



PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation  
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## QENENIW Restoration Project S,DÁYES (Pender Island) *Annual Report 2021*

### Background

The QENENIW Restoration Project is a new project developed in collaboration with participants of the TETÁCES (Gulf Islands) Climate Action Project. The TCAP formed in 2019, initiated by Pender Island residents intending to facilitate reconciliation with the WSÁNEĆ First Nations. These residents invited members of WSÁNEĆ First Nations, CRD, Islands Trust as well as practitioners and supporters of WSÁNEĆ First Nations environmental conservation, restoration and justice to symposiums at Poet's Cove Resort in May and October 2019 to determine objectives for the TCAP. Attending participants determined that TCAP would create three courses to educate various audiences about the depth of connection to place held by the WSÁNEĆ peoples, and foster meaningful action to advance the healing of the land. Members of the PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation were invited to both symposiums and subsequent meetings, and we advocated strongly for ecosystem restoration work at QENENIW (Hay Point, Tsawout First Nation reserve land on S,DÁYES) as a definable healing action which would have a positive and lasting impact for WSÁNEĆ lands and people (see Appendix I). QENENIW has become highly invaded by daphne laurel and scotch broom and ecosystem restoration would support the return of native plants which include traditional foods and medicines such as TI,ILĆ (yerba Buena) and SẄSEMILĆ (soapberry).



The PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation is a WSÁNEĆ based non-profit organization based out the PEPÁKEN HÁUTW (Blossoming Place) Native Plant Nursery & Garden at LÁU,WELNEW Tribal School. We lead numerous restoration projects throughout the WSÁNEĆ homelands, in particular at SNIDÇEŁ (Tod Inlet, Gowlland-Tod Provincial Park). PEPÁKEN HÁUTW's mission is to provide participatory education opportunities about traditional and healthy food systems, to contribute to

the restoration and revitalization of native ecosystems in the W̱SÁNEĆ homelands and to promote food security and indigenous food sovereignty in the W̱SÁNEĆ community and beyond (see pepakenhautw.com).

At the time of the TCAP symposiums, Tsawout Chief Nick Claxton (a lead participant) gave permission for PEPÁKĒN HÁUTW to initiate ecosystem restoration work during the courses which were offered primarily from Poet's Cove and various sites around S,DÁYES in January and February 2020. Participants in these courses really enjoyed their time doing ecosystem restoration at QENENIW! The feedback was extremely enthusiastic, especially from W̱SÁNEĆ youth participants.

After the courses were complete, Chief Nick Claxton recommended a formal agreement be developed between PEPÁKĒN HÁUTW and Tsawout First Nation for any future ecosystem restoration work at QENENIW. PEPÁKĒN HÁUTW started discussions with Tsawout Lands Manager Darwin Horning, who communicated to the Tsawout Lands Committee as well as Tsawout Chief & Council. During the discussion stage it was understood that future restoration work at QENENIW would take place under the terms of the protocol we developed with Tsawout First Nation.

Further discussion with Tsawout First Nations staff emphasized a high priority for the presence of a cultural monitor designated by Tsawout First Nation to assure any W̱SÁNEĆ artifacts that may be uncovered by the restoration work would be properly respected and taken care of by a Tsawout First Nation expert. QENENIW is an extremely sensitive place in cultural and archaeological terms; memory of the devastating impacts caused by the construction of Poet's Cove



Resort from 2002-2004 is still very fresh in the minds of W̱SÁNEĆ people. The archaeological piece of this protocol was reviewed by Tsawout archaeologist Adrian Underwood and his approval and interest in the healing element of ecosystem restoration work at QENENIW was very encouraging. By November 2020, we had finalized a protocol agreement between Tsawout First Nation and PEPÁKĒN HÁUTW Foundation (see Appendix II).

## Work Summary 2021

In collaboration with the W̱SÁNEĆ Leadership Council, W̱SÁNEĆ School Board and Raincoast Conservation Society, PEPÁKĒN HÁUTW was able to host an amazing restoration day at QENENIW with W̱SÁNEĆ youth! A significant amount of invasive daphne was removed and the youth all really enjoyed doing this healing work on the land. This group of youth also participated in the first salmon ceremony at QENENIW one week before the restoration day, which was incredibly

powerful and deepened their connection to this special place. Corey Joseph, the Tsawout cultural monitor present for this day, shared historical and archaeological knowledge of QENENIW as well as proper cultural and archaeological protocols for working on this sensitive site. He also commented that it was very good to see the youth laughing and enjoying their time on their homelands, especially at QENENIW which has been the site of deep mourning in the recent past.



## Work Plan 2022

PEPÁKEN HÁUTW is currently collaborating with youth initiatives from the WSÁNEĆ School Board and the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council, as well as the TETÁCES Climate Action Project steering committee and our partners with the Living Lab Project, to build programming that will provide opportunities for WSÁNEĆ youth and community members to engage in this healing work at QENENIW. We have plans for students from ŁÁU, WELNEW Tribal School and WSÁNEĆ Leadership Secondary School to bring classes out to QENENIW in 2022 through our PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Program. With consideration to cultural safety and respect for the homeland spaces of Tsawout First nation, wider community members may also be involved in this work as appropriate.

Some priorities for 2022 include:

- cutting the large maple trunk away from the walking trail to provide better access for elders
- monitoring completed areas for resprouting of invasives
- increasing the number of restoration days on site
- creating a planting and new plant maintenance plan

We are grateful to contribute to the healing of QENENIW through this restoration work.

**HÍSŬKE SIÁM!**

Judith Lyn Arney  
Ecosystems Director  
PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation  
December 17 2021

## APPENDIX I

# TĚTÁĆES Climate Action Project



## Actions of Healing: Restoring Ecosystems

S,DÁYES (Pender Islands) is a unique and beautiful place. Like so many indigenous places, the lands and forests of S,DÁYES has experienced devastating changes during colonization. In early settler days, nearly all the forest trees were clearcut from S,DÁYES and their complex ecosystems fragmented. TĚTÁĆES, the nearby islands, all faced the same devastation as the felled trees could be easily transported by water from the island shores. These changes forever altered the homes and fishing places of the WŚÁNEĆ people across TĚTÁĆES. Today much of the islands are covered by stands of second growth forest, a faded echo of the diversity of the past, and a dangerous legacy as well.

A forest in its natural state, stewarded in the traditional ways of indigenous peoples, has many natural protections against intense fire and pest outbreaks. Today as we walk through the forests of S,DÁYES we see many trees of the same age, the dry and broken branches along their trunks ready to ignite from any errant spark and their interlocking branches blocking sunlight from the forest floor. In many places the dry litter of branches has replaced a vibrant native shrub understory, the darkness from the branches above restricting the opportunity of life for these young plants that have accompanied their giant relatives in these forests for millennia.

The last stress on these ecosystems comes in the form of seeds and treasured plants brought from far overseas by settlers, plants that have now become invasive and take the smallest opportunities to survive and overrun areas where once native plants and medicines grew in abundance, collected and cared for by the WSÁNEĆ peoples.

As climate change progresses, all these factors compel us to protect what remains, to understand the cultural problems that led us here, and to plant the seeds of healing through *meaningful action*.

We propose in this TETÁCES Climate Action Project to take a decisive action step towards restoring the land under WSÁNEĆ care here on S,DÁYES (the reserve land adjacent to Poet's Cove). In each of the three proposed courses in this project, there will be a hands-on component of restoration in which students learn that restoration of ecosystems is not only possible but a deeply and proactively healing practice. This healing can be felt by the land, the waters and move our hearts.

**What will we do?** We will arrive on the land with WSÁNEĆ elders and knowledge keepers in the spirit of doing healing work. The first days of our work will be removing invasive species such as daphne laurel and scotch broom from the land. Often, native plants have lain dormant in the soil under a cover of invasive species, just waiting for the opportunity to thrive again. In later stages, we may thin trees that and grow native plants to bring back to this beautiful place. This is a lot of learning, a lot of work and a lot of fun!



QENENIW (Hay Point)

## APPENDIX II



### QENENIW RESTORATION PROJECT S,DÁYES (Pender Island, BC)

The QENENIW Restoration Project was initiated during the TETÁCES Climate Action Project, a collaborative initiative between WŚÁNEĆ First Nations, S,DÁYES (Pender Island) residents, CRD, and local environmental partners. The TĀCAP determined that the principle of *action* was important to any education regarding climate action and indigenous land sovereignty.

PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation is a WŚÁNEĆ based organization delivering education programs about native plants and food gardens at LÁU,WELNEW Tribal School and ecological restoration projects throughout WŚÁNEĆ territory. PHF members participated in the TĀCAP and advocated for the *action* piece of the TĀCAP to involve restoration work at QENENIW (Hay Point), adjacent to Poet's Cove Resort. Tsawout First Nation Chief Nick Claxton approved this project for the duration of the TĀCAP (winter 2020).

Many WŚÁNEĆ community members, including WŚÁNEĆ youth, participated in the QENENIW Restoration Project in February 2020, removing the invasive daphne laurel from the land and hearing from Tsawout First Nations elders and leaders about the importance of this village site. Moving forward, there has been great interest in continuing this healing work.

This document details the protocol between Tsawout First Nation and the PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation to ensure that any further restoration at QENENIW is undertaken with respect to the wishes of Tsawout First Nation and in accordance with sound restoration principles.

## **Protocol for the QENENIW Restoration Project**

The QENENIW Restoration Project will be undertaken in accordance with the following protocols.

1. A Tsawout First Nation cultural monitor will be present for any restoration activity at QENENIW. Day rates for a cultural monitor are minimum \$350, including food and travel.
2. There must be strong consideration for archaeological remains in the area. Tsawout First Nation has complete control over any archaeological remains that may be found at QENENIW during the course of restoration work: the Tsawout cultural monitor present for each restoration day will be responsible for handling archaeological materials on behalf of Tsawout First Nation.
3. Any culturally important findings must be reported to the Lands Department in order to be recorded and entered into the Tsawout First Nation Information System, including location, description, and action taken. This process will be guided by the Tsawout cultural monitor present.
4. Ecosystem restoration work must be conducted using proper safety equipment and tools. PEPÁKEN HÁUTW must ensure first aid kits and trained first aid people are available on site during restoration work.
5. Ecosystem restoration work will be led by a trained PEPÁKEN HÁUTW staff member to ensure the safety of participants and adherence to sound restoration principles.
6. A record of restoration activities must be maintained by PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation and submitted in an annual report to Tsawout First Nation for review.

**This protocol represents a formal agreement between  
Tsawout First Nation and the PEPÁKEN HÁUTW Foundation.**

**HÍSWKE SII,ÁM!**