



# Shxunutun's Tu Suleluxwtst

*In the footsteps of our Ancestors*

*Summary of the Interim Strategic Land Plan for the Hul'qumi'num Core Traditional Territory, 2005*



*This is a summary of Shxunutun's Tu Suleluxwtst — In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors: The Interim Strategic Land Plan for Hul'qumi'num Core Traditional Territory. We encourage you to read this summary and find out more about the Hul'qumi'num peoples' strategic vision for the future of our lands.*

*Copies of the full Interim Strategic Land Plan*

are available from the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group, RR#1 12611B Trans Canada Hwy. Ladysmith BC V9G 1M5, and can be downloaded online from [www.hulquminum.bc.ca](http://www.hulquminum.bc.ca). If you have any questions or comments, please contact the HTG office, at 250 245 4660 or 1 888 9TREATY.

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— RAY HARRIS



Summary of  
Shxunutun's  
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*My vision for the future, regarding land and resources, sees First Nations living prosperously from what is rightfully ours. For my vision, there is economic equality. Opportunities will become available, and at long last, our people will be pulled from poverty to live prosperous, healthy lives. — Rebecca James*

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the HTG Interim Strategic Land Plan is to describe a Hul'qumi'num vision for the future of our core traditional territory. The HTG Interim Strategic Land Plan will help our leadership communicate more clearly *Hul'qumi'num Mustimuhw* values, perspectives and concerns about land and natural resource management in our territory. It will help our leaders and staff in their discussions with the federal and provincial governments, local governments, private landowners, developers and other parties.

The HTG Strategic Land Plan applies to *all* of our core traditional territory, not just our reserves or potential treaty settlement lands. It is an expression of our Hul'qumi'num commitment to retain a connection with 100% of our territory, as our Elders have directed us to do.

### **How was the HTG Land Plan developed?**

This project began with a review of all land use plans and planning processes within Hul'qumi'num traditional territory, and a report was produced that summarized these plans. A questionnaire was then developed and over 136 interviews were conducted with members of the six First Nations of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group between November 2002 and April 2003. The strategic land plan questionnaire asked

many questions about our members concerns and perspectives on land and resource management in our territory. The results of the interview process were summarized and a report produced. This information — together with information from the HTG Traditional Use Study and several other important studies — were used to prepare the plan. The Principal Authors were Bryan Evans, Julia Gardner and Brian Thom; Community Researcher was Lea Joe; Contributors were Cheri Ayers, Joey Caro, Rob Flemming, Jana Kotaska, Eric McLay and Hillary Rudd; Strategic Direction was provided by Robert Morales.

#### **Previous page photo**

*Le'tsus* is an open weave basket. This basket is woven to hold clams or other seafood, the open weave allowing the contents to be washed and drained while in the basket. This basket is made of *xpeyts'us* (narrow branches of cedar) and *sluwi'* (cedar inner bark).  
Photo by Gary Fiegehen, object A2358 courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology, UBC, Vancouver, Canada.

#### **WHAT IS IN THE HTG LAND PLAN?**

The plan describes how we want to see our land and natural resources used, managed, and protected for the benefit of present and future generations of *Hul'qumi'num Mustimuhw*. The plan includes a summary of our members' concerns and perspectives on a wide range of land and resource management issues. There are many quotes in the draft plan to show the range of community perspectives and to include our members' voices as much as possible.

### Resource Management Direction

The HTG Interim Strategic Land Plan describes our vision for the future of our land and resources. It also describes what we are trying to achieve (called **goals** and **objectives** for land and resources), and how we will go about it (called **strategies**). Below are highlights of goals, objectives and strategies for these resources:

- **Beach (Intertidal) Resources:** Beach foods are very important to Hul'qumi'num people. The plan calls for protection and restoration of Hul'qumi'num beaches, and improved access for our members. The plan calls for identification of *Hul'qumi'num Management and Harvest Areas* (HMHAs). These are beach areas to be controlled and managed by the Hul'qumi'num people for Hul'qumi'num use.
- **Agriculture:** The plan supports local land use zoning to keep good agricultural land dedicated to farming and other agricultural uses. The plan encourages the use of conservation farming techniques for sustainable agriculture that minimizes impacts like soil erosion and water quality.
- **Access Management:** Many important cultural and spiritual places have been degraded by roads access. The plan calls for steps to control roads and other access (such as ATVs) to areas that have important Hul'qumi'num spiritual, cultural and traditional values and uses.
- **Biodiversity and Wildlife:** Hul'qumi'num territory contains some of the most threatened wildlife and wildlife habitat in Canada, much of which is on private land. The plan calls for action to protect endangered wildlife and habitats. The plan also calls for more involvement of Hul'qumi'num people in wildlife management and conservation.

- **Fish and Aquatic Habitat:** The plan calls for protection and restoration of fish-bearing streams, many of which have been heavily damaged by logging, roads and urban development. The plan also calls for more controls on commercial and sport fishing, and a move to ecosystem-based management of fish stocks.

- **Culture and Heritage Resources:** Hul'qumi'num people have a strong interest in protecting the physical evidence of our ancestors. There are more than 1,000 archaeological in our territory which must be protected). We also want to protect the many *xe'xe'* (sacred) places we use today for cultural purposes such as bathing and *syuth* (legendary) areas which commemorate our Ancestors and honour the Spirit World.

The plan calls for protection of these special places as well as educational programs to increase awareness of Hul'qumi'num language, culture and heritage values.

- **Recreation and Tourism:** The plan supports appropriate cultural and nature-based and tourism as long as it benefits Hul'qumi'num people, respects Hul'qumi'num culture, and does not adversely impact Hul'qumi'num traditional use areas and sacred sites. The plan recommends that a tourism strategy and operator protocols be developed to protect these cultural values and to enhance Hul'qumi'num opportunities to participate in nature-based and cultural tourism.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT  
[EXCLUSIVE INTERTIDAL  
USE AREAS FOR  
HUL'QUMI'NUM PEOPLE].  
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WHAT'S AVAILABLE.  
— CHARLES SEYMOUR

I THINK WE HAVE A  
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COME AND DESECRATED  
OUR GRAVESITES AND  
MIDDENS. IT SHOULDN'T  
BE ALLOWED.  
— ROSS MODESTE

WE NEED TO PROTECT  
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WE NEED TO PROTECT  
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TO OUR PEOPLE.  
— DAN NORRIS

- **Timber Resources:** The plan supports increased Hul'qumi'num involvement in sustainable forestry to create more jobs and benefits for Hul'qumi'num people while also protecting old-growth forests, fish streams, wildlife, cultural values, and other non-timber forest resources.
- **Non-Timber Forest Products:** Hul'qumi'num people have always depended on the forests for food, medicine, housing material and many other uses. The plan calls for protection and restoration of areas that are especially important for the harvesting of forest resources or for cultural uses. The plan also calls for a prohibition on any commercial harvest or sale of indigenous medicinal plants until appropriate controls are in place to protect traditional use and intellectual property rights.
- **Mineral and Energy Resources:** The plan calls for more Hul'qumi'num control over mineral and energy development to ensure that the highest standards of environmental management are met, and that projects that do go ahead provide significant benefits to Hul'qumi'num people.
- **Water, Air and Soil Resources:** Water pollution is a serious concern. The plan calls for increased efforts to reduce air and water pollution from pulp mills, improve waste treatment facilities for residential and urban development, and clean up beaches and nearshore waters polluted by septic systems and recreational boaters.

- **Management of Provincial and Federal Protected Areas:** The plan calls on the federal and provincial governments to enter into co-management agreements with the HTG to ensure that Hul'qumi'num people are fully involved in the management of all federal and provincial protected areas.

### ***Hul'qumi'num Mustimuhw Intensive Traditional Use Areas***

The Plan identifies and shows on a map 42 special areas that are especially important to Hul'qumi'num people for traditional harvesting activities ('a'lu'xut places), cultural and spiritual practices (xe'xe' places), or because of their importance in Hul'qumi'num oral traditions (syuth places).

In the Plan, these special places are called *Hul'qumi'num Mustimuhw Intensive Traditional Use Areas*. The plan calls for more detailed local planning to protect, and where necessary restore, these areas to ensure Hul'qumi'num traditional harvesting opportunities, protection of cultural sites, and respect for First Ancestor sites, Xeel's Transformer Places, and other sites recognized as important in Hul'qumi'num oral tradition.

### **Vision**

*A positive future would be First Nations to have control over their own land and resources; the right to develop those lands in any way they see fit for their well-being and for future generations. For me, that would be cleaning up our beaches, healthy shellfish for our people to eat, healthy forests, enough land for our people to live, to build homes, and protection of our cultural sites. — Stephanie Charlie*

*A positive future for me would be for the tribes to manage our resources including the land to ensure that the generations to come will have the opportunity to work and play and survive in our own territory. I hope they design a model, a community-based model, for our own people. — Ray Harris*

### **Beach Resources / Freshwater**

*That's one of our biggest concerns right now. We hear from a number of people that their grandparents and parents always went to Cowichan Bay to harvest clams, crabs, xihwu, it's just not safe to do that anymore. — Larry George*

*We need to start cleaning up for the next generation. It's going to take that long to clean up, especially down Cowichan Bay. — Ben Joseph*

*I think we need to start to do exactly what we've been doing in stream enhancement. Encourage the stock to build by enhancing the stream. What I've heard from my father in law, he spoke of Elders and what they used to do, which is manually cleaning the streams. He spoke of Somenos Lake, certain people looked after it. They just did it, no pay. Their pay is return of stock. — Harvey Alphonse*

*Maintaining the integrity of the land and beaches is a high priority. We need to deal with pollution issues. — Robert Morales*

### **Cultural Resources**

*I think it's important that we develop the ability to look at the same information that modern archaeologists look at but use that information to tell our story, to fill in our history, and to change present ideas and practices so that they are more respectful to our culture and our needs and so that they more accurately depict our history and our presence. — Tim Kulchyski*

*Many cultural practices are no longer possible because there are so many places that are developed. — Tim Kulchyski*

*All of those areas (archaeological sites, sacred sites, traditional use areas, wildlife habitats, viewsapes) need to be protected. In particular, I'd like to see the sacred sites in Cowichan protected and restored, such as the bathing creeks — Lea Joe*

*They all need to be protected. All of the subsistence, cultural, and social sites and the environmental resources. If they're not protected, they're most likely to be destroyed or abused in one form or another. — Martina Joe*

*The use and value of all lands, food and medicine gathering is very important to me. Our culture feels to me as if it is diminishing with time. The teachings have been lost and forgotten. Anything that would assist our people to practice and preserve our heritage would be invaluable. In this way, teachings of our culture will be passed from generation to generation for eons into the future. — Rebecca James*

*I think the most important part is we need to start introducing the youth to traditional practices. For example my father used to take me out and show me all the plants. — Joe Norris*

### **Tourism**

*We need a unified plan for tourism for First Nations activities / tourist attractions that supports each other. There are a number of things we can do to create tourist related small business opportunities. — Robert Morales*

*I would support tourism or commercial recreation as long as it does not exploit our culture or people. — Rebecca James*

### **Forest Resources**

*Forestry has to be done in a respectful way, the way our ancestors used to take care of the trees. It has to be taken care of for future generations. — Paul Thomas*

*We need to protect and restore old growth forests — Candace Aleck*

*I believe that we should have commercial forestry, but a type of forestry practice that is value added, instead of just clear cutting. It is our traditional way of harvesting. — Harvey Alphonse*

### **Mineral and Energy**

*I think it's more important that we have the rights to do mineral and energy development before getting into it. Right now these are non-renewable resources. Having control is most important. — Shana Robinson*

### **Intensive Traditional Use Areas**

*We need to be able to access all our traditional use areas in order to educate our children about our traditional ways. — Doreen Thomas*

#### **Front and back cover photo**

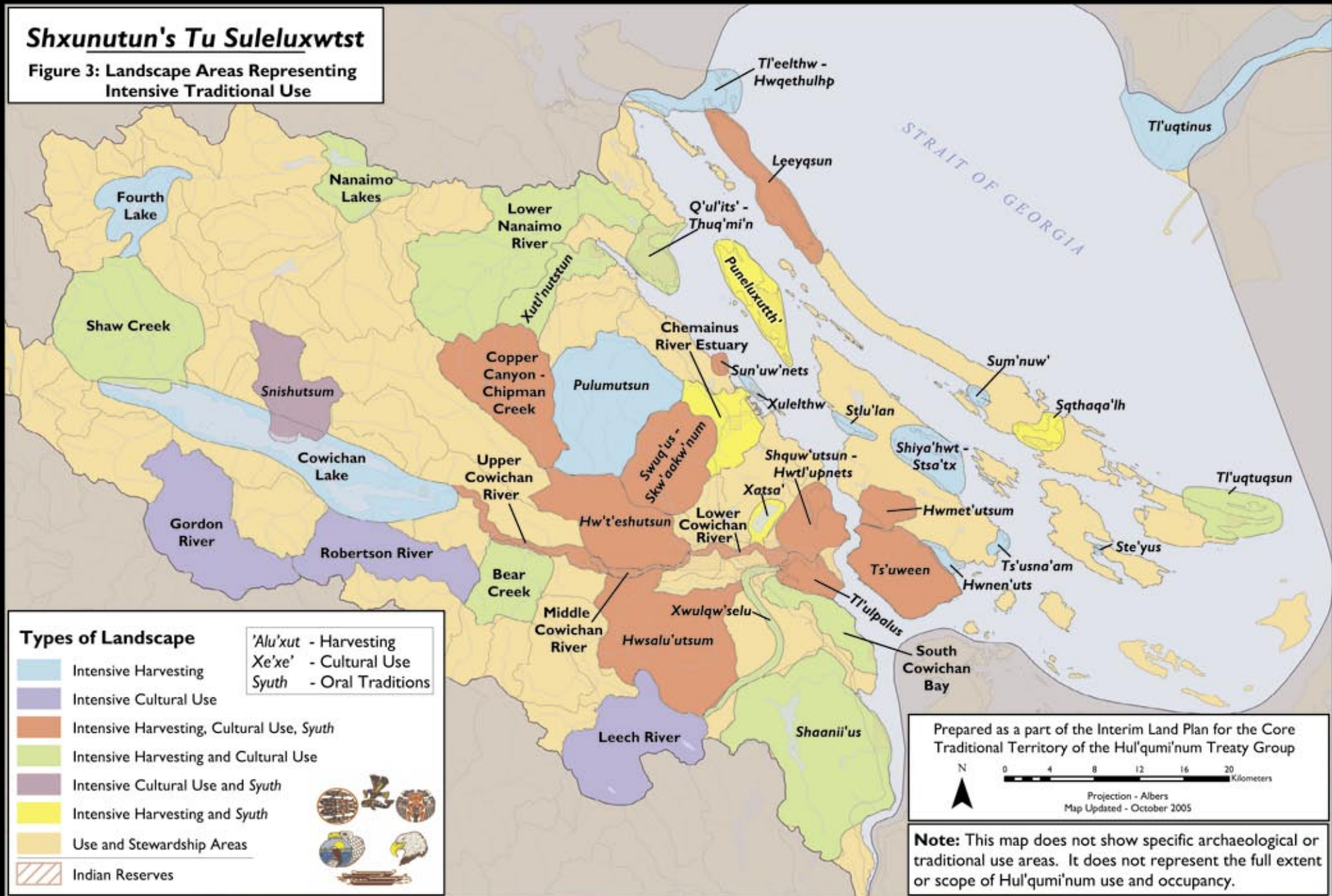
The *sul'sul'tun* (spindle whorl) is used in traditional Coast Salish weaving to spin and ply wool into yarn. This spindle whorl illustrates carvings of two *ste'elhtun* (salmon) below and above the *sxwuxw'a'us* (thunderbird) located in the middle, legendary figures from Hul'qum'num oral tradition.

Photo by Gary Fiegehen, object courtesy of Royal BC Museum 10352, Cowichan Spindle Whorl.

*I think that for a vision for the land and resources that sustainability is key. Governance is key. And that way we really can present our own vision for the territory. — Bob Daniels*

# Shxunutun's Tu Suleluxwtst

Figure 3: Landscape Areas Representing Intensive Traditional Use





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