

(Seabird Island Band)

# Sq'ÉWQEL Annual Report 2024 - 2025



*Clara Busby*



# S'ólh Téméxw, Tselhxwelmexw yóyes sq'eq'ó

*Our Communities, Our Families Working Together*

*Sq'éwqel (Seabird Island) is proud of our formative collective history. Honouring Mother Earth, Grandfather Sky and the generations of united communities working together to form one Family, Seabird Island.*

*Honouring our history and connectedness will lead our community into the Future. Community, Administration, Chief and Council are all walking together and working together as a Seabird Island Family.*



# MISSION STATEMENT

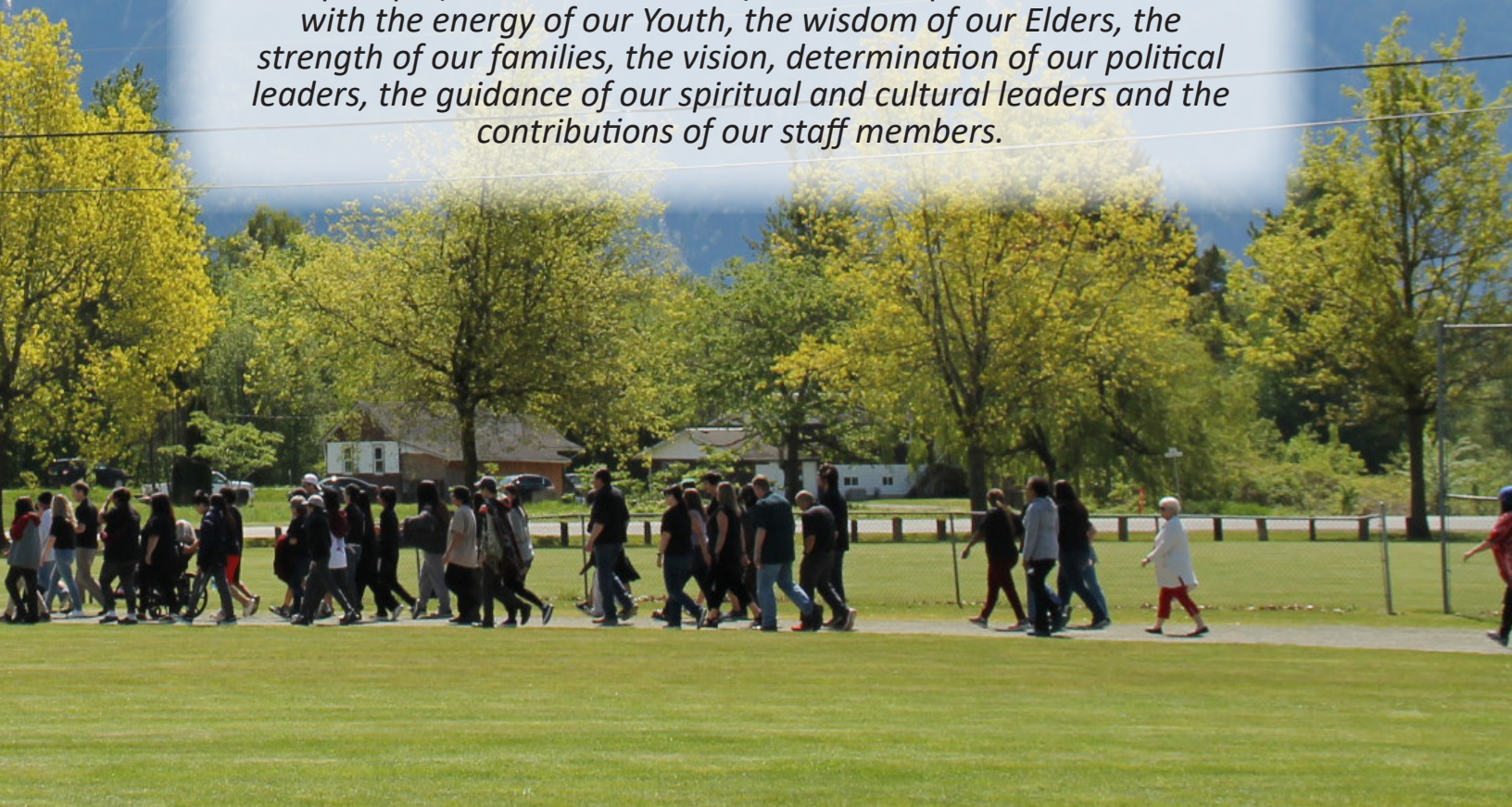
## **Sq'éwqel (Seabird Island Band) Council Mission Statement**

*Sq'éwqel (Seabird Island Band) exists to promote a Healthier, self-sufficient, self-governing, unified and educated community. We believe that a Healthy community is one that has achieved physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and cultural balance.*

*We work towards building a community where communal pride and respect are based on family values and respect for other people's values, views and ideas. We want to co-exist with other communities and governments while exerting our right to be a self-governing nation.*

*Sq'éwqel (Seabird Island Band) promotes full employment, the development of our local economy and improved housing conditions. We want our community to be a safe and prosperous place for our people. We aim at achieving a good standard of living for all our Band Members.*

*Sq'éwqel (Seabird Island Band) will accomplish this mission with the energy of our Youth, the wisdom of our Elders, the strength of our families, the vision, determination of our political leaders, the guidance of our spiritual and cultural leaders and the contributions of our staff members.*



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# Welcome to the 2023–2024 Annual Report

This report covers the period from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024. Within these pages, you will find a comprehensive collection of updates and achievements from our seven Divisions, as well as numerous departments and programs.

The dedicated staff at Sq'ewqel (Seabird Island) work tirelessly to support and uplift the community. Through their efforts, we continue to strengthen our programs, foster growth, and uphold our commitment to serving the needs of our members.

We invite you to explore this report to learn more about the remarkable work accomplished over the past year and the impact it has had on our community.



Sq'ewqel Eyem Tówel Sq'ep'ép  
(Seabird Strong Town Gathering)  
Town Hall

## ELECTED Council Members 2020 - 2023 Portfolios

Jim Harris, Chief	Council Executive Committee Office of the ED Signing Authority
Willow Walker, Councillor	Council Executive Committee Office of the ED Administration Department / Audit Committee Health & Social Development Infrastructure / Lands Committee
Paul Andrew, Councillor	Council Executive Committee Office of the ED Health & Social Development Child & Family Jurisdiction
Sally Hope, Councillor	Administration Department / Audit Committee Education - K-12, Post Secondary, College Inter-Government Affairs / Ab Rights & Title Development Corporation Board (Sqewqel)
Marcie Peters, Councillor	Administration Department / Audit Committee Infrastructure / Lands Committee Justice Signing Authority
Marlana Peters, Councillor	Health & Social Development Infrastructure / Lands Committee Justice
Chaundine Fisher, Councillor	Child & Family Jurisdiction Early Childhood Education - K-12, Post Secondary, College
Rod Peters, Councillor	Early Childhood Education - K-12, Post Secondary, College Justice
Tamara Andrew, Councillor	Early Childhood Inter-Government Affairs / Ab Rights & Title Development Corporation Board (Sqewqel)



**CHIEF,**  
*James (Jim) Harris*

**A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE CHIEFS WORK:**

Willow, Chuck, Alexis, and I, along with little Sheridan Nijkamp, attended the two-day Ab Cabinet Ministers and First Nations conference on January 21 and 22.

In addition, I am a member of ICBC's Indigenous Advisory Council. We met at the ICBC main headquarters in North Vancouver. We later had an honoring ceremony for Chuck and Alexis on the evening of January 23.

One of the pre-MCFD meetings we attended was on January 24. In the afternoon of January 28, we held the MCFD meeting.

On the 29th, the Council and Directors met in the morning for a Strategic Planning meeting.

There was an STC meeting on the 31st.

On the afternoon of February 4th, we held a Council Executive meeting.

I had an interview for the position of child and family services specialist (Penny) on February 11.

I attended the UBCIC meeting, which was hosted by Shway Village, on January 12 and 13.

On the night of January 12th, I went to the Enbridge open house at Seabird.

We held an Education Jurisdiction meeting on the evening of the 13th.

On the afternoon of February 16th, I greeted families for the celebration of Seabird Family Day.

I participated in a Seabird Island Forestry online meeting on February 18th, and immediately following that, there was an Enbridge information session.

On the 19th, I attended a forum on toxic drugs in Abbotsford, followed by a council meeting that evening. Day 2 of the Toxic Drug Forum took place on the 20th.

I met with a member of our group in the morning of the twenty-first

27th FA Regional Caucus at Cheam, February

Leadership meeting of STC at Sqewlets on February 28th

March 4th ICBC also added me to the GLP (Graduated Licensing program) Advisory Group. We're examining the driver's license procedure. In the morning, we held a meeting virtually.

A council executive meeting was held on March 4th in the afternoon.

We had a review of Child and Family Jurisdiction on the morning of March 6.

I was requested to do an opening for the Seabirds Career Fair on March 12.

We held a council meeting on March 19.

I took part in the GLP Advisory Group's morning online meeting on March 20th.

We had a staff and council meeting at Enbridge on the afternoon of March 24th.

On March 25, I took part in a segment of the Maria Slough Ripple Report.

I went to the event to join and express my gratitude to the First Responders on the evening of March 26. It took place in Tchacten.

The 27th meeting's afternoon with the executive and HR. Followed by a gathering that was held in Harrison on the evening of the 27th.

Seabird hosted the STC meeting at Millennium Hall on March 28.

March 31st. Meeting with Enbridge in the morning.

Circle discussions on April 1st lasted till late in the evening at Millennium Hall.

Attended a Community to Community (C2C) meeting in Skowlitz on April 2.

Council executive meeting on April 3rd, evening.

Attended a Self Governance seminar with Steven Point and Mark on April 4.

Attended a meeting of the ICBC and GLP advisory committee in the morning on April 7.

Participates in a C2C group online meeting on April 8th in the morning. The second round of talks with the elders was held on April 8th.

A meeting with the council was held online on April 10.

Evening council meeting on April 15th

I went to the B.C. Cabinet Ministers and First Nations conference in Vancouver with Chaundine and Alexis.

Additionally, I received an invitation to take part in AESS graduate student CAPSTONE interviews.

**I would also like to note:**

We had a basket repatriation event at the elementary school this year. Some cedar baskets that had been created many years ago by a Seabird member were returned by a family. They clarified that while they were unsure of the identity of the original basket maker, their ancestors had acquired the baskets in trading. They wanted to give them back to our community, which was a meaningful gesture.

It's great to see so many new homes being constructed in the neighborhood.

The new Youth Center portables have also been installed, and construction is currently ongoing on the new Cultural Center.



**COUNCILLOR,**  
Paul Andrew

### **LISTENING, LEARNING, AND MOVING FORWARD**

This past year has been one of transition, growth, and taking community feedback to heart. Many Members voiced the need for greater transparency from the Band Office, more access to support services, and a stronger sense of safety — especially from our Elders. In response, Council committed to doing better: listening more closely, acting more openly, and making real changes where they're needed.

Elders also shared concerns about the loss of culture, staff hiring decisions, and the presence of traditional teachings in our programs. These are important conversations, and we've adjusted our hiring practices to bring in more Seabird Members, strengthen cultural influence, and ensure fair treatment for all staff.

With the rising cost of living, we know many families are feeling the strain. That's why Council took steps to improve the quality and frequency of **Member hampers**, easing some of the burden inflation has brought.

One of the most powerful moments of the year was seeing the return of **fishing and dry rack time**. Not being able to pass down these teachings — fishing, drying, cutting, and canning salmon — was heartbreaking. This year, we were able to make it happen again. Council went door-to-door inviting Members personally, and it was beautiful to see the community come together, honour traditions, and teach the younger generations. We hope to do even more of this moving forward.

At town hall meetings, difficult topics like **overdoses, moonshining, and community loss** were hard to speak about. But thanks to intervention programs and support services, we've seen a real shift — **less fear, more safety, and growing hope**.

We're still searching for a strong **facilitator** to help coordinate community planning in a way that makes sense for everyone — Elders, Youth, and families alike. Important documents like the **Sustainability Plan** and **Election Code** need to be easier to understand and more accessible. We're reviewing the Election Code now and will share updates soon.

We are weaving more **Seabird traditions, knowledge, and culture** into community planning — including employment strategies, cultural accreditation, and the path toward **self-determination and self-governance**. Knowing who we are and where we come from is essential. We can't do this without our **traditional knowledge keepers**, whose voices and wisdom guide us.

We're also advocating for full **jurisdiction over our children and families** — a step beyond current MCFD practices. Culture, family connection, and education shaped by **our values** are central to this vision.

Our **10-year health plan** has been updated, and we continue working with **FNHA** to develop **First Nations-led primary healthcare**. The dream is to bring in traditional knowledge keepers, healers, medicine people, and counselors to support wellness at our primary care centre — not just for Seabird, but as a model for surrounding Nations.

We're preparing for **comprehensive negotiations** with MCFD to create real coordination and agreements for **child and family services** — a major next step in reclaiming our rights and responsibilities.

Lastly, I traveled to **Calgary and Ottawa** this year to work on the **Final Settlement Agreement** and **Jordan's Principle**. Unfortunately, the proposal was turned down — but we're not giving up. We're going back to the drawing board, and we'll keep fighting for what our children and families deserve.



## COUNCILLOR, Rodney Peters

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

There are monthly meetings scheduled with the Director, staff, and portfolio holders. The following are the main topics we receive reports on and discuss: Aboriginal rights and title, fish and wildlife, referrals, policy, membership, natural resources and forestry, community engagement and communications, revitalization of the halq'eméylem language and teachings, Elders, and finally, recreation.

**Enbridge Sunrise Project** – I have attended all technical meetings with negotiators, legal counsel, administration, and staff. The Enbridge team and staff have met regularly with Chief and Council representatives. Enbridge also hosted a Community Open House to present and inform Members about the details and timeline of the Sunrise Project, which is expected to begin in 2026. Members in attendance had the opportunity to observe and ask questions about the process and work involved in the project.

**Lower Fraser Fishing Alliance** – We are a member of this alliance and have hosted Tier 1 Above Port Mann First Nations and/or Bands to discuss technical information and fish plan meetings. Our next step is to prepare to host Tier 2 Above Port Mann with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Management, Indigenous Relations, Technical, and Resources

staff. Within the integrated fish plan, we include the Wind Dry Rack Fishery, which takes place from Yale to Hope Bridge. DFO has issued an annual event ceremony licence and communal licences for funerals.

**S'ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance** – Hosted by Stó:lō Nation, this board meets regularly, and we have been a member since November 2024. I also sit on the Education Committee, which meets quarterly. We discuss the implementation of local Stó:lō curriculum within Stó:lō Nation and the surrounding school districts: Chilliwack, Mission, Abbotsford, and Fraser Cascade. Another important project we support is in the Skagit, from Manning to Ross Lake, to help preserve and protect this important area.

### EDUCATION

We have regularly scheduled meetings with the Director, Principal, committee members, administration, and portfolio holders. There are monthly and quarterly meetings that include updates and reports from elementary, secondary, and post-secondary programs for review and discussion. The Director also attends the monthly Indigenous Education Council meetings at School District #78 (Fraser Cascade).

We are now in the second year of **Education Jurisdiction** and continue to meet and discuss the development of Education Law. This includes the composition of the Education Committee and the role of Chief and Council in approval processes.

This also includes **Seabird College**, which has been in operation and continues to support students in reaching their life goals. The board holds regular meetings that include financial reports, proposed programs, and course offerings. Seabird College continues to offer upgrading to Grade 12, Early Childhood Education – Infant and Toddler, and trades training courses.

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

The Director of ECE, along with staff and portfolio holders, hold regular meetings. Due to the increase in projected enrolment and actual attendance, funding was received to expand upward within the current ECE structure. A temporary portable was installed to accommodate the children while construction is underway.

Congratulations to all preschool-aged children for successfully transitioning to your next level or program! We also celebrate the Parents and Families who supported them throughout the year. A heartfelt thank you to the dedicated Staff for your ongoing hard work and commitment.

#### **JUSTICE**

The CAO, administration, and staff meet regularly with portfolio holders. The Agassiz RCMP Detachment provides monthly reports outlining calls, incidents, response actions, and various categories. We continue to meet regularly—or in emergency situations—to coordinate and plan with Fire, Police, and Ambulance services. We are committed to upholding the health, safety, and well-being of all Seabird Island Community Members.

*In closing*, I want to thank and acknowledge all Community Members who come forward with your concerns, questions, and input at meetings and events. Your voice matters.

Respectfully submitted.

Rod Peters  
Council



## COUNCILLOR SIYOLWELH, Marcia (Marcie) Peters

### GROWTH, GRATITUDE, AND LOOKING AHEAD

Two key community successes this year were the **Town Hall meeting calling the community to get input regarding the moonshine and the Seabird Strong Community Event focusing on wellness and healing.**

In September, every home received **fresh fish**, and our **quarterly hampers**. Being able to share these resources is deeply meaningful, and we are honoured to have the funding to support these important initiatives.

We also recognize the importance of **transparency and communication**. We are always looking for different ways to present the SIB Financial Audit, so it is easy to understand and accessible to all Band Members. Ensuring that everyone is informed and included is a priority moving forward.

There is a significant increase of Band Members coming home and being hired to work in our Community.

- 148 employees are SIB members
- 96 employees are from other First Nation with Status
- 156 employees are non-status

Our **housing developments** have brought significant progress. The **first Elders' complex** is now complete, and our **new townhouses** have helped reduce the housing list allowing more families to find stable housing. In total, **34 new units** are expected to be completed by the end of this fiscal year. Phase 1 of the **BC Housing** is under construction. This project will provide 40 units with a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom units.

Construction of the **Cultural Building** is well underway. **Biweekly coordination meetings** between architects, builders, and key partners helps to keep the project moving forward. A final completion date is still pending, but progress remains steady.

Beyond new builds, we are also seeing **home renovations** roll out across the community. Our **new partnership with Fortis Gas** will improve energy infrastructure and bring greater comfort and reliability to Seabird households — another big step toward long-term sustainability and livability. **Fortis BC** is switching to smart meters across the province by the end of 2026. This changed opened the door for Fortis and SIB to work together so all members in private home and rental homes could have a free natural gas appliance cleaning service completed by a Fortis BC team member. For those

homes with Natural Gas furnaces that were 25 yrs or older and Natural Gas hot water tanks older than 15 yrs, **Fortis BC upgraded 19 furnaces** to a dual fuel heat pump to provide both heating and air conditioning and **6 hot water tanks** to a highly efficient Hot Water on Demand system. Fortis BC has also recommended that an additional 45 Furnace and 12 Hot water tanks be replaced under the Rebate program. The housing team is working with Fortis to make these replacements happen by the end of 2025.

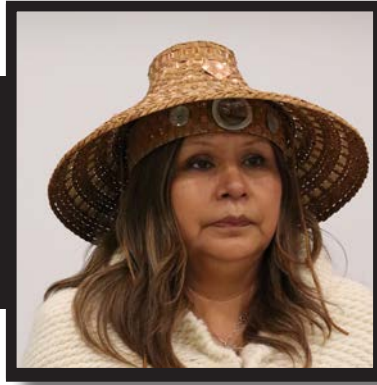
All the developments and upgrades have encouraged many Members to return to Seabird; it is a joy to see the feeling of pride at home once again.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I'm filled with optimism. It has been incredible to witness so many positive changes in our community this year and I am proud of the work being done by our dedicated staff and

departments. **Seabird is often looked to as a leader by other communities**, and that reflects our shared vision and commitment.

**Change can be difficult**, but it is also necessary. If we aren't seeing change, it means we aren't moving forward. My goal is to continue creating **positive, meaningful change** that strengthens the community, supports our staff, and creates more opportunities, all while remaining grounded in transparency and accountability.

As you can see, our housing report is blending from last year to this year showing the progress made.



## **COUNCILLOR SIYOLWELH,** *Sally Hope*

This past year has been one filled with learning, learning curves, excitement, changes, challenges and reflections. I appreciate the opportunity to sit at the leadership table with fellow Council Members and to work with an administration has been through so much this year, but has met those challenges and prospered. It fills my heart to work with Sq'ewqel Members and the community.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

As Alternate Portfolio Holder for Administration, I actively participate in the Audit Committee as well as the Sq'ep committee. The Sq'ep committee started meeting again and it has a good cross section of Members. We welcome all Members who would like to join in these discussions and the committee. The Audit Committee continues to meet throughout the year.

### **SQ'EWQEL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (SQDC)**

SqDC has had an extremely busy year with the purchases of the Harrison Grand Motel, the Harrison Hot Springs Marina and Pine Court Townhomes in Chilliwack. The grand opening of the marina had a wonderful turn out of Elders, Members, leadership from the District of Kent, the Village of Harrison and neighbouring nations. The brand change for the Sq'ewqel Gas Bar from Esso to Petro Can was smooth and we look forward to the benefits we anticipate from this new brand.

### **EDUCATION**

It is wonderful to see that the Youth program continues to offer drop-in services with various activities and exciting outings. I can appreciate that the Youth program also takes the skate crew out to utilize local skate parks, including our own at the lacrosse box.

It truly warms my heart to see how the school is incorporating land-based learning with activities that demonstrate the connection between our people and our land. Staff engaging with the classes to show them how to skin and de-bone a deer to gutting, cleaning, prepping and cooking salmon on a fire are culturally relevant activities that make learning fun!

## **INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

The IGA department has grown over the past year, and portfolio holders continue to meet with them monthly. The files range from local government to provincial and federal government levels.

I continue to participate actively in the fisheries meetings at the Tier 1 (Nations), Tier 2 (Nations with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, or DFO), and at times at Tier 3 (Nations, Government, and other sectors). Each year, the DFO drafts a southern salmon Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP), whose purpose is to identify the main objectives and requirements for the southern B.C. Pacific salmon fishery, as well as the management measures that will achieve these objectives. In response, the Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance led by the signatory nations compile a Consolidated Fisheries Plan as the IFMP does not recognize our inherent rights under Section 35 of the Indian Act, nor does it align with UNDRIP or DRIPA.

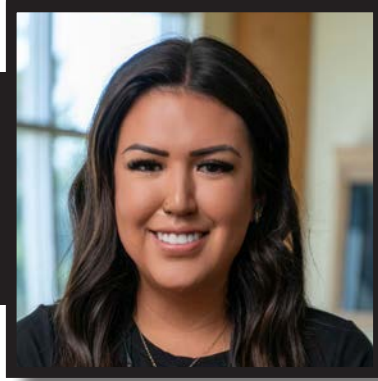
Our Food, Social and Ceremonial needs have not been met for many decades. The nations have worked with the biologists to articulate our expectations for each of the salmon stocks that migrate through the lower Fraser. The plan includes the management of eulachon, sturgeon, chinook,

sockeye, pinks, coho, chum as well as tributary fisheries. It also addresses ceremonial fisheries and the dry rack fishery. The plan outlines the stock, the timing, the gear and the management considerations. If you would like a copy of the CFP, please reach out to me.

The past year has been filled with joy, such as when we all worked together to ensure Members could all have some fish in their freezers or cupboards; grief, as we lost loved ones, and pride, as we all walked together in the Red Dress March in Agassiz. There was also pride as we watched our loved ones play soccer, paddle in canoe races and sing and dance at the Coast Jam session during the annual Seabird Island Festival.

It truly is an honour to stand with all of you during Seabird Strong, Sq'ewqel Days, Graduation ceremonies, and throughout this healing journey! Thank you to all the staff who continue to work in the best interests of Sq'ewqel, and especially the volunteers who give their time and share their gifts with our Members!

Quetitse (Sally Hope)



## **COUNCILLOR SIYOLWELH,** *Marlana Peters*

Good day all,

A bit about myself: I come from the Peters family, daughter of late Garry Peters. I grew up in Sq'ewqel and have spent my entire life here, therefore Seabird is my roots, my home. Here is where I've always wanted to live and start a family. I recently got married and have a 4.5-month-old baby boy. Right now, I'm on maternity leave from being a nurse, and I take great pride in what I do, as I am proud to work alongside our people as well as neighbouring nations.

Growing up, I knew I wanted to support our people, specifically in mending and navigating the health system, and offering guidance for any health-related needs. I also hoped to provide education, support and advocacy in general, which led me to Council. I want to share the voices of our Members, and to learn how to engage leadership and the community, encourage communication and always keep our people up to date with the latest changes.

I've been on Council for only a few short months, starting in December 2024. I took some time off to be with my baby, learning about parenthood and being a new mom but I'm grateful to be on Council even if it's for a short time. It's opened my eyes to the other side of the table and understanding the structure of our community. As a new Council Member, there is a lot of room to grow and learn to best serve this role.

My portfolios are Health, Lands & Infrastructure and Justice. I chose my portfolios based on where I felt I could be most effective. Having a health background has assisted me as the Chair of Health. There have been many positive changes in our Health department, for example with providing services to our neighbouring communities. I

look forward to working together to strengthen wellness in our community as well as maintaining the connections with other communities we service.

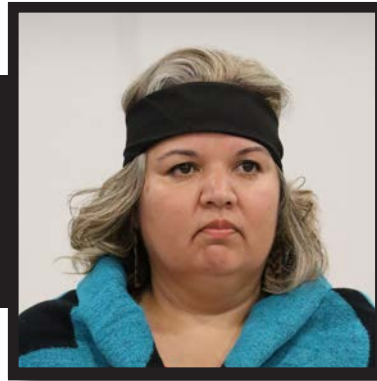
Lands & Infrastructure has been quite complex, as there is much to know about the developmental potential and growth of our community. It's very exciting to see the positive changes in Seabird, from the new Cultural Building to completing the townhomes that will house more and more of our families. Growth is flourishing in Seabird, and the community is being bettered for our people.

Justice has been delicate and challenging as it's always hard working with sensitive cases in our community. We must always remind ourselves that the goal in every situation is to keep Sq'ewqel sacred and safe. Although the journey can be difficult at times, it's rewarding knowing that we are keeping our community safe and keeping Seabird strong!

I look forward to continuing to learn and grow on Council, walking beside our Members as we all grow together as a community.

Kw'as ho:y / Thank you,  
Marlana Peters  
Council

**COUNCILLOR SIYOLWELH,**  
*Willow Walker*



Law ey swayel Willow Walker tel sqwix,

Reflecting on my second year has been good, I would like to say that I feel like we have come a long way and I feel that one of the most important steps we have taken has been to start working together better, we have been listening and working so well with our Community to help make Seabird an even better, safer, healthier place for all our Community members.

Starting with meetings with our Elders, having discussions about the drug and alcohol problems in our Community, and working together to find solutions.

Hosting our first Townhall with Community and having the opportunity to speak about what they are seeing, what they have been through and the change that they want to see. Having our partners there was very helpful, for them to hear our struggles, and where help is needed firsthand. My hands go up to them for being there, so that all our people feel heard and that we can move forward together and help one another heal and be a stronger healthier Community.

The Sq'ep, Culture Committee had a table set up at the Seabird Strong Event, and we had a sign-up sheet, as we want to have as many families apart of this work, as we are made up of such a diverse group of families, we need to make sure we take into consideration all our backgrounds and teachings.

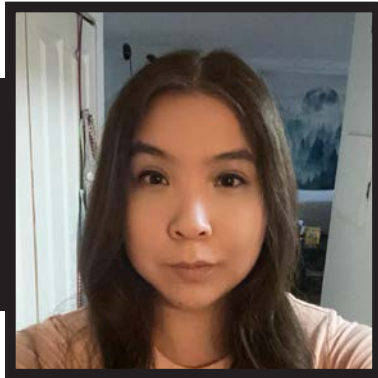
[Aishah's edits] I feel good reflecting on my second year on Council. I feel like we have all come a long way; we have truly started to work together in a better way, which is so important. We have also taken care to listen to the community and understand how to best create a safe, healthy Seabird Island for each and every Community Member.

Meeting with our Elders to find solutions has proven especially helpful in addressing the drug and alcohol problems in the community; thank you to all for providing wisdom and guidance.

The Town Hall meeting was a wonderful opportunity to hear Members speak about what they are dealing with and their hopes for the future. Having our partners there was very helpful, because they could hear of our struggles first-hand, and learn where help is most needed. My hands go up to them for being there; our people were heard, and now we can move forward together to heal, and we can be a stronger, healthier community.

At the Seabird Strong event, the Sq'ep Culture Committee had a table set up with a sign-up sheet. We hope for many families to be a part of this work so that we can truly show up for the diverse group of families, with consideration for all their differing teachings and backgrounds.

All my relations,  
Willow Walker



**COUNCILLOR,**  
*Tamara Andrew*

- Early Childhood
- Inter-Government Affairs / Ab Rights & Title
- Development Corporation Board (Sqewqel)



**COUNCILLOR,**  
*Chaundine Fisher*

- Child & Family Jurisdiction
- Early Childhood
- Education - K-12, Post Secondary, College

**EXECUTIVE**





## Chief Administrative Officer

*Alexis Grace*

### Seabird Strong

The seasons have passed in what feels like a heartbeat. I reflect, in gratitude, upon the many lessons, shared experiences, and meaningful moments that extend beyond our past years of growth, to renew our aligned purpose, building Seabird Strong.

As we continue to build the strong community those before us visioned, we remain guided by the teachings we carry, grounded in tradition and united in our shared value for our community. Our approach this year has been rooted in collaboration, bringing together administration, leadership, and community members to create meaningful change and prosperity.

By weaving our traditional knowledge into our everyday work, we honor our ancestors and ensure their wisdom remains alive in every decision we make.

Through open communication and transparent decision-making, we effort to achieve strengthened trust and accountability in all that we do.

Together, we are shaping a future where programs and services reflect both our cultural foundation and the evolving needs of our people.

Every initiative, partnership, and achievement highlighted within this report reflects our collective commitment to ongoing evaluation and improvement to better address the needs of those we serve.

As we journey forward together, we will continue to build upon a strong and established foundation, honoring our past leaders in governance and administration, embracing innovation, and working side by side to ensure Seabird Island remains a vibrant, healthy, connected, and prosperous community for generations to come.

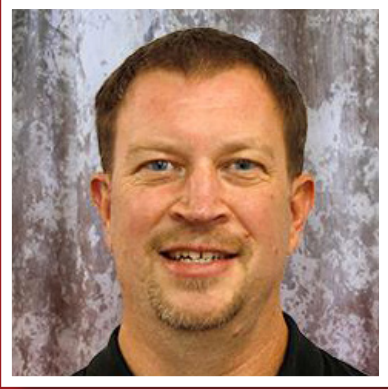
I raise my hands to our community, leadership and staff in commitment to continue to listen, learn, work harder and honour those who left their legacy upon us.

In kindness & respect,  
Alexis

# FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

Photographs:  
Career Fair  
March 2024





**ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE  
DIRECTOR**

*Jason Ellis*

**PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

*Accounts Receivable*

*Accounts Payable*

*Payroll*

*Records*

*Information Technology*

*Human Resources*

*Purchasing*

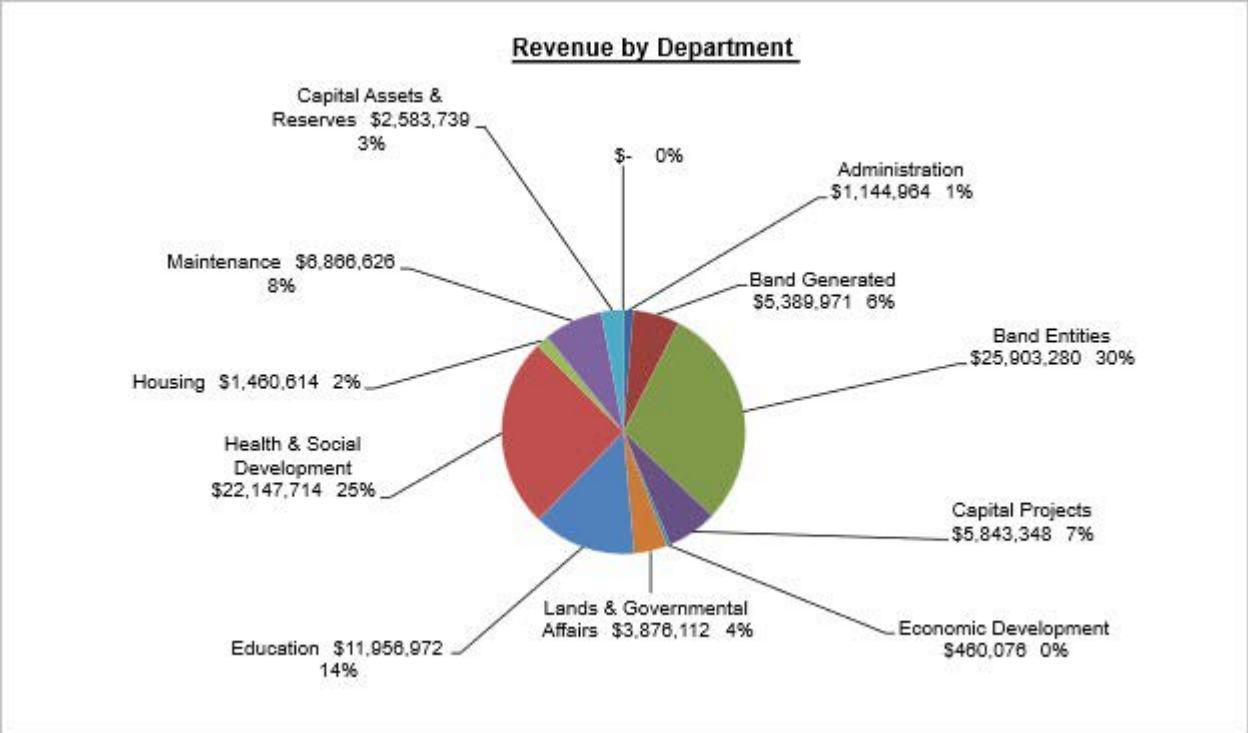
## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Revenues and accumulated surplus continued to grow for Seabird Island over the fiscal year ending on March 31, 2025. This has resulted in Seabird maintaining a strong financial position, and the Net Financial Assets for Seabird Island have been substantial.

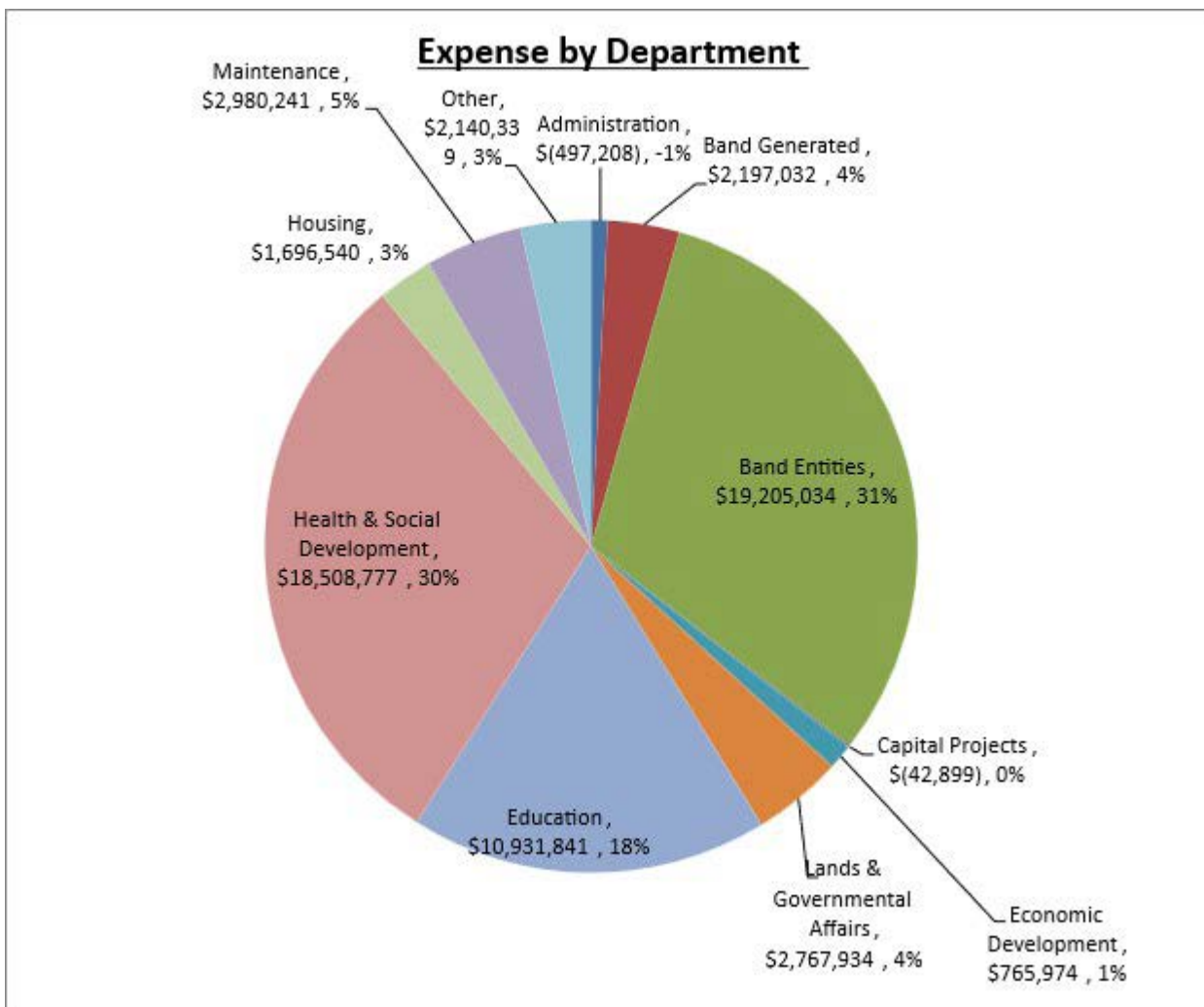
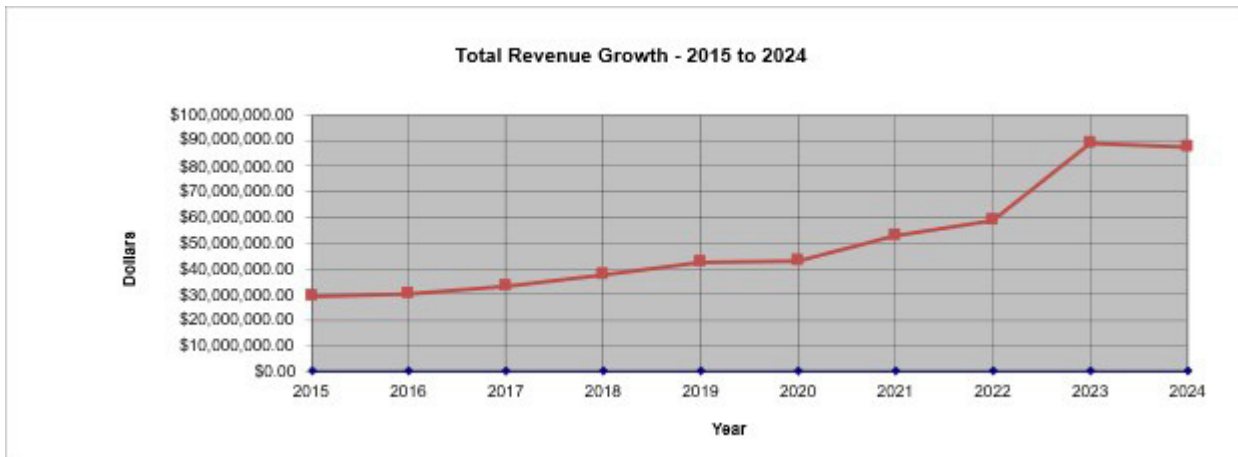
Health and Education continue to be the largest sources of revenue for Seabird Island, as they consistently expand to provide additional services to the community and the other regional First Nations. The Band has also had many large capital projects during this fiscal year, including multiple housing projects and the Community Cultural Centre.

Expansion of the Band Office and BC Housing projects are in the beginning stages and are warmly welcomed additions to our growing community.

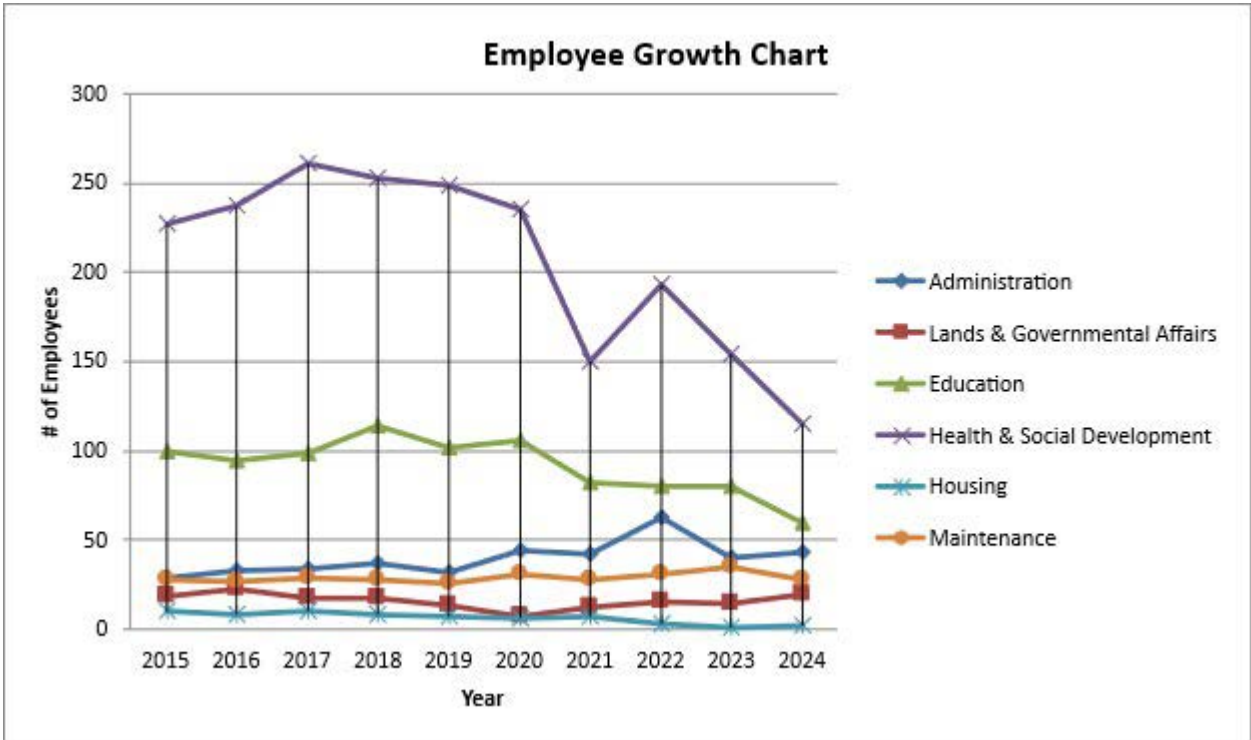
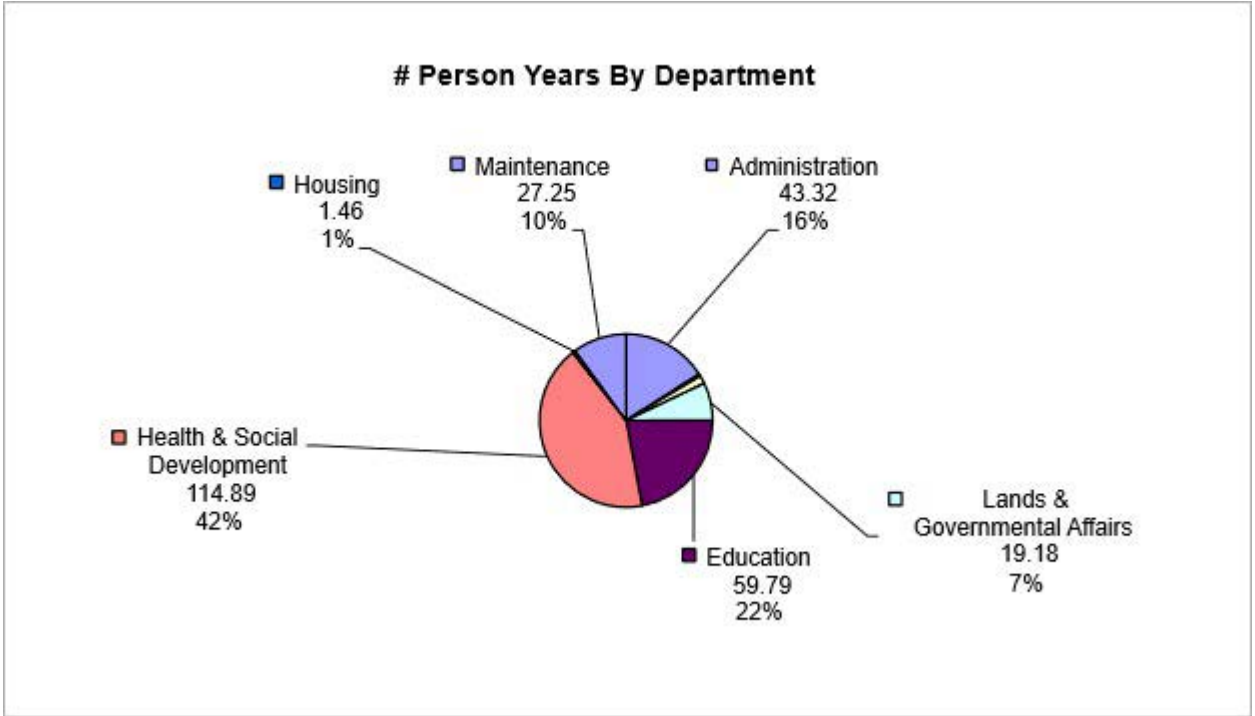
As we continue to enhance our financial position, Seabird Island Band is better able to provide improved, more diverse programs and services to serve our Members and residents and sustain a healthy and secure community.



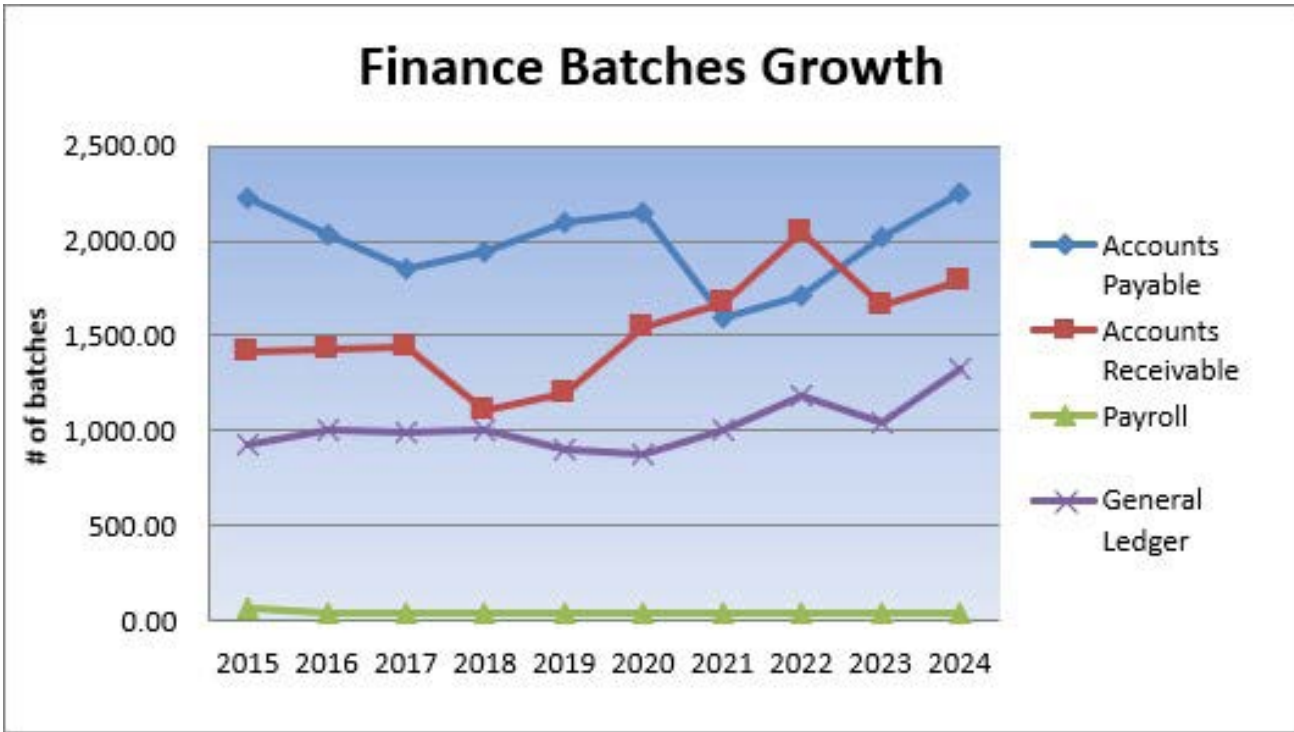
# EXPENSES



# FINANCE TRANSACTIONS



# FINANCE TRANSACTIONS

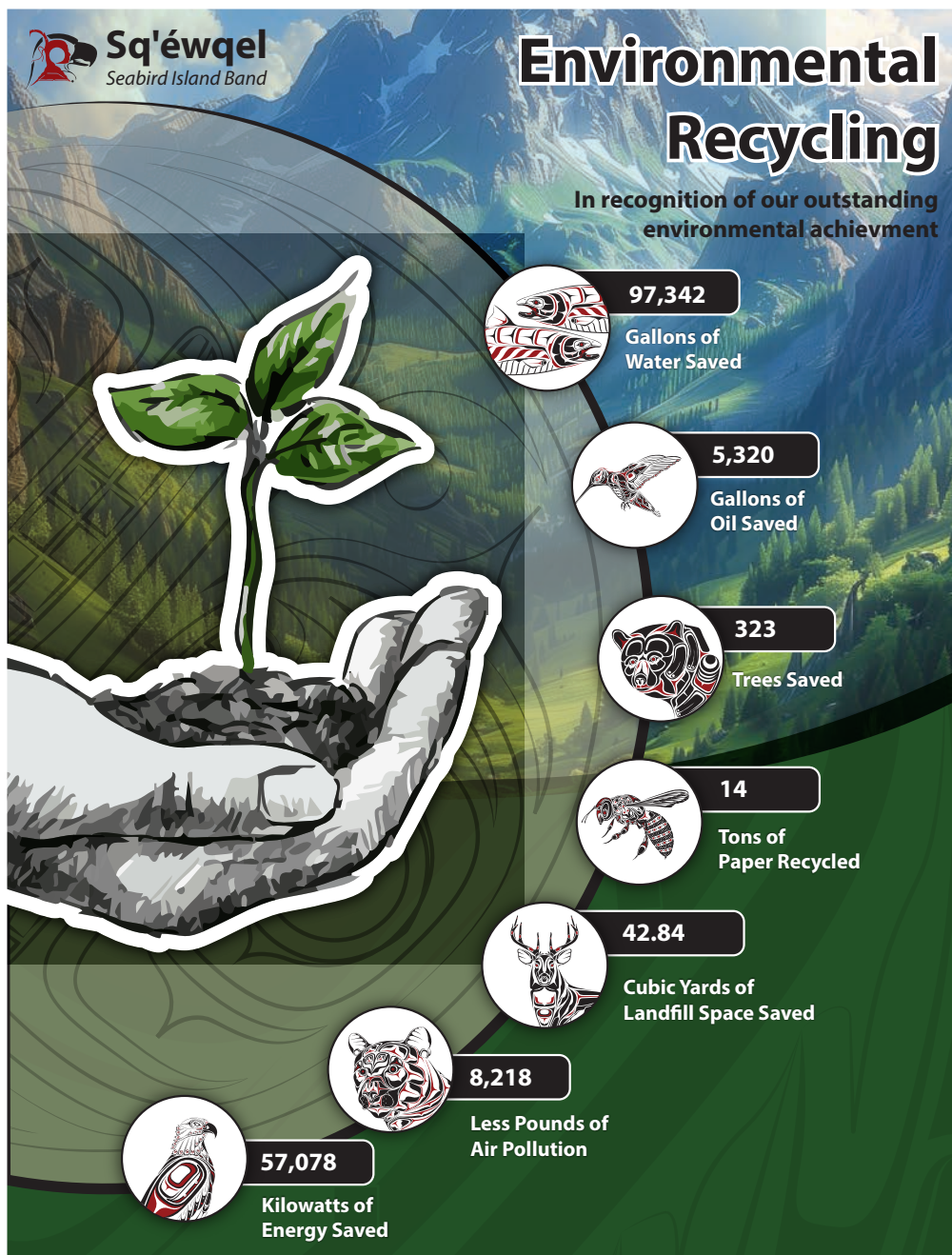


Gone are the days of paper files and dusty storage rooms; today, records and information management is all about digitization, automation and staying ahead of the curve.

In the ever-evolving landscape of information and data handling, staying up to date with the latest records and information management trends is not just an option, it's a necessity.

Our increased use of technology continues to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of records and information management throughout every program and service here at Seabird.

The Records Team tirelessly transforms paper-based records and information documents into digital formats. This process encourages collaboration and efficiency by utilizing a centralized platform wherein all staff can easily share, edit and comment on files in real time.



We conduct frequent quality-control checks to ensure the final digital file is clear, complete and indexed properly, as we ultimately transform old memories into digital treasures for generations to come.

The “Green” impacts of shredding reduce the consumption of natural resources like trees, energy and water required for paper production, and encourages the re-use of shredded paper fibers in the manufacturing of new paper products, further minimizing environmental impact. Emphasizing the eco-friendly benefits of shredding not only promotes responsible waste management, but also aligns with corporate sustainability initiatives.

We are proud of the carbon footprint we have achieved thus far and strive to ensure we uphold our environmental sustainability values one page at a time.

# Information Technology

IT has been extremely busy again this year maintaining and upgrading all things IT; servers, switches, networks (like the community internet), websites, desktops, laptops, printers, cell phones, and any other small devices included. We provide support and services for a wide range of IT needs.

This year, the IT department has continued the maintenance and upgrading of hardware to existing systems, while also supporting the Development Corporation (SqDC) entities. These significant upgrades will provide SIB with the long-term ability to sustain the ongoing growth of our organization.

We are nearing the final stages of our major internet/fiber connectivity project with Rogers/Shaw. This will be so we can offer higher-speed internet, cable television and phone services.

The IT department is also continuing to support Stqo:ya Construction with network connection, software and support for their day-to-day operational needs.

## **Other major completed and ongoing projects at Seabird Island IT are:**

- Installation of new building security, which will enhance security for all of our buildings and facilities
- Integrating Adobe Sign: the digitization of our paperwork to save our trees and preserve our environment
- Commercial building network upgrades to connect Nations Creations, Sqewqel Development Corp., Stqo:ya Construction and our warehouses to our network and firewall security
- Addition of Geo-fencing to safeguard us from malware and phishing scams from abroad
- Standardization of our staff IT equipment and cell phones

**Future IT projects** taking place at Seabird Island will include continued improvements to our websites, infrastructure upgrades throughout our buildings, standardizing our hardware and software, improving our services to staff, and planning for additional facilities on Seabird Island such as new homes and the Cultural Centre.

IT is always evolving, and with the continuous growth of Seabird we are endlessly seeking the best possible solutions to consistently enhance community internet connectivity and communication experience.

As we continue to grow, SIB IT continues to adapt to the changing needs of the community and the organization.

## **OVERALL**

Seabird Island continues to grow at a rapid pace, and IT has kept the pace in making necessary changes to meet the growing needs of the community. As we move forward, it is vital that Finance, Human Resources, IT, Records Management, Reception, and Purchasing/Procurement work more effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of the organization.

Finance and Administration staff continue to refine and improve our internal processes, inter-departmental coordination and communication. As our organization continues to grow, the Finance and Administration team has streamlined a fair number of processes and procedures to better meet the increased volume of transactions and growth at Seabird Island.

This year, the Human Resources team has continued to prioritize a decolonized and community-centered approach to supporting our employees. Guided by First Nations values of respect, inclusivity, and holistic wellness, we have worked to ensure that our practices align with the needs of both our staff and our community.

## GROWTH AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

At the heart of our work is the recognition that every team member plays a vital role in the success of our work, as well as the wellbeing of our community and the communities we serve. Our annual Performance Review provides an opportunity for employees to share their experiences, celebrate their strengths, and express what supports they require to flourish. This year, participation reached its highest level:

- 85% of employees shared their reflections
- 90% of direct supervisors engaged in meaningful feedback

Most importantly, **94% of our employees shared that they feel valued or deeply valued** — an increase from last year. The Early Childhood Development team had the highest number of employees expressing a strong sense of feeling highly valued.

To further promote a workplace of care, we introduced pop-up flower cards — messages of encouragement and support for employees returning from leave, or when facing health or life challenges. These messages, written by team members, serve as gentle reminders that no one walks their journey alone. The response has been overwhelmingly positive, and we look forward to continuing this tradition of kindness.

As we move forward, we will continue listening, learning and ensuring that every employee feels seen, heard and supported on their journey.

## MEDIATION AND TRADITIONAL HEALING

As a First Nations community and employer, we know that healing is best achieved through connection, understanding and shared responsibility. This year, we deepened our commitment to decolonizing workplace conflict resolution by welcoming an HR Generalist (Mediation and Traditional Healing). This role is dedicated to holding space for employees, facilitating healing circles and integrating traditional conflict resolution practices into our workplace.

Through these efforts, we have seen employees come together in new ways, working through challenges with a focus on a shared commitment to restoring balance and strengthening relationships, rather than assigning blame. These practices honour the wisdom of our ancestors, recognizing that true resolution is found through listening, storytelling and healing, not punitive approaches.

By grounding our workplace in these teachings, we continue to create an environment where employees feel supported, heard, and empowered to move forward together.

## WELCOMING NEW FACES AND STRENGTHENING OUR WORKFORCE

This year, our team grew — both in spirit and in numbers. We welcomed **59 new employees**, bringing our **total workforce to 395** team members. We also helped re-establish the Community Labour Pool to prioritize hiring Community Members for on-call work before recruiting externally. We also introduced drop-in hiring sessions for the Community Labour Pool to remove barriers and make it easier for interested candidates — especially Youth and Community Members — to explore job opportunities in a supportive and welcoming space.

**Some of the key roles we've added this year include:**

- Speech and Language Pathologist
- Natural Resources Coordinator
- Senior Executive Assistant
- Administrative Coordinator
- Senior Children, Youth, and Family Services Projects Manager
- Senior Health Projects Manager
- Physical Education Teacher
- Health & Safety Officer
- Traditional Food Practices Specialist
- Residential Maintenance Program Manager
- HR Generalist (Mediation and Traditional Healing)
- Geographic Information System Analyst
- Family Wellness and Preservation Specialist
- FireSmart Coordinator
- Student Engagement Coordinator
- Pathways and Activities Coordinator

We developed and hosted training sessions for management focused on requesting new positions, job postings and conducting interviews. In the coming fiscal year, we will continue to build on these efforts by offering additional training on onboarding, orientation, setting employees up for success, and integrating new staff into both workplace and community culture.

Turnover this fiscal year decreased to 18.7% for permanent employees, with 7.6% due to contract terms or funding ending.

We continue to hold gratitude for every employee who contributes their time, energy and heart to this organization. **Together, we are not just building a workforce — we are strengthening a community.**

**LIFELONG LEARNING AND CULTURAL HUMILITY**

Learning does not happen in isolation; it is an ongoing journey that requires openness, humility and a willingness to grow together. This year, our Annual Staff Development Day was focused on Cultural Humility Training, but due to a loss in the community we had to partially postpone the training. In the coming fiscal year, we hope to re-introduce this important team training. We also provided a learning opportunity for Team Communications training, ensuring employees feel confident expressing themselves and working collaboratively.

As we move forward, we remain committed to creating spaces for reflection, growth and learning that grounds our work in Cultural Humility.

**LOOKING AHEAD:**

As we step into a new year, we reaffirm our commitment to fostering a workplace that reflects the values of our people.

**Our goals include:**

- Reinforcing our welcoming process for new employees through an onboarding program that ensures new hires feel embraced and supported, as well as integrating Seabird Island's Cultural Humility framework into our practices
- Expanding Employee Wellness initiatives by integrating traditional healing, land-based activities and holistic supports to nurture the mind, body and spirit
- Ensuring policies align with workplace values, community culture, and legal principles to maintain a balance between regulatory requirements and the values of our people
- Strengthening workplace community care in times of illness by offering ongoing support to employees facing health challenges, ensuring they continue to feel connected and valued

# INTER-GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



Photographs:  
Community Salmon  
August 2024



## **INTER-GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DIRECTOR**

*Janice Parsey*

### **PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

*Membership*

*Policy*

*Fish, Wildlife & Natural Resources*

*Referrals*

*Aboriginal, Rights & Title*



## **INTER-GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS (IGA)**

The Inter-Government Affairs department gives Seabird Island a voice in bureaucratic arenas federally and provincially, and with Industry by engaging with external stakeholders, agencies and proponents. IGA's aim is to advocate for the Aboriginal Rights & Titles of Seabird Island First Nation Members in accordance with UNDRIP.

Director: Janice Parsey

Programs Include: Aboriginal Rights & Title, Policy, Fish & Wildlife, Natural Resources & Forestry, Referrals, Membership, Communications, Elders, Vitalization (Language and Traditional Teachings) and Recreation

## **2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:**

1. At the beginning of 2025, our department expanded to include Communications, Elders, Vitalization (Language and Traditional Teachings) and Recreation.
2. Lease agreement for past and future rental of Lot 259 (highway 7) was completed. With the future rent having a five-year term agreement to resolve the trespass of Highway 7, specific caveats have been included in the discussion to address access and drainage issues. This is a huge accomplishment in moving towards resolving the trespass created by the building of Highway 7.
3. The Enbridge Sunrise Project is requesting to create a loop through Seabird. There is no concrete decision, and a team of Council, IGA Strategic Advisor and Sq'ewqel continue to discuss the proposed project. There will be various assessments and studies conducted in the upcoming year.

# Aboriginal Rights & Title / Referrals

## ABORIGINAL RIGHTS & TITLE (AR&T)

Aboriginal Rights & Title affirm our right to our Traditional Territories and to maintain and protect the resources within our lands and waters. This forms the umbrella over all that we do in Inter-Government Affairs.

### 2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:

1. The division hired an AR&T Project Lead at the beginning of 2025.
2. Enbridge discussions continue to move forward. Assessments and studies will be conducted in the new year.
3. Working with the Ministry of Transportation on over 20 projects.
4. Continue to work to highlight the UNDRIP and DRIPA changes within the Forestry to move the Woodlot process forward.
5. Conducting information sessions with Council, Directors and senior staff in a collaborative approach moving towards self-governance.

## REFERRALS

A referral is a notice submitted by government agencies or private corporations to a First Nation to initiate consultation on a project that seeks to utilize lands and/or resources within our territory.

### 2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Continued to receive, review and respond to incoming referrals. A coordinated effort is required as referrals are received by our Referrals Coordinator and Assistant who then forward it to the IGA team for technical review and comments.
2. Hired an Inter-Government Affairs and Referrals Assistant to provide support in the referrals process.
3. Ongoing endeavor on implementing the Referrals Framework.

Our Policy Division works to develop policies based on the direction of Chief and Council to ensure that policies reflect the wishes of Seabird Members and the community. They also conduct external policy reviews at the provincial and national levels.

Policies are rules, actions and guidelines that protect Seabird Island's assets and its Members.

### **2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:**

Internal:

1. Committee Establishment and Disbandment Policy
2. Membership Committee Terms of Reference
3. Community Health Policy
4. Occupational Health and Safety Policies and Procedures
5. A:yelexw Center for Hope and Healing Policies and Procedures Manual
6. Parents Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

### **EXTERNAL:**

The enactment of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) Act in British Columbia has driven widespread legislative changes, requiring the Policy Division to engage with the Government and other stakeholders regarding these changes. The division has guided Chief and Council through amendments to various important legislations, including:

1. Police Amendment Act
2. Wildlife Act Review
3. Mineral Tenure Act
4. Heritage Conservation Act Transformation Project
5. Gaming Facility Policy Developments

# Fish & Wildlife

The Fish & Wildlife division addresses issues and opportunities pertaining to the conservation, protection and enhancement of animals and the natural environment within Seabird Island's traditional territory.

## 2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:

1. In 2023-2024 Seabird Island's Fish & Wildlife division launched a pilot program for surveying the Salmon spawners returning to the Maria Slough and monitoring the water quality of the slough. The pilot project was a success and will continue the surveys in 2024-2025. The Fish & Wildlife team established surveying routes for Salmon Spawner surveys, counting the number of live spawners and carcasses. The team began monitoring the dissolved oxygen and depth levels of multiple points along the slough and plans to expand the number of locations where this data is collected in 2024-2025. These projects will help the team to improve their understanding of the Maria Slough and identify key habitats and limiting factors for the success of spawning Salmon.
2. In August 2024, the Fish & Wildlife team worked with the DFO and contractors to excavate 1,400m length of channel downstream of Chaplin Road at a location known as Fishtrap Channel. The depreciating culvert was replaced with a modern box culvert by the District of Kent's engineers, and the channel was excavated to open the channel for spawner access. The response of spawners in October 2024 was incredible, with most of the observed Chinook spawning activity observed in that channel. DFO will be returning in summer 2025 to make the channel deeper and install large woody debris to improve the instream habitat year-round for all salmonids using the channel.
3. In January 2025, construction commenced on the Upper Maria Slough Restoration project to excavate a new channel and pond. The goal is to improve the quality of aquatic habitat with the creation of a year-round wetted channel along 800m of habitat overgrown with invasive Reed Canary Grass and removing barriers to fish passage. The project team will be removing the culvert later due to the sensitivity of habitat for Oregon Spotted Frog during overwintering. Effectiveness monitoring will assess how the site recovers and supports Salmonids with new access and refuge habitat.
4. In March 2025, we hosted the second annual Ripple Report community event to present results on the water quality monitoring and spawner survey programs from 2024. The event was well attended and many participants provided valuable feedback about Fish & Wildlife projects which will be used to improve and direct our projects toward the interests of the Seabird community.

The Fish & Wildlife division is excited to announce new opportunities for the community to become involved with our team and projects. In 2025, regular updates will be available on the Fish & Wildlife page of the Seabird Island Website. Also, our team will be offering the opportunity for members to join the team conducting fieldwork. A sign up will be available on the website or you can email [Jillian Stewart, Seabird's Biologist at FishandWildlife@seabirdisland.ca](mailto:Jillian.Stewart@seabirdisland.ca)

# Natural Resources & Forestry

The Natural Resource and Forestry division focuses on regaining control, access and rights to Seabird's traditional and natural resources. We advocate for protection from infringement of our rights and title over all resources in our territory. This past year, the Natural Resources and Forestry division has contributed to the stewardship of our natural resources, addressing environmental crises and broader challenges concerning sustainable development and conservation.

## 2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Launched and coordinated a heat map initiative for Seabird Island to support long-term climate adaptation planning by obtaining temperature data, identifying heat-vulnerable areas and informing emergency preparedness strategies.
2. Initiated the process to launch Seabird Island's first formal Evacuation Route Planning Project to strengthen community resilience and emergency preparedness.
3. (In 2024) Actively supported the initial stages of Seabird Island's efforts toward securing an area-based forest license and establishing an Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) aligned with Seabird's cultural values and sustainable forestry practices.
4. The Natural Resources Department is continuing to offer unwavering support to the Inter-Government Affairs team in advancing work on a Specific Claim related to land and resource use, reinforcing Seabird Island's rights and title.
5. Represented Seabird Island at a key forestry conference, fostering dialogue on Indigenous forestry leadership, sustainability and jurisdiction over forest resources within Tíyt Tribe territory.
6. Participated in a biophysical field assessment by Enbridge focused on identifying habitat for Oregon Spotted Frog and Oregon Forest Snail as part of broader environmental review and monitoring efforts within Seabird Island territory.



# Membership

Membership services at Seabird Island play a pivotal role in facilitating various administrative processes crucial to the well-being and recognition of our Members within the community and beyond. Membership can assist you with the services listed below:

- Minor/Adult Registration
- Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS) applications
- Certificate of Indian Status (CIS) applications
- Recording events and amendments into the Indian Registration System (IRS) such as marriages, divorces, deaths and legal name changes

**Do you need your status card renewed?**

**Does your child need to apply for registration under the Indian Act?**

Please contact Simone Jimmie at 604-796-2177 to set up an appointment!

Membership is now available from Monday – Friday from 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM.

## MEMBERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS 2024-2025

Membership has been working closely with the Membership Committee and our Policy team to engage with the community and inform them of the Membership Code revision. A Membership Code survey was made available to Seabird Members from October 2024 – February 2025. The goal was to gather feedback from the community to see what Members would like implemented in the revised Code. Membership and our Policy team will be compiling all paper and online surveys to analyze the data and create an updated Code.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Our Policy team will create a revised code and Seabirds Membership Committee will present the proposed amendments to Seabirds Chief and Council. A final review of the proposed amendments will be presented at the next Membership Code Community Meeting and the new proposed amendments to the Code will then go to a referendum.

Seabird Island's Elders division coordinates a variety of activities and programs to enrich the lives of our Elders on and off-Reserve. The division is focussed on the physical, emotional and spiritual wellness of Sq'ewqel's senior Members. Regular contact and connection with Elders help with a sense of belonging and purpose. Social activities contribute to mental wellbeing and can reduce loneliness and isolation. Monthly outings and fitness programs are also scheduled with the understanding that they contribute to the overall wellbeing of Elders.

The division also helps bring our Elders together for small and large gatherings. This year, they attended the Annual Gathering in August and hosted a lunch with Elders throughout the region.

The Elders program also assists with preparing annual tax returns, applying for Canada Pension Plan and other benefits, and online banking set-up.

The Genealogy project within the Elders Division is responsible for researching and tracing the lineage, history and family ties of individuals or groups. The genealogist explores and studies family histories, creates family trees, and establishes kinship and pedigrees for family members.

## 2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- Forty Elders attended the annual Elders' Gathering for 4 days in Vancouver.
- Completed 6 Elder's binders going back three generations — 1820s-1850s — with supporting documentation including but not limited to: baptism certificates, newspaper clippings, funeral pamphlets, census records, baptismal records, pictures, marriage, military records and death records.
- The regional luncheon that brought over 100 Elders together to reconnect and celebrate was a highlight.



# Recreation

The purpose of the Recreation Division is to provide a variety of physical and leisure activities for all age groups, contributing to the physical, social and mental well-being of individuals and the community. The Division uses three approaches to maximize resources: 1) direct delivery of activities, such as drop-in soccer, volleyball, etc. 2) partnership with other departments, such as Elder's fitness and chair yoga, and 3) contracted services to lead programs, such as Women's Self-Defense and Zumba.

Recreation introduced a variety of afternoon and evening activities and programs, including Zumba, Women's Self-Defense, indoor soccer, volleyball and boxing. Plans are underway to conduct a community survey to identify additional needs and interests. This will be used to expand opportunities in 2025-26.

## **2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:**

Re-opening the Fitness Centre for daily use by the community was the major undertaking of the reformed Recreation Division. Moving to a safe and secure 20-hour daily drop-in operating model has been highly successful, with over 100 people being issued access cards. Scheduled programming is also provided for Elders, Youth, and women.



# Communications

The Communications Division is a multi-faceted program unit that helps each Band Department create documents, reports and information materials. It designs print and digital notices, as well as produces the monthly Sq'ewqel Sqwélqwel Pipe (newspaper), the bimonthly and annual calendars, annual report, and many other documents. Over 650 different items were prepared by the Division this year.

The Communications Division is active in the support of most Band events and programs. The division is known for its photo sessions at Christmas, Easter and other community gatherings. Increasingly, Communications is the lead to community engagement, working with other departments to promote special projects and collect comments and input for consideration in planning and decision-making, such as with the Membership Code amendments and referendums.

The division is committed to continuous improvements and is working to implement additional media to its tool kit in the coming year.

## **2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS:**

Over 650 different promotions were prepared by the Division this year.

Communications' return to door-to-door delivery of the Sq'ewqel Sqwélqwel Pipe has been well received.



# Language Vitalization

## Language and Traditional Teachings

The Language Vitalization Department (LVD) aims to bring together researchers, students and practitioners to share knowledge and experience in language learning and revitalization. The LVD intends to minimize language loss, preserve Upriver halq'eméylem and reverse language shift by offering realistic techniques for local language vitalization projects, and promotes educational growth through a robust language revitalization strategy that directs the community's language vitalization efforts throughout time.

The Vitalization Language and Traditional Activities Division is responsible for the development of Halq'eméylem-specific curriculums for Seabird Island schools, as well as other language restoration programs across all departments.

A second group of staff participated in the 2024-25 certificate program provided in a partnership opportunity between Seabird Island Band and the University of the Fraser Valley. This intensive classroom opportunity provides an intensive foundation for infusing the language in the community.

The division is expanding into non-formal learning opportunities in halq'eméylem and coordinating heritage skills and knowledge programs open to all Members.

## 2024-25 YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

- UFV & SIB partnership
  - o Intermediate Upriver halq'eméylem Proficiency Certificate accredited programming offered and implemented for, but not limited to, band employees
    - 2024 (8 staff – 6 are band members)
    - 2025 (IP at the time of reporting)
  - o UVic Masters of Education specializing in Language Revitalization
  - o Graduate Certificate & Graduate Diploma graduates (Inaugural graduates in 2024) 2025 4 graduates
- Contributed to translations and sxwôxwiyám application to land laws and numerous programs
- Assistance with translations and name development
- URH research, documentation and resource development
- Draft Language Vitalization report
- Upriver halq'eméylem themed resources for K-12 teachers

# COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE





## **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE DIRECTOR**

*Jay Lambert*

### **PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

*Public Works*

*Housing*

*Capital Projects*

*Lands*

*Custodial*

*Events*

*Emergency*

*Fleet*

The Community Infrastructure Department supports Seabird Island's growth, safety, and wellbeing through a wide range of services. Our work spans six core areas—Public Works, Housing, Capital Projects, Custodial Services, Lands, Emergency Services, Fleet—and includes Events through the Culture and Community Services program. Together, these services help maintain a safe, functional, and culturally vibrant community.

Our work is guided by the Seabird Island Comprehensive Sustainable Community Plan (CSCP), which outlines community goals across five planning areas: Membership, Leadership, Environment, Community Development, and Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness. The department's activities contribute directly to these goals and reflect Seabird's commitment to long-term sustainability and self-reliance.

## Looking Ahead

Several major initiatives were approved or funded during the reporting period and are scheduled to begin after March 2025:

- Pipe:hom Road Family Units: Funding and approvals were secured for additional family housing units. Groundbreaking is scheduled for Fall 2025.
- Seabird Road Elevation: Planning and funding were secured for the future elevation of Seabird Road's south end. Surveying is scheduled to begin in Fall 2025, with construction planned for 2025–26.
- Band Office Addition: Approved and funded during the reporting period, with groundbreaking anticipated later in 2025.

These projects reflect Seabird's commitment to long-term planning, infrastructure resilience, and community development.

# Public Works

## PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works maintains Seabird’s core infrastructure and supports daily operations across the community. This includes roads, signage, lighting, drainage, and building systems. In 2024–25, the team focused on:

- Upgrading lighting systems for safety and energy efficiency.
- Supporting seasonal operations such as snow clearing, recycling events, and waste management.
- Enhancing building systems through preventative maintenance and repairs.
- Participating in emergency planning and tabletop exercises to ensure readiness.

## CSCP Alignment

- Environment Goal 1: Protect and enhance the environment for future generations
- Community Development Goal 1: Promote sustainable land use and capital planning
- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 6: Keep our community safe



# Capital Projects / Lands

## CAPITAL PROJECTS

Capital Projects oversees the planning and delivery of major construction and infrastructure upgrades. Highlights from 2024–25 include:

- Elders Complexes on Chowat Road: Construction was completed, and Elders moved in between January and February 2024.
- Family Units on Stsi'stem Drive: Construction began on new family housing units, with completion expected in 2025.
- Cultural Building: Construction began on Seabird Island's new Cultural Building, which will support cultural revitalization, gatherings, and inter-generational learning.

### CSCP Alignment

- Community Development Goal 1: Promote sustainable land use and capital planning
- Community Development Goal 2: Address our housing needs
- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 4: Work to protect and rebuild our culture
- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 5: Promote and celebrate our culture

## LANDS

The Lands program supported responsible land use, environmental stewardship, and community safety. Services included:

- Permitting for construction, events, and land use.
- Land governance and registration services.
- Special projects such as cemetery beautification and Indigenous plant revitalization.

### CSCP Alignment

- Environment Goal 1: Protect and enhance the environment for future generations
- Leadership Goal 5: Protect and promote our Aboriginal Rights and Title
- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 4: Work to protect and rebuild our culture



# Custodial & Venue Services

Custodial Services ensure that Seabird's buildings remain clean, safe, and ready for daily use and special events. In 2024–25, the team provided:

- Daily cleaning and sanitation across 14 buildings.
- Event setup and takedown in the Band Gym and other venues.
- Support for emergency cleanups and building safety inspections.

## CSCP Alignment

- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 6: Keep our community safe
- Leadership Goal 2: Ensure effective and accountable Administration

## EVENTS

The Events program played a key role in bringing the community together.

In 2023–24, the team:

- Coordinated seasonal and cultural events such as Christmas dinners, Halloween celebrations, and community dinners.
- Supported bookings and logistics for over 70 gym events and 50+ catered gatherings.
- Worked with Communications to promote events and share information with Members.
- Continued developing a comprehensive listing of events and programs for distribution.

## CSCP Alignment

- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 5: Promote and celebrate our culture
- Membership Goal 2: Cultivate a community culture of participation and engagement
- Leadership Goal 6: Ensure clear, accessible communication



The Seabird Island Fire Department and Emergency Preparedness team worked together to keep our community safe and prepared. Key activities included:

- Fire protection, rescue services, and safety education.
- Ongoing firefighter training and recruitment.
- Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) planning and activation.
- Response to natural disasters, extreme weather, and community emergencies.

#### CSCP Alignment

- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 6: Keep our community safe
- Leadership Goal 1: Ensure effective and accountable governance
- Environment Goal 1: Protect and enhance the environment for future generations

The Emergency Department helps prepare staff and community for emergency events that require intervention and surpass the need to call 911, such as major earthquakes or incidents that result in evacuations. Preparation includes community awareness events, organizing courses and emergency exercises, purchasing emergency equipment, creating emergency plans, and strengthening relationships with partner communities and agencies. All emergency preparation measures Seabird's Emergency Department completed in 2024 were 100% grant funded, including hiring Seabird Island's first FireSmart Coordinator!

#### 2024 Emergency Department Grants Received:

- Continuation of the Emergency Management Capacity funding from ISC
- Emergency Support Services (ESS) Equipment and Training from UBCM
- Emergency Operations Centres (EOC) Equipment and Training from UBCM
- FireSmart Community Funding from UBCM
- On-Reserve FireSmart Program from FNESS, ISC, and FireSmart BC
- Fighting and Managing Wildfires in a Changing Climate Program (Stream 3) from NRCan
- Flood Hazard Identification Mapping Program from NRCan
- Non-Structural Mitigation and Preparedness from ISC

The Emergency Department is actively working with the department of Inter-Government Affairs on two additional grants:

- Public Notification and Evacuation Route Planning from UBCM
- Indigenous Engagement Requirements from EMCR

Some of the grant income helped us purchase decals for the new Emergency Management pickup truck, two new sea cans and shelving for emergency equipment, swift-water rescue gear, wildfire PPE, FireSmart mitigation equipment and educational items, ESS supplied, boat safety gear, radios, and many more emergency-related items.

# Emergency Services

## **2024 COURSES EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT COORDINATE:**

- San'yas Cultural Training
- Incident Command System 100
- Incident Command System 200
- Incident Command System 400
- EOC Essentials
- EOC Planning
- EOC Logistics

## **2024 EXERCISES EMERGENCY SUPPORT SERVICES COORDINATED:**

- Emergency Support Services (ESS) exercise
- Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) exercise
- TransMountain Spill exercise
- Trans CAER training
- Earthquake Exercise

Fleet Services managed Seabird’s vehicle assets, including school buses, health transport, and public works equipment. The program ensured that vehicles were safe, reliable, and well-maintained.

**Key initiatives included:**

- Coordinating driver scheduling across departments.
- Upgrading equipment and replacing aging vehicles.
- Implementing systems for key tracking and fuel card management.
- Providing safety training for operators and exploring new training opportunities.

**CSCP Alignment**

- Community Development Goal 1: Promote sustainable land use and capital planning
- Culture, Health, Healing & Wellness Goal 6: Keep our community safe
- Leadership Goal 2: Ensure effective and accountable Administration

**Purchases:**

1. Seabird public works purchased a 2024 John Deere mower which was delivered in September 2024 from Prairie Coast Equipment in Chilliwack. This is to replace the aging 2010 Toro Mower that had come to the end of its life and maintenance costs were getting high.
2. Seabird School purchased a 2024- 35 passenger minibus from Dynamic Bus, which was delivered the end of October 2024. This bus was purchased through funding from FNEESC, the bus will be used for smaller field trips, saving on

fuel and maintenance on the larger school buses, increasing the longevity of the bus.

3. Seabird Public Works purchased a 2025 Gmc 1500, this was a new addition to the public works fleet, this was purchased as the public works crew lost a vehicle back to the newly reformed Seabird Housing Department.
4. The ECE Department recently purchased a 2025 Ford F450 bus for the ECE program, this bus was purchased from Dynamic Bus and was partially funded through FNEESC funding.

This bus will be replacing the 2010 Ford F450 bus that is currently used by the ECE program.

This bus is scheduled to be delivered in the fall of 2025.

5. Inter-Government Affairs purchased a 2007 Ford Ranger from Stoqya Construction, which is being used by the biologists.
6. Shipping and Receiving warehouse purchased a 2020 Chevrolet cube van for its operations at the new warehouse in Agassiz.

Public works trucks received a make over in early 2025, the 4 public works pickups received new decaling with the newer Seabird Logo, this will identify each truck as public works and the department within public works its attached too. The new design will be used moving forward on all Seabird fleet owned vehicles.

Seabird School- Bus fleet had its yearly inspection done by CVSE (Commercial

Vehicle Safety Enforcement) in the fall of 2024 and the bus fleet passed with only a couple of minor repairs needed on 2 of the 4 buses.

Seabird Fleet insurance was renewed March 2025, fleet and finance reviewed all coverages and made changes to some deductibles, which created a savings for the original insurance amount.

Seabird Fleet organized a training class for the public works team on the safe operation of the JCB Backhoe and the Bobcat Toolcat machines, these were put on by Griffith training and these were to have the operators of these pieces of equipment certified in the safe operation of the equipment.

Only employees that have successfully completed this training may operate these pieces of equipment.

Fleet Department day to day operations include scheduling of vehicles for staff, scheduling field trips and drivers for the school, scheduling vehicles and drivers for community events, out of school care field trips, elders monthly shopping and other monthly elder's outings.

Fleet is also responsible for scheduling day to day patient travel for the doctor's office and dentist office, along to other off Seabird medical appointments.

Vehicle maintenance and vehicle safety are a top priority of the fleet department, and they take pride in keeping the fleet vehicles running as smoothly as possible.

## **FLEET DEPARTMENT FUTURE PLANS**

The fleet department is working on a 3-5 year plan to replace the aging vehicles in the fleet

Seabird fleet storage yard- fleet has outgrown its available usable space in the yard, the yard needs repairs.

Respectfully Submitted by;  
Dwight Schneider  
Fleet Manager

The year 2024-25 for housing has been one that has seen changes within our organization. The team has expanded in the latter months, and this has been a good adjustment. The approval of new buildings can be seen in the land that cleared for them. Seabird continues to grow, and we are happy to be able to continue to accommodate most housing needs of our members.

## RENTAL UNITS

Seabird housing team now controls the rental collection for all our social housing units. We are working closely with our members that rent our homes to ensure we have up to date rental applications, tenancy agreements, repayment agreements for arrears and home inspections.

## HOME MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

Select Management took care of home maintenance requests until the end of the summer of 2024. We did some internal shifting within this program and began our own maintenance and repairs system building. At this time, we had eighteen empty units, we began the process of fixing up these units and to tending to rental unit needs too. We hired our first maintenance worker in January 2025 and have added another worker to the maintenance team. The first half of the fiscal year, **100 home inspections** were completed. We work closely with our capital projects manager in renovating homes that we have funds for.

## HOUSING TEAM

Our priority was team building with the new team members. We have gone from a team of one to a team of eight. At the end of the fiscal year for 2024-25, this team looks different from the one that started out, and we have been able to transition to a full working team that strives to improve our services in all ways from communication, to completing empty unit renovations, to fixing repairs needed in our homes and dealing with home emergencies as they arise.

## HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS

We are proud of our **new 10 unit Elder homes** on Chowat road, this was a real need, and we are happy to have our elders housed in a home that meets their needs. Our new townhomes on Sts'stem Road are beautiful, and we are happy to see our members move into them. We will continue to work towards more homes in our community and to keep up to the maintenance and repairs as best we can.



# Housing

The **SIB BC Housing Project** went out to tender in August 2024. This will bring new builds in the Pipehom and Steqoye area. This is led by the Projects Manager. These new homes will be multi-family homes, and we are excited to have them.

The **Fortis Heat Pump Project** has been under way. Fortis is moving to Smart meters in the next year, and they recognized there were some challenges with the older natural gas furnaces and hot water tanks connect

to the new meters. They had asked Seabird Island Band to consider being a pilot project to switch out the old ones and convert to dual fuel heat pumps and tankless hot water systems. **The estimated project is 800k.**

We recognize all housing assets, which includes our elders and special needs, we look assess their housing needs and try to identify where we can source funds to support the work that is needed to fix them.



# EDUCATION

Photographs:  
Seabird Island Community High School Grad  
June 2022





## **ACTING EDUCATION DIRECTOR**

*Barbra White*

### **PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

*Elementary School*

*High School*

*College*

*Employment Services*

- *Drivers Training*
- *Pre-employment Training*



# Youth Program

This year our Youth took part in many different activities, sports, learning and culture! Seabird Youth Workers are part of a support group for students at AESS. Each group connects Youth with supports and builds relationships between students and workers.

We collaborated on events and trips with Chawathil and Shxw'ow'hamel, including Cultural Youth Camp and visiting Kawkawa Lake for a canoe day with Indigenous Policing. Indigenous Policing brought their war canoe and hosted a BBQ for the Youth.

Other trips included Cultus Lake Waterslides, PNE, Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week, Reaper's Haunted Attraction and Corn Maze, Greendale Acres for pumpkin carving and fall festivities. Sq'ewqel Development Corporation sponsored two Youth to attend the Bear's Lair Entrepreneurship Workshop in Vancouver. Youth also had opportunities for further travel this year, including ziplining in Whistler, floating the canal in Penticton, and skiing or snowboarding at Apex Mountain Resort!

We are optimizing the program to better serve Youth. Our new Youth Connections Specialist

will foster relationships and connect Youth with supports so that they can learn more about who they are, envision their place in the wider world and plan for their future. A valued Elder has been supporting Youth regularly, sharing her knowledge and cooking skills.

Seabird's Driving and Employment program visited the Youth Centre throughout the fall to promote the supports they provide. The goal is to familiarize Youth with the staff so they feel more comfortable accessing services.

Seabird Skate Crew is one of the longest running aspects of the Youth Program. Its purpose is to create a consistent space for youth to bond while performing their sport. A professional skateboarder from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation spent time with the Youth to provide mentorship and create a short video of Youth skateboarding to showcase their skills. Three Seabird Skate Crew Members graduated and were presented with a skateboard as a token of congratulations and encouragement to keep moving forward. The Seabird Skate Crew is intentionally increasing opportunities for training, connection, skill building and learning.



# Seabird Island Community School

Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, each class has been learning on the land for one afternoon a week. This learning aims to connect students to the land and their culture in a meaningful way and is a step toward building on education jurisdiction for Seabird Island. The land-based learning initiative will expand next school year and will involve a full day for the school to learn together.

Some of the activities that were completed throughout the year include harvesting cedar and learning to prep and weave headbands, prepping and cooking fish using traditional methods, de-boning a deer, salting fish, and skinning a deer.

Additionally, connecting with families was high on our priority list. Throughout the year we welcomed families into the school with our welcome back barbeque,

parent-teacher dinner, make-and-take, literacy night, nutrition run, and our community Halloween event. These events help to foster connections between school and home, which are vital for student learning.



# Seabird Island Community School

## *Congratulations to the Lalme'Iwesawtexw Graduates (Seabird Island Community School)*



# EMPLOYMENT

Our Employment division provides employment counselling, career exploration, occupational skills training, job search strategies, employment retention supports, labour pool access, skills development, work experience, pre-employment supports, professional referrals, coaching, a driving school and more.

Seabird's driving program includes theory and in-car road lessons as well as transportation to tests. Financial support for fees is available for eligible students and anyone attending Lalme'lwesawtexw, Seabird College, pre-employment support programs and/or is a Seabird Island Band Member. This year's accomplishments include eight participants obtaining their Class 7 (L), 11 participants obtaining their (N) and two participants obtaining their Class 5.

We have celebrated many successful program participants this year; some enrolled in courses, determined career paths, obtained employment and exited income assistance. We raise awareness about our pre-employment support program and services at community coffee days in the communities that we serve.

We welcomed back 42 Youth to our summer Youth Initiative this year, which is intended to give young people aged 12-15 and 16-18 opportunities to gain experience, skills, confidence and community connection. Workshops addressed the world of work, on-the-job skills, mental well-being, physical health, team building, sexual health and harm reduction training.

We thank Chief Harris for opening this year's career fair with a record number of vendors (61) and over 300 attendees, including Youth and students.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO OUR FUNDERS:

Employment services funding is primarily funded by both Stó:lō Aboriginal Skills Employment Strategy (SASET) to provide Employment Assistance Services (EAS) at Seabird Island and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to provide the Pre-employment Supports Program (PESP) within 10 communities.





Graduation celebration of Piping class

This year marked a period of significant growth for the college. We experienced an impressive 30% increase in enrollment, reflecting the growing demand for quality education and the strength of our programs. With the support of our educational partners – IAHLA, Employment and Social Development Canada and First Nations Education Steering Committee – we have been able to expand

our course offerings, ensuring students have access to diverse learning opportunities that align with industry needs. Additionally, we secured new funding to launch an exciting culinary program at Seabird College, which will not only enhance student pathways but also support the local community by fostering skills in the thriving food and hospitality sector. These advancements highlight our ongoing



Hallowe'en Spooktacular

commitment to student success, workforce development, and community engagement. We look forward to building on this momentum in the coming year.

Beyond the classroom, we actively engaged with our community by hosting a Hallowe'en

Spooktacular, a Hot Dog Barbecue lunch, the Education Awards Dinner, and participating in a holiday 'Make and Take' event for the community school. These initiatives reflect our commitment to student success and community connection.



Education Awards Dinner

# HEALTH & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Photographs:  
Nutrition Walk/Run  
March 2023



## **HEALTH DIRECTOR**

*Arlene (Lolly) Andrew*

### **PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

#### **ALLIED HEALTH**

*Accupuncture  
Hearing Clinic  
Mammography  
Naturopath  
Optometry  
Massage Therapy  
Future Services Expansion*

#### **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

*Prevention & Safety Approach,  
Seabird Island Festival  
Resilience & Prevention - Justice  
Sexualized Resilience & Prevention  
Community Safety Line*

#### **HEALTH & WELLNESS**

*Annual Health Conference  
Breast Cancer Support Group  
Celebration of Life  
Candle Light Vigil  
Immunizations*

#### **HOME & COMMUNITY CARE**

*Home Care Nursing  
Better at Home*

#### **MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH**

*Maternal Child Health &  
Tem'elile Midwifery  
Annual Baby Welcome Celebration  
Life Giver Wellnes Home*

#### **MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS**

*Recovery Homes - A:YELEXW  
Youth Aims Project - THÍYTELH  
WELLNESS PROGRAM  
Counselling Services  
Family Develpment  
Family Home - A:YXALH:  
Child & Family Wellness*

#### **NUTRITION & WELLNESS**

*Community Fish Hampers  
Specialty Hampers  
Land to Table  
Meals on Wheels (MOW)  
Community Kitchen  
Nutrition Run*

#### **PRIMARY CARE**

*Doctors Clinic  
NP Clinic  
Highlights*

#### **SEABIRD ISLAND DENTAL CLINIC**

#### **PHARMACY**

The Allied Health team continues to provide culturally safe and holistic care that aligns with Indigenous values of wellness, balance, and community. These services are designed to complement traditional healing practices and support the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of community members.

We are pleased to report that all previously paused services have now resumed, with enhanced safety protocols and renewed commitments to cultural safety and trauma-informed care. Community feedback has been instrumental in shaping the return of these services in ways that are respectful and responsive to Indigenous needs.

## **ACUPUNCTURE:**

Acupuncture services are offered with cultural sensitivity and awareness of traditional Indigenous healing practices. Recognizing the holistic approach to health within Indigenous communities, acupuncture is presented as a complementary therapy that aligns with Indigenous values of balance and wellness. Practitioners are encouraged to engage in cultural safety training and collaborate with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers to ensure respectful integration of traditional and Western healing modalities.





## MASSAGE THERAPY:

Massage therapy is offered as a culturally safe and trauma-informed service that supports physical and emotional healing. Recognizing the importance of touch in traditional healing, massage therapists are trained to understand and respect Indigenous protocols and preferences. Services are adapted to meet the needs of Indigenous clients, with options for gender-specific care and collaboration with traditional healers when appropriate.

- Infused and active through various community health and wellness events in 2024-25.

## FUTURE SERVICE EXPANSION:

In response to community needs and feedback, the Allied Health team is planning to expand services to include:

- Kinesiologist: To support physical rehabilitation, mobility, and chronic disease management through movement-based therapies that align with holistic wellness.
- Physiotherapist: To provide culturally safe physical therapy services, focusing on recovery, strength-building, and improving quality of life for community members of all ages.

These additions will further enhance the continuum of care available and reflect our commitment to supporting Indigenous health and healing through integrated, respectful, and community-driven approaches.



# Community Safety

## PREVENTION AND SAFETY SEABIRD ISLAND FESTIVAL 2025:

### Wellness & Safety Approach:

As part of Seabird Island’s Wellness & Safety Strategy, a collaborative team of staff and partners, including Fraser Health, FNHA, and other wellness organizations provided trauma-informed, culturally safe, and harm reduction-oriented support during the Seabird Island Festival (May 23–25, 2025).

### Key components of the initiative included:

- Safety Zones: Designated calm spaces offering hydration, rest, and emotional support.
- Mobile Wellness Teams: Circulated the festival grounds to check in with guests, distribute supplies, and guide individuals to appropriate supports.
- On-site Support: Team members provided compassionate, non-judgmental care, emphasizing cultural humility and relational accountability.
- Collaborative Presence: Staff worked closely with Seabird leadership and external partners to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all attendees.

Volunteers were easily identified by designated bandanas and received orientation upon arrival. Meals, breaks, and logistical support were provided to ensure a positive and sustainable experience for all team members.

This initiative exemplified Seabird Island’s commitment to community wellness, safety, and inclusion, reinforcing the value of collective care and cultural respect during large community gatherings.

## RESILIENCE AND PREVENTION – JUSTICE

Seabird Island is committed to fostering safety, healing, and justice through a culturally grounded, community-led approach. Our justice work is rooted in Indigenous values, trauma-informed practices, and harm reduction, and continues to evolve in response to the needs of our people.

This work is carried out through a collaborative, team-based model that supports individuals and families impacted by the justice system. Together, we walk alongside community members to reduce barriers, promote healing, and strengthen pathways to reintegration and well-being.

### Key areas of focus include:

- Supporting individuals in understanding and accessing legal, social, and health systems.
- Promoting accountability, healing, and reconciliation through culturally appropriate approaches.
- Responding to urgent needs with compassion and care.
- Embedding Indigenous teachings into service delivery and raising awareness about justice and prevention.
- Working closely with justice, health, and social service partners to provide coordinated, wraparound support.

This work is ongoing and adaptive, guided by community voices and grounded in the belief that justice must be relational, inclusive, and healing. As we continue to grow and learn, Seabird Island remains committed to building a safer, more just future for all.

# Community Safety

## SEXUALIZED RESILIENCE AND PREVENTION

The Resilience and Prevention Program at Seabird Island is dedicated to fostering a safe, supportive, and resilient community. Our work is rooted in culturally safe and inclusive practices that honor and integrate First Nations knowledge, traditions, and ways of being.

In 2024-2025, the team supported an annual total of 196 individual interactions, not including outreach through community events from an age range of 8-76 years old.

The team focuses on the coordination, delivery, and continuous improvement of programs that promote healing, resilience, and the prevention of sexual violence. This includes program development, documentation, reporting, partnership building, and securing funding to sustain and expand services.

Direct support is provided through trauma-informed and culturally responsive approaches, including one-on-one and group-based interventions, system navigation, and accompaniment to essential appointments such as medical, legal, and justice-related services.

Community engagement remains a core component of our work. The team facilitates one to one or family engagement, talking circles, and educational events that promote awareness, healing, and prevention. Training initiatives cover topics such as consent, healthy relationships, traditional teachings, and community safety, with strong collaboration from Elders, youth, and local stakeholders.

The Resilience and Prevention Team continues to walk alongside survivors and families, offering compassionate support and fostering strength and healing at a pace that reflects each individual's readiness and needs.

### SEABIRD ISLAND COMMUNITY SAFETY LINE

For non-emergencies and support outside regular office hours (after 4:00 PM, weekends, and holidays), community members can call the confidential Community Safety Line.

Leave a voicemail, and a team member will return your call. This service ensures continued access to support during evenings, weekends, and holidays.

**Phone: 604-796-6900**

## ANNUAL HEALTH CONFERENCE Returns with a **Focus on Self-Care**

After a multi-year hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Annual Health Conference made a vibrant return, centered around the timely and essential theme of Self-Care. With a holistic approach encompassing mind, body, and spirit, the event served as a powerful re-connection point for our communities, fostering healing and resilience after years of isolation.

The conference welcomed over 100 attendees from our partnering communities, each guest received a thoughtfully curated swag bag, including a cozy hooded sweater emblazoned with the Health Conference logo. The atmosphere was further energized by a prize wheel draw, offering a variety of beautiful door prizes and sparking joy throughout the day.

The day commenced with a moving cultural performance by Registered Nurse Cheyenne Gardner and John Williams, whose drumming and singing grounded the event in tradition and gratitude. Their contributions also marked the opening of both lunch and dinner, creating a rhythm of reflection and celebration. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Cheyenne and John for sharing their gifts.

This year's conference featured ten engaging breakout sessions, each designed to promote self-care through diverse practices:

- Healthy Cooking
- Traditional Medicines
- Reiki
- Fitness
- FNHA Self-Care
- Smudging
- Indigenous Tea
- Yoga

- Sound Healing
- Project AIM

Participants explored new strategies for nurturing their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Between sessions, attendees heard from a dynamic lineup of guest speakers addressing critical topics such as:

- Diabetes
- Trauma and Healing
- Easy Meal Prepping

Val Thomson from the Nutrition Department played a pivotal role in both organizing and presenting. Her workshops on Meal Planning and Batch Cooking, along with a keynote on Budget-Friendly, Nutritious Meal Plans, provided practical tools for sustainable healthy eating.

The Nutrition Department also curated plant-based meals that were both delicious and educational. Breakfast featured an Oatmeal Bar with a variety of toppings, while lunch offered a customizable Baked Potato & Chili Bar. These meals showcased how vegetarian cooking can be nutritious, affordable, and easy to prepare. Attendees received recipe cards to encourage continued healthy eating at home.

The conference concluded with a catered dinner featuring roast, mashed potatoes, homemade macaroni and cheese, and assorted salads, followed by a delightful dessert. The evening's highlight was a performance by "Got Land?" Indigenous Comics, whose humor and storytelling brought laughter and connection to the room, closing the day on a joyful note.

## BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP - GROUP CHRISTMAS EVENT:

### “Laughter is the Best Medicine”

On November 22, 2024, fourteen First Nations individuals from six Stó:lō Nation communities came together to celebrate an early Christmas and embrace the joy of life. The theme of the day was “Laughter is the Best Medicine,” and the goal was simple yet profound: to lift the hearts and spirits of each participant.

Each person in attendance had faced personal loss, health challenges, or the weight of global concerns beyond their control. But for this one day, we embraced the wisdom of the Irish saying, “The cares of tomorrow will wait till this day is done.”

Our journey began with Chief Jim Harris at the wheel, skillfully navigating a highway closure, rainy weather, and city traffic. With just 20 minutes to spare, we arrived at Canada Place for an unforgettable experience at FlyOver Canada. The breathtaking aerial tour offered a glimpse of our beautiful country from coast to coast—many of us saw places we’ve never had the chance to visit. Smiles lit up faces, and laughter echoed as we soared above the stunning landscapes.

The second feature, a magical flight to the North Pole was the perfect festive touch, truly the “icing on the cake.” Spirits were high as we boarded the bus and made our way to Abbotsford for a delicious meal at Dragon Fort Restaurant.

Gathered around the table, participants eagerly shared their favourite Christmas memories. Stories of oranges in wooden crates, horse-drawn sleigh rides on Christmas Eve, and the sound of church bells ringing brought us back to cherished moments of the past. The laughter and heartfelt recollections confirmed that our mission had been accomplished.

The ride home was filled with Christmas music, warm conversation, and a sense of connection. Each guest left with a thoughtfully prepared gift bag filled with personal items to enjoy during the holiday season.

This event was a beautiful reminder that even in the face of hardship, joy, laughter, and community can be powerful medicine.

## CELEBRATION OF LIFE: - CANDLELIGHT VIGIL:

### “Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep”

The Elders Room at the Seabird Island Band Office was filled with warmth and remembrance as community members gathered on a Friday evening to honour loved ones who have passed. The space came alive with stories, memories of Alaskan cruises, past Candle Light Vigils, looney auctions, and even the unforgettable fashion show where “Elvis” made his debut. These shared moments offered comfort, especially to those still navigating life without their cherished person, grandparent, or loved one.

The evening began with a powerful opening by the Seabird Drummers, all women, whose voices rose strong and sure, reaching toward the heavens. A delicious supper was shared, bringing people together in fellowship and healing.

As the ceremony unfolded, memory candles were lit - symbols of hope, courage, remembrance, and love. A reverent hush fell over the room as each person stepped forward to light their candle, clutching a hand-carved stone angel, a gift of memory and comfort. Emotions ran deep as memories surfaced, and the presence of clients from the

Recovery Home, accompanied by staff, added to the sense of community and support.

The theme of the evening, “Do not cry for me, I am happier than you know, I just beat you there,” resonated deeply. Staff were present to offer encouragement, connect attendees to resources, and promote self-care and outreach to others who may be struggling with grief or loneliness.

One community member brought photos of her father impersonating Elvis at the fashion show - a touching tribute that reminded everyone of the joy and laughter shared in past gatherings. In a community that has experienced many losses, each memory shared was a thread in the fabric of collective healing.

To close the evening, door prizes were drawn, bringing smiles through the tears. The event was a meaningful blend of reflection, connection, and hope. Following the vigil, one participant shared in an email how profoundly helpful and “powerful” the evening had been for her a testament to the impact of coming together in remembrance and support.



## IMMUNIZATIONS:

Seabird Island continues to demonstrate strong performance in infant and childhood immunization rates, exceeding regional benchmarks within Fraser Health. Public Health Nurses provide immunizations to clients of all ages and offer a wide range of additional services to support community wellness.

### These services include:

- Tuberculosis (TB) testing
- Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) screening
- PAP and HPV testing
- Birth control support and provision
- Condom distribution
- School health services, including immunizations, health education, and a weekly youth drop-in clinic

Through these efforts, Seabird Island's Public Health Nursing team plays a vital role in promoting health, preventing disease, and supporting individuals and families across the community.

Seabird Island Community Health Nursing Services support several surrounding communities, the statistics and activities outlined here reflect direct interactions and services provided specifically to Seabird Island community members:

### Immunization Services Summary:

- Total number of clients who received immunizations during the reporting period: **254**
- Total number of immunizations administered during the reporting period: **664**

# Home and Community Care

## HOME CARE

Home Care remains a vital and high-demand service within the Seabird Island community. In 2024/25, our dedicated team of Nurses and Licensed Care Aides provided over 655 home visits, supporting clients, especially Elders, in maintaining independence and remaining in their homes for as long as possible.

When hospitalization is necessary, the team continues to offer compassionate support to both clients and their families, assisting with discharge planning to ensure a smooth transition from hospital to home.

The program also facilitates access to essential medical equipment such as commodes, handrails, walkers, and hospital beds. Daily care services provided by our Care Aides include personal care assistance, medication management, meal preparation, and light housekeeping.

In addition to serving Seabird Island, the Home and Community Care Program extends services to neighboring communities including Boothroyd, Chawathil, Cheam, Kwak'waw'apilt, Scowlitz, Shx'wow'hamel, Skwah, Squiala, and Union Bar.

### 2024/25 Highlights for Seabird Island include:

Home Visits	Office Visits	Phone Calls	Wound Care	Hospitalizations
655	475	104	131	12

## BETTER AT HOME:

Over the past year, the Better at Home program provided a total of 4,443 hours of community support services across 19 communities. These services were designed to help Elders and community members live independently and safely in their homes.

The most requested service was **yard work, accounting for 3,675 hours**, followed by **gutter cleaning with 357 hours**. Additional services included **firewood chopping and stacking (131 hours)**, **snow shoveling (83 hours)**, **group socials and activities (113 hours)**, and miscellaneous support (**84 hours**).

### Communities served through regional program:

- Aitchelitz
- Chawathil
- Cheam
- Kwaw-kwaw-aplit
- Leq' a: mel
- Matsqui
- Peters
- Scowlitz
- Seabird
- Shxw'ow'hamel
- Shxwha':y
- Skowkale
- Skwah
- Soowahlie
- Squiala
- Sts'ailes
- Sumas
- Tzeachten
- Yakweakwioose

**FOOTCARE:** 156 community members received footcare by our trained footcare nurses in 2024/25. This important service has prevented serious disease for diabetic patients, ensuring that permanent disabilities that impact walking are addressed early.

# Maternal Child Health

## MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAM & TEM'ELÍLE MIDWIFERY

The Maternal Child Health (MCH) initiative is a heartfelt commitment to nurturing the full spectrum of wellness for Indigenous mothers, children, and families. Through culturally safe, confidential, and holistic care, MCH honours the sacred journey of life from birth to end of life guided by Indigenous values and the enduring principles of truth and reconciliation.

At the heart of this initiative is a deep respect for traditional knowledge and practices. MCH seeks to restore and uplift traditional birth practices, working alongside knowledge keepers, respected aunties (kwiyo:s), and matriarchs who carry the wisdom of generations. Their presence ensures that care is not only clinically sound but spiritually and culturally rooted.

MCH is a voluntary, low-barrier support system designed to meet the unique needs of Indigenous families whether they live on or off reserve as a one of a kind regional program. By offering a monthly cash incentive, the program helps ease financial pressures while creating opportunities for families to access education, primary care, and community services through trusted and culturally grounded supports.

Our approach is compassionate, trauma-informed, and culturally safe, walking alongside families through their prenatal and postpartum journeys and beyond. We honour each family's story and traditions, recognizing the seasonal rhythms of Indigenous life and the sacredness of every life stage.

The MCH team is composed of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and Kwiyo:s "respected aunties" whose lived experience and professional expertise enrich every interaction. Their certifications span lactation consultation, contraceptive and STI management, and child passenger safety education, ensuring a well-rounded and deeply

informed care experience.

With a wraparound, collaborative approach, we co-create personalized pathways for each family's wellness journey. Our services include:

- a. Prenatal and postnatal education
- b. Newborn assessments
- c. Family planning
- d. Contraceptive management
- e. Lactation consultant services
- f. STI education and management
- g. Car seat education
- h. Transportation support
- i. Emergency supplies of diapers, wipes, and formula
- j. Monthly online Zoom classes with food bag incentives
- k. An exclusive Facebook group for connection and education

Through every interaction, the MCH initiative strives to uplift families, restore traditions, and foster a future where Indigenous maternal and child wellness is celebrated, supported, and sustained.

### Program Impact(s)

The Maternal Child Health (MCH) team continues to make a meaningful impact across the region, averaging **1,896 visits** annually. These visits span a variety of formats including telehealth, clinic-based care, and home visits, ensuring accessibility and flexibility for families wherever they are.

A vital partner in this work is Tem'elíle Midwifery (Salmonberry Time), which collaborates closely with the MCH team to provide culturally grounded, voluntary midwifery care. Over the past year, Tem'elíle supported **92 clients** and was present for **57 births**, helping to bring new life into the world with dignity, cultural safety, and care.



## ANNUAL BABY WELCOMING CELEBRATION

Each spring, the Maternal Child Health (MCH) program proudly hosts its Annual Baby Welcoming Celebration, a sacred and joyful ceremony that honours all families who have participated in the program throughout the year. In 2024–2025, we invited **60 families** to join us in celebration, with over **320 community members** gathering to welcome the newest little ones earthside.

This uplifting event is far more than a celebration, it is a ceremonial acknowledgment of birth, community, and our deep-rooted connection to the land. It reflects our shared commitment to nurturing future generations in ways that are grounded in culture, community, love, and belonging.

This year, we were honoured to collaborate with Seabird Island Community School, where **over 50 youth and children** danced in a circle around our families and newborns - a powerful act of honour and celebration that recognized the sacredness of this milestone. Their

movement as medicine, joy, and presence embodied the inter-generational strength and unity of our community as one.

The celebration also featured a shared meal and hands-on activities that reclaimed and revitalized traditional wellness practices. Families enjoyed Bannock and hot chocolate through a “make and take” experience, and had the opportunity to create child-safe traditional salves, reinforcing ancestral knowledge in everyday care. We also honoured dental health and wellness, weaving it into the event as part of our holistic approach to family wellbeing.

Together, we celebrated not only the arrival of new life, but the enduring strength of our community, our traditions, and our collective journey toward wellness.



# Maternal Child Health

## LIFE GIVER WELLNESS HOME:

The Life Givers Wellness Home is a Seabird Island-led initiative focused on restoring Indigenous birth and wellness practices to our communities. Grounded in culturally safe and trauma-informed care, the program supports First Nations women and families throughout their reproductive health journeys - reclaiming traditional midwifery, ceremonies, and teachings that were disrupted by colonization.

Historically, birth was a sacred event held within the community, guided by grandmothers, aunties, and midwives who carried the knowledge of medicines, songs, and ceremonies. Colonization disrupted these practices, replacing them with Western systems that often alienated Indigenous families and created lasting harm. The Life Givers Wellness Home responds to these harms by creating a space where birth is once again a community-held, culturally grounded experience.

In 2024–25, renovations began on the new location of the Life Givers Wellness Home. This marks a significant milestone in our journey to reclaim reproductive wellness and sovereignty. We anticipate opening the home in 2025–26, offering a dedicated space where families can receive care rooted in tradition, dignity, and respect.

### Key Objectives:

- Restore birth, parenting, and reproductive wellness to Indigenous communities

- Ensure every Life Giver receives culturally safe, respectful care
- Integrate traditional midwifery, land-based healing, and ceremony into the birth journey

This initiative is not just about healthcare, it is about healing generations, reclaiming strength, and ensuring that babies are welcomed into the arms of their people with love, ceremony, and ancestral connection.

### Vision for the Future:

- Birth is returned to communities
- Families feel safe, supported, and uplifted
- Babies are welcomed with ceremony, songs, and the love of their people
- Reproductive care is rooted in sovereignty and cultural safety
- Parents walk with confidence, supported by community
- Teachings from moon time to postpartum are passed down
- Two-Spirit, LGBTQ+, and gender-diverse birth givers are fully seen and respected
- Traditional midwives, doulas, and Aunties walk alongside families once again

The Life Givers Wellness Home is a powerful step toward restoring what was never truly lost, only held in the hearts of our grandmothers and the resilience of our people.

# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

We support clients in achieving holistic wellness - mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional, fostering strong families and contributing to a thriving, resilient community through culturally grounded mental health and wellness services.

## **RECOVERY HOMES “ A:YELEXW” - Centre for Hope and Healing**

The Men’s and Women’s Recovery Homes continue to provide culturally safe, supportive programs for individuals on their healing journeys from substance dependence. In 2024, both homes temporarily closed to allow for a comprehensive restructuring of the program. This renewal focused on identifying and removing barriers to entry, ensuring greater accessibility for those seeking support. The Women’s Home closed in March 2024 and reopened in August. The Men’s Home closed in August 2024 and reopened later that same month.

During the 2024–2025 period, each home welcomed 12 clients, offering up to one year of residence in a culturally grounded, supportive environment. Clients participated in a wide range of healing and wellness activities, including:

- Sweat lodge ceremonies
- Longhouse gatherings
- Spirit baths
- Individual and group counselling
- Access to primary care
- Employment services
- Enrollment at Seabird College
- Workshops and circle with knowledge keepers
- Traditional harvesting on the land
- Drum circles

In addition to receiving care, clients gave back to the community by volunteering at events such as fish processing, hamper distribution, Christmas celebrations, and other community gatherings. Their contributions reflected the deep gratitude and connection fostered through the program.

Looking ahead to 2025, the Recovery Homes will launch refreshed promotional materials and strengthen collaboration with other First Nations communities and service organizations across the region. These efforts aim to expand outreach and ensure more individuals can access the healing and hope offered through A:yelexw.

The impact of the Recovery Homes is deeply felt, transforming lives, reconnecting families, and reinforcing the strength of community through culturally rooted care.



# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS



## YOUTH AIMS PROJECT - THÍYTELH WELLNESS PROGRAM

The Thíytelh Wellness Program supports Indigenous young adults (ages 19–26) from Seabird Island and neighboring Fraser Salish communities, including Stó:lō, Nlaka’pamux, and Coast Salish Nations. In its inaugural year, the program focused on establishing a strong foundation through a phased approach, prioritizing community-based pre-treatment and post-treatment supports while the bed-based component remains in development.

### Highlights:

- Young adults engaged in wellness circles, land-based healing, cultural teachings, and skill-building sessions led by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and clinical staff. Individualized wellness plans were developed to support stabilization and recovery.
- The program now serves as a referral and readiness pathway to future bed-based services, with structured engagement during wait periods and piloted post-treatment supports to reduce relapse and promote reintegration.
- Key frameworks - including the Model of Care, Clinical Service Plan, and Operations Plan Mobile were finalized in collaboration with Fraser Health. Staffing and operational strategies were established to ensure readiness for residential service delivery.
- Targeted sessions with youth, families, and regional partners helped refine the program design and ensure cultural safety.
- Soft-launch activities allowed the community to experience the program firsthand, fostering confidence and laying the groundwork for future participant recruitment.

The Thíytelh Wellness Program continues to evolve, guided by community voices and a commitment to culturally safe, holistic care for Indigenous youth.



# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## COUNSELLING SERVICES

### Primary Care Mental Health Services:

In 2024–2025, 216 patients accessed mental health support through our primary care services. These services included individual counselling, medication management, and referrals to specialized care, ensuring a holistic approach to mental wellness.

### Community Counselling Services:

Our four-member trauma-informed counselling team continued to provide vital mental health support across the Seabird Island community completing **983 sessions** (individual and group). Rooted in the values of respect, relationship, and healing, the team offered both clinical services and culturally safe care tailored to the unique needs of community members.

This year, the team brought specialized expertise in Play Therapy, Forest Therapy, Substance Use Counselling, 2SLGBTQIA+ Inclusive Counselling, Youth Counselling, and Women’s Counselling. With extensive education, training, and experience, they supported individuals of all ages navigating addiction, life transitions, grief and loss, mental health challenges (diagnosed and undiagnosed), family breakdown, relationship issues, suicidal ideation, self-harm, behavioural concerns, inter-generational trauma, and complex trauma.

Beyond individual and family counselling, the team facilitated a women’s support group, the Wellbriety program, a 2SLGBTQIA+ Pride event, crisis response services, and staff debriefings. They also attended community ceremonies, celebrations, and gatherings—offering mental health support and lending a helping hand wherever needed. Their presence during emergencies provided critical support to families in crisis.

Collaboration remained central to their approach. The team worked closely with care teams, delegated agencies, schools, medical professionals, and other service providers to ensure wraparound care. As strong advocates, they also connected clients with extended community resources to meet their evolving needs.

Despite staffing challenges due to leaves of absence, the counselling team remained a cornerstone of healing, inclusion, and resilience. Their unwavering commitment to cultural humility and holistic wellness continues to make a meaningful impact in the lives of those they serve.



# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## **FAMILY DEVELOPMENT:**

The Family Development Team at Seabird Island continues to play a pivotal role in promoting the health and wellness of families through culturally grounded, trauma-informed services. Rooted in the values of respect, inclusivity, and Indigenous knowledge, the team works collaboratively across Health Services and Departments to support holistic well-being.

In 2025, Family Development Workers delivered personalized support through client assessments, individualized care planning, and coordinated case management. They facilitated educational workshops, responded to community referrals, and maintained accurate, confidential documentation to ensure high-quality service delivery.

Remaining responsive to evolving community needs, the team identified service gaps and advocated for enhanced programming. Their efforts have strengthened family resilience and supported pathways to independence and healing.

## **Support Services Include:**

- Cultural wellness and outreach
- Referrals and application assistance
- Family care plan development
- Mental health and addictions support
- Parenting education and mentorship
- Advocacy and goal setting
- Family connection time

The Family Development Team is deeply committed to empowering families through compassionate, culturally safe, and holistic support.

## **FAMILY HOME - A:YXALH:**

The A:yxalh Family Home is a voluntary, live-in support program designed to help families on their journey toward reunification. Families with open protection files through MCFD, Xyolhemeylh, or other delegated agencies may apply to reside in the home for up to one year.

This four-unit residence offers a safe, culturally grounded, trauma-informed environment where families receive holistic, non-judgmental support from Seabird Life Skills Coaches. Our coaches provide personalized, strength-based guidance focused on health, wellness, and parenting goals. Through daily mentorship and compassionate care, parents are supported in rebuilding relationships with their children and restoring family unity.

At A:yxalh, we walk alongside families through every challenge, triumph, and healing moment. We are honored to be part of their journey, supporting them in becoming strong, safe, and connected, and rediscovering themselves as empowered, nurturing caregivers.

## **CHILD AND FAMILY WELLNESS**

The Seabird Island Family Wellness Team provides trauma-informed care, advocacy, intervention, and support for families in immediate need. Our team walks alongside families navigating involvement with external delegated agencies such as MCFD and Xyolhemeylh, helping them understand their rights and the rights of their children and youth in protection cases.

We work collaboratively with families and agencies to develop comprehensive care plans, connect families to resources and culturally appropriate programming, and support each member with their unique needs. In times of crisis, our team responds promptly and ensures that the voices of families and individuals are heard and respected.

# NUTRITION AND WELLNESS

## COMMUNITY FISH HAMPER:

Fish particularly salmon hold deep cultural, spiritual, and nutritional significance for Indigenous peoples. They are central to traditional diets, seasonal harvesting practices, and community gatherings. The distribution of fish, especially to Elders, reflects a commitment to cultural continuity, respect for traditional food systems, and the health and well-being of Indigenous families. This initiative not only supports food security but also strengthens inter-generational connections and cultural resilience.

In 2024, the community came together for a successful fish distribution event, despite extremely short notice. Over 45 volunteers participated, including SIB staff, Fraser Health Authority (FHA), community members, Chief & Council, and Elders. Their collective efforts ensured that fish reached households both on and off reserve.

### A total of 409 households received fish:

- 194 of 235 on-reserve households
- 179 off-reserve local households
- 36 off-reserve distant households

### Elders received a significant portion of processed fish, including:

- 221 vacuum-sealed packs
- 125 pint jars
- 20 half-pint jars



## SPECIALTY HAMPERS:

Launched in late 2024, the Circle of Care Hamper is a pilot initiative developed to support high-risk families with school-aged children by promoting food security and access to essential care items during scheduled school breaks.

The hampers are thoughtfully assembled. Once eligible families are identified, the team engages directly with each household to gather information on personal preferences and demographic details, ensuring the contents are tailored to meet individual needs.

### Each hamper typically includes (subject to seasonal availability):

- **Household hygiene products:** dish soap, hand soap, laundry detergent, disinfectant wipes
- **Baby care items:** diapers, baby wipes, infant formula
- **Meal support:** ingredients and recipe cards for five nutritious meals
- **Pantry staples:** boxed meals, children's snacks
- **Fresh produce:** pre-cut vegetables with dips
- **Protein:** fresh meat selections

### Participation Statistics

- **December 2024:** 21 families served
- **March 2025:** 24 families served

# NUTRITION AND WELLNESS

## LAND TO TABLE:

Established in 2025, the Land to Table Program is a new initiative within the Sq'ewqel Community that brings together two key roles: the Traditional Food Practices Specialist and the Food Sovereignty Coordinator. While each position has distinct responsibilities, both are united in their mission to address food security inequities through culturally grounded and land-based approaches.

The program takes a holistic view of food insecurity, emphasizing self-reliance through the revitalization of localized food systems. This includes traditional practices such as hunting, fishing, gathering, and sustainable crop cultivation rooted in ancestral knowledge and land stewardship.

In its inaugural year, the Land to Table Program hosted a variety of workshops focused on skill-building and community engagement. These included plant propagation, irrigation installation, plant care, mushroom foraging, berry picking, fishing, and upcoming hunting workshops. These activities have helped reconnect community members with traditional food practices while fostering hands-on learning.

In addition to its educational focus, the program also supports food acquisition for internal community use. Harvested produce, wild game, and forest foods are either distributed directly to essential programs such as the Sq'ewqel Food Bank, Lunch Programs, Elders Programs, and Meals on Wheels or processed and stored in the community warehouse for future use.

Though still in its early stages, the Land to Table Program is steadily growing. Its foundational goal remains the revitalization of food self-sufficiency within the Sq'ewqel Community, guided by traditional knowledge and sustainable cultivation of staple food crops.

## MEALS ON WHEELS “MOW”:

The Meals on Wheels program currently serves **50 community members**, providing nutritious, home-style meals twice per week. This service is designed to support individuals who are unable to prepare meals independently due to health or wellness challenges.

Our dedicated team of cooks and delivery drivers take pride in offering this essential service, ensuring that clients receive not only nourishing food but also a sense of care and connection.

In the 2025/26 fiscal year, the program will undergo a comprehensive review to assess its effectiveness in meeting community needs. This review will focus on enhancing meal offerings to better reflect the cultural preferences and dietary requirements of our clients, ensuring continued relevance and satisfaction.



# NUTRITION AND WELLNESS

## COMMUNITY KITCHEN: FOOD AS MEDICINE:

This year, the Community Kitchen continued to thrive as a culturally grounded initiative rooted in the principle of food as medicine. The program brought community members together to nourish one another, explore seasonal foods, share laughter, and build connections through cooking and learning.

A highlight of the year was the series of community field trips, including visits to local berry farms and engaging in recipe exploration centered around fish, inspired by an abundant fishing season and the community fish hampers. These experiences deepened participants' connection to the land and traditional food practices.

Each session offered hands-on opportunities to prepare nutritious meals using locally sourced ingredients, while also providing education on Indigenous food knowledge and healthy living. Participants left with take-home recipes designed to support family wellness, reduce household food costs, and make mealtime more manageable.

The Community Kitchen remains a vital space for healing, learning, and togetherness, strengthening food sovereignty and promoting holistic wellness across generations.

## ANNUAL NUTRITION RUN

The 2025 "Nut Run" was a vibrant celebration of wellness and community, reflecting Seabird Island Band's dedication to Stó:lō values of balance in mind, body, and spirit. Held along Chowat Road, the event welcomed roughly 250 staff, Seabird Island Community School students, and community members to participate in either a 5km or 10km loop, with water stations and enthusiastic support from Seabird staff along the route.

New this year were prizes for the fastest runners in each age category, which added a fun competitive element and was warmly received. Every participant also received a Sq'ewqel-branded hoodie, and a refreshing salad bar/buffet lunch followed the run, offering a chance to relax and connect in community.

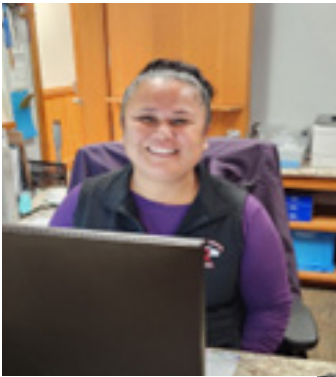
Looking ahead, the 2026 Nut Run will feature exciting upgrades, including a start clock and an inflatable start/finish line to enhance the race-day experience.



## PRIMARY CARE

Seabird Island Primary Health Care has significantly improved access to and quality of care for Indigenous clients. Our current team of Physicians and with the addition of a new Nurse Practitioner, we have provided services in Seabird but also travel to Chawathil, Shx'wow'hamel, Sts'ailes, Skwah and Cheam, to bring services closer to home. As a result of our expanded staff we have seen:

- **Improved Continuity and Quality of Care:** Enabling longer appointment times, providers can engage in meaningful case management, build trust, and address complex health and social needs.
- **Culturally Safe and Trauma-Informed Care:** The clinic has adopted approaches that respect Indigenous knowledge, traditions, and lived experiences, leading to increased patient engagement and satisfaction.
- **Integrated Services:** The clinic is now fully integrated with Seabird Island's broader health and social services, including lifestyle coaching, education, mental health, addictions, and cultural programming. This wraparound model ensures clients receive holistic support.
- **Reduced Barriers to Access:** Outreach services have expanded to surrounding areas, reducing transportation barriers and increasing access for clients who may otherwise go without care.
- **Empowered Providers:** With operational support (e.g., EMR licenses, mobile tools, professional development), clinic staff are better equipped to deliver high-quality, coordinated care.



# Primary Care

## KEY OUTCOMES:

- **Total Patients Seen:**
  - o Dr. Fox: 4,926 patients
  - o Dr. Beaulieu: 4,261 patients
- **Chronic Disease Management:**
  - o Diabetes: 280 patients seen; A1C levels have decreased, indicating improved blood sugar control.
  - o Hypertension (HTN): 205 patients managed.
  - o Congestive Heart Failure (CHF): 28 patients supported.
  - o Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD): 45 patients treated.
- **Women's Health:**
  - o 243 gynecological exams completed by Dr. Beaulieu, contributing to a reduction in cancer rates through early detection and intervention.
- **Substance Use Support:**
  - o 321 patients received Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT) under Dr. Fox's care, supporting harm reduction and recovery.
- **Recovery Home Support:**
  - o Dr. Fox provides ongoing medical care and case management for clients in Seabird Island's Men's and Women's Recovery Homes, ensuring continuity of care during recovery.
- **Frailty in Elders:**
  - o 37 elderly patients received care and support

## Two Future Nurse Practitioners Returning to Seabird Health in Fall 2025

Seabird Health is proud to announce that two Registered Nurses currently completing their Nurse Practitioner programs are scheduled to graduate in Fall 2025 and return to serve our community. One is a Seabird Island member, and the other previously contributed to our Maternal Child Health team. These dedicated women will bring advanced clinical expertise and a deep commitment to providing culturally safe and trauma-informed care. Their return represents a powerful investment in community-led wellness and a strengthened capacity to meet the unique needs of Seabird Island members.

## DENTAL SERVICES

The Seabird Island Dental Clinic continues to provide essential dental care services to the community, including cancer screenings and minimal sedation options. Our team remains committed to delivering high-quality, culturally sensitive care in a safe and welcoming environment.

This year, our dental team prioritized professional development by attending courses that enhance both our clinical expertise and our understanding of the community we serve. A highlight was participating in the Pacific Dental Conference in March 2025, where we gained valuable insights and skills.

We were proud to volunteer at the annual Seabird Festival in May 2025 and participate in the Seabird Health Fair in July 2024. Our team also regularly attended monthly community events such as the Parent and Tot groups, Someone So Small, and the Career Fair, strengthening our connection with families and youth in community.

A notable success this year was the growth of our Cavity Prevention Program, which involves transporting children from Seabird Island Elementary School for their bi-annual dental checkups. We've seen a significant increase in participation, along with a general rise in patient visits, an encouraging trend for community health and wellness.



### We welcomed two new team members:

- Dr. Rutledge, joining us from Prince George, and
- Kaitlan Peters, a Seabird Island community member and recent graduate of UFV's Certified Dental Assistant program.
- Both have quickly become valuable additions to our clinic.

To improve our services, we upgraded our X-ray equipment and refreshed our clinic space with new flooring throughout. While our clinic has been serving the community since 2001 and is beginning to show signs of aging, these updates help us maintain a comfortable and functional environment for our patients.

With the rollout of the Canadian Dental Care Plan, we anticipate an increase in patient visits. We are actively reaching out to existing patients who haven't been in for a while, encouraging them to return for checkups. We remain committed to providing care that supports both oral and overall health.

We've also begun collecting patient feedback through surveys distributed by the quality care team at Seabird Island. While full results are pending, early responses have been largely positive.

### Clinic Statistics:

- **Total Patients: 2,734** (1,792 identify as Indigenous)
- **New Patients: 174**
- **Staffing:** 2 Dentists, 1 Hygienist, 3 Certified Dental Assistants (CDAs), 1 Receptionist, 1 Office Manager

## SEABIRD ISLAND PHARMACY

At Seabird Pharmacy, we are proud to work closely with Seabird Island's Doctors and Nurses to deliver seamless, high-quality care to our community. Our knowledgeable and experienced pharmacy team specializes in navigating FNHA and NIHB medical benefits, ensuring patients receive the coverage and support they deserve.

Conveniently located just across from the Seabird's Doctor Office, our pharmacy offers easy access for all your medication and healthcare needs. You'll also find our team actively participating in community events such as Seabird Health Days and local vaccine clinics.

Over the past year, we dispensed more than **36,000 prescriptions**. A testament to our commitment to providing accurate, efficient, and compassionate care to our community members.

Thanks to the NIHB Pharmacy Grant, we've expanded access to non-covered vaccines, helping protect more individuals from preventable illnesses. We also prioritize support for patients needing nutritional supplements and baby formula, including coverage for eligible products - ensuring culturally safe and comprehensive care for all.

### Our services include:

- Prescribing and assessment for minor ailments
- Custom compounding of medications
- Comprehensive medication reviews
- Home delivery of prescriptions
- Blister packaging for easier medication management
- Support for pain and addiction management
- Patient education and wellness programs
- Flu and COVID-19 vaccine clinics
- Administration of injectable medications and vaccines
- Home visits for home-bound patients
- Access to home health and wound care supplies
- Compatibility counselling for herbal products, food, and lifestyle with medications
- Supply of medical equipment and supplies
- Provision of nutritional supplements and baby formula

At Seabird Pharmacy, we are more than a dispensary, we are a trusted culturally safe, trauma informed healthcare partner, dedicated to improving access to care and supporting the health and wellness of every community member.



# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION





## **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION DIRECTOR**

*Carlene Brown*

### **PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

*Aboriginal Infant Development*

*Supported Child Development / Aboriginal Supported Child Development*

*Aboriginal Headstart On-Reserve*

*Ey Qual Speech & Language*

*BEAR Bus*

*Daycare*

*3' Preschool*

*4's Preschool*

*Out of School Care*

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

2024 – 2025 has been an exciting time within our ECD Department. We have enjoyed opening our doors to our families with in-house programs. As we proudly continue to provide our high quality of programming, I have had the privilege of overseeing the planning and construction of our expansion of our ECD building with new second floor with office and meeting space, new Speech and Language room and a exciting Sensory room on the main level.

## DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS THIS YEAR:

- In-house graduation ceremonies for children who completed 3's Preschool and 4's Preschool program. The ceremonies included drummers, elders, gifts and lunch.
- ECD Story Time In the Park in partnership with the Agassiz/Harrison Community Services, provided a Bannock snack with jam and watermelon and the book, I love my life by Dr. Peter Gppinga
- Back to School Dayz /Early Childhood Carnival was a huge success. All community and program families were invited to, enjoy carnival games, bouncy castle, snow cones, popcorn, cotton candy, lunch and more.
- ECD Pancake Breakfast with Santa was a huge success in the School Gym. Each child was given a gift. All families were invited to enjoy breakfast, meet with Santa and have their photos taken with Santa, and participate in Make & Take Crafts. During this event we were able to provide gifts and more to over 150 children on our case load. We provided each family with a food hamper that included everything they need to provide a Christmas dinner for their family.
- ECD Caseload for 2024-2025 was approximately 300 which includes the Summer Program and Head Start on Reserve.
- The ECD team was able to participate in an amazing cultural learning in Osoyoos. FNHA staff joined us for a 2 day wrkshop on cultural and team building. That included a field trip to Spotted Lake with guidance from a traditional knowledge keeper.

The Early Childhood Centre of Excellence is home to 14 of our ECD programs. These programs provide specialized services to Seabird and the surrounding communities. Our department partners with other Seabird Departments to ensure that all children and families are provided with optimum care.



# Aboriginal Infant Development

The Aboriginal Infant Development Program has provided services to over 40 Indigenous babies and toddlers, birth to 3 years of age who required extra support or who were at risk for physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and developmental delays. 25 referrals came in for 2024. Services were offered on and off reserve from Sts'ailes to Boothroyd. The program is voluntary, and family centered. Developmental screening and assessments were also provided to families interested in support services. AIDP has had a successful year, and many positive relationships have been established with families and other professionals. Infant massage classes are a popular part of Infant development as well as the parent drop-in gross motor movement group called someone so small. Circle of Security is now being offered by AIDP and will run a few times per year.



# Supported Child Development

## SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT/ABORIGINAL SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Seabird Supported Child Development program is a family centered program that provides services to Indigenous and Non-Indigenous children who require extra support due to intellectual, social, emotional and communicative challenges with children from the age from 0-19 with a focus on 3–6-year-olds.

This past year we have provided support to 10 different centers from Boothroyd to Sts'ailes and have worked with over 65 children and families, and 43 new

referrals in 2024. Our team consists of one supervisor, two consultants and seven support workers and we travel to all surrounding communities within circle 1 to provide support services. Our team attends many of the developmental fairs in our area hosted by the early years committee, story time in the park, as well as the Ready Set Learn. Circle of Security will run throughout the year as well in partnership with AIDP



# Ey Qwal Speech and Language

A referral-based program servicing Indigenous children ages 0-6 years who experience challenges with language development. Our program has been able to provide services to 104 children this past year in daycare, 60 referrals were received for preschool and in home throughout our catchment area of Boothroyd to Sts'ailes. Our program works closely with Supported Child Development and Infant Development to ensure the children get a wraparound service delivery from our Early Childhood Department. Our team consists of one registered speech pathologist and two speech and language assistants. We started a parent group course to support

parents learning about speech and language development with their children. We have been fortunate to purchase our own hearing screening equipment and are able to screen for possible hearing loss in our children. If there are concerns regarding the hearing screen, the child will then be referred to an audiologist for further assessments. This process has helped our families receive the appropriate support needed in a much more time efficient manner.



# BEAR – Bus for Aboriginal Educational Resources

Bear Bus is a mobile program that travels in our catchment area of Boothroyd to Sts'ailes to provide families with children between the ages of 0-6 with educational and cultural resources. Our program runs five days per week in different communities and works closely with the Infant development and supported child development programs.

B.E.A.R incorporates both the Sto:lo and Nlaka'pamux language and culture into the daily activities through circles, art and story time. The focus for BEAR is to reach those who live in isolated areas and do not have transportation to get their children to early childhood programs.



# Daycare

Here at the Seabird Island Daycare, we strive to keep a low staff to child ratio which ensures optimal care and individual time for each child to spend with our fully qualified staff. Our Center is fully licensed and follows strict licensing regulations throughout the program and accommodates 12 infants (0-18 months), 12 toddlers (18 months-3 years) and 25 (3-5-year-olds). We are fortunate to be funded by the First Nations Health Authority, allowing cost free child-care to help our families.

Daycare, operational hours are Monday to Friday from 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM with daily art, activities, circles, outdoor play. We provide

cereal for breakfast and two healthy snacks, one being hot. We participate in community events/walks, monthly/Summer fieldtrips as far as Vancouver and implement culture, language, singing and drumming.

The Daycare staff take regular training for professional development to enrich life-long learning and to keep up to date with new information. We are also proud to be fully supported by the in-house services including Ey Speech and Language, Aboriginal Supported Child Development and the department administration.



# 3's Preschool Program

The Seabird Island 3's Preschool is a welcoming and culturally diverse program, which runs five days a week, Monday-Friday, with a morning and afternoon class. We give thanks to the First Nation's Health Authority (FNHA) for providing a grant which makes our program free to all students that attend our 3's Preschool. We teach cultural beliefs and language as we believe this will help children build a positive sense of themselves through their culture.

We understand the importance of children to get proper, healthy nutrition and provide a healthy and nutritious snack during each of our classes.

We strive to provide a safe, caring and inviting environment. We believe children learn best through play to help develop and enhance positive social and emotional development and instill a sense of pride, confidence, and desire to learn within children.

3s Preschool runs accordance with all childcare licensing requirements and the philosophies, policies, and objective establishment by the Seabird Island Band Management.



# 4' Preschool Program

The Seabird Island 4's Preschool runs five days a week from Monday-Friday, full days. Our regular program runs from 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Beyond our regular hours we provide before and after-care hours for those that require it starting at 7:45 AM and ending at 5:00 PM.

We are a welcoming and culture diverse program; we teach the cultural beliefs and language of the first nations peoples because we believe this will help children build a positive sense of their culture.

The Seabird Island 4's Preschool provides a positive introduction to help children be prepared for school readiness. We strive to provide a safe, caring and inviting environment. We

believe children learn best through play to help develop and enhance positive social and emotional development and instill a sense of pride, confidence, and desire to learn within children.

We know the importance of our students enjoy proper and healthy nutrition, so we provide a healthy and nutritious morning and afternoon snack, with one of the snacks being hot.

4's Preschool runs accordance with all childcare licensing requirements and the philosophies, polices, and objective establishment by the Seabird Island Band Management.



## Out of School Care

We run five days per week,  
Monday - Fridays from  
3:00 PM - 5:00 PM.

We also are open Pro-D-Days and  
spring break, to ensure the working  
parents have care in place as  
required. During these days the Out  
of School Care program runs from  
7:45 am - 5:00 pm.

We are a welcoming, culturally  
diverse program. We teach the  
cultural beliefs and language of the  
first nations peoples, as we believe  
this will help children build a positive  
sense of themselves through their  
culture. We give all students a place  
where they can unwind and be their  
authentic selves. This gives them the  
opportunity to interact and learn  
healthy social and emotional skills.

We understand the importance  
of our students enjoying proper,  
healthy nutrition, so we provide a  
healthy and nutritious after-school  
snack, with lunch to follow.

The Out Of School Care program  
runs in accordance with all childcare  
licensing requirements and the  
philosophies, polices, and objective  
establishment by the Seabird Island  
Band Management.



# Head Start Program

The Head Start Program at Seabird Island is committed to supporting the early childhood development of children from birth to 6 years old, while fostering a strong sense of community and cultural connection for families. Our program offers free activities tailored to the unique needs of the Seabird Island community, with transportation services available.

For the 2024-2025 year, we served nine families and 10 children, ages 0-6, through our program that operates on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM. We provide healthy snacks and lunches for the families, alongside a monthly family night that strengthens our bonds as a community.

Cultural integration is at the heart of everything we do, which connects children to their heritage. One of the highlights of the year was the opportunity for families



sq'ewqe/



Yálh yuw kw'a's hò:y

Thanking someone deeply,  
thanking the creator,  
praise something beautiful, finished

shxw'éyelh

be in good health

kwétslóme

see you

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