

## S'ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance Statement of Support for the Coast to Cascade Grizzly Bear Initiative

### WHEREAS:

- A. *S'ólh Téméxw te íkw'elò. Xyólhmet te mekw'stám ít kwelát.*  
(This is our land. We have to look after everything that belongs to us)

Stó:lō rights, title and interests exist throughout S'ólh Téméxw, the territory of the Stó:lō. These are proprietary rights recognized in Canadian law. In addition, we Stó:lō relate to our lands and resources in terms of responsibility and a form of property relationship strongly connected by stewardship. The lands and resources are our extended family with whom we have a fulsome connection, including a shared life force. The right to care for the lands and resources is therefore both a privilege and an obligation of the Stó:lō. The responsibility cannot be delegated or compromised because it is a part of our identity. Snoweyelh (the laws of our land) govern these relationships to our sxexó:mes (gifts of the creator), our land and resources, and everything that belongs to us;

- B. The People of the River Referrals Office (PRRO) is the operational wing of the S'ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance (STSA). The STSA is comprised of leadership from sixteen Stó:lō communities: Chawathil First Nation, Cheam First Nation, Kwaw'Kwaw'Apilt First Nation, Leq'á:mel First Nation, Scowlitz First Nation, Shxw'ow'hamel First Nation, Skawahlook First Nation, Skwah First Nation, Sumas First Nation, each on their own behalf; and Aitchelitz Band, Shxwhá:y Village, Skowkale First Nation, Soowahlie First Nation, Squiala First Nation, Tzeachten, and Yakweakwioose First Nation, as represented by Ts'elxwéyeqw Tribe Limited Partnership. This group of communities crosses political affiliation, participation in the treaty process, and tribal affiliation in the interest of a strong, unified Stó:lō voice in matters concerning S'ólh Téméxw;
- C. The STSA recognize that xeytl'áls (grizzly bear) is an important umbrella species that requires protection, and through whose protection many other species will benefit; and
- D. The STSA recognize that xeytl'áls (grizzly bear) populations within S'ólh Téméxw and the surrounding areas are at risk and that immediate action is required for their survival.

**THEREFORE:**

- A. The STSA declares that *ɣeytl'áls* (grizzly bear) is at risk and protected within S'ólh Téméxw, in accordance with Stó:lō cultural knowledge, values, laws, and customs;
- B. The recovery and management of *ɣeytl'áls* (grizzly bear) is a priority to the membership of the STSA, to ensure they will remain in S'ólh Téméxw and thrive in perpetuity;
- C. The STSA support the *Coast to Cascade Grizzly Bear Initiative*, and their efforts to further *ɣeytl'áls* (grizzly bear) population recovery and habitat connectivity in Washington State and British Columbia. This support is predicated on STSA notification and/or participation in all aspects of the recovery planning process, including, but not limited to development and implementation of the recovery plan and associated measures; and
- D. The STSA calls upon the Province of British Columbia, the Government of Canada, the State of Washington, and the Government of the United States of America to act promptly and effectively to implement cooperative actions for the protection and recovery of *ɣeytl'áls* (grizzly bear) and their habitat in southern British Columbia and northern Washington State.



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