

2010 MEDIA KIT

## LIL'WAT NATION



We live in a stunning and dramatic landscape with a rich biodiversity — a mysterious place of towering mountains, ice fields, alpine meadows, white-water rivers, and braided river valleys that run to a milky colour due to the silt and clay deposited by glacial melt.

While the Lil'wat is a separate and distinct nation, it remains part of the St'át'imc group. We are an Interior Salish tribe and are unique from our Coast Salish cousins in many ways.

Our language is called Ucwalmícwts. It is taught at both Xit'olacw Community School and Pemberton High School, and through Simon Fraser University in cooperation with the Mount Currie Ts'zil Learning Centre.

Most Lil'wat people live at Mount Currie, near the confluence of the Lillooet and Birkenhead rivers, just east of Pemberton, a two-and-a half hour drive north of Vancouver on the Sea-to-Sky Highway.

Our 797,131-hectare traditional territory is about twice the size of Rhode Island — or one-fourth of Vancouver Island. Our territory extends south to Rubble Creek, north to Gates Lake, east to the Upper Stein Valley and west to the coastal inlets of the Pacific Ocean.

Our geography — between two formidable mountain ranges — ensured our important role in the early regional economy. We were traders. For centuries we bartered and exchanged all manner of goods with many other First Nations, and later with non-aboriginal fur traders, miners and settlers.

Skilled fishers and hunters, we are closely tied to our land. The plant and animal resources of the high mountain slopes and river valleys remain critically important to us. Like our ancestors we have a profound and harmonious relationship with this land.

*~ From the Lil'wat Nation Fact Book*

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## LIL'WAT NATION PROTO(OLS)



The Lil'wat people have a great honour and respect for our traditional lands and we welcome you into our Traditional Territory. Our culture is rich and our history is long. We are happy to share our knowledge and culture with the world but we ask that you recognize and respect the protocols and traditions that serve as the foundation for our way of life.

### *Accessing the Community:*

Most of our people live in the community of Mount Currie, 35 minutes north of Whistler. Our children go to school here, our people work here and we conduct the business of the Mount Currie Band from our newly constructed Ullus Centre. While we welcome guests into our community, we ask that our privacy is respected. All visitors must register at the Band Office where you may be assigned a guide.

### *Speaking to our People:*

Our Elders and our youth are honoured in our Community. We look to our Elders for a link to our past and direction for our future and we look to our Youth to lead our people into a new generation and maintain our connection to our past. Our Youth and our Elders are precious and should be treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

### *Filming and Photography of Ceremonies:*

Filming and Photography is generally allowed for most Lil'wat performances however there are certain Spiritual Ceremonies, such as smudging and blessing, where filming is not permitted. In some instances we can arrange that recording that may occur with special permission.

### **Requesting Interviews:**

All media requests must go through Mitch Thevarge of the Lil'wat Nation 2010 Coordination Team. Mitch will go over protocols for interviewing elders and community members and will work with Media for scheduling. Mitch can be contacted at [mitch.thevarge@lilwat.ca](mailto:mitch.thevarge@lilwat.ca) or at 604-894-6115.

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## LIL'WAT STORIES



### **Story Theme:**

#### *Fisheries*

The Lil'wat and their connection to the fish is crucial. Using unique drying techniques, traditional barbecuing methods and the magnificent traditional fish honouring ceremonies, the Lil'wat peoples have moved from the past and into the present with their fisheries management. With the sockeye fence and recent fish count, the numbers have provided startling results and rivers that used to run black during spawning season are becoming more and more clear. Sadly, there are now fewer fish than ever before in Lil'wat history.

### **Lil'wat spokespeople:**

*Maxine Bruce*

*Ernie Jim*

*Jeanie Andrew*

*Veronica Bikadi.*

### **Contact Information:**

In order to contact one of our spokespeople on this topic please contact Mitch Thevarge of the Lil'wat Nation 2010 Coordination Team for protocol and scheduling.

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## LIL'WAT STORIES



### Story Theme:

#### *Traditional Ways*

Unique family clans, clever hunting techniques, exclusive seasonal dwellings, distinctive traditional dance clothing and discipline set the Lil'wat Nation apart from the coastal, plains, and "the Hollywood" Indian. Cedar weaving, wood carving, drum making and hunting all interweave to form the Lil'wat peoples traditional way of life. Our ancestors had their lives forever altered by the powerful and supernatural beings known as the Transformers. Learn who the Lil'wat peoples truly are, and why the Lil'wat carry out their ceremonies in a unique way like no one else. Drumming, dancing, singing, sharing, carrying on the traditional name giving and gifting that has been passed down from generation to generation in the traditional Lil'wat way.

### Lil'wat spokespeople:

*Johnnie Abraham*

*Lex Joseph*

*Johnny Jones*

*Vera Edmonds*

*Priscilla Ritchie*

*Morgan Wells*

*Veronica Blkadi*

*Mike Peters*

*Daniel Joseph*

*Georgina Nelson*

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## LIL'WAT STORIES



### Story Theme:

#### *Rodeo*

The Lil'wat people have a connection to rodeo like no other. Rodeo events range from intense bull riding, fast-paced horse racing to heart-warming children's events. The Lil'wat rodeo started off as a social gathering for Lil'wat, then grew to become a nationwide event attracting participants from neighbouring communities far and wide. The Lil'wat people hold gymkhanas to prepare their young children for one of the biggest events in the Lil'wat Nation. Lil'wat Nation has world champions in bull riding, bronco riding and barrel racing. The history of Rodeo runs deep in Lil'wat, with each family having their own bond to the rodeo and rodeo events.

### Lil'wat spokespeople:

*Burt Williams*

*Katrina Williams*

*Nick Andrew*

*Morgan Wells*

*& The Rodeo Families*

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## LIL'WAT STORIES



### **Story Theme:**

*Revitalizing the Culture - Language & Traditions*

The Lil'wat Nation struggled through many disruptions, tragedies, losses and burdens throughout history which shattered the true Lil'wat way, but did not destroy it. The Lil'wat people have picked up the pieces of the past and re-shaped their cultural outlook and their children's future. With the innovation of the Immersion class, where the traditional language is solely spoken, traditions are taught and practiced hands-on with children starting at age 4 and graduating at age 8. Lil'wat people are continuing to pass on the language and culture to the next generation. While honouring the past and teaching the present, the Nation is reviving and safeguarding the true Lil'wat way.

### **Lil'wat spokespeople:**

*Morgan Wells*

*Veronica Bikadi*

*Johnny Jones*

*Marie Abraham*

*Terri Williams*

*Vania Stager*

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## LIL'WAT STORIES



### **Story Theme:**

#### *Sport and Youth*

The Lil'wat have adopted sports as a major stepping stone. Sports have almost become a rite of passage for the youth and young generation of Lil'wat. Sports of all kinds are practiced and taken seriously within the Lil'wat Nation. Soccer, floor hockey, the First Nations Snowboard Team and others. The Lil'wat Nation take competition to a whole new level. Great conflict and controversy arose following a recent proposal from an outside business to build a dome (similar to B.C. place) in Lil'wat. This created some strong opposition from the community. However, the idea developed great hope and dreams of for youth to have a facility built for them in the future. In a semi-isolated community such as Lil'wat, sports take on a major dynamic teaching respect, discipline and valuable team-work ethics.

### **Lil'wat spokespeople:**

*Alphonse Wallace*

*Jordin Gabriel*

*Elaina Andrews - 11 year old Luge hopeful*

*Sandy Ward - 22 year old Aboriginal Snowboard Team member and Olympic hopeful*

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## LIL'WAT CONTACTS



**All contacts provided within this document must be accessed through Mitch Thevarge or a member of the 2010 Coordination Team**

### **Lil'wat Chief and Council**

*Chief Leonard Andrew*

Bruce Edmonds

Vaughan Gabriel

Joanne John

Lois Joseph

Maxine Joseph

Felicite Nelson

Martina Pierre

Tara Smith

Rosemary Stager

Christopher Wells

Morgan Wells

Patricia Williams

### **Administration & Senior Management**

*Senior Administrator - Daniel Sailland*

### **2010 Coordination Team**

*604-894-6115 or 2010@lilwat.ca*

Dan Cindric

Tanis Grandbois

Jennifer Hanna

Tracy Howlett

Lois Joseph

Mitch Thevarge