

# ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

## NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 4

### VISION

č̓thi:yayəstəl̓ ct tə ʔniməʔ xʷməθkʷəy̓əm kʷ s xaʔtəmət ct tə sʔa:nʔ təməxʷ. stəʔe ʔə tʰeʔ wə ʔəqəlləxʷəs ʔaʔ kʷθə m̓is yəʔeyəqtaʔxʷ wə scəkʷəlaməxəs kʷθə nəxʷskʷəyχθət. nəʔeməstəxʷ ct ceʔ kʷθə sʔa:nʔ syəθ ʔiʔ ʔəw haʔkʷəx tə snəwəyəʔ kʷ s xaʔtəmət ct kʷθə məkʷ wet ʔiʔ kʷθə məkʷ stem.

*"We, the Musqueam, will work together to take care of our territory so the following generations will know how to be self-reliant. We will remember our own history and as well, use our traditional teachings to take care of everyone and everything on this earth".*

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Hello everyone,

With spring wrapping up and summer 2021 around the corner we wanted to applaud all of the hard work the community has put into keeping everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic for over a year now!

The Environmental Stewardship Department has continued to be a determined representative for Musqueam and with the new additions to our team we hope to continue to serve the communities environmental needs at a top tier level. As vaccines roll out at a faster rate, we hope to see the community in person soon and wish everyone a fantastic June and hope you all get a chance to enjoy the weather and explore outside.

Take care,

**Yeganeh Asadian, M.Sc., P.Ag.**, Environmental Stewardship Department Manager

## FACE MASKS AN ENVIRONMENTAL RISK?



At the beginning of the pandemic, people across the world hoped that the planet would be given a much-needed break with the public staying home. Now, over a year later, when walking on the street, trail, beach or parking lot, you will most likely see more than one face mask laying on the ground.

We know that face masks are made to protect us from illnesses but what many do not know is how to properly dispose of them or how detrimental the impact can be to wildlife if disposed of incorrectly. Often times, disposable face masks are made of plastic material (usually polypropylene) that does not degrade and can be present in the environment for up to 450 years. When face masks are not properly disposed of they can pose serious risks to not only the public but ecosystem functionality as well. At the very least, a face mask on the ground can spread the corona virus to garbage collectors or good Samaritans picking up trash. On the extreme end, it can break up entire ecosystems, kill wildlife that mistake it for food and choke animals that become entangled in the ear loops.

OceanAsia, a Hong-Kong based marine conservation group, estimated that the 1.56 billion face masks used in 2020 will be making their way into our oceans adding 4,860 to 6,240 tons of plastic waste to our waters. While those numbers are shocking, we must remember we have the ability to reduce our face mask waste, educate others and initiate beach and park clean ups. The University College of London conducted a study that found reusable, machine wash safe masks with no filters had the lowest environmental impact over the course of a year. Although the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) recommends that your mask have three layers to ensure that droplets won't pass through the fabric, it is still possible to have a low environmental impact with three layers in a reusable mask. Even with the vaccine rollout, it is still recommended to wear a mask if you aren't fully vaccinated, are high risk or are in public spaces.

In order to reduce your environmental impact here are five steps you can take to protect yourself, the environment and all living things within it.

1. Use reusable masks without disposable filters. Machine wash mask regularly following the instructions for the fabric type.
2. Carry an extra reusable mask with you when you leave your home so you won't need to buy or use a disposable mask.
3. If you do need a disposable mask, take it home with you and dispose of it in the garbage bin.
4. Do **not** put disposable masks in the recycling bin. They can get caught in recycling equipment and become a biohazard to waste workers.
5. Finally, do not litter. Dispose of your mask in the proper bin, don't leave it on the ground!

Looking for a reusable face mask? Here are some options.

- Ten Tree. The Protect Mask (3-pack): <https://bit.ly/2SdzSgo>
- Christy Dawn. The Sustainable Mask (3-pack): <https://bit.ly/3v5DjxA>
- Milo+Nicki's Zero Waste Face Masks: <https://bit.ly/3f0cDZC>
- Etiko facemask Organic Fairtrade: <https://bit.ly/3hFg6Pg>
- Indigenous Face Masks: <https://indigenousfacemasks.ca/>
- Pass the Feather Face Mask: <https://passthefeather.org/covid-19-masks/>

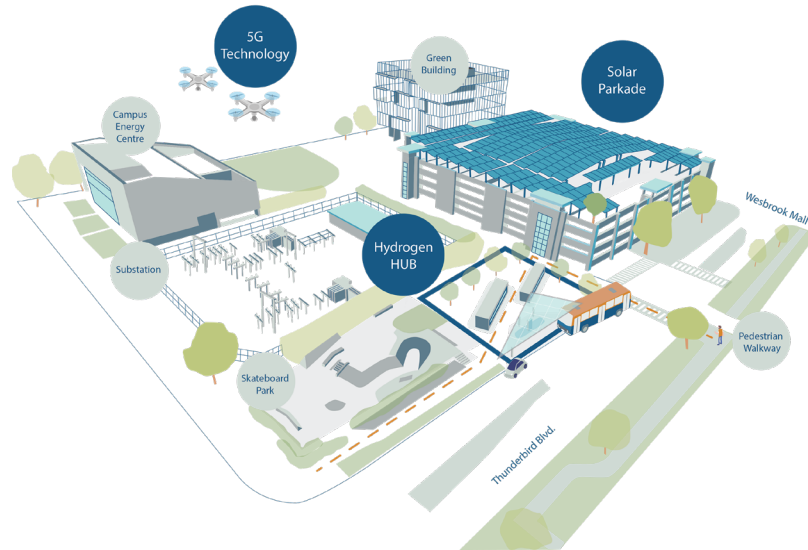
## UBC'S RENEWABLE ENERGY HUB



The University of British Columbia is turning an entire block on campus, from the corner of Wesbrook Mall and Thunderbird Boulevard, into a \$23-million smart energy district. The renewable energy hub will be the province's first hydrogen refueling station for light and heavy-duty vehicles. Additionally, the district will include a collection of solar panels acting as the cover for the parkade and intelligent charging structures for electric vehicles (EVs).

This project is backed by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation which granted UBC \$5.6 million in low-carbon fuel standard (LCFS) credits for the project. UBC's ground-breaking project was not the only one selected to receive these LCFS's. 21 other projects looking into the production and use of renewable fuels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) were selected for the 2020 intake. The ministry stated that it is committed to helping the province's institutions, communities and organizations lessen their pollution output. This renewable energy hub project will not only benefit the local community, it will help BC meet its CleanBC Climate Goal. The CleanBC Climate Goal is to have the province reach 30% of the sales from new light-duty cars and trucks to be zero-emission vehicles by 2030 and the province is looking at raising that to 100% by 2040.

This energy hub will look further into the connections between energy, transportation and urban design. A large feature of this new hub will be its water electrolyzer. The water electrolyzer will allow electricity from the solar panels to split water into hydrogen and oxygen, creating a completely renewable source of hydrogen and even better, the system will not emit carbon emissions. This clean hydrogen will also make it possible for the government to look into adding hydrogen into the natural gas grid to allow for space heating that does not involve the use of carbon.



The above image showcases the layout for the hub created by MéridaLabs. The solar parkade, 5G technology (drones) and energy substation demonstrate how functional a hub like this can be in the urban setting of Vancouver.

The solar panel system (Solar Parkade) will aide power production in a realistic urban environment. There will be a reversible EV charging station where energy will be transferred between electric vehicles and the grid, demonstrating how even passive assets can be used to generate energy. The project will be looking into smart energy storage from the shared energy capacity of EVs, data analysis using a 5G network and progressive research in related technologies through UBC. The EV charging stations have already been installed and will be useable by the end of this summer, while the hydrogen refueling centre is said to be open by next March.

## NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY



Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup> is National Indigenous People's Day and the 2021 summer solstice. National Indigenous People's day occurring at the same time as the summer solstice is no coincidence. Due to many Indigenous communities having important ceremonies and traditions regarding the solstice the 21<sup>st</sup> was chosen to further solidify the importance of the day.

While the whole month of June is National Aboriginal History month, National Indigenous People's Day is a day to celebrate, recognize and honour the achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples in Canada. The day was first announced in 1996 by Governor General Roméo LeBlanc but it is important to note the events and determination by Indigenous People's that led up to this proclamation.

In 1982, the Assembly of First Nations stated the need for a National Aboriginal Solidarity Day. Quebec became the first province to establish June 21<sup>st</sup> as a day to celebrate Indigenous culture. In the 1990's as tensions between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples became more prevalent such as the Oka and Ipperwash Crisis', this led to calls for a national day of recognition. In 1995, the Sacred Assembly, which was a national conference made up of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, chaired by Elijah Harper, called for a national holiday to celebrate all of the contributions Indigenous People's had made to Canadian Society. Then again in 1995, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People's recommended the designation of a National First People's Day, leading us to the proclamation in 1996.

This month and on June 21<sup>st</sup>, it is important for all Canadians to honour this country's Indigenous peoples. Non-indigenous peoples can support their First Nations, Métis and Inuit community members by learning about their different cultures, histories, and experiences. A few ways to do this are:

- Signing up for the University of Alberta's free *Indigenous Canada* course at <https://bit.ly/3f6YWIE>
- Buying books from Indigenous Authors such as,
  - Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants by Robin Wall Kimmerer
  - 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act: Helping Canadians Make Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples a Reality by Bob Joseph
  - The Inconvenient Indian by Thomas King
  - Sanaaq: An Inuit Novel by Mitiajuk Nappaaluk
- Watching and supporting Indigenous films/directors/actors. Here are some films to watch:
  - Angry Inuk
  - Kayak to Klemtu
  - Reel Injun
  - ʔəsnəʔəm, the city before the city

As this is the Environmental Stewardship Newsletter, it is only appropriate to talk about the Indigenous environmental advocates that Canada is lucky to have. One example is Kiya Bruno a 15-year-old from the Samson Cree Nation in Maskwacis, Alberta. She is a protector of Mother Earth, Indigenous Rights advocate and a climate change activist. Danika Littlechild is a lawyer from Ermineskin Cree Nation in Alberta. She focuses on Aboriginal law, environmental law, water governance and international advocacy related to water. Myia Antone, from Squamish Nation (**Skwxwú7mesh**) is currently in an advanced **Skwxwú7mesh sníchim** (Squamish language) program where she is learning, speaking and thinking in

the language of her ancestors. She founded Indigenous Women Outdoors, an organization that helps to get Indigenous women outside and reconnect with their land (traditional territories and lands they are occupying). If you yourself are interested or you know someone who may be interested in joining this community of strong, environmentally focused Indigenous women here is the link for more information, <https://www.indigenouswomenoutdoors.ca/>

Narrowing back down to Musqueam, as stewards of the land xʷməθkʷəy̓əm has fought for their rights to fish, occupy land, protect ancestors and protect their resources. Recognizing all that Musqueam has accomplished not only on National Indigenous People's Day but every day of the year, is essential for the continued growth and prosperity of this community.

Considering most of the day's events are still virtual or the details have yet to be announced, this year ways for the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm people to celebrate could include:

- attending virtual events
- attending the Bill Reid Gallery,
- celebrating at home with the family,
- at home xʷməθkʷəy̓əm focused arts and crafts for kids,
- practicing hənqəmínəm or
- brushing up on xʷməθkʷəy̓əm history

## SUMMER 2021 EVENTS AROUND VANCOUVER

\* Please note that all events are pending with BC Health & Safety Guidelines regarding COVID-19\*

- ❖ **Bill Reid Gallery of Northern Coast Art: To Speak with a Golden Voice, July 16<sup>th</sup> 2020 – Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021**  
The ever-popular Bill Reid Gallery of Northern Coast Art has been extended in celebration of what would have been the artists 100th Birthday (1920-1998). This gallery showcases not only Reid's work but other Northwest Coast artists as well. Wood carvings, paintings, bronze works, gold jewelry and Coast Salish masks. Admission is free on the first Friday of every month from 2:00 pm until 5:00 pm and otherwise \$13 for adults, \$10 for seniors, \$8 for students and children (12 and under) are free.
- ❖ **Gulf of Georgia Cannery: Waves of Innovation: Stories from the West Coast, May 1<sup>st</sup> - April 15<sup>th</sup> 2022**  
The Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Historic Site is hosting this feature exhibit gathering stories of adaptations and innovations in the commercial fishing industry and their impacts on West Coast communities. Four fields of innovation will be the main points of this exhibit; energy, fishing, preservation and innovations of today. Artifacts and quotes from various fishing communities along with interactive displays will aide in visitors understanding of what innovation means to them. Admission is \$11.90 for adults, \$10.20 Seniors and youth 17 and under are free.
- ❖ **20<sup>th</sup> Annual UBC Farm Farmers Market, June 5<sup>th</sup> – November 27<sup>th</sup>**  
UBC is hosting their annual Farm Farmers market where they host Vancouver's only multi-vendor farmers market located on an actual farm! They will be offering certified organic and farm-fresh

vegetables, fruit and free-range eggs. Other vendors will be selling various kinds of meats, cheeses, plants, alcohol, baked goods and more!

❖ **National Indigenous People's Day, June 21<sup>st</sup> 2021**

June 21<sup>st</sup> is National Indigenous People's Day (previously known as National Aboriginal Day) and is a day to celebrate First Nations, Inuit and Metis culture. Events that happen most years are most likely going to happen virtually but you can still celebrate in your homes and out in the community, socially distanced. Details are still yet to come out for many of this year's virtual events.

❖ **TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival, June 25<sup>th</sup> – July 4<sup>th</sup>**

TD is hosting the Vancouver International Jazz Festival online this year to abide by the local health restrictions. The festival will have a focus on BC based artists to show case the talent we have in our province. There will be free performances and workshops to celebrate the festival's 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

## CONTACT US

For further inquiries regarding the newsletter and our green initiatives, please contact:

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