


CONSERVATION

BC MÉTIS FEDERATION | SPRING 2025







As we wrap up another busy and inspiring **spring (praentaan) season (sayzoon)**, the Conservation Department would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of you—our members, volunteers, partners, and community supporters—who helped make this **season (sayzoon)** so impactful. From shoreline cleanups to wildfire preparedness and **water (d'loo)** awareness events, your passion and commitment continue to drive the important work we do.


With the **summer (l'itii) season (sayzoon)** just around the corner, we hope you find time to enjoy all the simple joys this **season (sayzoon)** brings. Whether you're out **fishing (payshii)** on **the lake (le laak)**, dipping your toes in **the ocean (la mayr)**, or relaxing in the shade at **a park (aen parc)**, we encourage everyone to take a break, get **outside (dahor)**, and reconnect with the natural world. There's nothing quite like a **hot (shoo) summer (l'tii)** day at **the beach (la plaazh)**, a cool swim in **the lake (le laak)**, or a peaceful **walk (maarsh)** along a **forest (bwaa)** trail to remind us why conservation matters.

As always, our department will continue working behind the scenes to protect this shared environment, but we also recognize the importance of rest, reflection, and celebration. Here's to sunny days, **summer (l'itii)** gatherings, and the beauty of nature all around us. From all of us at the BCMF Conservation Department—have a safe, joyful, and refreshing **summer (l'itii) season (sayzoon)!**

Michif Words – Compliments of the Culture and Language Department.

WILDFIRE SEASON





As of June 24, 2025, Canada is grappling with one of its most severe wildfire seasons in recent history. With over 3.87 million hectares burned nationwide, the scale and intensity of these fires have surpassed the 10-year average by more than fourfold, marking the second-worst start to a fire season in Canadian history, only behind the catastrophic 2023 season.

British Columbia (B.C.) stands at the epicenter of this crisis. Since April 1, the province has recorded 437 wildfires, consuming approximately 650,000 hectares of land. Alarming, 275 of these fires have been attributed to human activity, underscoring the pressing need for public awareness and preventive measures.

The northeastern regions of B.C., including areas around Fort St. John and Dawson Creek, have been particularly hard-hit. Fires in these locales have been classified as "out of control," prompting emergency alerts and precautionary evacuations. The combination of unseasonably high temperatures, prolonged drought conditions, and strong winds has exacerbated the situation, leading to rapid fire spread and challenging containment efforts.

The ramifications of these wildfires extend beyond immediate fire zones. Smoke from the blazes has drifted across vast swaths of North America, leading to hazardous air quality levels in parts of Canada and the United States.

As of early June, over 243 air quality warnings or statements were in effect across Canada, with several U.S. states also issuing alerts.

In response to the escalating crisis, the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre has elevated the National Preparedness Level to 5, indicating full commitment of national resources and the mobilization of international assistance. Provinces like Manitoba have declared states of emergency, with over 17,000 residents evacuated in what officials describe as the largest evacuation in the province's living memory.

Efforts to combat the wildfires have been bolstered by technological advancements. Google, in collaboration with the Earth Fire Alliance and satellite builder Muon Space, has launched the Fire Sat program. This initiative aims to detect wildfires from space using a constellation of over 50 satellites equipped with advanced imaging systems, providing timely information to first responders and aiding rapid fire management.

As Canada confronts this unprecedented wildfire season, the situation underscores the urgent need for comprehensive strategies encompassing prevention, rapid response, technological integration, and public education to mitigate the impacts of such natural disasters in the future.

Environmental Emergency Preparedness



On April 12th, the BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department visited the community of Clearwater and the North Thompson Aboriginal Cultural Society to deliver 30 WASP Home Wildfire Protection Kits to local Métis members. The afternoon was spent engaging in meaningful conversations with representatives from several municipal and emergency organizations.

A highlight of the day was hearing from the Clearwater Fire Chief,

who provided valuable insight into local wildfire risk and fire mitigation strategies. Attendees were also treated to a live demonstration on how to easily and effectively install the WASP sprinkler systems, which are designed to help protect homes during active wildfire events.

On May 3rd, in recognition of Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, the Conservation Department joined the Métis Association of Central Okanagan for another successful outreach and engagement session.



Members gathered to discuss wildfire resilience, learn about home protection strategies, and receive their own WASP Home Wildfire Protection Kit. The afternoon included a live demonstration to ensure that community members felt confident using the kits should the need arise.

These kits are more than just physical resources—they represent an essential part of our commitment to

environmental emergency preparedness and climate resilience.

For many of our members living in high-risk fire zones, these tools bring peace of mind and a sense of proactive empowerment. They are a direct response to what our communities have told us they need and a reflection of our shared commitment to protecting Métis families, homes, and lands in the face of increasing climate-related threats.



Wonders Of Water

On Saturday, May 3, 2025, the BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department proudly participated in the Wonders of Water event at Mission Creek Regional Park in Kelowna. Hosted by the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO), this free, family-friendly event celebrated the importance of clean, healthy water systems through engaging, hands-on activities. Our team contributed to the event's interactive atmosphere by setting up an "Our Water, Our Pledge" wall, where attendees of all ages shared their personal commitments to water conservation for the summer season.

Additionally, we provided water samples for guests to test, offering a tangible way to learn about local water quality and the significance of environmental stewardship.

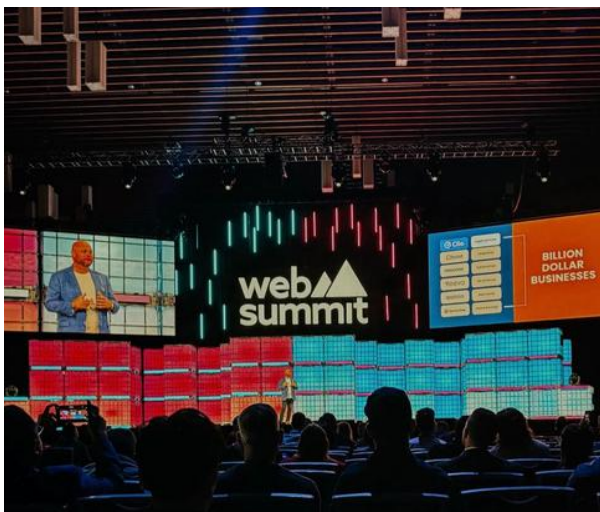
The event also featured the release of kokanee salmon fry into Mission Creek, allowing participants to witness a vital part of the salmon life cycle and understand the role of healthy waterways in sustaining local ecosystems. Our involvement in the Wonders of Water event underscores our commitment to fostering environmental awareness and community engagement. By collaborating with RDCO and other partners, we aim to inspire collective action towards preserving our precious water resources for future generations.





Web Summit + Government Reception

The BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department was honored to attend Web Summit Vancouver 2025, held from May 27–30 at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The North American edition of this globally renowned technology conference attracted over 15,000 attendees, including entrepreneurs, investors, and policymakers from around the world. The summit featured a diverse lineup of speakers, such as Jay Graber, CEO of Bluesky; Raquel Urtasun, CEO of Waabi; and Jack Newton, CEO of Clio;. Notably, Matt James, Chief Animal Officer of Colossal Biosciences, discussed his company's groundbreaking work in the de-extinction of the dire wolf.



Director of Conservation, Angel Fisher, was also invited to the Government Networking Reception, co-hosted by Web Summit Vancouver and the Government of British Columbia. This exclusive event brought together members of the Consular Corps, diplomatic representatives, and government-directed trade teams to foster relationships, explore trade and investment opportunities, and identify areas for collaboration. Angel's participation in the reception reflected the department's commitment to integrating Indigenous perspectives into broader discussions on innovation and sustainability.

Participation in Web Summit Vancouver and the Government Reception underscores the BCMF Conservation Department's dedication to staying at the forefront of technological advancements that can benefit Métis communities. Engaging with global leaders in technology and policy enables the department to explore innovative solutions for environmental stewardship and sustainable development, ensuring that Indigenous voices are included in shaping the future of conservation efforts.

Waves of Change

Shoreline Cleanup



On June 8th, 2025, the BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department hosted the Waves of Change event at Neck Point Park in Nanaimo to mark World Ocean Day. The event brought together Métis members, local families, and community allies for a shoreline cleanup, water sampling demonstration, and an Indigenous-led circle discussion on marine conservation. Volunteers of all ages participated in collecting debris along the shoreline, while youth and elders engaged in hands-on environmental education and cultural knowledge sharing around traditional relationships with ocean and water systems.

Guests enjoyed complimentary refreshments and were entered into a prize draw for a climate action gift pack valued at over \$300. This initiative is part of the department's broader commitment to Indigenous-led conservation, public engagement, and environmental preparedness. Supported through Ocean Week Canada, Waves of Change reflected the growing role of Métis communities in protecting coastal ecosystems and highlighted the importance of restoring, respecting, and sustaining ocean health in the face of climate change.



Stream Of Dreams

In June, the BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department was invited to attend a Stream of Dreams event in West Vancouver—a creative, educational initiative dedicated to inspiring environmental stewardship through art and science. The event was hosted by Stream of Dreams whose mission is to educate communities about watersheds, storm drains, and fish habitat protection through dynamic school and community programs. Their well-known tagline, “All drains lead to fish,” served as a powerful reminder throughout the day, highlighting the direct connection between our everyday actions and the health of local waterways.

Our team had the opportunity to participate in a guided watershed education session, learning about how urban runoff affects streams and what individuals can do to mitigate harm. The experience was hands-on and engaging—we even joined in painting our own fish to add to the schools chain link fence, a symbol of community commitment to environmental protection.

This collaboration offered the Conservation Department valuable insight into how artistic engagement can be used as a powerful vehicle for environmental education. It also opened the door to exploring how similar partnerships might be implemented with Métis communities across British Columbia.





Beyond Canadian Borders





In June, the BC Métis Federation's Conservation Department was honored to participate in Alacrity Canada's "Beyond Canadian Borders" event in Vancouver. Hosted at Doane Grant Thornton LLP, this panel brought together leaders from across British Columbia's innovation and export sectors to discuss strategies for scaling Canadian businesses into global markets. The event was part of Alacrity's APEX Program—Advanced Pathways for Export—which supports sustainable, high-growth ventures in navigating international expansion through mentorship, trade readiness, and market access support.

The Conservation Department's attendance reflected our growing interest in exploring international partnerships and funding opportunities related to Indigenous-led conservation, clean energy, and climate resilience. The panel discussions offered valuable insights into export diversification, regulatory navigation, and global investment trends. We are grateful to Alacrity Canada for the opportunity to connect with like-minded organizations and look forward to future collaborations that support Indigenous-led sustainability efforts on a global stage.

