



Coastal
Water Protectors



BC Métis
FEDERATION

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BC MÉTIS FEDERATION CONSERVATION



SWEEPING THE SHORES **02**

Esquimalt Lagoon, Victoria

MEET AND GREET **07**

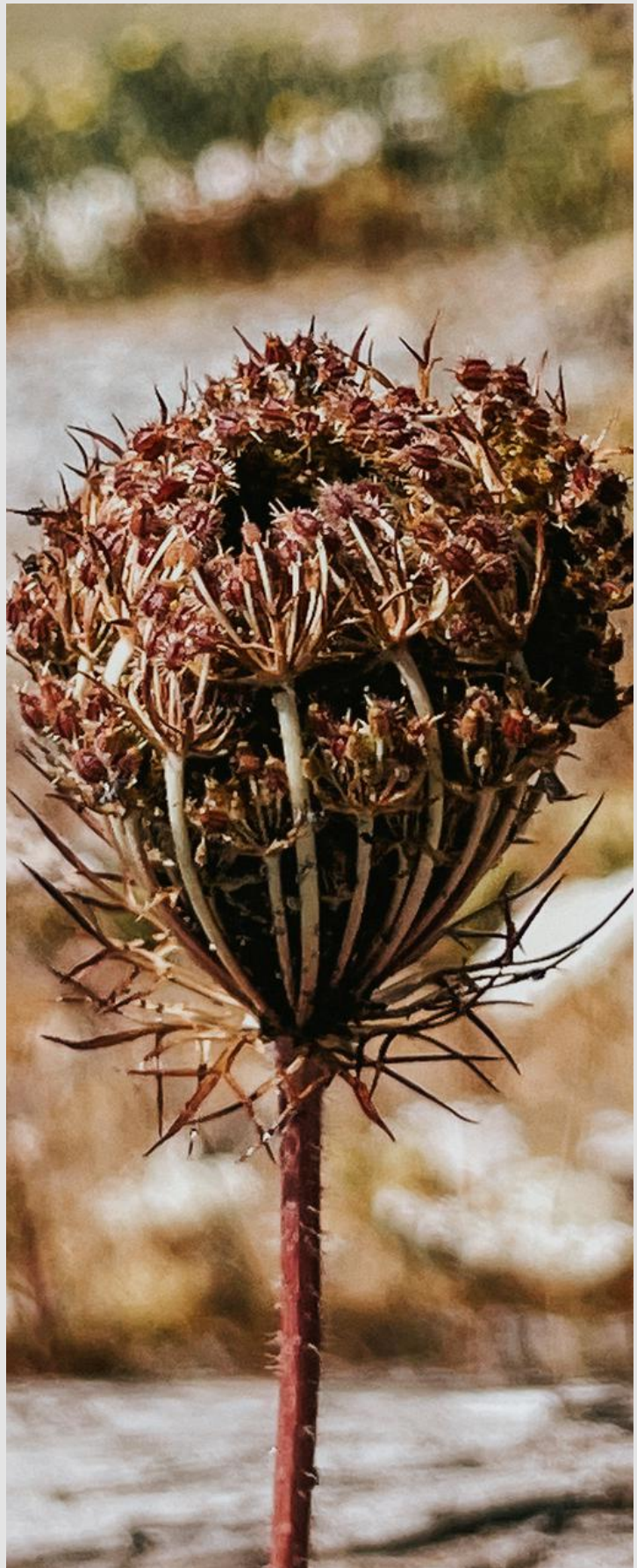
BCMF in Victoria

COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL **09**

Terrace

WELCOME THE KOKANEE **11**

Peachland





SWEEPING *THE SHORES*





On a bright and invigorating afternoon, the Conservation Department of the BC Métis Federation hosted a highly successful shoreline cleanup at the stunning Esquimalt Lagoon in Victoria. Located just minutes from downtown, Esquimalt Lagoon is a picturesque natural gem, offering breathtaking views of the Olympic Mountains and the Juan de Fuca Strait. This coastal lagoon, with its protected waters, is a beloved spot for birdwatchers, beachgoers, and nature lovers. It's home to an array of wildlife, including migratory birds and aquatic species, making it a vital part of the local ecosystem. The importance of keeping this beautiful and ecologically significant area clean and thriving cannot be overstated, which made the event all the more meaningful.

The Conservation Department, known for its active engagement in environmental stewardship, organized the cleanup as part of its ongoing efforts to protect and restore aquatic environments across British Columbia. Volunteers from the community, many of whom were Métis members, showed up in droves, excited to lend a hand. Fresh coffee and pastries from Starbucks were provided to keep everyone fueled and ready to tackle the task ahead, setting the tone for a productive and energized day.

Dozens of volunteers, armed with gloves, garbage bags, and litter pickers, fanned out across the sandy shores of the lagoon, determined to make a difference. The cleanup effort targeted not just visible litter but also microplastics and smaller debris that can cause long-term damage to marine life. Volunteers worked diligently to collect discarded plastics, food wrappers, cigarette butts, and other waste that had accumulated along the water's edge.

Esquimalt Lagoon, with its tranquil waters and scenic beauty, serves as a crucial habitat for many species of fish and birds. The impact of pollution and littering threatens not only the wildlife but also the health and enjoyment of those who visit. This event was about more than just picking up trash; it was about fostering a deeper connection to the land and water, and empowering people to take an active role in preserving the beauty of these natural spaces.

Throughout the day, volunteers reflected on the importance of protecting the environment, and many expressed gratitude for the opportunity to give back to such a special place. The Conservation Department team worked closely with the volunteers, sharing knowledge about the lagoon's ecosystem and how the shoreline cleanup ties into larger conservation efforts across the region.

With each bag of debris collected, the volunteers could see the immediate results of their efforts—clearer shores, safer waters, and a revitalized environment for both people and wildlife to enjoy.

By the end of the cleanup, several large bags of waste had been gathered and responsibly disposed of, leaving the shoreline in a much-improved state. The event was not only a success in terms of debris removal but also in building a sense of community and shared responsibility for environmental stewardship.

The Victoria shoreline cleanup at Esquimalt Lagoon was a testament to what can be achieved when people come together with a common goal: to protect and preserve our natural environment for future generations. The Conservation Department looks forward to continuing these efforts and hosting more events that inspire action and make a tangible difference in the health of British Columbia's aquatic ecosystems.





MEET & GREET



The Conservation Department of the BC Métis Federation recently had the pleasure of attending the Federation's Meet and Greet event in Victoria, held at the elegant Parkside Hotel and Spa. Nestled in the heart of downtown Victoria, the Parkside Hotel and Spa is a modern and eco-friendly destination known for its luxurious accommodations and green design. With beautiful rooftop gardens, a serene koi pond, and stunning views of the city and nearby parks, the hotel provided a perfect setting for the gathering of Métis members and community leaders. The venue's warm and inviting atmosphere made it an ideal location for fostering connection and conversation.

The Conservation Department took full advantage of the opportunity to engage with Métis members from across the region. Throughout the evening, we had meaningful conversations with attendees about the work the department has been doing, especially in expanding our focus to include all aquatic regions of British Columbia. Members were eager to learn about the various initiatives, including our recent shoreline cleanups, spill kit distribution program, and the popular free online courses offered to the community. Many were particularly excited about our efforts to protect BC's precious waterways and how they can get involved.

As we chatted with members, we heard incredible stories of how people are connecting with the land and water in their own ways, whether through fishing, boating, or simply enjoying time outdoors. It was clear that the Métis community has a deep appreciation for nature and a shared commitment to its protection. We also discussed upcoming events and projects, inviting members to participate in future shoreline cleanups and conservation activities.

The event was not only an opportunity to share updates but also to listen to the concerns and ideas of the community. Many members expressed a strong interest in working with the Conservation Department to create even more local opportunities for environmental engagement and education. These conversations reaffirmed the importance of community-driven conservation and underscored our department's mission to work alongside Métis members to protect and preserve the natural beauty of British Columbia.

The Meet and Greet at the Parkside Hotel and Spa was a memorable evening of connection and collaboration. The Conservation Department is grateful to have been part of such a vibrant event and looks forward to continuing to build strong relationships with the Métis community in Victoria and beyond.

TERRACE COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL



In a continued effort to connect with communities across British Columbia, the BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department made a stop in Terrace for the annual Terrace Country Music Festival. This vibrant event provided a perfect opportunity for the team to engage with the local community, share valuable information, and expand awareness of aquatic conservation initiatives.

The Conservation Department set up an information table at the festival, where they provided printed materials on various conservation topics, including shoreline cleanups, responsible boating practices, and the spill kit initiative. The team was on hand throughout the event, answering questions, sharing stories about their work, and fostering meaningful discussions with festival-goers about the importance of preserving aquatic ecosystems.

Beyond their presence at the festival, the team also took time to tour the surrounding area, gaining a deeper appreciation for the local environment. This firsthand experience helps shape the department's ongoing efforts to promote environmental stewardship in all aquatic regions of British Columbia.

The Terrace Country Music Festival proved to be a valuable platform for outreach, education, and building relationships with community members who share a passion for conservation and the protection of aquatic resources.



WELCOME THE KOKANEE



The BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department recently traveled to the Thompson Okanagan region to participate in the annual Welcome the Kokanee event in Peachland. This unique celebration highlights the spawning of Kokanee salmon, an important species for the ecosystem and local Indigenous cultures. Held on the shores of Okanagan Lake, the event brings the community together to honor the natural life cycle of the Kokanee while raising awareness about the importance of protecting aquatic habitats.

At the event, the Conservation Department set up an interactive booth, where they distributed printed materials about conservation efforts, local aquatic species, and the significance of Kokanee to both the environment and the Métis community. The team engaged in meaningful conversations with attendees, discussing sustainable practices, the need to protect spawning habitats, and the department's ongoing initiatives, including their shoreline cleanups and education programs.

The event also featured guided tours along the creek to witness the salmon spawning firsthand, allowing attendees to learn more about the Kokanee's journey and the factors impacting their survival. The Conservation Department team participated in these tours, using the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the region's unique ecosystem.

"Welcome the Kokanee" provided an excellent opportunity for the BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department to connect with the local community, share conservation knowledge, and celebrate the rich biodiversity of British Columbia's aquatic regions. The event served as a reminder of the importance of safeguarding the waters that support such vital species and traditions.



