



TŜILHQOT'IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

# NEWSLETTER WINTER 2021

Tisel ?lza (January) The Month of the Golden Eagle

Benen Ses ?Elhtsish (February) The month the bears have their cubs



## Storytelling Edition

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Health	2- 3
Emergency	4-5
Stewardship	6-12
Fisheries	13-16
Negotiations - Executive Lead	17
Governance	18-19
Housing & Infrastructure	20-23
Tsilhqot'in Nen - Lands & Resources	24
Education	25-26
Communications	27-28
Tsilhqot'in Radio	29
External Partners & Projects	30-31

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## Health Manager

Connie Jasper



We have spent the last few months focused on responding to Covid Positive Cases and the First Dose of the Vaccine Rollout. We saw Covid positive cases in five of our Tsilhqot'in Communities. The nurses and health staff in communities worked around the clock 7 days a week to provide Covid Testing, Self Isolation supports and then Vaccine clinics. We were very fortunate to have support from First Nations Health Authority and Interior Health for the nursing support they provided to help with Covid Swabbing, contact tracing and Vaccine Clinics.

The communities all went into lockdown to try to stop the spread and protect community members. Over the next few weeks we will be rolling out the Vaccine clinics for the second doses. It is really important that everyone comes back for their second dose to ensure that you have the best protection.

We have a Community Liaison worker now and can be reached in the evenings and weekends. The number to reach her at is (250) 267-3298. She is available 7 days a week. She is available to assist with any Covid related questions.

We also welcome Hazel Quilt to our team as our Receptionist. It has been amazing having her. I will make sure she introduces herself for the next newsletter.

Dakotah Casey who has worked for us as the Health Liaison Worker for TNG Health the last couple of years will be moving on to a position with ?Esdilagh. We want to wish her well and say thank you to Dakotah for her work with us and the work she has done with the Caribou Memorial Hospital and the Seniors Homes in Williams Lake. Interior Health has received funding to have two Aboriginal Patient Navigators and should have coverage at the hospital for evenings and weekends so we are hoping that services for our people will be much better then they have been in the past. Wishing all of you a great rest of the winter and feel free to reach out if you need anything.

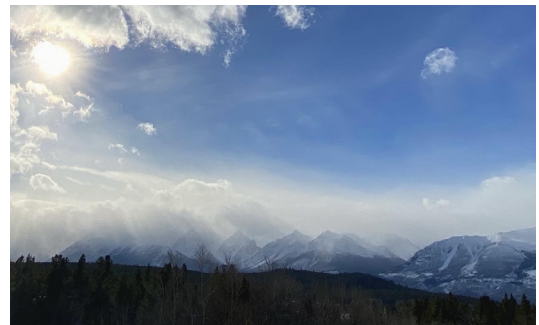
## Health Dietitian

Hannah Zmudzinski, RD



As we started to work from home again this winter, some things changed in my household that made it a little easier to be alone at home all day. My new fluffy co-worker has been a great motivation for getting up early in the morning (thanks to his whining), for getting out for those walk breaks and for staying active! Although I miss working in the health office with all of my colleagues and going out to communities to see staff and community members and the beautiful Tsilhqot'in territory, having my new pupp Billy around has been a nice alternative.

As I am no longer able to see groups of people for cooking classes or nutrition education, I have taken on many more clients for one-on-one nutrition counselling!



In January I had the chance to help out with the COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Xeni Gwet'in where I got to reconnect with a few community members that I have not seen in months. I am still hoping to get out to communities in the spring and summer to help with community gardens, orchards and knowledge sharing, if permissible. It is an adjustment to be providing nutrition services virtually but I am always thankful to still be able to connect with our members, even if it is via Zoom! I will continue to work with the Tsilhqot'in Food Security and Sovereignty working group with Dawn Morrison to advocate for community needs and pass along any funding opportunities. I am amazed at the resiliency of our communities and TNG staff to stay positive and continue to do great work even during these prolonged times of uncertainty. Sechanalyagh!

## Health Liaison

Dakotah Casey

Hunilt'eh,

Considering the year it has been, I am ever grateful for all the small opportunities to support and connect with the Tsilhqot'in people.



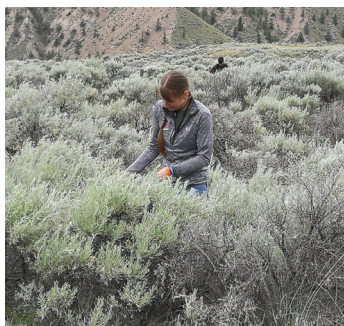
I want to say sechenalyagh to everyone who has taken the time to teach me the language, and for sharing your many stories.

In recent years I have served as the Tsilhqotin Health Liaison to provide guidance through the medical system and a warm connection to supportive services. I am resigning from my role as Health Liaison, but I will still be living and working within the Nation. The Elders in Deni House will continue to enjoy monthly Drumming events on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

It has been my pleasure to give back whilst discovering my Tsilhqot'in roots.

Nixiyah gunest'in,

Dakotah Casey



## Emergency Manager

Brian Moore

The emergency team has been in full swing since mid-March. On March 17, 2020, a public health emergency was declared under the Public Health Act. On March 18, 2020, the Tsilhqot'in National Government declared a State of Emergency in response to the threat of the coronavirus (Covid-19) on behalf of the six Tsilhqot'in communities as an exercise of its inherent jurisdiction and authority to protect the health and safety of elders, citizens and communities. The Tsilhqot'in Nation called on its citizens and communities to protect elders and loved ones by staying home unless it was absolutely necessary or essential to leave. As the virus continued to spread throughout BC and Canada, we called on everyone to do their part to stop the spread of Covid-19 by continuing to practice social distancing and following the guidelines set up by the province and health authorities.

Spring Freshet is on the radar; with fast rising temperatures and previous ground saturation, flooding should be anticipated and now is the time to start preparing.

### Protect Your Home & Property

There are simple steps you can take in and around your home and property to help prevent flood damage.

Here are steps everyone should take:

- Store valuables and important items or documents in water-tight containers or in higher places, like on a tall shelf or upper floor
- Clean your gutters regularly
- Keep nearby storm drains clear of debris
- In the winter, clear snow at least 3-5 feet away from your home's foundation

### Make an Emergency Plan

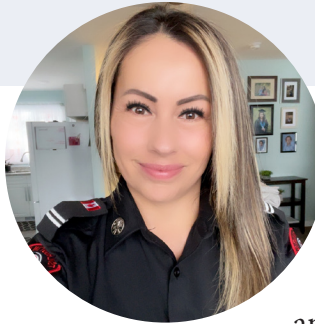
Having an emergency plan is one of the best steps you can take to prepare for a flood. An emergency plan is a playbook for how you and your household will respond to a disaster. Knowing what to do will reduce anxiety and help keep you focused and safe. You can download an emergency plan from Prepared BC webpage.

### Make Grab & Go Bags

If flood waters get too close to your home, it may become unsafe to stay and you'll need to leave quickly. This is easier to do if you take time to build grab-and-go bags in advance. Fill backpacks or carrying bags with the supplies everyone in your household will need while away from home.

## Emergency Planning Coordinator

Danielle Gilpin



Hi everyone! Spring is almost here and so far this year has been quite challenging for us all. Since the State of Emergency announcement, I have been working remotely in our virtual

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) where our team, and staff along with the communities pulled together to help coordinate an effective COVID-19 response and support efforts.

On story-telling, I have a story I'd like to share with you all. In November 2020, I was experiencing excruciating abdominal pains and decided to go into the Williams Lake emergency room, thinking to myself that although I am in pain, what could possibly happen? Well, that was short lived, and the amazing doctor diagnosed me right away with diverticulitis, which meant my large intestine was perforated with inflammation and infection. I was rushed into emergency surgery within hours and thank goodness, the surgery went extremely well. There was a fifty-fifty chance my large intestine could not be connected back together, but the surgeon did a remarkable job, 4 incisions and ten staples later, I now am back to almost feeling 100% once again!

This spring, I hope to be able to enroll in more emergency management courses through the Justice Institute of British Columbia, and hopefully be able to join facilitated courses in a group setting, but with Covid restrictions and regulations in place, this year may be another tough long haul for all of us. I look forward to seeing everyone sometime in the hopefully near future. I hope you all stay safe, be prepared and keep practicing social distancing!

## Deputy Chief Operations

Dan Heaton

### ENIYUD COMMUNITY FOREST PRESCRIBED BURN

On September 30th, 2020 Brian Moore and Dan Heaton (TNG Emergency Services) were invited by the Alexis Creek Forestry Office to attend and observe a Prescribed Burn which took place on October 1st 2020.

This prescribed burn was in partnership with the Communities of Tatla Lake and Tsi Del Del First Nation and involved approximately 160 Ha land base. The reason for the prescribed burn was that the stand was infected badly (90%) with Dwarf Mistletoe and would not develop into a productive, merchantable site as it was. Mistletoe stunts tree growth. This treatment allows for the consumption of fine fuels and some coarse woody debris, and increases the recruitment of naturally regenerated stems and diminishes the prominence of Mistletoe in the stand.

This is also an excellent opportunity for Forestry Firefighters to build knowledge, skills and practice in fire science and management, as well as strengthen the working partnership between TNG and BC Wildfire Service.



Photo 1: Dan and Brian being briefed by the Incident Commander and one of the Command Staff Members



Once weather conditions, (wind, temperature, and humidity) were within safety ranges, two (2) small test fires were started by crews with hand touches to ensure the burn could precede in a safe manor. Previous to the test fires, fire lines, pumps, fire crews, water supplies, 4 wheelers, heavy equipment, water tanks, and First Aiders were in place should the Prescribed Burn not go as planned and the fire could be quickly and safely be extinguished.

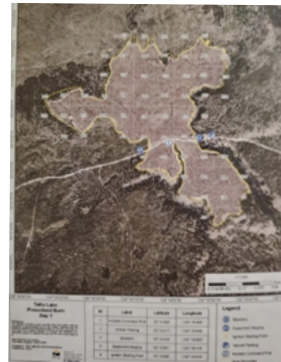


Photo 2: Prescribed Burn Area with in the Eniyud Community Forest

After determining that the test fires were burning as predicted Bob Mitchell the Incident Commander (BCWS) ordered the burn to proceed and a Helicopter was brought in to drop dragon balls in a grid pattern. These are Ping Pong type balls with an ignition source chemical (bio degradable), which are dropped from the Helicopter to the ground and then the down wash from the blades fan them creating a series of small fires in a line.



Photo 3: Helicopter conducting PSD Air Ignitions

We only attended day one of the two day planned prescribed burn but a total success going as planned and in a very safe manor. Dan has been invited to other type prescribed burns with in the territory during the month of October.

## Stewardship Manager

Luke Doxtator

I would like to start off by saying that I hope each and every Tsilhqot'in member has been able to stay safe during these difficult times. It has been a real struggle with Covid-19 nipping at our doors and affecting some of us. I have been fortunate to not catch Covid, but I have had friends that had caught it and my heart and prayers went out to them. This winter newsletter I will highlight some of the activities, but I also want to share with you some insight to how my family has been trying to stay safe, while continuing activities during these winter months.



**TNG Office:** The TNG office is currently closed due to Covid concerns. We are continuing to work from home during these times and it's great to see all the hard work continue to happen even under not so ideal conditions.

**Fish & Wildlife Panel meetings:** We continue to have these meetings monthly and continue to do the hard work that needs to be done in order to continue our fight for the betterment of wildlife within the territory. I am very grateful to the community members who are active participants at these meetings; they are able to demonstrate how important the fish and wildlife are to the Tsilhqot'in people.

**Tsilhqot'in Stewardship Agreement (TSA):** The 1-year extension on the TSA will expire on March 31, 2021. JP Laplante, Dominique Nouvet and I have been negotiating a new agreement for the next 3 years. The new agreement is in its drafting stage and will be presented to leadership over the next couple of weeks.

**Story time:** I won't bore you with all the details, but I have been dealing with some health issues, so this winter has not been the same for me and my family. Normally, we would be ice fishing like crazy, hauling in a lot of kokanee and rainbow trout to eat, but unfortunately not this year.

I am unable to get out on the ice. I did try 3 times earlier this year, but I paid for it dearly. Since my children love to be on the ice fishing, my wife and I had to be creative to provide other activities for them so they aren't in the house all winter. Last year I had built a 18x30 ice rink in my back yard, since the kids were just learning to skate, this size was suffice. However, now that they are both enrolled in the Williams Lake Minor Hockey Association and are skating a lot more and are getting bigger and faster, I needed to build a larger rink. I ordered some wood from the Toosey Old School, and was very happy with the service and the material (I highly recommend them) for this project. This year we built a 30x40 rink, setup lights so they can skate during these short days. My boys are getting at least 20 hours of ice time a week and they love it. Their skills are getting amazing and their shots are way harder and accurate now compared to the beginning of winter. In the pictures below you can see the rink, which took quite a bit of work, but it was well worth it.





For myself to keep sane during these indoor times, I focused on photography. I built myself a mini studio to start taking some product photos. The studio was built by my youngest son and I. It is just a cardboard box with holes cut out and covered with baking paper to act as a diffuser so the light isn't so bright. We used table lamps and flashlights for our studio and we had a lot of fun taking pictures of my toy replica Harleys. My son really enjoyed this, and he has an eye for taking pictures. I have been teaching him how to take pictures in manual mode on our camera so we can control all the settings based on the lighting and environment we are in. It's amazing what a 9 year old can pick up once he shows interest.



Well that pretty much wraps up some of the activities we have been doing to keep busy during these uncertain times. I sure hope you all stay safe and remember to check up on your loved ones. I honestly can't wait until we can go back to some type of normalcy, so we can make community visits again on a regular basis.

Luke Doxtator  
Stewardship Department Manager.



## Wildlife Biologist

Mitchell Warne



### How to Understand British Columbia's Moose Estimates

The Province of British Columbia conducts moose surveys throughout the province, which they then use to inform their management decisions. These surveys are called Stratified Random Block surveys (SRBs) and that is how the moose population density estimates and ratios are developed. If you want more details on how BC completes these SRB surveys BC has created a video that can be watched on YouTube titled "How we Count Moose". Search that title on YouTube and you can watch the 6 minute video.

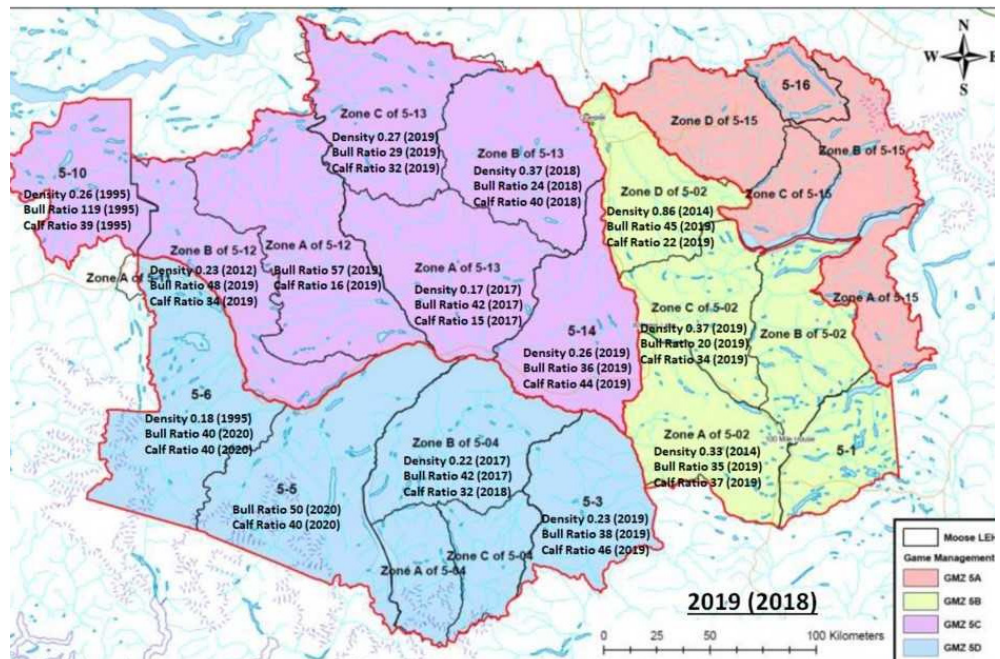
The purpose of this article is not to explain how the SRB surveys are conducted nor to justify their use but instead provide information on what the numbers mean from these surveys.

The first piece of information is the moose population density. This is typically provided as how many moose can be found per square kilometer. This does not mean that every part of that area will have that many moose but on average throughout the whole area that's what the SRB calculated. When you look at the attached map you can see that in the Management Unit (MU) 5-13A the density is 0.17 moose per 1 km<sup>2</sup>. A more useful way to talk about moose is how many moose are in a 1000km<sup>2</sup> area. Title Land is about 1750km<sup>2</sup> so you could think of it as how many moose are in an area that is over half the size of Title Land. Multiply the density by 1000 and the result is 170 moose for 1000km<sup>2</sup> in the MU 5-13A. If you wanted to know how many moose are estimated in each of the MUs you would need the area, 10,045km<sup>2</sup> for MU 5-13A, and multiple that by the density from the SRB estimates (0.17) so the estimate is 1708 moose in the MU 5-13A.

The second and third pieces of information are the ratios. The first is the number of bull moose per 100 cow moose, so using the MU 5-13A example the bull ratio 42 means that you should see about 42 bull moose for every 100 cow moose. To note, this doesn't include calves just cows. BC has different bull ratio objectives depending on the density but the minimum target is a ratio of 30 bulls.

Calf ratios are the third piece of information and the same as the bull ratios except it is the number of calf per 100 cow moose. Again using MU 5-13A the calf ratio of 15 means you should see about 15 calves for every 100 cow moose. The BC target is at least 30 calves so this MU is well below BC's target. To note, ratios of both bulls and calves can vary quite a bit between years.

When you see MUs that do not have densities but only have ratios or different years listed this is because BC flew a different type of survey, Composition Survey, that is not as intensive as the SRB so they do not calculate out a density estimate but instead only the ratios. That is also why you can see some zones with ratios and densities having different years (in brackets) because they flew different survey types in different years.



If you have any questions about the moose surveys or moose in general you can contact me using the below information;

Mitchell Warne R.P.Bio.

TNGs Wildlife Biologist

Phone: 780-814-2026

E-mail: mwarne@tsilhqotin.ca

## Mining, Oil and Gas Coordinator

Helga Harlander

### Kingfisher – Goldrange Project

TNG has received a referral for a mining exploration project by Kingfisher Resources. The Goldrange property is located approximately 16 km south of the White Saddle Air Base. Access to the site is by helicopter. The proposed program consists of conducting an IP survey and drilling of 35 holes (15 rotary air blast, 20 diamond drill). Status: under review



### Gibraltar

Gibraltar Mines Ltd applied for various permit amendments. The company finished mining Granite Pit in 2020. They propose to change the previously approved mining sequence for 2021, namely they plan to commence mining Gibraltar East Pit instead of Connector Pit. This requires transferring water from the Gibraltar East Pit to Granite Pit and establishing a new waste rock dump. The application is currently under review. In March 2022 Gibraltar will be required to submit a new Five-year Mine Plan and Reclamation Plan for approval. Status: under review

### Rocky Point Ranch – Sand & Gravel Quarry

The owner of Rocky Point Ranch applied for a permit to quarry approximately 25,000 tonnes of sand and gravel over five years. There are concerns with this application and ?Esdilagh representatives plan to visit the site once weather conditions allow. Status: under review

### Moroni - Placer Operation

BC has submitted a referral for a four-year permit for placer mining. The placer claim is located on private land west of Diamond Island. The proponent plans to excavate three test pits in the first year, and a total of nine additional test pits in the remaining years. Status: under review

### Enbridge – Westcoast Transmission Pipeline

Enbridge notified TNG that they plan on completing 20 integrity digs along the transmission pipeline in the region, starting this spring. They have applied for permits with the BC Oil and Gas Commission (OGC). Status: waiting for referral to be submitted by the OGC

Please give me a call or send an email if you are interested in more detailed information on any of the above.

Sechanalyagh, Helga

## GIS Team Lead & Portal Administrator

Sarah Gash



### Story

Many of our family stories revolve around our dog. Johnny is a male black lab. Yes, Johnny Gash, the dog in black is our dog, named after a certain “man in black”, Johnny Cash. Johnny is going on 11 years now, but doesn’t act a day over 5, sometime 2 or 3 years old. While in his old age he does spend more time sleeping, he is always up for adventure chasing the quad, mountain biking, or cross country skiing. He is all in. His favourite is fishing. He once launched himself off the back of our boat in the middle of the Quesnel Lake Junction. He gets very excited and barks and jumps, on all fours, in the air repeatedly when an adventure is in the making. A number of years ago my family, along with some family friends, did a quad trip into the Itcha Ilgachuz park. You need a special permit to do this, so all arrangements were made in advance. We had 4 quads, two trailers, food and gear for 4 nights plus extra in case of emergencies. Much planning and preparations went into making sure we could fit everything. Then a week before we were to depart we realized we hadn’t thought of the dog. What are we going to do with Johnny? Well I guess we can take him with us.... This was the best decision Johnny could have hoped for. What a dog adventure! The ride in was a long one! Too long for even Johnny, so we had to leash tie him, so he would stay put, to the top of the trailer (which was a big piece of plywood. Johnny heralded our passage barking the whole way, so excited to be included. So there was our caravan – Mike, my husband with our son Charlie on the back of his quad towing the trailer with Johnny riding surfer style on the back of the trailer, followed by me and Olivia on a second quad followed by two more quads with our family friends. It wasn’t a quiet ride, but it was an amazing trip.

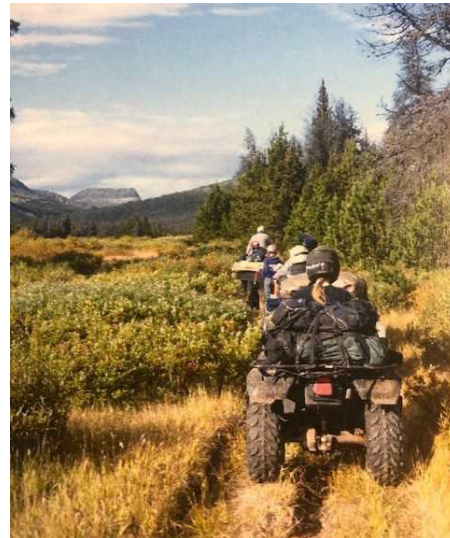


Photo 1: Our caravan.

Some updates in Mapping over the last couple of months (in point form):

- Held Portal Training for TNG staff;
- Survey design for Wildlife Tracking with maps for Rangers program;
- DND Military Block mapping of Sensitive Areas for Tlesqox;
- IT coordination and improvements – migration to new server;
- Hired Jenn Marr as 3rd member of our GIS team;
- Siwash Gathering map for Range Tenure Restrictions;
- And much much more!

Sechanalyagh,  
Sarah Gash

## GIS Technician

Adam Gaudet

Since work-from-home began again in early January, my family and I started doing family walks up on Fox Mountain most days before lunch in order to break up the day. And right around Christmas, a book came in the mail for our oldest son from his aunt in northern Saskatchewan called "How to be a Cat", wherein each page shows a different illustration of a cat doing different cat things. Halfway through the book is a page called "Pounce" that shows a cat pouncing, about to catch his prey. For some reason, this idea of something pouncing on another thing completely resonated with our two-and-a-half year old - like he was put on Earth to do one thing and one thing only, and that is to pounce.

So, just after the first big snowfall of the year, we did our family walk up Fox Mountain and got to the open clearing where the Chicken Scratch trail meets an old logging road, where the snow is considerably deeper as it is not under cover of the canopy. The snow was fresh and soft, so I started (gently) throwing Matsuo (our two-and-a-half year-old) into the fresh snow, like he was "pouncing" – like a cat – only to sink up to his neck as he landed in the soft snow. We did this over and over for what must have been 20 minutes – just about enough time for Dad to feel a bit winded as Dad finds himself to be less and less of a young spring chicken.

Now, each time we go out for our family walks, he is right away asking me to throw him in the snow so he can "pounce like a cat", so naturally we always make our way to this clearing now. I'm not sure how he's going to react when the warm weather comes and melts away all that soft pouncing snow, but maybe we figure something else out. Anyone have a pool I can throw my son into over and over this spring and summer?



Photo 1: Here is Matsu playing "Pounce Like a Cat". I don't know what we are going to do once spring arrives and washes away the snow. Is there like a soft mud pit nearby anywhere?

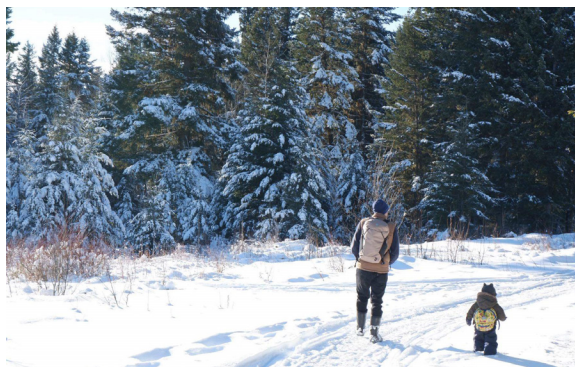
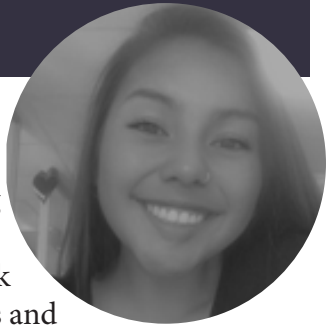


Photo 2 : Matsuo and Dad enjoying the winter sunshine. We both carry backpacks to hold our snacks – boring whole wheat muesli bread for Dad; yummy gummies and fish crackers for Matsuo.

## Natural Resource Worker

Ruthie Jackson



As COVID-19 is very much real, the Tsilhqot'in communities have been feeling the pressure of it. Many of the communities have gone on lock down to help protect the elders and families from the virus and further more prevent the spread of it. Teriann and I got the privilege to fill the role of security at the checkpoint for T'lesqox as relief for the workers and community members who were working tirelessly for weeks during the lock down. Everyone was so kind and helpful. I'd like to thank the community members and workers who made our experience so enjoyable. I hope everyone stays safe and healthy through these difficult times. I was fortunate enough to be invited to join the caribou flights with Percy Guichon and our wildlife biologist Mitchell Warne. I must admit that I was a little bit nervous at first but the beauty of the Tsilhqot'in territory eased my fears. I'm excited to say that I saw a caribou for the first time. We also saw moose, goat, and a bird of some sort. I'm hopeful to be a part of more flights in the future.

Sechanalyagh



Photo 1: Teriann and I working at the T'lesqox community checkpoint

## Fisheries

Randy Billyboy (Fisheries Manager),  
Michelle Tung (Fisheries Strategy Lead,  
Pete Nicklin (Fisheries Biologist)

Hello all!

By now, most people are aware that 2020 was another very tough year for salmon returns to the Fraser River, T̓silhqot'in fisheries and spawning grounds. Sockeye and Chinook returns to T̓silhqot'in Territory (and Fraser River overall) were the lowest in recorded history. These low returns were further challenged by passage issues related to very high water levels in the Fraser River in June/July and the added barrier of the Big Bar Landslide. It was "all hands on deck" for the TNG Fisheries Department to focus our field work, data analysis and communications to support conservation efforts and T̓silhqot'in leadership's decision making during this difficult fishing season.

Fortunately, the TNG Fisheries Team will use the experiences from 2019 and 2020 to prepare for the challenges of the 2021 salmon return.

The 2021 pre-season estimate for:

- Chinook – unknown until May after the reconstruction of its parent spawners
- Sockeye is 311,000 at 50% probability as returning by DFO. Pray that the numbers are true or increased.
- Pink is 3 million at 50% probability as returning by DFO. 2019 was greatly exaggerated, so expect a decrease.

The TNG team planned and implemented new field projects and communications activities:

**Additional TNG-led monitoring field** projects to collect extensive direct information on Chinook and sockeye in the T̓silhqot'in Territory, to inform Leadership's in-season decision making.

**Emergency hatchery enhancement** measures to increase the number of fry/smolt produced from returning spawners to avoid extirpation (loss of population in the future) due to very low returns.



**Weekly updates to T̓silhqot'in leadership** and TNG senior management throughout the season fishing season (weekly calls, newsletters on website) to support decision making.

**Water Quality Monitoring** and testing will be done by Andrea Sterling and Rangers. There will be temperature gauges set with 10 different locations within the T̓silhqot'in watershed. This is a one year approved proposal to set this up.

**Chilcotin Lake Diversion Restoration** is being planned correct the illegal changes made without anyone's approval. DFO and TNG Rangers will be visiting this site on March 3rd.

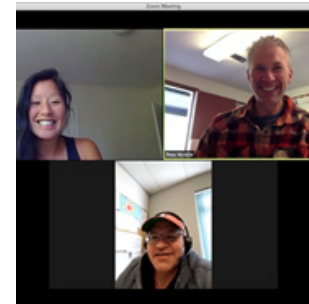


Pic 1. (left) – our intrepid biologist Pete Nicklin, counting fish from helicopter and looking scary!

Pic.2. (middle) -Leonard English, Fisheries Coordinator, running our ever-expanding field programs!



Pic 3. (right) – Michelle, Pete and Randy – our virtual team!



### TNG-led monitoring field projects

In addition to our core activities (annual stock assessment and catch monitoring programs), TNG implemented new monitoring activities in 2021, included a roving sonar, non-retention test fishery and site visits.



Pic 4. (left) – Rangers Jimmy Harry and Mason Seaward help set up sonar and fence at Taseko;



Pic 5. (right) –Shawn Harry and Wacey Alphonse setting up the electric fence.



Pic 6 and 7: Leonard (left) and Winston (right) conduct non-retention test fishery (new monitoring program!)



### What did we learn from 2020 monitoring?

All information collected to-date and directly observed by TNG staff confirmed that Chinook and sockeye have returned from the ocean at the lowest levels on record and are of very high conservation concern.

2020 Chilko sockeye escapement return at 68,000.

2020 Chilko Chinook escapement – 5,000 spawners.

### CHINOOK

- Continued monitoring data has confirmed very low returns of Chinook, compared to the parent year.
- Early-timed Chinook (that were attempting to migrate up the Fraser in June/July) were highly impacted by high water. However, water levels did drop dramatically, and there is good confirmation of passage for later-timed Chinook, including Lower Chilcotin, Taseko, Elkin and Chilko Chinook past Big Bar, and those stocks passing Esdilaugh, but at very low total numbers.
- Chilko - finished brood capture, we were able to get the 150,000 eggs. 42 females and 46 males used.

- Lower Chilcotin – 3,031 as of Sept 13. not enough eggs taken due to early spawning or not enough females on Aug 31.
- Elkins Creek – 300+ Chinook seen
- Taseko/Yohetta Sockeye brood cancelled, 1 live sockeye seen and 2 carcasses seen on Sept 11.



Pic 8. (left) – Henry's crossing early September, no Chinook holding (as observed previous week)



Pic 9. (right) – Outlet of Chilko lake, head of Chliko River, north of the narrows, Sept.6. Small group of Chilko lake sockeye, around 50. Very low spawner number compared to typical year.

### SOCKEYE

- Sockeye were delayed by high waters in the Fraser, but when water dropped, have had good passage past Big Bar, but at very low numbers. Very few “white heads” were observed this year, indicating less impact from Big Bar than last year.
- Pete observed by helicopter spawning in small group - “seen in clumps, not ribbons”, and using far less spawning habitat than was available – confirming a very low return this year. Final spawning return numbers for Chilko Lake sockeye are estimated at 60K, the lowest total return in recorded history.

Our field monitoring work continued into November, to capture all salmon runs, now we are back at our desks and are analyzing the data for post-season analysis.



Pic 10: Confluence of little Chilcotin and Chilko (Pete's flight Sept.2)

Pic 11: Lower Chilcotin Sonar (DFO and TNG) that is monitoring Chinook and soon, coho (Sept.2 flight)

## EMERGENCY HATCHERY WORK – NEW AND A KEY CONSERVATION PRIORITY!

TNG's key focus this year is on emergency hatchery enhancement activities to increase the number of fry/smolts produced from returning spawners to avoid extirpation (loss of population in the future) of very vulnerable stocks, that include Lower Chilcotin Chinook, Chilko Chinook, and Taseko/Yohetta sockeye.

- Worked with Big Bar response team to prioritize collection of adult Upper Chilcotin Chinook below Big Bar (as passage at that time was not possible), collect brood and incubate in hatchery.
- TNG (Gerald, Winston and Leonard) and DFO conducted Lower Chilcotin Chinook brood (eggs and milt) collection at spawning grounds last week. Eggs were fertilized and raised at the hatchery in Vanderhoof, to be released as fry/smolts back to spawning grounds.
- TNG and DFO conducted brood collection for Chilko Chinook in early September, and successfully collected the target of 150K eggs for research and conservation.
- TNG planned to conduct brood collection for Taskeko/Yohetta sockeye, but there were not enough spawners observed to attempt brood collection.

### CHILKO LAKE SMOLT SOCKEYE PROJECT:

Started Apr 12 ended May 21. Working 7 day/week and 8 hours/day.

Gerald William & Winston Bambrick

Steelhead Closure is still in effect due to extreme conservation concerns. Pre-season forecast estimated at 68. There will be monitors checking the Chilcotin and Chilko River for and Rod and Reel activities.

Summer Salmon harvest monitoring should start July 1st and end October 22nd. We usually get 22 to 24 people hired to monitor Nagwentled to Gwetsilh and at Henry's Bridge. 2020 we had half the monitors hired due to lack of interest with Covid-19 concerns and Sockeye/ Chinook Salmon Closure set.

### CHINOOK SENTINEL STOCK PROGRAM:

Starts Aug 2 to 31

Working 7 days/week and 8 hrs/day

Gerald William & Winston Bambrick

### CHILKO LAKE ADULT DEAD PITCHING TNG: Started Sept 1 to Oct 22

Working 7 days/week and 8 hrs/day

Gerald William & Winston Bambrick



Pic 12. (left) Leonard, Winston and Gerald handling nets with DFO to catch spawning Chinook, Lower Chilcotin



Pic 13. (top right) – Gerald William with Leonard English and Winston Bambrick, conducting emergency brood collection for hatchery (Lower Chilcotin).



Pic 14 and 15 (right, middle): Winston and Gerald collecting Hilt and Egg collection for Chilko Chinook.



Pic 15 (right, bottom): Chief Otis in the field, visiting TNG field projects, including Chilko Chinook egg take in the field. We'd like to end with a huge shout-out to our awesome Fisheries Coordinator, Leonard English, our invaluable and experienced fisheries technicians, Gerald William and Winston Bambrick, and Paul Grinder and the TNG Rangers for their direct support in fisheries monitoring and research!



STEELHEAD FLIGHTS: 2021 by Lee Williston flew with White Saddle Helicopter with Gerald William.  
Survey results: May 17, 21 and 24

Helicopter Chinook Salmon flight plan for the Tsilhqot'in Rivers 2021  
by Pete Nicklin and DFO:

Upper Chilcotin:	Monday Aug 9
3 Flights	Monday Aug 16
Friday Aug 21	
Lower Chilcotin:	Wednesday August 25
3 Flights	Wednesday September 1
Monday September 6	
Chilko/Elkin	Monday August 30
5 Flights	Monday September 6th
Friday September 10	
Wednesday September 15	
Tuesday September 21	

Coho Flight November 6, 1st flight by Gerald William and Pete Nicklin –  
November 10, 2nd flight –  
November 13, 3rd flight -  
Flight started near the Narrow on the North end of Chilko Lake down to the tagging site.

Sechanalyagh from Randy,  
Pete and Michelle

## Executive Lead

Jay Nelson

The theme of the winter newsletter is story-telling, and when this is all over and I think of the story of the pandemic, one of the many little details I will remember is my “office” at home in the corner of my bedroom. Dominique is also working from home, so she has the real office, and Sasha has the run of the house when he’s not at school, so the only quiet spot remaining for me is by the window in our bedroom. It’s become a small ritual for me to unfold a card table early each morning, set up my chair and laptop, pour one thermos of coffee and another of water for the day, and get to work. I finish each day in the dark (during the winter), and I fold up the card table, slide it away, put the chair away, and my office transforms into a bedroom again. Sometimes I think back on the highs and lows of the past year, the excitement and successes, the challenges and heartbreaking conversations, the intense meetings and negotiations, the connections with so many people, and it amazes me that it all happened sitting still in the corner of this little room. That’s my story of working through the pandemic. And we’ve been working hard from our offices, and bedrooms, and backyards, and every other quiet space (or not) we can find! TNG is supporting a lot of progress being made by and for the Communities and Nation, as you will see in this newsletter.



One additional highlight for me is a COVID-19 Information-Sharing Agreement that TNG negotiated with the Provincial Health Office, which now gives TNG and the Communities access to regular updates on positive case numbers in surrounding communities (Williams Lake, Quesnel, Alexis Creek, etc.) so that leadership can make informed decisions about emergency measures to keep communities safe. This is a step forward to recognition of Indigenous governance and self-determination. On a similar note, we extended the Collaborative Emergency Management Agreement with BC and Canada for an additional year, to give us time to negotiate a multiyear agreement that will support the vision of the T̓silhqot̓in Nation as leaders in emergency management for the region.

Even with everything else going on, the Chiefs have made it a priority to meet (virtually) with provincial and federal Ministers to keep negotiations on track and advocate for the T̓silhqot̓in. Since the last newsletter, Chiefs have met with federal Minister Sajjan (National Defence), BC Minister Rankin (Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation), federal Minister Bennett (Minister of Crown Indigenous Relations), BC Minister Fleming (Transportation), and BC Assistant Deputy Minister Jessica Wood, who is leading BC’s efforts to implement the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Each time, the Chiefs deliver a strong, unified message and represent the T̓silhqot̓in people with honour.

I want to send special acknowledgments to those who have lost family or friends, or experienced other losses or tragedies over these past few months. It has been a very difficult time. I’m very grateful for the TNG team. Everyone is more than willing to help in any way possible – many are pulling “double duty”, getting their own work done but also holding roles in emergency management and helping wherever they can. And I know it is the same for staff in each of the Communities. A special shout out to each one of you that continues to reach out to help others, that gives so generously of yourself, and that goes that extra mile to lift spirits when it is most needed. Sechanalyagh, take care, stay safe!



Photo 1: My Office/Bedroom

## Governance Manager

Shawnee Palmantier



### TSILHQOT'IN FOOD SECURITY/SOVEREIGNTY PROJECT

In the theme of storytelling for our winter newsletter, I am going to attempt to draw out pieces of our dechen ts'edihtan from one of our stories and connect the threads to the Nation Food Security/Sovereignty Project...

What is food security? Food security is ensuring that everyone has access to enough culturally appropriate food in the short term.

What is food sovereignty? Food sovereignty is a specific approach used to address the basic issues of why people don't have enough food. Indigenous food sovereignty goes even deeper into understanding the unique issues, concerns, situations and strategies for increasing the ability of communities and Nations to uphold a strong legacy of upholding sacred responsibilities and relationships to the land, water, people, plants and animals that provide us with our food.

Food security and food sovereignty have always been part of the Tsilhqot'in way of life. Read the story below and reflect on what the teachings might be around food security and food sovereignty...

### THE YOUNG MAN AND DT'AN (FAMINE)

(Writer's note: story is taken from the Livingston Farrand collection)

Once the winter was very severe, and nobody had any food. An old woman and a boy lived together in the woods; and the old woman hunted about continually for food, but all she could find was rabbit-dung; and this they used to eat. The boy tried to catch fish through a hole in the ice, but with little success. He could only

catch one or two small fish each day. One day, as he was fishing, he heard a sound as if some one struck the ice with a stick..., and each time he heard the sound, fish came from that direction, and the boy caught them. And soon he had plenty. As he sat watching his line, the boy heard a sound of someone walking, and saw a man close beside him, who asked him what luck he was having. The man's name was Dt'an (Famine or Starvation), and in his hand he carried a heavy stick with which he struck the ice...and over his shoulder he carried a great sack, and the sack was filled with the food that people waste in eating (that is, crumbs). Dt'an told the boy that he was looking for two men who had insulted him whom he wished to kill, he might be gone some time, but the boy should keep a lookout for him, as he would come back that way. Then he left, and the boy went back to camp with his fish, but only took a few into the house at first. The old woman cooked the fish and they ate them, and then the boy told her what had happened. And they saved the rest for another time.

Every day the boy used to go out to watch for fish at the hole in the ice, and to wait for Dt'an to come back. One day as he sat watching, he saw on the mountain something like a whirl of snow coming toward him, and thought it must be Dt'an. The snow came closer, and then, Dt'an appeared with his heavy stick, and struck the ice. And every time he struck, fish came from that direction toward the boy, and he caught them. Dt'an would walk a few steps and strike, and then walk a few steps and strike again, and more and more fish came. And soon the boy had plenty. At last Dt'an came up and spoke kindly to the boy, and told him of his adventures

in the mountains, —how he had killed both the men he was after...



Then Dt'an went away, and the boy took his fish back to camp, and the old woman cooked them, and they ate all they wished, and there were still a great many left. Then the boy went around to all the other houses and told the people to go and take the fish, which they did, and there were enough for all.

The story is rich in teachings isn't it? It speaks of famine and hard times; the importance of sharing; the consequences of waste; and ultimately the well-being of all and how that well-being can be reached.

Nin hunilzun? What are some of the other teachings you know that relate to food security and sovereignty? How do we tackle these issues today to work towards the well-being of all? What are some of the things we need to do?

These are some of the questions we are trying to answer with the Nation Food Security/Sovereignty project. We need your help and input!

The project team will be attending the virtual community update in Tsideldel on March 1, 2021 from 10:00am -12:00pm. Stay tuned to TNG's website, Facebook page, Tsilhqot'in Radio and your community contacts to find out how you can participate at one of our upcoming meetings in your community.

Feel free to email me at [spalmantier@tsilhqotin.ca](mailto:spalmantier@tsilhqotin.ca) or phone me at 1-778-799-2145 about this project. I would love to hear from you!

Shawnee Palmantier  
Governance Sub-table Manager

## Senior Advisor, Housing & Infrastructure

Shawn Wiebe



It is hard to believe we are into February already, 2020 felt like the year that would never end and 2021 already seems like the year that is rushing to be over. The end of last year and the beginning of this year brought us many funding proposal opportunities including a proposal for 3 years of training and job placement support from the Indigenous YouthBuild Canada Program through Algonquin College and our relationship with NVIT which we were successful in securing. Because of this great opportunity we will have posted for a Training Coordinator position to help apply for more funding, coordinate training, do the reporting and provide information to prospective employers with the goal of improving the employment rate of participants that complete their training. I hope that this position is filled by a T̓silhqot̓in member. We will be sharing more information as it develops.

With COVID-19 the main priority for communities most of the Housing and Infrastructure projects that require us to provide in person supports in communities such as the Housing & Infrastructure Mapping Project or the housing condition assessments have been temporarily put on hold. However, there is still a lot of work happening to prepare for the day that we can once again get into communities.

On a personal note, Sherry and I sold our ranch and have purchased a 10 acre parcel closer to town. This will allow us to focus our efforts on our important work here at TNG and allow more time for recreation. We will miss having all the animals but we are keeping our dogs and horses and after we get the infrastructure in at our new place we will revisit the idea of getting back into our Highland cattle. We will likely also still raise a few pigs through the summer to keep ourselves fed with healthy forest raised pork. We will look at it more as a hobby farm rather than as a full-blown ranch.

The Housing and Infrastructure team has grown recently again so I would like to introduce the new members Monisha Dharmaraj and Elio Ibrahim, and to share some important updates from the rest of the team.

## CAD Drafter & Designer

Monisha Dharmaraj



I take immense pride to say that this is my first job as a CAD designer in Canada at T̓silhqot̓in National Government. Originally from India, I set foot in Canada two years ago and enjoyed my first snow experience of my lifetime. After my bachelor's in Civil engineering back home, I decided to take a huge leap of faith by moving to this country to excel in my career. My two-year journey at Fanshawe College led me to learn the concepts of designing by taking Building Information Modelling and Construction Project Management courses.

I gained a lot of experience in this field in my first role as a designer during my 2-year internship period back home. This gave me an insight into concepts like floor plans, elevations, drafting technical drawings from 2D/3D from sketches and handling multiple projects at the same time. This gave me a deeper understanding of software like AutoCAD and Revit Architecture. I also had the opportunity to work as an architectural and mechanical designer in my college project. My two-year course at Fanshawe enabled me to get a better grasp of subjects like BIM Management, project planning and scheduling and Construction & Environment.

I moved to Williams Lake on November 22nd when the pandemic was at its peak. I thought that moving to a different place would not be easy, but when I moved, I met so many beautiful souls who helped me to survive in these situations and made me feel at home. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Sherry and Shawn Wiebe, Tony Trotman, Elio Ibrahim and Bridget Rosette. Without these amazing people, I would have not made it to this point. I thank Shawn and Sherry for all the coffee's during my quarantine!

Having moved from a beautiful city named London, Ontario I now look forward to calling Williams Lake my home. I am very excited to learn about the culture and the diversity of the T̓silhqot̓in people. I thank the team for taking me to the communities, It was a wonderful experience and I would love to visit them more often.

I strongly believe that hard work never fails. I am looking forward to working with TNG and to make this place even more beautiful by giving them wonderful designs.

Apart from my love for travelling and learning different languages, I also enjoy painting, hiking, reading books and playing with Scar (my cat)."

## Asset Manager Coordinator

Elio Ibrahim



I'm an asset management professional with specific focus on strategic asset planning, risk analysis, infrastructure condition assessment, financial modeling, and data visualization. Working in consulting and project management roles for almost 5 years in Canada and overseas, I have helped clients in developing strategic plans, budgets, asset inspection programs, and feasibility studies.

I'm passionate about infrastructure development that leads to community building, I enjoy working with multi-disciplinary teams and different stakeholders and believe that the best outcomes arise from good communication and diversity.

I completed my Master of Engineering Leadership in Urban Systems at the University of British Columbia in January 2020, focusing on topics such as Asset Management, Project Delivery & Economics, and Urban Systems & Society. I also have a Bachelor of Civil Engineering from the American University of Beirut.

When I moved to Canada, I had limited knowledge about Indigenous people and communities. I started learning more and more about the topic as I was pursuing my master's degree. In December 2019, as I was doing some research for one of the courses I was taking, I came across the Iqaluit Airport Project, which had won an award for achieving and exceeding its First Nations capacity building goals. I was very fascinated by the project and ended up writing a paper about it. I joined the T̓silhqot'in National Government in September 2020. Since then I have been working on organizing the infrastructure data for the communities and developing frameworks for sustainable infrastructure service delivery. On top of

that, I have been assisting in the development of grant applications, which resulted in receiving funding for four infrastructure related training courses so far. I have already been to Tl'etinqox, Toosey Old School, and to Yunešit'in and I hope to travel more to the communities and meet more people in the near future, as I think it is vital to get a feel for the communities to be able to move infrastructure asset management from being asset centric to deni centric.

I speak English, French, and Arabic fluently. I also enjoy reading and learning about new topics and cultures. On my weekends, I like to go outdoors, especially for snowboarding during the winter.

## Construction Manager

Sherry Wiebe



There has been a flurry of activity here with great news as a result of some of the funding proposals that were submitted. So now begins the hard work of getting everything in place to enable us to implement the recent proposal successes. We recently advertised to hire a Construction Superintendent and were lucky enough to have a couple of quality candidates apply that we expect to hire including a local fellow. We expect to have more details about these folks in the next newsletter. We will also be looking for construction help so stay tuned for more on that as well.

## Project Coordinator

Jackson Crick

I've been working with the TNG Housing team for just over a year now. I'm continuing work with our partners at BC Housing to create the database of the housing assets in each community for the BC Housing Asset Management project. Also continuing work on an application to CMHC's Co-investment program, which if it's successful will contribute to the costs associated with the repairs/renovations to the 3 houses chosen for repairs in each community. We are planning housing zoom workshops for this spring through a partnership between TNG, Ecotrust and CMHC that will help to open communication and dialogue between all of our Tsilhqot'in members. I've also been contacting the housing managers in each community to encourage them to pursue an application to the First Nation Market Housing Fund (the Fund) so that we can all take advantage of the funding they have available for housing capacity building in each of our communities. The Fund pays for training and workshops in anything that can be related to housing; including finance, governance, management and has even paid for the tuition for a bachelor's degree when it was demonstrated that the education could be used toward benefitting the housing department.

During my off time from work I've been doing a lot of walking and photography of the outdoor spaces in Quesnel. One benefit of the COVID lockdowns is that the Nenqayni Ch'ih for Beginners program began being offered online and I'm attending classes every Tuesday evening. Maria Myers is our instructor and we are all having a lot of fun learning the language and listening to songs and stories in the Tsilhqot'in language. I don't hurt anyone's ears with my singing voice though...that's the great thing about zoom, the mute button.



## Administrative Assistant

Bridget Rosette

Hi everyone, since January I have been with TNG for a year. I was new to Housing and Infrastructure, but I have years of experience in administrative work. I have learned so much in my first year with much more to learn, I find it very interesting and I'm excited to be part of this amazing team, both in Housing and the TNG family.

I have been working closely with the Carpentry Foundation program and have really enjoying working with everyone on this team. This opportunity has given me more skills and experience to put in my toolkit but what I most enjoy is the opportunity it has given me to meet new people. I have gotten to know the students over the past few months and look forward to the program restarting soon. One highlight of the program for me is our monthly lunches with the students, getting to hear their stories and see their projects. Some ways I'm keeping mentally and physically healthy during COVID are I'm making time to attend TNG's socials and yoga classes each week that TNG has set up to help staff through these trying times with working from home due to COVID. Another way that helps me is riding my two horses, I find it very grounding and peaceful when I'm with my horses and my dog Jimmy. I do many different disciplines with my horses such as cattle sort, barrel race, gymkhana and jumping.

I am very excited to have this chance to update everyone on the projects that the Housing & Infrastructure team has been working on.

### Carpentry Foundation Training Program

Wow, it is hard to believe the program has been going for five months now, except the five weeks it was closed down from January 14 – February 22nd due to COVID. It was agreed that everyone's safety was top priority and our funding partners also understood and we can extend the end date to reflect the closure. The students have been learning a lot and have been getting hands on experience with different equipment



and tools. So far some of the equipment they have used are the jointer, thickness planer, table saw, compound miter saw, and coping saw as well as hand tools. They learned how to do stencil work that they applied to their large cutting boards and then afterwards cut them out and sanded them. Scaffolding is a big thing in carpentry so the students learned how to build and take down a scaffold and they also received practical

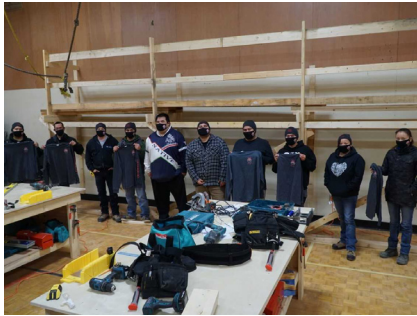


Photo 1 (Left, top): Group shot with gifts



Photo 2 (Left, middle): Students in training

experience with survey equipment and then wrote their D-1 survey equipment test.

The TNG team went out to Toosey Old School to set up for the Christmas lunch, and everyone enjoyed the beautiful lunch that was prepared by one of the cooks from Tlesqox. Peyal, TNG's Cultural Ambassador started our festivities off with a drum song and a prayer. Then we moved into our fun gift game where everyone received a gift. The students received gifts from Loni Solomon, TNG's Employment Coordinator, TNG and from the Housing and Infrastructure team. Chief Frances was unable to attend in person but sent a video clip giving the students great words of wisdom and congratulating them for coming this far. After lunch the TNG staff said a few words to the students telling them how proud they were of everyone and



Photo 3 (Right, bottom): Peyal Laceese performing a drum song.



Photo 4 (Left, top): Shawn Wiebe setting up gifts



Photo 5 (Left, bottom): Jenny Philbrick and Bridget Rosette

how this training will open doors for them and their future. TNG staff enjoyed visiting with the students and asking them about their projects. Peyal did a closing drum song before we packed up and let the students get back to their day.

### Construction Management Company

There has been some recent success in working with a couple of the communities to secure some funding for renovations and new construction. This recent success will help the Construction Management Company build capacity, fill valuable positions, build relationships and support trades training in a progressive manner so that when the renovations and new construction funded through the Federal Housing Investment begin the company structure and staffing will be in place and more deni will have completed training programs, readying them for a career in construction. Please watch TNG's website and Facebook page for up coming construction related job postings.

### Asset Management

TNG is the only indigenous organization participating in the "Operationalizing Asset Management" course funded by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, which has been allowing the Housing and Infrastructure team at TNG to work with industry experts and other local governments, including the City of New Westminster and the Cariboo Regional District on overcoming barriers to desired asset management practices. The Outcome of the course for TNG is to develop a strategy leading to nation level asset management program, which would result in more capacity building in the field of infrastructure management within the communities.

## Cultural Heritage Coordinator

Shane Doddridge



Hello everyone. I'm currently working hard on my schoolwork these days, so my time with TNG is minimal. However, we are continuing to work hard to develop a strategic road-map for cultural heritage protection that will include site protection measures, archaeology policy, museum repatriation, and so on. I hope to be back working for TNG full time this fall.

My master's research interviews have been on hold since the pandemic has reached us, but I am still able to do place name interviews online or over the phone. If you would like to learn more or participate in this study, give me a shout!

Phone: 250-649-6662 or Email: [shane.doddridge@gmail.com](mailto:shane.doddridge@gmail.com).

## Education Manager

J. Randolph Radney, Ph.D.

In the fall of 1984, my wife and I moved into a small place in Nimpo Lake and, when the temperature plummeted to 30 below a few days later, we thought cold winters were normal in the country. It was the end of October! The next year we busied ourselves in 40 below temperatures, stuffing pieces of insulation in the chinks between logs where we could see daylight to help warm up the icy cold cabin at Tišandax (near Konni Lake); it was the end of November. This year, we thought winter was past, but February brought us a reminder that cold comes each year in Tsilhqot'in Nen, just not always at the same time.



Photo 1: "When we arrived in 1984, this is close to what we looked like (minus the chickens!)."



Photos 2 & 3: "various scenes on my daily walk"

All of us on the education team are yearning to get out to communities and hear from people, but during the pandemic, safety is job number one, so we will delay our visiting until we can be sure all the places we go are as safe after we visit as they were before. In the meantime, I have been reading up on the mass of work and planning done before us in education and language. This study has helped me understand the key priorities for goals and activities that leaders have selected to move the nation forward. By the time this report is available, I will also have met with the Nits'il?in-Qi to get more direction.

Among the things being considered are formal and informal programs in language learning for people of all ages who want to participate in Tšilhqot'in communities more. Also, I have been meeting with administrators at TRU, UNBC, NVIT, and other institutions to see the plans they have for extending training, making their campuses safe for Indigenous students, and generally serving people more carefully throughout their organizations. I have several connections at each place, so if you want to register and enrol in courses, please get in touch with me, so I can help you to make contact with people who have the best information for you.

In university education, many things have become 'normal' in the past year that would have been 'unthinkable' earlier. This is not because we have suddenly become more innovative or because we had the vision to change: It was thrust upon us by the pandemic and 'pivot to digital' has brought a lot of new opportunities for remote learning that didn't exist before they became a necessity in higher education. Not only have programs and courses become available for remote delivery, but instructors and university offices have become a lot more aware of how difficult 'studying from home' can be during an emergency. In my experience, the situation has made faculty, administrators, and other learning support people actually listen to students who encounter difficulty. However, if any of you are facing situations where you don't believe you are being heard, please contact me, so I can bring your situation to the attention of the people I know where you are attending.

On three different occasions, I have been invited to observe at First Nations Education Steering Committee sessions. FNEESC is doing an impressive job bringing Indigenous issues in education to the attention of communities and government agencies.

My favourite part of the meetings, though, is getting to listen to voices I recognize from people who sit on the committee from TNG communities. I want you all to know that your representatives are speaking out to make sure that TNG concerns are being heard. In the same vein, I enjoyed meeting online with NITEP students who are working hard to get certified to teach in schools locally. These are students who merit our respect and honour for their hard work and diligent study. What a great bunch!

I haven't received any emails so far from community members, so I would guess you are all waiting to talk to me when I get into the downtown TNG offices next month (we hope!). Call me when you like.



Photo 4: “Unless you’re the lead dog, your view pretty much stays the same!”



Photo 5: “Dante, Best Office Buddy, 2021”

## Communications Manager

Jacey Warne

It has been a long Winter with confirmed COVID-19 cases within the Tsilhqot'in Nation and throughout Williams Lake and the surrounding area. At the time of writing this update, we have begun to see the number of COVID-19 cases decrease in each of the communities, thankfully.



### COVID-19

Over the past several weeks, each of the communities and TNG have come together to take care of one another and to flatten the curve and eliminate COVID-19 cases in the territory. I have such admiration for all my fellow TNG team members and the communities for their dedication and determination to keep the communities, elders and staff safe. I have supported the TNG Emergency Operation's Centre as the Information Officer during the COVID-19 outbreak. The TNG Facebook page continues to grow and many of our video and written updates have been shared to that page. Be sure to follow us on Facebook if you haven't already done so. We also have a new and improved TNG website. Visit [tsilhqotin.ca](http://tsilhqotin.ca) for the latest information on events (virtual), news, updates and more!

### TNG Community Information Sessions

Cheiro Guichon has stepped in to arrange the TNG Community Information Sessions for the month of March. All meetings are virtual and no TNG staff will be traveling to the communities until further notice. We hope that you will join us for the meetings from the comfort of your computers at home. Please register with Cheiro Guichon at [cguichon@tsilhqotin.ca](mailto:cguichon@tsilhqotin.ca) to receive the link for the Zoom meeting. Please see the March schedule below.

Community	Date	Time
Tsideldel	Monday, March 1st	10 am – 12 pm
Yunesit'in	Tuesday, March 2nd	1 pm – 3 pm
Tl'etinqox	Wednesday, March 3rd	1 pm – 3 pm
Tl'esqox	Wednesday, March 10th	1 pm – 3 pm

### Take Care of Your Loved Ones

For my story, I wanted to share how important I think it is to call and check-in on your elders and loved ones. This is the case always, but especially during these times. One day this Winter, I got to thinking about how long it had been since I had, not only seen, but talked to my grandparents. I have made a better effort in the last month to call my grandparents and great uncles and aunts and check-in to see how they are doing, and to just have conversation with them. I think they are feeling lonely and I've really enjoyed hearing the care and cheerfulness in their voices when I call. We talk about anything and everything it seems, but I know it is an hour of my day very well spent. In an odd way I'm thankful to COVID for giving me this new perspective about my elders and family. I've always appreciated them, but that has grown stronger and deeper throughout the pandemic. Moral of the story, call your elders and families and maintain and nurture that connection, you'll be happy you did – I know I was.



### TŚILHQOT'IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

**Saturday, January 23, 2021**

Over the weekend the TNG staff and Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) helped sort emergency management supplies such as road signs and pylons, and delivered them to the communities.



**Monday, January 25, 2021**

On Monday the staff helped sort food and supplies and prepared the deliveries for Xeni Gwet'in.

A warm thank you to Telus who donated groceries to the communities. Those deliveries are being sent to the communities Tl'esqox and Tl'etinqox.



## Communications Project Specialist

Myanna Desaulniers

Hi Everyone,  
Well the worst of winter has passed but I hope you all still have enough wood in the wood shed to get you through to June.



With all of us staying home and hopefully being able to go to events virtually, communications at TNG is having to change quite a bit. We are always looking for new ideas to reach out to members locally and those that live outside of the territory. Keep an eye out for the virtual healing ceremony that TNG will be hosting, as well as the virtual job fair.

I have been busy helping with communication around the Gibraltar Mine discharge permit appeal. There will be an Environmental Appeal Board hearing from March 15-19, 2021 around this 2019 permit. Keep an eye out on our TNG Facebook page and radio/newspaper for more information on this.

Because laughter is such a great way to lift spirits, us at communications thought it would be fun to have some funny stories told in this newsletter. So here it goes – when I worked at a ski hill (Sun Peaks), I was bored at a chair lift in the backcountry and decided to make chewing gum from tree pitch/sap. I remembered doing it as a kid so thought I would just pop some pitch in my mouth. I forgot probably the most important step of kneading it in your fingers first. This meant that the entire rest of the day was spent with me trying to scrape pitch off my teeth. That was my last time trying to make pitch gum.

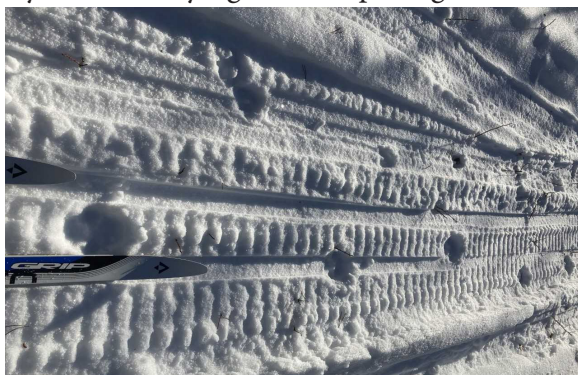


Photo 1: Tracking wolves while skiing at Anah Lake

## GIBRALTAR DISCHARGE WHAT IS IT?

GIBRALTAR MINES LTD. IS DUMPING MINE TAILINGS EFFLUENT FROM THEIR TAILINGS POND INTO THE FRASER RIVER NORTH OF WILLIAMS LAKE, BC. THIS IS WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.



**50% INCREASE  
IN EFFLUENT**

In 2019, the BC Ministry of Environment approved a permit for Gibraltar mines to increase discharge into the Fraser River by 50% without any form of sophisticated water treatment

**DILUTION  
IS NOT  
THE  
SOLUTION**



**2ND LARGEST MINE  
IN CANADA**

Gibraltar Mines is the 2nd largest Gold/Copper mine in Canada and still does not adequately treat its discharge

**4KM**

FROM  
COMMUNITY OF  
?ESDILAGH

Discharge is entering the Fraser River at important fishing and gathering sites.

**LONGEST RIVER  
IN BRITISH  
COLUMBIA**

The Fraser River is the longest river in BC, flowing into the Salish Sea at the City of Vancouver. It supports aquatic life and Indigenous groups that have relied on it for millennia. The Fraser River must be protected at all costs.



## IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION



Take action by writing to your MLA, Provincial Ministers, and local politicians about this issue. A template letter can be found at [tsilhqotin.ca/gibraltar](https://www.tsilhqotin.ca/gibraltar)

**INFORMATION  
SOURCE**

<https://www.tsilhqotin.ca/gibraltar>  
Tsilhqot'in National Government



Donations to support the legal costs are welcome.  
DONATE HERE:

[www.tsilhqotin.ca/gibraltar](https://www.tsilhqotin.ca/gibraltar)

## Studio Technician

Evan Catalano



My name is Evan Catalano and I was born and raised in Williams Lake, BC. I grew up in a musical family on Dog Creek Rd where I would learn to write, record, and play lots of music.

I started on drums at an early age, then picked up guitar/bass and vocals shortly after. Film work is also an on going creative passion that I have always had in which I enrolled and completed two courses in. Over time I developed recording abilities in the studio with many different bands I had been involved with in Williams Lake, and other places where I had lived over the last 12 years including Vancouver, Nelson, Grand Forks, Christina Lake, and Victoria.

Over the years I continued playing and putting on live concerts mostly around BC but had also done two entire North American tours along with other shorter outings with a band I was playing in. We would start in Vancouver, then down to Seattle, to playing shows all across the States until we hit New York, then back up to Canada in Montreal and continued the loop across the country until we made it back home.

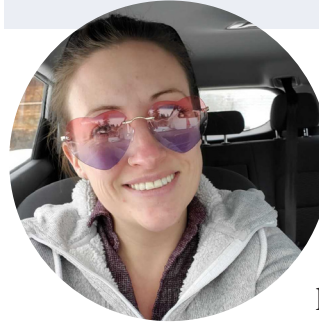
In-between residing in other locations, life always seemed to end up back here in hometown WL. The creative works continue to this day and luckily experience in radio/podcast work was gained in the midst of it all. When I found out that the Tsilhqot'in National Government's local radio station was seeking a studio technician it felt like the perfect opportunity to put my audio recording/editing and video skills to good use. I am now honored to be apart of such an important community that carries the torch of standing up for the rights of Indigenous people and preserving the Tsilhqot'in culture.

Other than music or creating, I love exploring and camping in the great outdoors, especially on lakes when the season is right. Either back trail biking on a BMX or longboarding on smooth pavement are my favourite methods of exercise, unless it's winter then snowboarding for the win.

When things finally go back to normal hopefully again soon I will be excited to bring in live music to the Cariboo once again.

## Administrative Assistant

Kristen Lees



Hello my name is Kirsten Lees. I was hired on at TNG in January of 2021 as an administration assistant at the radio station. My job consists of learning the language, finding/ recording news stories, and helping out

where I may be needed, I am excited and proud to be working with such amazing and talented people. I was born and raised in Williams lake, I moved to Horsefly in 2011 and stayed there for almost 8 years until moving back to Williams lake. I am fortunate enough to have a large family scattered around the area and also a large family of my own, I have a daughter Gracie Lynne, son Avery, four step boys Logan, Adam, Blake, Holden and a fiancé Otis ELzinga. My family originates from Scotland and I am second generation Canadian, we are a traditional family participating in the Williams Lake pipe band and highland dancing. I look forward to getting to know more people in the TNG family and the opportunity to be a part of all the wonderful things they do.

Thank you,  
Kirsten

## Denisiqi Services Society

This is the story of how one small idea took hold and started to grow. In what seems like another lifetime ago the world around us started to change. The changes were fast and furious and left many feeling a bit out of sorts. It was the kind of out of sorts that sometimes needs a little extra human connection to talk through, so the staff thought what a great idea to send out some numbers for folks to call if they needed that wee extra. What started as an email collection of important numbers quickly grew to adding some other information and even cross word puzzles and colouring. It is hard to colour without the supplies, so pencil crayons were added. What about paint? Oh, and some other games too! With all the fun from colouring and games, wouldn't it be fun to bake too?! So, the evolution of a list of numbers has grown into crafts, games, cookie, and entire meals in a jar! Over the last year we have mailed, delivered, and distributed over 5000 packages to children and families to help support them with mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health. And that is the story of how a phone number grew into cookies! We figure that if this continues cookies may grow into puppies!



Denisiqi is very excited to share the news that we have been formally approved for our Urban Expansion Agreement. The Aboriginal Services Branch of MCFD conducted the Urban Expansion Guardianship (C4) Readiness Assessment of Denisiqi Services Society based on all 20 Operational Standards. The outcome of the assessment was that; "Denisiqi has completed the required planning to expand their C4 Delegated services to the children and families of their member communities to the urban MCFD service area of Williams Lake, BC."

With this expansion the agency is able to provide the same delegated services in Williams Lake that currently exist in communities. We are now ready to take on urban service requests, enter into agreements with youth and create extended family plans. Supporting children and families in a culturally grounded way is the next step in service delivery for the agency. We are filled with gratitude to be able to continue serving our clients in this expanded way.



## Dasiqox Nexwagwez?an

In the place of Dasiqox Tribal Park, we will now be referencing it as Dasiqox Nexwagwez?an as it reflects the place and that it is “there for us”.

I think everyone can agree that 2020 has been a challenging year! For the Dasiqox team it was a time of change and renewal, and we are looking forward to 2021 with some great new additions to the team and, most of all, to getting back into the communities once conditions allow. Here are some of the things we are planning to focus on:

- Incorporating the important work of Dechen Ts’edilhtan into the management planning process;
- Integrating Dasiqox work into related initiatives within Xeni Gwet’in and Yunesit’iin and working more closely with the Nenqay Managers in each community;
- Updating the 2017 Communications Plan and creating a schedule for regular communications about Dasiqox both internally, in community, and to the larger audience
- Starting the work of redesigning the Dasiqox logo and related materials to reflect the name change to Dasiqox-Nexwagez?an
- Continue our fundraising efforts to support Dasiqox and related initiatives;
- Planning and supporting cultural events and getting back on the land (as conditions allow);
- Continuing to foster relationships with other Nations in regard to Indigenous Protected Conservation Areas and Guardianship
- Preparing orientation materials and providing support and direction on governance

Our leadership team consists of Xeni Gwet’in Nits’il’in (Chief) Jimmy Lulua and Yunesit’in Councillor Merle Quilt. Our staff are Community Coordinator Roger William, Governance Consultant Russell Myers Ross, Management Planner Jonaki Bhattacharyya, and Team Coordinator Caitlin Thompson. We have been working closely with Nen Planners Michelle Myers in Xeni Gwet’in and Trina Setah in Yunesit’in, and we have also been collaborating youth and cultural leaders in the hopes of providing some training and funding for cultural activities in Dasiqox this summer.

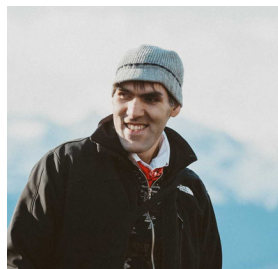
Community Coordinator Roger William has been leading the Dechen Ts’edilhtan (Traditional Law) project and has interviewed 16 elders with hopes to do more in the coming months (if COVID conditions allow). Roger has been busy formulating his work into a handbook that will be available to community members and will also guide the management planning process.



Nits’il’in (Chief) Jimmy Lulua



Yunesit’in Councillor Merle Quilt.



Governance Consultant Russell Myers Ross



Team Coordinator Caitlin Thompson



Community Coordinator Roger William



Management Planner Jonaki Bhattacharyya

Last year Dasiqox also collaborated with the UBC School of Architecture to challenge student’s ideas of architecture and design. The students’ work will be developed into a booklet that will be available to the Dasiqox team, as well as Xeni Gwet’in and Yunesit’in. We are busy reviewing our communications plan with the goal of providing more regular communications to our communities. We are also actively searching for ideas to update our logo; if you are interested please get in touch by emailing [dasiqox@gmail.com](mailto:dasiqox@gmail.com). You can find our full winter 2020/21 newsletter on our website at [www.dasiqox.org](http://www.dasiqox.org) or you can sign up for our newsletters by emailing [info@dasiqox.org](mailto:info@dasiqox.org). Sechanalyagh and we look forward to being in touch!