KTUNAXA NATION
Lands & Resources
NEWSLETTER AND UPDATES

Kuq̓ukupku 2020
June 2020
ripening of strawberries

Ki?su?k Kyukyit

The KNC Building has been closed since March 23, 2020 and will be staying the course. KNC is following the Provincial guidelines and will remain closed until such time it is declared that we can re-open. When the office re-opens, there will be pre-cautionary measures in place to keep everyone safe.

While all face to face, in-person community engagement has ceased, we are showing our true resilience, we have adapted to a new way of working and engaging citizens. Our elders are becoming experts on the various virtual meeting platforms; and citizens are finding new ways to remain connected while being apart.

KNC Lands and Resources Sector will continue to take guidance from KNC's COVID-19 Response Committee as to when it is safe to start re-engaging citizens face to face.

Take care of yourself, be safe when out on the land and around the rivers and streams. Please remember to call the elders in your community to make sure they have what they need during these unprecedented times.

Taxa

New Staff at Ktunaxa Nation Lands and Resources Sector

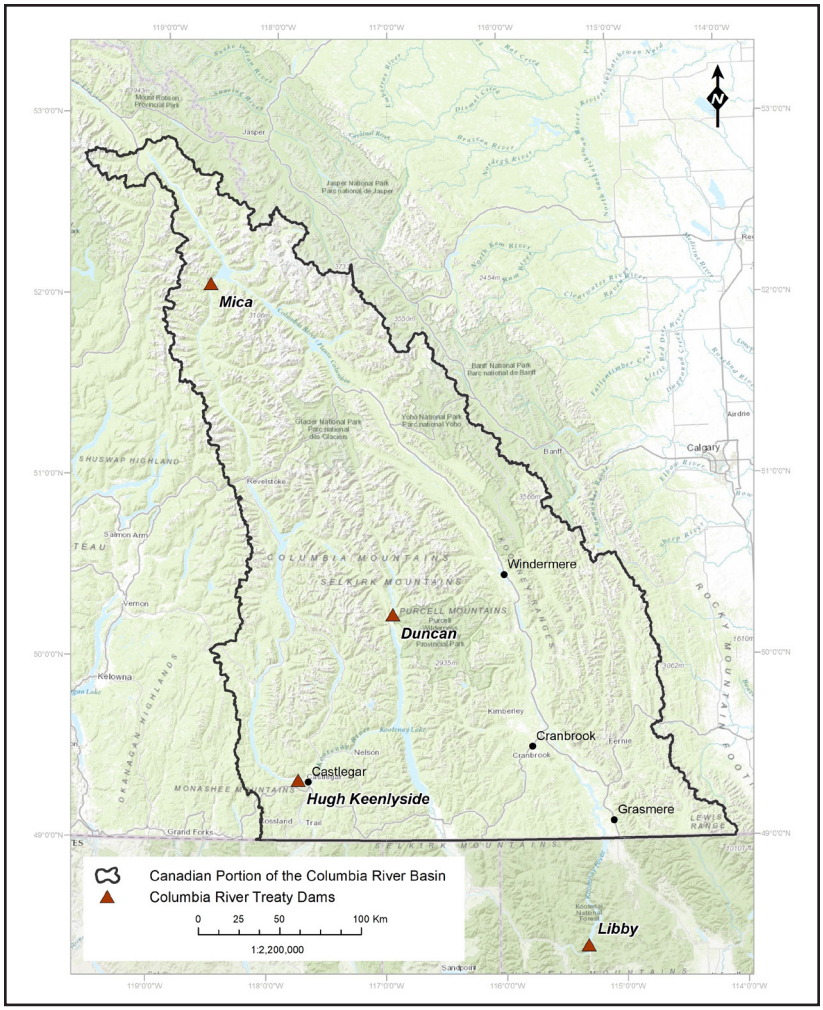
Ki?su?k kyukyit, my name is Johanne Allard and I am the new Agreements Coordinator for the Lands & Resources Sector. My main role is to focus on the Impact Management & Benefits Agreement that KNC has with Teck Coal. I support the working groups made up from representatives from both KNC and Teck. I work closely with the IMBA Managers, Vickie Thomas and Norm Fraser. My other responsibilities are to assist our Citizen Engagement Quadrant in the Lands & Resources Sector. Meaning I still have the opportunity to work with our Ktunaxa Citizens. I look forward to working with our industry partners and staying connected to our Ktunaxa ʔaqɬsmaknik̓.

Columbia River Treaty & Ecosystem Functions

The Columbia River Treaty (CRT) was entered into by Canada and the United States in 1964. It resulted in the construction of the Hugh Keenleyside, Duncan, and Mica dams in British Columbia, as well as their associated reservoirs: Arrow Lakes, Duncan, and Kinbasket. The Columbia River Treaty also allowed the construction of the Libby Dam in the United States and the flooding of the Koocanusa Reservoir. There have been very serious impacts to ecosystems and Ktunaxa aboriginal rights and title as a result of the construction and operation of the CRT dams.

Since fall 2018, three Indigenous Nations – Ktunaxa, Okanagan, and Secwepemc – have been working collaboratively on ecosystem function studies in the Canadian portion of the Columbia River Basin. The purpose of these studies is to: 1) understand the impacts of reservoir operation on different ecosystems and their functions, and 2) how reservoirs could be operated differently to improve ecosystems that have been impacted by reservoir operations. Goals, objectives, and knowledge gaps associated with various ecosystems on the Canadian side, helped guide the selection of studies that needed to be completed. Fourteen studies were identified and were assigned to study leads from each of the three Nations. The Ktunaxa Nation is leading two of those studies.

Columbia River Treaty & Ecosystem Functions (con't)



One of the ecosystem function studies is led by Katrina Caley, a biologist with the Lands Sector of the KNC. This study is looking at the amount of river and side-channel habitat lost due to reservoir flooding. The operation of the dams and reservoirs not only changed how the water flows through the landscape, but it also changed what types of habitats are available throughout the year. Much of the main Columbia River, as well as other large rivers, were turned into reservoir habitat when they were flooded. The availability of free-flowing rivers and side-channel habitats may not match when certain species require these habitats to complete their life cycles, or when Indigenous peoples would access these habitats for cultural practices. The mainstem and side-channel habitat project aims to increase the amount of free-flowing river and side-channel habitat available throughout the Canadian portion of the Columbia during critical periods of the year, based on culturally and ecologically important species and their habitat requirements.

The second ecosystem function study is being led by Ryan MacDonald, a local hydrologist who works with the KNC on several projects. This study is helping to guide how streamflow and reservoir levels can be managed to improve the quality of stream and riparian ecosystems. The streamflow patterns of the Columbia River system have been greatly changed relative to natural conditions in order to produce hydro power. The study is looking at ways to compare current streamflow and reservoir levels to more natural patterns. The goal is to determine how the reservoirs could be operated in a way that promotes more natural streamflow patterns and improves ecosystem functions.

Moving forward, the ecosystem function studies will be collaborating with the Cultural Values team (Nathalie Allard and Craig Candler) to ensure that all studies have properly considered and integrated cultural values and traditional ecological knowledge. This Indigenous-led work is critically important in shaping future water management in the Columbia River Basin and improve ecological and cultural values for future generations.

KNC staff will be arranging community engagement on CRT in the near future and will provide regular updates in this newsletter.

For more information, please contact: Katrina Caley, kcaley@ktunaxa.org

Succour Creek (Kinbasket Reservoir) during low reservoir levels

Mica Dam and the Kinbasket Reservoir behind it

Photo Credit Teck Coal
Castle Mountain

Environmental Assessment of the Teck Fording River Operations; Castle Expansion project

Teck Coal is proposing to expand mining of the Fording River Operations (FRO) to include Castle Mountain (the project). By doing so, FRO will carry on with a production rate of 10 million metric tonnes of coal per year. Teck is proposing to have construction begin in 2023 and coal production to begin in 2026. The life of the Castle expansion is anticipated to be approximately 40 years and is located within the Kilmarnock Creek drainage of the Fording River.

The project is being reviewed under the BC Environmental Assessment Act (2018). Since the first workshop held on the project with Teck in April 2019, the KNC project team has been working to get a better understanding of the project with Teck and the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) during the early planning stages of the project's environmental assessment. Below are some of the topics KNC staff have brought forward in meetings with Teck and the EAO:

- Potential effects on the Ktunaxa nation including title and rights, current use of lands and resources, health, and other impacts;

- Potential impacts to Chauncey Creek - one of the last remaining un-impacted tributaries in the Upper Fording River that has been identified as one of the top tributaries for protection in the Elk Valley

- Cumulative effects;

- Reclamation and restoration progress; and

- Sensitive ecological communities and habitats which are found in the project area:
    - Bighorn sheep winter range
    - high elevation grasslands
    - Whitebark pine habitat
    - Westslope cutthroat trout habitat
    - mature and old growth forests
    - wetlands

From May 8 to June 22 the BC Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) has invited the public and Indigenous nations to review and provide comments on the Initial Project Description. This is only one of many opportunities to provide input into the process, which may carry on for several years. Input and guidance from this engagement will feed into submissions to the EAO from the Ktunaxa Nation regarding this project.

The intention of receiving comments and feedback from the Ktunaxa Nation and the Public on the Initial Project Description by the EAO is to make sure that concerns on the potential effects such as environmental, economic, social, cultural and health are put forward and taken into consideration early on in the environmental assessment process.

The project's Initial Project Description can be found on the BC EAO website: https://projects.eao.gov.bc.ca/api/public/document/5e8f5274491d620025cf58ac/download/Castle–Initial Project Description–2020200408.pdf

The KNC project team look forward to hearing from you. Please send any comments you might have on the Initial Project Description by June 22 to Johanne Allard johanne.allard@ktunaxa.org (250) 489-2464 or Katherine Morris kmorris@ktunaxa.org (250) 489-8871.

This is only the start of the Environmental Assessment Process and the first opportunity for public comment. KNC staff will be arranging additional community engagement on this project in the near future and will provide regular updates in this newsletter.

Glossary

Tributary: a river or creek that flows into a large river or mainstem river or lake

Cumulative effects: the combined past, present and future changes to the environment caused by human activities and natural environment processes

2019 Ktunaxa Diet Study Expansion — Verification Focus Group

Ktunaxa ʔaqƚsmaknik participated in the 2019 Ktunaxa Diet Study Expansion project over the past year through focus groups and the development of the Ktunaxa Lifeways Conceptual Site Model. The 2019 Diet Study team, with massive support from the Community Engagement quadrant, held a verification focus group in May, on ZOOM with Ktunaxa ʔaqƚsmaknik from all 4 bands.

hu sukiƚq̓ukni na quɬxaƚsiƚ t̓aḵ̓timunaƚa kwiƚqa qapsin.

The purpose of the verification focus group was to review the accuracy of the data collected in the 10 focus groups held in October to December. In addition, the verification focus group also reviewed the process the data is going through to find a 'representative' tally of foods that could be consider "sukiƚ ik naƚsa"—eating good—or a "Ktunaxa preferred Diet" in the Human Health Risk Assessment process. The data, will be used by proponents who are seeking an Environmental Assessment for qukin ʔamakʔis.

We also reviewed the proposed Ktunaxa Lifeways Conceptual Site Model, for further use. What KNC Lands and Resource Staff, and consultants received was great feedback, and insights as well as suggestions for 'a deeper look'.

For further information on this project you can contact Erin Robertson at ERobertson@Ktunaxa.org or Jim Clarricoates @ JClarricoates@ktunaxa.org

WORD SEARCH

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Word	Definition
kuq̓ukupku	June
maxa	Yellow Glacier Lily
ʔaqsuk̓utnamu	Summer
naqam¢u	Bitterroot
kɬawɬa	Grizzly Bear
¢i̓naɬkiks	camp
kt̓amuxuɬ	powwow
natanik̓	sun
ʔuɬumi	May
qustit̓	Rainbow Trout
¢u·¢u	chickadees
waxwik	Dragon Fly
ʔiɬwas	Pine Sap or gum
¢iniɬwi·tik	patience
¢i·katiɬmititxamik	future
kaqɬuyitqa	Blue

KNC Lands and Resources Staff Directory

Name	Extension	Job Title
Bill Green	3131	Special Initiatives Advisor
Cathy Conroy	4033	Terrestrial Biologist (Mines)
Chad Luke	(250)428-1971	Ktunaxa Steward, Community Engagement
Craig Paskin	3124	Manager, Policy and Planning
Crystal Phillips	3210	Administrative Assistant
Erin Robertson	3137	Mining Oversite Team Lead
Gregg Huculak	3130	Business Administrator
Greg Johnson	3190	Guardian Team Co-Lead
Heather McMahon	3172	Project Biologist
Ian Adams		Terrestrial Ecologist
James (Jamie) Smithson	4026	Lands Project Officer
Jim Clarricoates	(250)464-0274	Ktunaxa Steward, Community Engagement
Johanne Allard		Agreements Coordinator
John Nicholas	4324	Archaeology Technician
Katherine Morris	4027	Environmental Assessments Coordinator
Katrina Caley	4062	Project Biologist
Kamila Baranowska	3134	Aquatic Biologist
Kenton Andreashuk	(250)421-0753	Fisheries Guardian
Kerri Garner	3115	Lands Stewardship Manager
Laine Twigg	3171	Environmental Technician
Melissa Teneese	4060	Administrative Assistant, CE
Michelle Dunn	4308	Guardian Referrals Administrator
Misun Kang	3106	Knowledge Team, Co-Lead
Nathalie Allard	4309	Archaeology Technician
Nicole Kapell	3123	Land Use Research Program Coordinator
Rick Neidig	3028	Operations Excellence Coordinator
Ray Warden	3121	Lands Sector Director
Richard (Marty) Williams	3123	Environmental Technician
Vickie Thomas	4034	Community Engagement, Team Lead