

# THE LFFA-RELAW PROJECT

REVITALIZING INDIGENOUS LAW WITH  
THE LOWER FRASER FISHERIES ALLIANCE



LOWER FRASER  
**FISHERIES**  
**ALLIANCE**

# LFFA – RELAW TEAM

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LAWYER, WEST COAST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

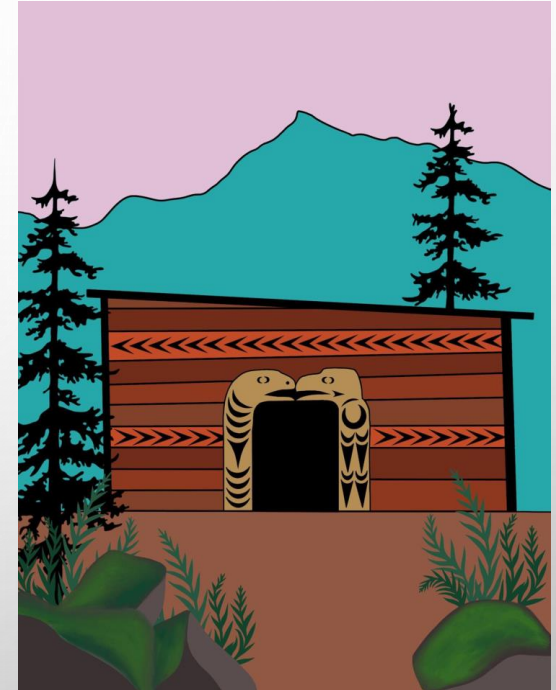
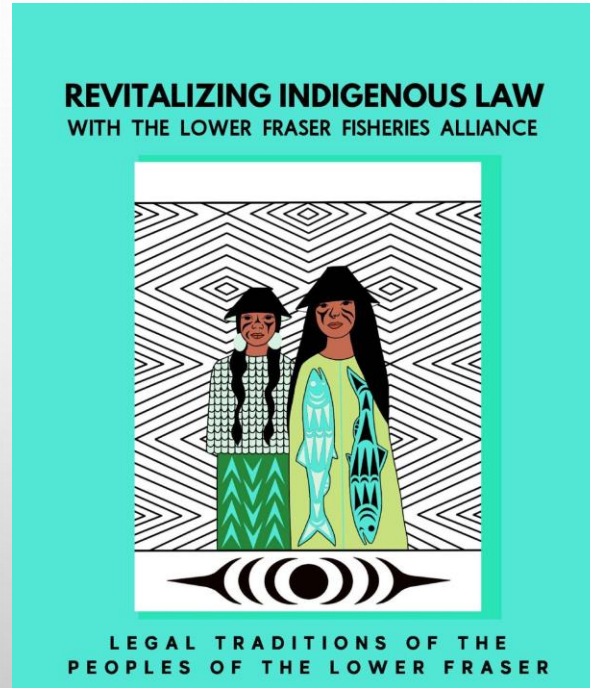


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Cover artwork by Ocean Hyland | IG: @dropletfromthesalishsea

# ABOUT THE LFFA-RELAW PARTNERSHIP

THE WEAVING TOGETHER  
OF WHAT WE LEARNED  
FROM THE STORIES, BOTH  
*SXWŌXWIYÁM /*  
*SĀʷƏĀʷƏYÉM* AND  
*SQWÉLQWEL / SQʷELQʷƏL*  
AS WELL AS ELDER'S  
KNOWLEDGE, ABOUT  
INDIGENOUS LAWS  
RELATED TO WATERSHED  
MANAGEMENT AND  
FISHERIES GOVERNANCE  
IN THE LOWER FRASER.



# WHERE WE HAVE BEEN – WHERE WE ARE GOING



## ROLE OF LFFA-RELAW PROJECT:

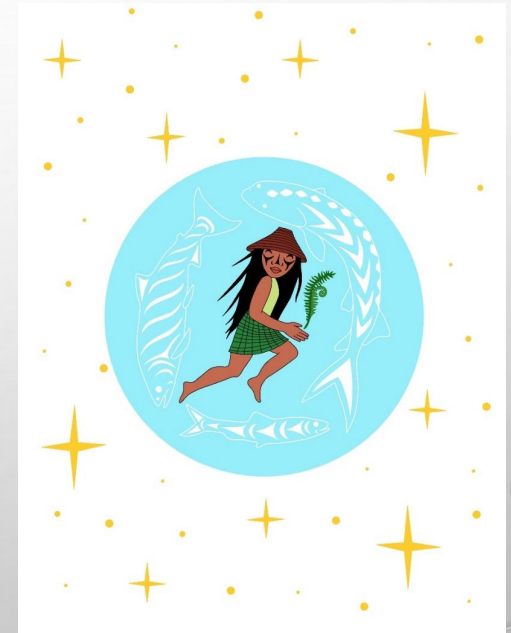
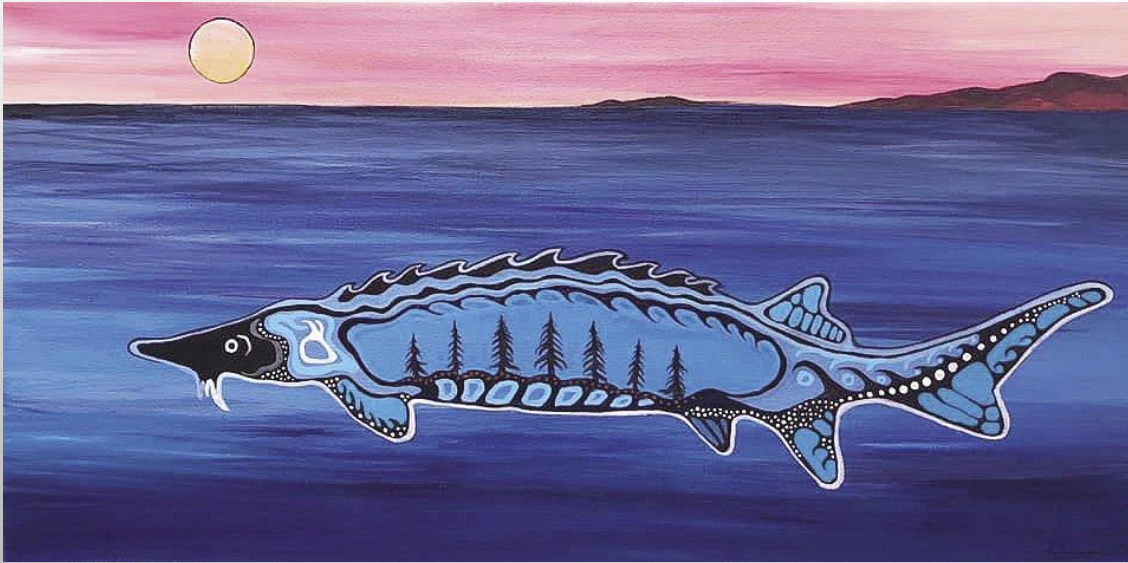
1. AWARENESS
2. PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION & COMMUNICATIONS
3. ADVISORY

-RELAW COLLABORATION

*sth'óqwi / scé·ttən 'Salmon'  
swí:we / swí?wə 'Eulachon' &  
"skwó:wech / q"tá·yθən 'Sturgeon'*

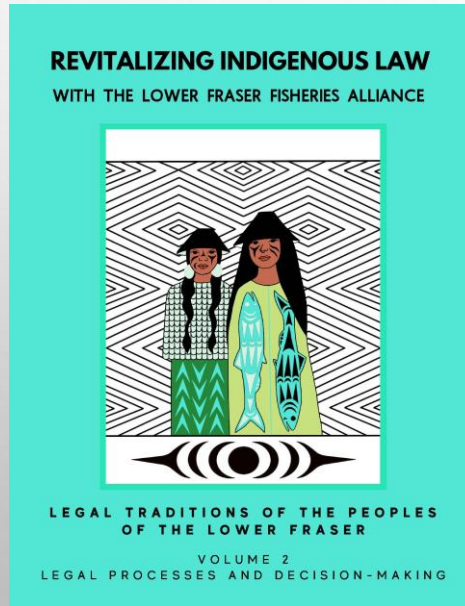
# MAKING SPACE FOR INDIGENOUS WORLD-VIEWS: HOW MAY WE LEARN FROM THE STORIES AND MAKE OUR MANAGEMENT PLANS STRONGER?

*Skwó:wech / q<sup>w</sup>ta'yθan* 'sturgeon'



## 2. LEGAL PROCESSES & DECISION-MAKING Roles and Responsibilities – beyond the human ...

Principle 2.2 - Important decision-makers in the Lower Fraser include the tribe, leadership, caretakers or stewards, matriarchs, family, spirits, ancestors, fish and other animals.

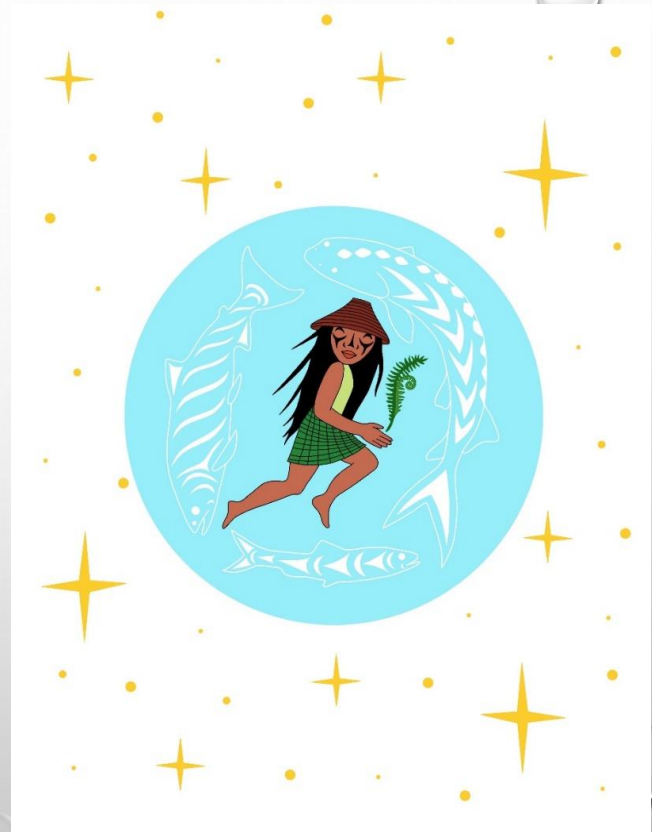


## 1. FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

**Principle 1.2: The inherent jurisdiction and title of the peoples of the Lower Fraser can be traced back to the time of the eternal ancestors who established the ancient connection between the peoples and their territories.**

**1.2c. *Tel Swayel/ təlsweyələməx*** and transformed ancestors established core relationships between the peoples and cultural keystone fish species, including:

- ***Sth'óqwi / scé·təŋ*** 'salmon';
- ***Swí:we / swíʔwə*** 'eulachon'; and,
- ***Skwó:wech / qʷta·yθən*** 'sturgeon'



## 7. CONSEQUENCES, ENFORCEMENT & TEACHING

**7.2 There are negative consequences to various relationships and aspects of life when jurisdiction is not respected and Indigenous knowledge is excluded from decisions.**

\*excluding IK in decisions has real life impacts on all beings; however there is no choice but to work towards restoration and healing because the peoples understanding of xólhmet te mekw'stám ít kwelát/xáʔəmət ct mək<sup>w</sup> scék<sup>w</sup>əl' ʔə k<sup>w</sup>ə swéʔct “we have to take care of everything that belongs to us”





### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

*Ewe chexw qelqelilt te mekw' stam loy qw'esli hokwex yexw lamexw ku:t / ʔáwateʔ čxʷ qelqeliltəxʷ tə mekʷ. stem čxʷkʷánət ʔə wə hakʷexəxʷ ʔalʷ*

Don't ruin (waste, destroy) everything, you just use what you take.'

The responsibility to share and celebrate offerings/resources from ancestors and *Chichelth Siyám / cicəł siʔém̓. Xaxastexw te mekw' stam / xʷəlíwənstəxʷ tə mekʷ* 'Respect for all things'.

The responsibility to treat all beings with respect, including their habitat. The stewardship obligation to maintain ecological conditions that allow all beings to thrive."

## REVITALIZING INDIGENOUS LAW

WITH THE LOWER FRASER FISHERIES ALLIANCE



LEGAL TRADITIONS OF THE PEOPLES  
OF THE LOWER FRASER

VOLUME 3  
RESPONSIBILITIES



## 4. RIGHTS

**V4 Principle 4.1: All beings have a right to live as part of the interconnected web of life that is fully functioning and thriving. This includes free flowing, clean water and the right of all beings to that water.**

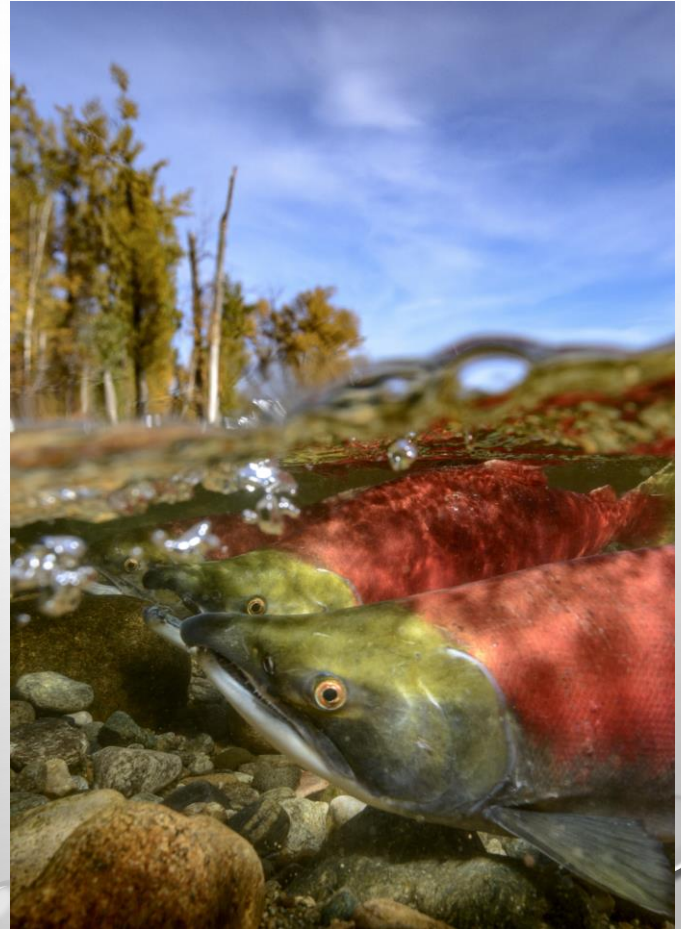
\*The draining of Se:math Lake has disrupted the right for sentient beings and humans to be part of the interconnected watershed as part of a vast water system that has the right to be the way it was intended by nature.

This includes culturally significant keystone species of *Skwó:wech / q<sup>w</sup>tá·yθan* 'sturgeon'

## 5. STANDARDS

**Principle 5.1: The laws of the peoples of the Lower Fraser require maintaining, or where necessary, restoring ecological conditions that provide (d) exercising jurisdiction and sharing according to the slha:éywelh ~ snoweyelh snəwəyəł or laws of the Peoples.**

\*We can work together to plan for future flooding, mitigation and/or the restoration of the ecological conditions needed for all beings to thrive.

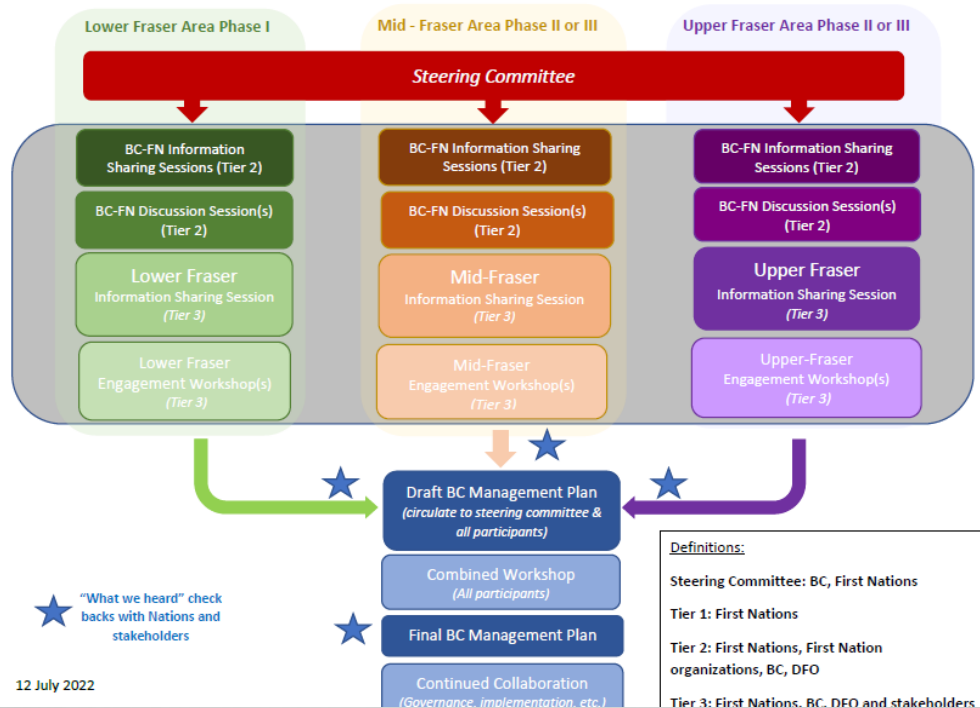




## 6. INTER-COMMUNITY & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

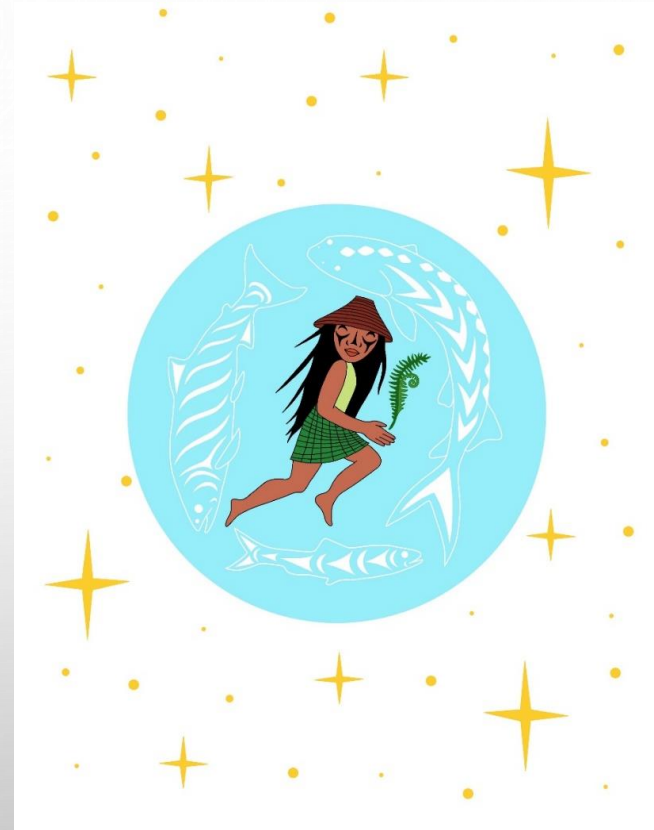
- 6.3 When emergencies or new opportunities occur, the peoples of the Lower Fraser may come together to take collective action in various ways
- b. Matters of common concern such as fisheries being in danger...
  - c. Threats to the ongoing survival of peoples, including floods, droughts, famines, colonization, epidemics

Figure 1. BC Fraser River White Sturgeon Management Plan Process



## LFFA ROLE

- PROVIDE CAPACITY AND SUPPORT FOR EACH NATION
- PROVIDING TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND LEADING OPERATIONS
- FACILITATE COLLABORATION BETWEEN LFFA PROJECTS, TFN, AND HSP
- COORDINATION BETWEEN NATIONS AND OTHER GROUPS (DFO, MFLNRORD, ACADEMIA, ETC.)



# ADVISORY EXAMPLE LOWER FRASER WORKING GROUP

Lower Fraser  
Fisheries  
Alliance

UBC

Raincoast  
Conservation  
Foundation



Relaw &  
West Coast  
Environmental  
Law

The fish

# COMMUNICATIONS EXAMPLE

## LOWER FRASER WORKING GROUP G&M OP-ED

2:28 51%  
THE GLOBE AND MAIL  
OPINION  
**Restoring Sumas Lake is an important step in B.C. flood recovery, climate adaptation and reconciliation**  
TARA MARTIN, MURRAY NED, LEAH BALLANTYNE,  
IAN HAMILTON, JANICE KWO,  
RAYANNA SEYMOUR-HOURIE, DEBORAH CARLSON,  
RILEY FINN AND KRISTEN WALTERS  
CONTRIBUTED TO THE GLOBE AND MAIL  
PUBLISHED APRIL 14, 2022



“We call on all governments to pause and reflect on an alternative path for the Sumas region – one that acknowledges the ongoing threat posed by climate-change-induced flooding, the cost and risk of “business as usual” and the need for innovative, informed and inspired regional planning to support climate adaptation and reconciliation.”



