Baptiste, Micky Tomma, Jason Bellrose, Meaghan Griffith, Delerisa Sauls, Patrick Arnouse, Phoebe Murphy, Denise Dear, Todd Paquin, Nola Markey, Aubrey Cartier, Brent Davidson, Jacky Chojko-Bolec, Celia Nord, Libby Chisholm, Randy McKee, Noldo Williams. Missing: Randy LeBourdais, Debbie Frenchy, Ralph McBryan, Kierra Tomma, Aiden Bohay, Elton Arnouse, Linda Mattson, and Sam Switzer

Contact

Nola Markey- Cultural Heritage Manager
Anthropologist/Archaeologist
nmarkey@lslb.ca

SKWLĀX TE SECWÉPEMCÚLECW, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PILLAR UPDATE

STES is committed to building a viable and thriving economy for SteS and generating lasting wealth for our members, our community, and future generations. Our approach is grounded in the traditional values of our stories, as well as our Secwepemc Laws and Values, as we plan for self-reliance and prosperity.

SteS Latest Economic Insights Corporate Restructure and Skwlax Group Ltd.

The Corporate Restructure of SteS business entities is nearing completion. Skwlax Group Ltd. (SGL) has been meeting regularly and has recently appointed its Chief Executive Officer, Salman Azam. (Bio Attached) Salman will work with the businesses to establish the governance structures, setting up and operationalizing the LLP entities, build sustainable budgets and long-term plans, strengthen capacity across the organization, and renew the infrastructure that supports the companies.

Skwlax Group Ltd. will be selecting members to sit on the operating boards of the following businesses.

- Skwlax Resource Management
- Skwlax Aggregates
- Skwlax Chevron Gas

Purchase of the Old Squilax Skwlax Chevron Gas Rebuild Store

Due diligence is being applied to the proposed purchase of the Squilax Store property. This is a very unique opportunity to secure property that is of high historical value and in alignment with the vision and goals of Skwlāx te Secwépemcúlecw.

- The property and its use will be assessed through a highest and best use study. Economic Development will explore funding opportunities for renovation and restoration.

Entrepreneurship

Skwlāx te Secwépemcúlecw is proud of the many enterprising Band members that have taken the leap into entrepreneurship utilizing their Trade, skills and talents. Embarking upon and maintaining a business is very hard work, and we applaud you. Our records indicate that there are 26 individual businesses owned by Band Members in our community. Submit your company logos and a small write-up about the service you offer and we will be happy to highlight you in a future newsletter.

- The Gas Station Rebuild Team is in the process of onboarding a Project Manager to oversee the first phase of the project. The project manager will develop a project scope and budget and get the Team to the point of launching into schematic design. Community information sessions will be integrated throughout the rebuild project.



SteS youngest entrepreneur, TK Billy, runs his slushie stand in summer 2025.



Talking Rock Golf



Talking Rock Golf Course Welcomes New Head Golf Professional, Steven Coulthard

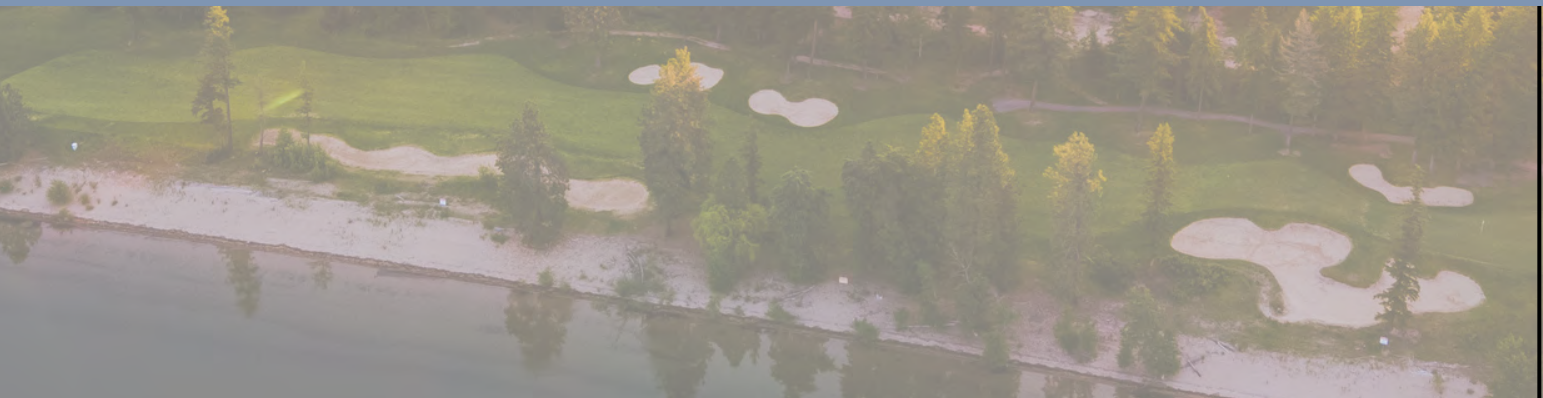
Talking Rock Resort is pleased to announce the hiring of Steven Coulthard as the resort's new Head Golf Professional. Steven joins the team from the Smithers Golf Club, where as the General Manager he played a key leadership role in elevating member programming, growing junior development, and enhancing the overall golf experience. With a strong background in golf operations, instruction, and guest service, Steven brings a wealth of experience and a passion for the game that aligns with Talking Rock Resort's continued focus on providing exceptional golf experiences for guests and visitors from across the region.

"We're thrilled to welcome Steven to Talking Rock," said Cody Bell, General Manager/Executive Golf Professional at the Resort. "His commitment to player development, team leadership and high-quality guest service make him an excellent fit for our golf operations. We're excited for the impact he'll make heading into next season."

In his new role, Steven will oversee day-to-day golf operations, lead the golf services team, support instructional programming, and contribute to long-term strategic planning for the resort's golf amenities. In his arrival, the Resort is also sad to see Jeff Liddle, current Head Golf Professional, depart after Steven is all caught up to speed. Jeff has been an incredible part of the Talking Rock team during his time at the Resort and he will be missed immensely. The Resort would like to wish Jeff all the best in his future endeavors.



Steven will begin his role December 1st and immediately begin preparations for what's anticipated to be another busy golf season in 2026.



Contact:
Cody Bell, General Manager
cody.bell@quaaoutlodge.com



Craft by Adalie v. from the Skwlax Headstart Program



Little Pine Catering

Contact Us



☎ 250-463-2005

✉ littlePineCatering@gmail.com

Little Pine Catering

Indigenous youth-owned by Ashanta August. Serving comforting homemade & traditional Indigenous cuisine. Catering meetings, community events, and birthdays from Squilax to Chase.

Drop-off or full-service (plates, cutlery, containers & setup).

New “Winter Warmth” menu launching January!

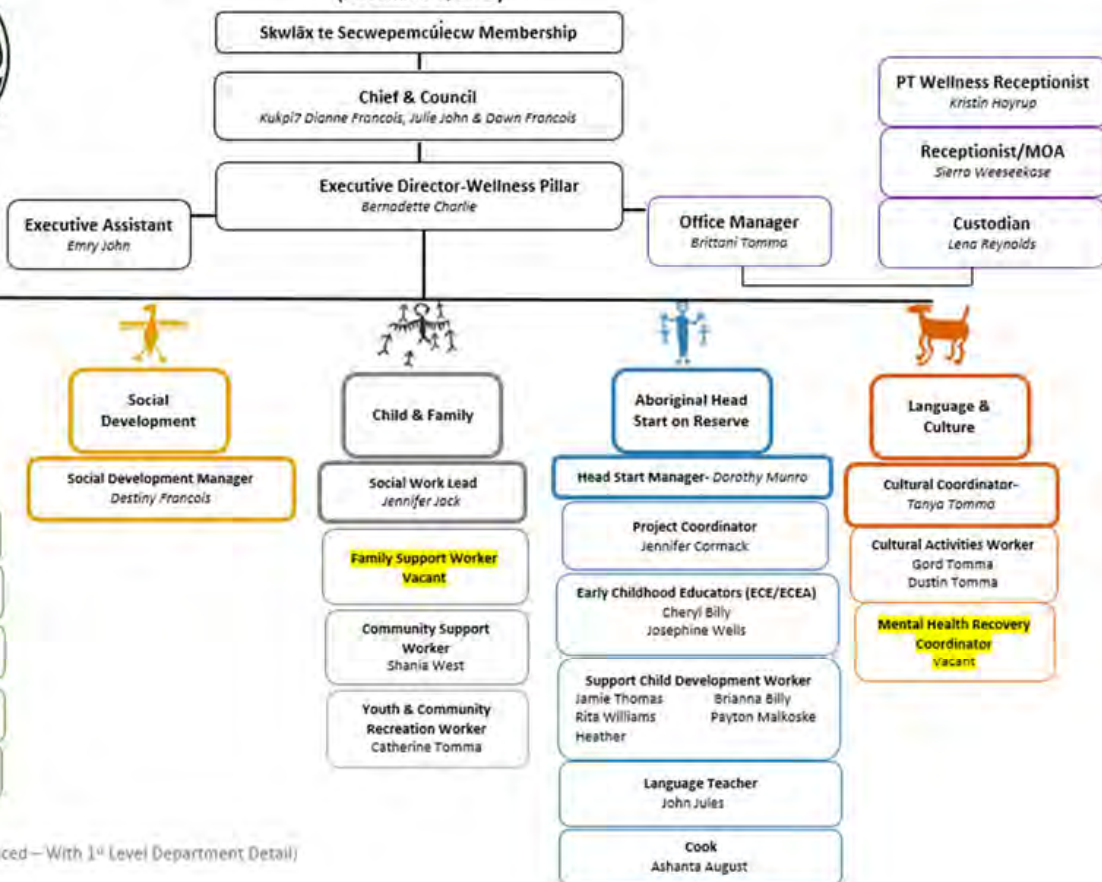
Book now!

WELLNESS PILLAR ORG CHART

This chart illustrates the structure of the Wellness Pillar, outlining roles, teams, and focus areas that drive our holistic well-being initiatives. It shows how leadership and groups work together to support the wellness of the Skwlax te Secwepemcúlecw members.

Wellness Pillar – Organization Chart

(November 3, 2025)



Wellness Pillar Org Chart (Draft) – 2023-01-19 (Enhanced – With 1st Level Department Detail)

Contact

Kristina John

kristina.john@skwlaxwell.com

Bernadette Charlie

bcharlie@skwlaxwellness.com

Dorothy Munro

dmunro@skwlaxwellness.com



Crystel-Rayne Tomma is a proud Skwlax te Secwepemculecw member, single mom of three, and local financial educator who is passionate about helping families feel confident with their money. After improving her own personal finances to afford to build her first home, she turned her experience into practical tools and workshops that support others in doing the same.

Crystel is hosting a full-day "Master Your Budget" workshop on January 10th at the Skwlax Community Hall, where she'll walk participants through the real-life strategies she used to pay off debt, save consistently, and build a strong financial foundation. The day includes guided budgeting, goal setting, and simple action steps you can put to work right away.

She currently supports families and community members through:

- Budgeting support & cash-flow planning
- Debt repayment strategies
- Savings plans for goals like home ownership and travel
- Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) & education grant applications
- Life insurance solutions (term and whole life) to protect families and build long-term security
- One-to-one financial clarity sessions for personalized planning

If you'd like help getting organized with your money, starting an RESP, or reviewing your current plan,



Crystel would love to connect.

Email: crystaltomma@gmail.com

Connect with her on social media for updates on upcoming workshops, financial tips, and community resources.
[@MasterYourBudget](#)

Who to Call in an Emergency

From the Skwlāx Band Office Closure:

Emergency Program: 250-318-5723

Security: 778-694-2469

Housing: 250-679-3203

Wellness: 250-679-3702

Operations & Maintenance (O&M): 250-804-6891

From the Skwlāx Wellness Centre Holiday Closure:

Emergency Medical Travel: Contact Brittani Tomma at 250-804-3923

Urgent Child Protection Matters:

Jennifer Jack (Social Work Lead): 250-804-9832

Child Protection Helpline: 1-800-663-9122

SunPeaks Day Passes: Catherine Tomma email ctomma@skwlaxwellness.com

Compassionate or Funeral-Related Emergencies:

Contact Shania West at 778-824-1391 or email swest@skwlaxwellness.com

From the KUU-US Crisis Services:

Adult/Elder Crisis Line: 250-723-4050

Child/Youth Crisis Line: 250-723-2040

BC Toll-Free Crisis Line: 1-800-588-8717

Text Support: 778-601-8009

Additional Supports:

1(800) 663-9122 - Centralized screening (MCFD)

1(800)668-6868 - Kids help phone (24/7)

text "Connect" to 686868 for confidential youth help

1(800)638-4722 Kuu-Us Crisis Line

Website: Home | KUU-US Crisis

Line Society Indigenous

BC Wide Crisis Line Port Alberni

Support Hours: 7 Days a Week, 6 PM - 7 AM



BEAVERTOOTH
RESOURCES LTD.

Allow us to
INTRODUCE
Ourselves

WHAT WE DO

- Forestry Services
- Forest Fuel Management
- Firewood Services
- Plowing/Sanding and Snow Removal
- Trucking and Hauling
- Emergency Transportation Vehicle Services
- Water Truck Services

QUALIFICATIONS

- BC Forest Safety Council SAFE Certified

Contact Us
jason@beavertoothresourcesltd.ca



BAND MEMBER ASSISTANCE REQUESTS

- RECREATION REIMBURSEMENTS
- PRESCRIPTION PAYMENTS
- OPTICAL/DENTAL/PHYSIO REIMBURSEMENTS.

IF SUBMISSIONS ARE NOT RECEIVED BY
DECEMBER 11, 2025, THE PROCESSING OF PAYMENTS
WILL BE POSTPONED UNTIL THE NEW YEAR.

Shania West (Community Support Worker)
ph. (250)679-3702 ext. 212
cell. (778)824-1391
swest@skwlaxwellness.com



December Skwlax wellness updated shuttle schedule



Tuesday: Skwlax to Salmon Arm	
Pick-up locations:	time:
Wellness Centre	10 AM
Veterans Lane Bus Stop	10:05 AM
Eagle Landings Subdivision	10:10 AM
LSLR West Garbage Can	10:15 AM
Tappen Subdivision Hall Parking Lot	10:40 AM
Leave Salmon Arm	1:30 PM

Thursday: Skwlax to Kamloops	
Pick-up locations:	time:
Wellness Centre	10 AM
Veterans Lane Bus Stop	10:05 AM
Eagle Landings Subdivision	10:10 AM
LSLR West Garbage Can	10:15 AM
Leave Kamloops	1:30 PM

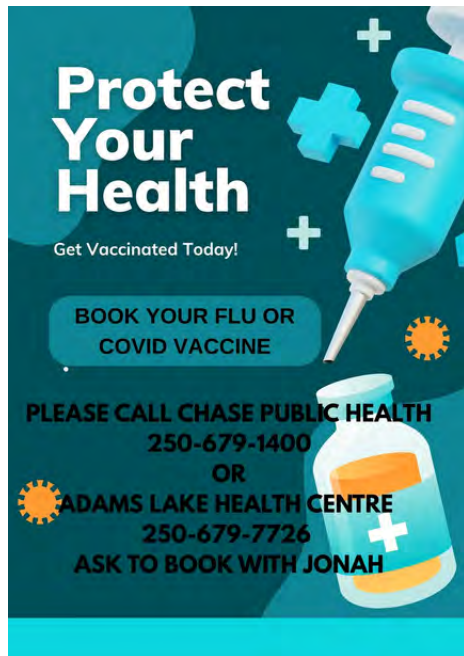
Shuttle days will run through part of the Christmas Holidays
-December 2nd & 4th
-December 9th & 11th
-December 16th & 18th

Returning in the New Year with a new schedule being posted in the New Year



Contact

Emry John
Skwlax Wellness Executive Assistant
ejohn@skwlaxwellness.com



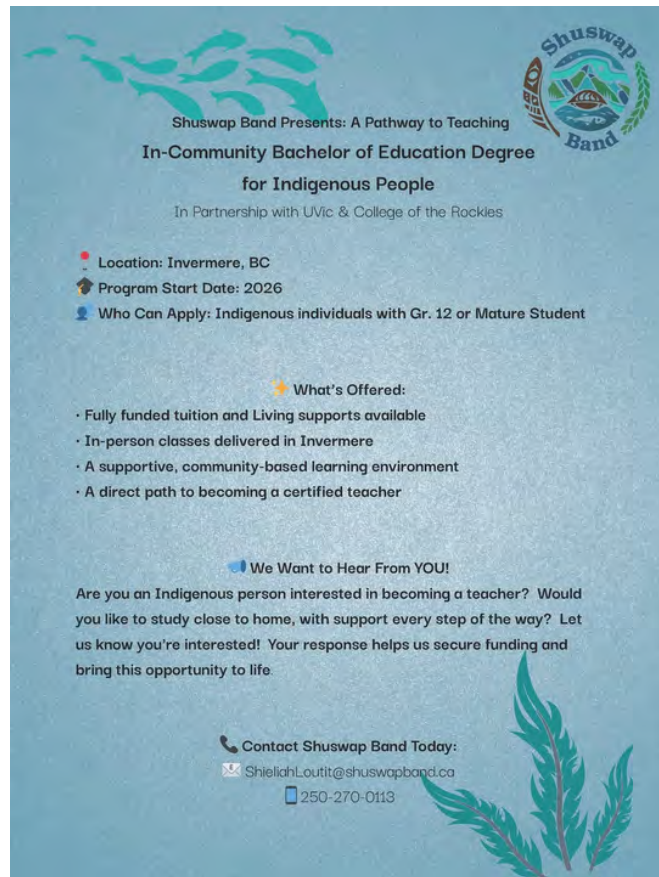
Protect Your Health

Get Vaccinated Today!

BOOK YOUR FLU OR COVID VACCINE

**PLEASE CALL CHASE PUBLIC HEALTH
250-679-1400
OR
ADAMS LAKE HEALTH CENTRE
250-679-7726
ASK TO BOOK WITH JONAH**

Please book through Chase Public Health. If you are a Skwlax band or community member (4 years or older), please call Jonah at Adams Lake to make your booking.



Shuswap Band Presents: A Pathway to Teaching
**In-Community Bachelor of Education Degree
for Indigenous People**
In Partnership with UVic & College of the Rockies

- Location: Invermere, BC
- Program Start Date: 2026
- Who Can Apply: Indigenous individuals with Gr. 12 or Mature Student

What's Offered:

- Fully funded tuition and Living supports available
- In-person classes delivered in Invermere
- A supportive, community-based learning environment
- A direct path to becoming a certified teacher

We Want to Hear From YOU!

Are you an Indigenous person interested in becoming a teacher? Would you like to study close to home, with support every step of the way? Let us know you're interested! Your response helps us secure funding and bring this opportunity to life.

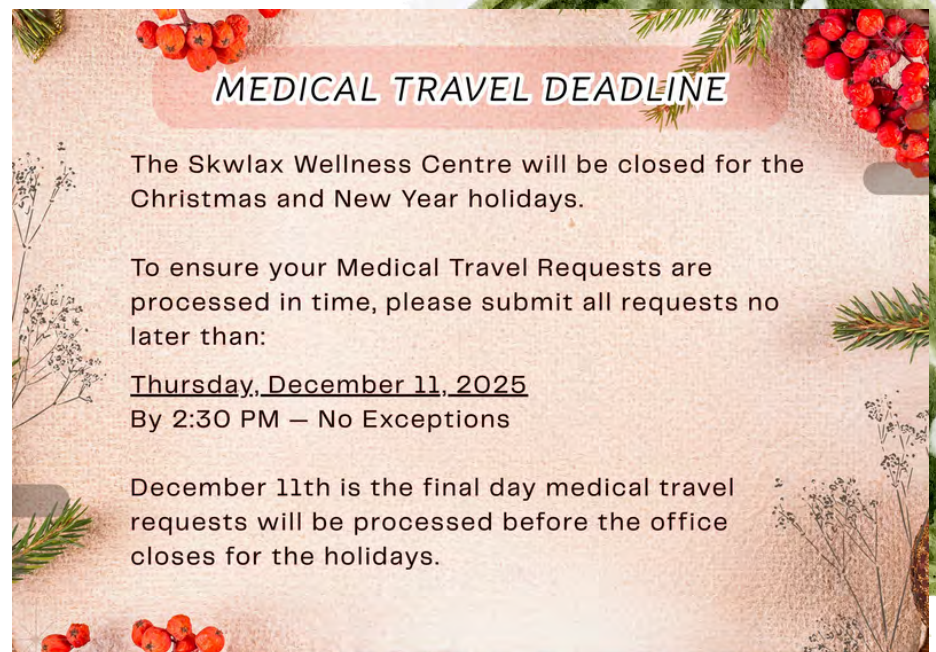
Contact Shuswap Band Today:
Shielah.Loutit@shuswapband.ca
250-270-0113



SUN PEAKS

Season passes & Day pass available for SteS band members!

**FOR DISCOUNT RATES FORM ON SEASON PASSES CONTACT
CTOMMA@SKWLAXWELLNESS.COM**



MEDICAL TRAVEL DEADLINE

The Skwlax Wellness Centre will be closed for the Christmas and New Year holidays.

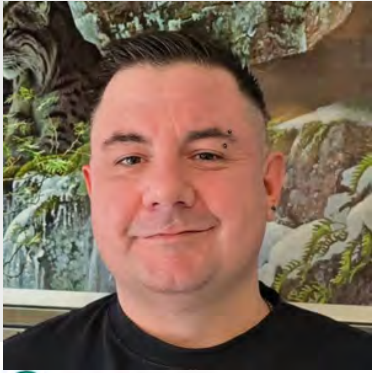
To ensure your Medical Travel Requests are processed in time, please submit all requests no later than:

Thursday, December 11, 2025
By 2:30 PM – No Exceptions

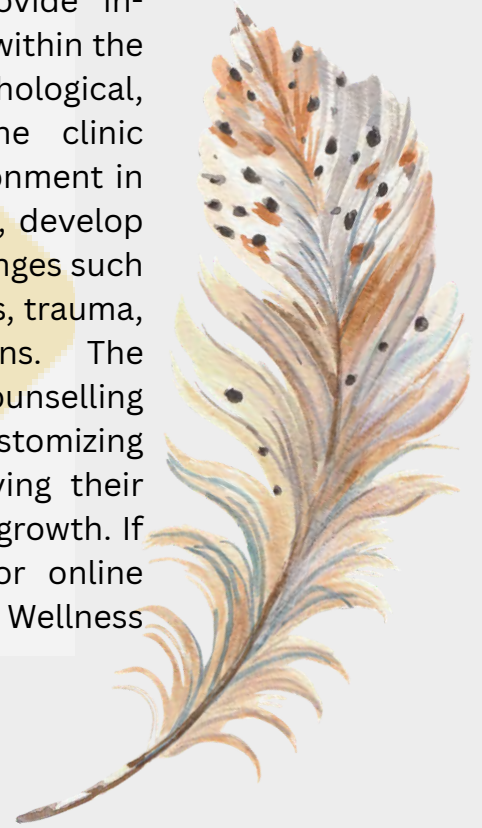
December 11th is the final day medical travel requests will be processed before the office closes for the holidays.



Skwlax Wellness Centre
(250) 679 3702

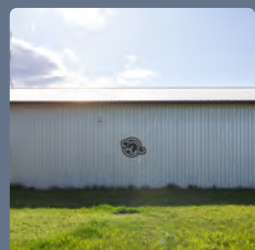
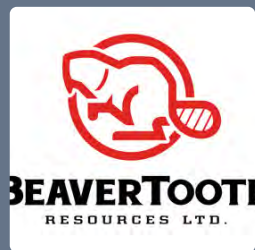


The Four Corners Counselling Clinic is owned by Stacey and Warren Arnoldus. They provide in-person and online support for individuals within the band who are experiencing psychological, emotional, or personal difficulties. The clinic provides a safe and nonjudgmental environment in which clients can examine their emotions, develop coping strategies, and work through challenges such as stress, anxiety, depression, relationships, trauma, grief and loss, and life transitions. The psychotherapists at the Four Corners Counselling Clinic utilize an integrative approach, customizing therapy to assist their clients in improving their mental well-being and achieving personal growth. If you would like to book an in-person or online appointment, please contact the Skwlax Wellness Centre @ (250) 679-3702.



+1 250-315-5051
stacey@fourcornerscounselling.ca
www.fourcornerscounselling.ca
102-3499 Voght Street, Merritt
B.C, V1K 1C6

SteS Economic Development would like to celebrate all Band Member Owned businesses in this space. Please email your submission along with logos and pertinent info to Maureen Clarke: mclarke@slb.ca



Reminder:

pickup dates for Christmas Food hampers

December 10, 11, 12

pickup at SafetyMart, Chase, B.C

SK'WLAX WELLNESS: (250) 679-3702

SECURITY

Daryl Riva

Community Safety Officer/Security
Manager

Ph: 778-694-2469

Email: security@lslb.ca or cso@lslb.ca



HOURS OF OPERATION

7 DAYS A WEEK

6:00 am to 9:00 pm

(HOURS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

(250) 679 8657



Skwlax Chevron – Operational Update

December 2025

Executive Summary

Skwlax Chevron continues to operate smoothly with strong sales growth, reliable equipment performance, and no reported incidents.

Overview

The station remains fully operational with no disruptions. Winterization activities are underway, supported proactively by SteS Operations & Maintenance Dept.

Sales Performance

Monthly sales have shown consistent year-over-year growth. A slight decline is anticipated in November, followed by an increase during the holiday season.

Equipment Status

All critical systems, including point-of-sale terminals, lottery machines, coolers, fuel pumps, and tank equipment, are functioning reliably, ensuring uninterrupted service.

Safety and Security

No incidents have been reported. The presence of STeS Security remains a key factor in maintaining a safe environment.

Holiday Hours

December 24, 2025- 6:00 am – 7:00 pm

December 25, 2025- 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

December 26, 2025 -6:00 am – 9:00 pm (Reg Hours)

December 31, 2025 -6:00 am – 7:00 pm

January 1, 2026 - 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Skwlax Chevron carries a great selection of gift cards for everyone on your gift list this holiday.

Kukstsémc

John Anderson: Manager- Skwlax
Chevron

Do you have community news you'd like to see in the Newsletter?

Contact

Destiny van Oirschot
destinyvano@icloud.com



Community Events



Youth Highlight: Lennon & Carver August

This month, we're excited to spotlight two talented young athletes in our community – Lennon and Carver August. These brothers have been working hard on the ice, and we're proud to share their hockey photos and celebrate their dedication, teamwork, and passion for the sport. Keep shining, Lennon and Carver!

We'd also love to feature more amazing youth in our upcoming newsletters. If you have a child, sibling, or community member you'd like to highlight – whether it's sports, arts, achievements, or personal milestones – please feel free to submit your photos and a short description. Let's continue celebrating the incredible youth in our community!

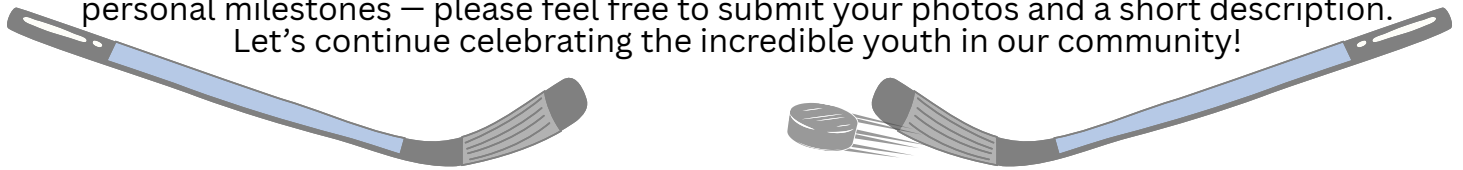


Photo 1 by Kristina John
Photo 2 & 3 by Nichelle

Elders Retreat November 26th and 27th

Contact

Nichelle King
Community Health Representative
nking@skwlaxwellness.com

Services:

- Good food box program
- Health month promotion
- Yoga
- Family Baby Circle Maternal Child Health
- Wellness visits (Families & Elders)
- Prenatal/Postnatal info. and advocacy
- Breastfeeding support
- Workshops (Education, Wellness, Health)
- Support Immunization clinics
- Community garden
- Food preservation
- Aboriginal diabetes initiative
- Community events
- Access to social events and supports
- End of life guide



Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Skwlāx te Secwépemc brings forward our ancestral teachings to instruct us in advancing our people, language, and culture and protecting the environment.

We take a proactive role to stimulate and lead the economy and protect Tmícw within Skwlāxulecw as we move towards greater unity, self-reliance and independence.

Mission

In pursuit of our Vision, and in alignment with our Values, we will:

- Lobby for the full recognition and implementation of our Title and Rights and the assertion within Skwlāxulecw.
- Ensure our members enjoy a high quality of life through service delivery and the benefits of a safe, healthy, and prosperous community.
- Acknowledge that wealth generation, the stewardship of our lands and resources, and the advancement of our language and culture are foundational to our success.
- Deliver effective communication, management and governance for an efficient administration.

Values

- We rely upon the wisdom of our ancestors, acting in the present and planning for the future.
- We believe that equity, reliability, empathy, integrity, and compassion are critical to the establishment and maintenance of healthy relationships.
- We are forthright in our dealings, embracing a philosophy of "do no harm" when engaging with others and the natural environment.
- We role-model respect through healthy two-way communication, speaking directly and honestly, and staying true to oneself.
- We are forward-looking, solution-oriented, and believe in the importance of collaboration and life-long learning for achieving success.



Contacts

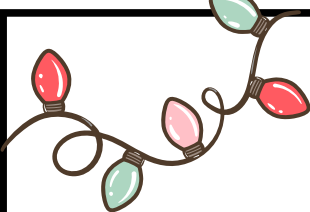
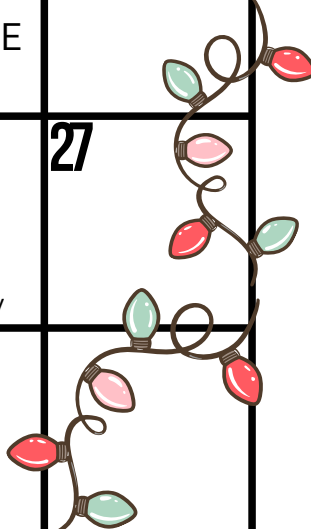
Kukpi7 Dianne Francois
Kukpi7@lslb.ca

Tk'wam7ipla7 Julie John
julie.john@lslb.ca

Tk'wam7ipla7 Dawn Francois
dawn.francois@lslb.ca



Skwłāx te Secwepemcúlecw

 December 2025						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4 FULL MOON	5	6
7	8	9 Education Post Sec. Planning & Pizza	10 Cmas Food Hamper Pick- up FORWARD LAW LLP- SKWLAX	11 Cmas Food Hamper Pick- up FORWARD LAW LLP- TAPPEN	12 Cmas Food Hamper Pick- up TRS Community building Engagement Session	13
14 Band Christmas Party	15 Education Strategic planning	16 Membership day	17	18	19 OFFICE CLOSURE 12:00	20
21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas	26 Boxing Day	27
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve			

The annual holidays closure for the band administration and wellness buildings will start: Friday, December 19, 2025, at 12:00pm and re-open Monday, January 5th, 2026, at 8:00am.