

BC MÉTIS FEDERATION CONSERVATION



Coastal
Water Protectors



BC Métis
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERATIONS OF WISDOM

An elder & youth retreat

01

WHALE TALES & POPCORN TRAILS

Reel Room, Vancouver

07



GENERATIONS OF WISDOM

The Generations of Wisdom Retreat held in November 2024 was an extraordinary gathering that brought together four youth and four elders for an intergenerational journey of connection, culture, and conservation. Over four days and three nights, participants immersed themselves in a carefully curated blend of adventure, education, and cultural reflection—an experience that will leave a lasting impact on everyone involved.

This retreat was designed with a powerful premise: fostering intergenerational bonds to inspire a shared passion for conservation and the environment. Combining adventure with learning was key to this mission, as hands-on experiences have a unique way of sparking a deep appreciation and love for the natural world. And when you love something, you protect it.

The journey included a breathtaking helicopter ride to Paradise Lake in Tofino, where participants marveled at the untouched beauty of the wilderness from above.

This aerial perspective set the tone for the retreat, reminding everyone of the importance of safeguarding these pristine spaces. Another unforgettable adventure was the winter wilderness boat tour, where participants explored the rugged coastline. Each excursion offered opportunities to reflect on the interconnectedness of ecosystems and the role we play in preserving them.

Education was another cornerstone of the retreat. A guided tour of the Ucluelet Aquarium provided an in-depth look at local marine species and their habitats. The experience underscored the importance of marine conservation while showcasing how educational institutions play a role in fostering awareness and action.





The retreat was not just about adventure — it was also about building connections. Daily group discussions created a space for participants to share their thoughts on topics such as culture, upbringing, conservation, and traditional practices. These conversations were a highlight of the retreat, as youth and elders exchanged stories, perspectives, and knowledge. To further deepen these bonds, each elder was paired with a youth for one-on-one partner interviews. These moments of candid sharing allowed participants to explore personal histories and cultural insights, forming meaningful relationships that bridged generations.

Creative expression also played a role in the retreat's agenda. A guided watercolor painting workshop encouraged participants to reflect on their surroundings and express their appreciation for nature through art. This activity provided a calm and meditative experience, blending creativity with environmental awareness.

The retreat was not only an opportunity for adventure and learning but also a time for healing. Shared meals in the main lodge fostered community, while hikes in the lush coastal forests served as moments of reflection and connection with the land.

The entire experience was designed to weave together the threads of culture, conservation, and community, highlighting the deep-rooted ties Indigenous peoples have to the environment.

Participants embarked on a winter wilderness boat tour, immersing themselves in the region's rich aquatic biodiversity. The tour offered breathtaking views and close encounters with seals, otters, eagles, and sea lions, fostering a profound connection to the natural environment. This experience not only highlighted the beauty and diversity of aquatic ecosystems but also spurred meaningful discussions about the importance of conservation and collective efforts to protect these vital habitats for future generations.





The impact of this retreat will continue to resonate through the participants and beyond. All discussions were recorded, and plans are underway to compile a book capturing the knowledge, stories, and wisdom shared during the retreat. This publication will serve as a testament to the power of intergenerational learning and the importance of conservation, ensuring that the voices of the elders and youth continue to inspire future generations.

By combining adventure, experience, culture, healing, and education, the retreat provided a remarkable platform for developing a deeper connection to the environment and to one another. The Generations of Wisdom Retreat exemplifies the belief that through understanding and love for the natural world, we can inspire meaningful action to protect it for generations to come.

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WHALE TALES & POPCORN TRAILS



The Department of Conservation with the BC Métis Federation proudly hosted "Whale Tales and Popcorn Trails," an evening dedicated to marine conservation, at The Reel Room in Vancouver. The event welcomed guests into a cozy and inviting setting, complete with a selection of delicious appetizers and British Columbia-inspired cocktails. The evening began with a compelling presentation by two guest speakers from the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Mammal Rescue Society. They shared fascinating insights and personal stories about their efforts in rescuing and rehabilitating marine mammals, emphasizing the importance of community involvement in conservation.

The highlight of the evening was the screening of the documentary *The Last of the Right Whales*. This visually stunning and emotionally impactful film delved into the challenges faced by one of the world's most endangered whale species. Attendees were captivated by the plight of these majestic creatures and the urgent need for collective action to protect them. The film sparked meaningful discussions among guests about the role individuals and organizations play in ensuring the future of marine life.

"Whale Tales and Popcorn Trails" was a successful and memorable event, reflecting the Department of Conservation's commitment to raising awareness and fostering engagement in environmental stewardship within the BC Métis community and beyond.





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