



Message to Community – Project Details

May 26, 2022

Ta newyáp Squamish Nation Members,

The Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw is committed to keeping Members informed of the ongoing archives and land-based research into St. Paul's Residential School. Yúusnewás is the project name for this work which includes all aspects of caring for our community, survivors, and families. We are here to walk alongside you and support you.

Information about the project is available on the [website](#). If you have any questions, information, or concerns, you can reach those working on the project by email: yuusnewas@squamish.net.

Why is the project called Yúusnewás?

Yúusnewás means to take care of spirit, to take care of one another, to take care of everything around us.

Ta na wa Ns7éyxnitm ta Snewíyelh (Language & Cultural Affairs) reached out the Elders Advisory Committee for guidance on a word or phrase that represents the outcome of this important work and to act as a value for decision making. The word that was selected by the Steering Committee, as presented by the Elders, is yúusnewás.

It is a word that recognizes the need to take care of not just the survivors, but all who have been impacted by intergenerational harms.

How is the project being governed?

The project has been set up to ensure work is done in a good way with culture and our protocols as the foundation. On January 27, 2022, Nexwsxwníwntm ta Úxwumixw (Council) approved a governance structure which places cultural protocol, knowledge keepers, and survivors at the heart of decision making.

Knowledge keepers and those with traditional knowledge lead the project and – before delivery of activities, events, or ceremony – check the work. The Steering Committee guides the project in a good way while the Project Team actively works across multiple areas including health and wellness support, recording stories, archive and land-based research, and cultural practices.

A full governance diagram is available to view [online](#).

Has the Nation received any funding to support this work?



Both the federal and provincial governments approved the Nation's requests for funding. Other grants have been approved for memorialization activities and traditional wellness supports. Donations have also been received from local businesses. The funds will be used to support our staff, activities and events like ceremonies (including knowledge keeper honorariums), and professional costs. More funding proposals to different agencies will be submitted over the next few months.

What was shared on May 15?

On May 15, traditional work and a community feast was held. The traditional work was an important step as we seek to understand and share the truth, care for one another, and honour our ancestors. The witness to the burning ceremony shared that our ancestors know we are doing this work in a good way. They also acknowledged that every person will be on their own wellness journey as our Nation undertakes this work.

After the feast, the Project Sponsor, Peter Baker, explained the work that has been done since the project began, including creating health and wellness supports for survivors and their families, and establishing protocols with other Nations whose Members attended St. Paul's.

The next stage of the project will involve recording the stories of survivors. This work will be done in a careful and safe way that respects individual survivors' needs. Kwitelut, Carla George will lead this work in her role as Survivor Liaison.

The final stage of the project will involve pulling all information together to present the truth. More details will be shared when the Nation is ready to proceed with that step.

Wellness and healing support

We understand that this is a difficult time for many of our Members. Ayás Ménmen (Child & Family Services) and Yúustway (Health & Wellness) are here to offer wellness & healing supports.

Hannah Rushton – Team Leader, Wellness Services, Ayás Ménmen
Phone: 778-233-4869 or 604-985-4111

Mackenzie Gomez – Community Health & Wellness, Yúustway
Phone: 604-360-3911 or 604-982-0332

Chet wanáxwstúmi (respectfully),

Council Spokespersons
Syexwáliya, Ann Whonnock and Sxwíxwtn, Wilson Williams