

TALKING STICK

A GREAT BEAR
RAINFOREST
PUBLICATION



The Guardian Department of **K'ómoks First Nation** are Caretakers of the Land of Plenty
Mamalilikulla Guardian Watchmen Fulfill Their Ancestral Stewardship Responsibilities
Welcoming **Three New Directors to the Coast Funds Board**

SUMMER 2021

Updates from Coast Funds

Welcome to the summer 2021 edition of Talking Stick, a magazine showcasing the stewardship and sustainable economic development initiatives led by First Nations throughout the Great Bear Rainforest and Haida Gwaii.

Since its founding, **Coast Funds has supported the growth and development of First Nations' Guardian programs and robust stewardship authorities along the coast.** This issue of Talking Stick showcases the Guardians of two First Nations.

On the east coast of Vancouver Island, the Guardian department of the **K'ómoks First Nation** sustains the Nation's territories and protects its cultural values. Further north, **Mamalilikulla First Nation's** Guardian Watchmen are fulfilling their ancestral responsibility to steward the lands, waters, and animals of their territories as they have for thousands of years.

The growth and accomplishments of both Guardian departments are impressive. And yet, there is much more they aim to achieve. **Both Mamalilikulla and K'ómoks First Nations are partnering with Coast Funds to increase their**

access to self-determined stewardship revenue so they may continue to grow their Guardian departments and care for their territories for the benefit of future generations.

As we embark on this journey in support of First Nations-led fundraising, we are guided by an incredibly diverse and talented board of directors. **This summer we welcomed three new directors to the board: Angela Wesley, David Egan, and our new board chair, Dallas Smith.** I'm enthusiastic about the diverse talents and deep knowledge each brings to our board, and invite our readers to learn more about each in the pages of this magazine and on our website.

We are honoured to present the stories First Nations are sharing in Talking Stick. If you'd like us to publish your story, please reach out to talkingstick@coastfunds.ca.

Brodie Guy
CEO

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SUMMER 2021
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COVER

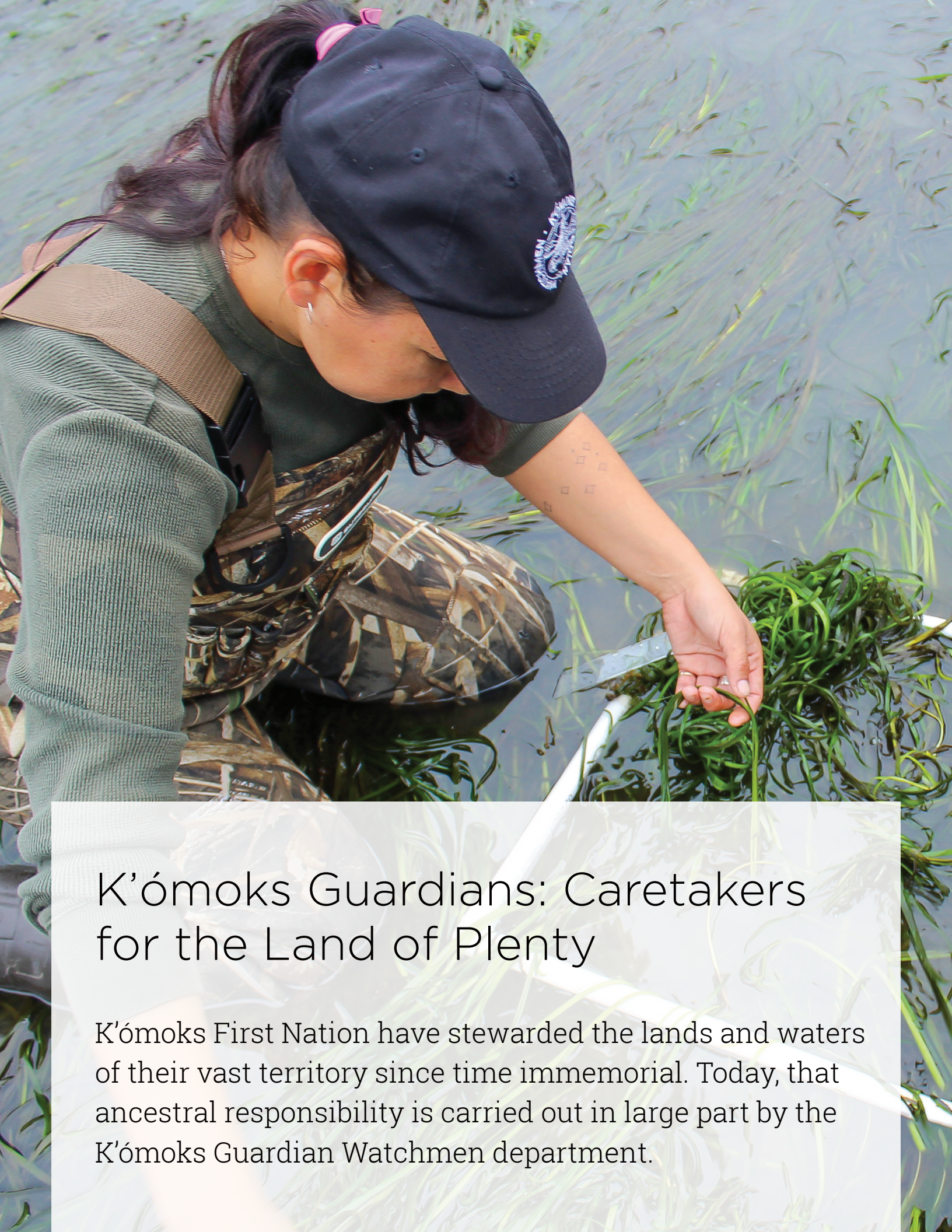
K'ómoks First Nations' Guardians Cedar, Cory, Jessie, Caelan, Krissy, and Randy (not pictured: Candace Newman) in front of abatement fencing built to control the population of invasive non-migratory Canada geese in the K'ómoks Estuary (Courtenay River).

PHOTO COURTESY
K'ómoks Guardian Department

OPPOSITE PAGE

K'ómoks Guardian Krissy Brown conducts eelgrass surveys.

PHOTO BY
Scott Harris



K'ómoks Guardians: Caretakers for the Land of Plenty

K'ómoks First Nation have stewarded the lands and waters of their vast territory since time immemorial. Today, that ancestral responsibility is carried out in large part by the K'ómoks Guardian Watchmen department.

The lands and waters of K'ómoks First Nation are vast and abundant. It is a region rich with vital watersheds, from the Salmon River in Sayward to the Puntledge River, known to the K'ómoks as the "Land of Plenty."

The relationship between the K'ómoks people and the 'Land of Plenty' has always been one of careful stewardship K'ómoks First Nation has stewarded the lands and waters of their vast territory since time immemorial.

"Stewardship never went away from the K'ómoks First Nation perspective," says K'ómoks Councillor Richard Hardy. "With regards to our authority, jurisdiction, governance, and management of the resources within our traditional territory, it has never gone away. But we'd like to re-establish those aspects and get federal, provincial, and local governments on board."

"Stewardship never went away from the K'ómoks First Nation perspective. With regards to our authority, jurisdiction, governance, and management of the resources within our traditional territory, it has never gone away."

Today, that ancestral responsibility is carried out largely by the K'ómoks Guardian Watchmen department. Established in 2014, the K'ómoks Guardians monitor, restore, document, patrol, and protect their territory and all the species therein. Their work sustains the ecosystem, protects cultural values, and supports the K'ómoks people.

Though the department has grown extensively over the years, now employing seven full-time staff, there is still much the Nation hopes to achieve. In a region of intense development and urban growth, K'ómoks is fundraising to grow

and enhance its stewardship authority. In doing so, they will benefit current and future generations of K'ómoks by enhancing their path to self determination.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
[COASTFUNDS.CA](https://coastfunds.ca) AND
[SEARCH K'OMOKS GUARDIANS](#)

BELOW

K'ómoks Guardians Cory and Randy Frank have been with the department since its founding in 2014.

PHOTO COURTESY
K'ómoks First Nation





Mamalilikulla Guardian Watchmen: Fulfilling Ancestral Responsibilities for the Benefit of Future Generations

The Mamalilikulla Guardians are re-asserting the Nation's presence in their territories, conducting research and restoration, monitoring industrial and recreational activity, and protecting cultural assets. With the Nation's 10-year stewardship vision, they are mapping a path forward to do even more.

ABOVE

The Mamalilikulla Guardian Watchmen are fulfilling the Nation's ancestral responsibilities by stewarding the lands and waters of their territories.

PHOTO COURTESY

Markus Thompson—Thalassia Environmental



Maya'xala is a Kwak'waka word meaning "respect."

The practice is a guiding concept for Mamalilikulla First Nation. Practicing maya'xala is a commitment to fulfilling their ancestral responsibility to steward the lands, waters, and animals of their territory as they have done for thousands of years.

The Mamalilikulla Guardian Watchmen program is one way in which the Nation is fulfilling that responsibility and resisting centuries of colonial impact. Over six years of operation, the Guardians have reasserted a strong presence on their lands and waters. They monitor recreational and industrial activity, conduct research and restoration work on marine and

terrestrial species, and undertake public communication and outreach. The Guardians are more than the Nation's "eyes and ears," they are stewards, actively caring for and restoring the well-being of their homelands for the benefit of current and future generations of Mamalilikulla.

"If people recognize the success that we have on the coast, with these Guardian programs, they'll see that there is the possibility to save what we have left and to pass it on to our young people. We can pass on the love and the connection, that is so incredibly crucial to our success as First Peoples," says Chief Councillor John Powell.

In the short time since the program was established the Guardians have made significant positive impacts in their territory. But there is much more the Nation would like to accomplish. In 2020, Mamalilikulla First Nation documented its 10-year stewardship vision, outlining its commitment to grow its stewardship authority. Today the Nation is fundraising to fulfill that vision and has set itself on a path to uphold Mamalilikulla's inherent rights and responsibilities to practice maya'xala.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT
[COASTFUNDS.CA](https://coastfunds.ca) AND
 SEARCH **MAMALILIKULLA**
GUARDIANS

"If people recognize the success that we have on the coast, with these Guardian programs, they'll see that there is the possibility to save what we have left and to pass it on to our young people."

ABOVE
 Mamalilikulla Guardian manager Jake Smith looks over territory maps with archeologist Sean Connaughton.

PHOTO BY
 Scott Harris

Coast Funds Welcomes Knowledge and Experience of New Directors

Coast Funds is pleased to welcome three widely respected and diversely experienced new directors to our board. Angela Wesley, Dallas Smith and David Egan were appointed by Members to the board of directors on July 7, 2021.

Angela, Dallas, and David bring with them an incredible diversity of knowledge and expertise and we are thrilled to welcome them to the board. Their experience strengthens Coast Funds' ability to empower the First Nations we serve to achieve their stewardship, conservation, and economic development goals for the benefit of future generations.



Angela Wesley is a citizen of the Huu-ay-aht First Nations (Nuuchah-nulth) and has been principal in Wes-Can Advisory Services since 1992. Over the past 30 years, she has worked extensively within her own community and with First Nations communities throughout BC providing advisory and facilitation services in the areas of strategic planning, community development, communications, community engagement, and governance capacity building.



Dallas Smith, who was announced as board chair on June 9, 2021, is the President and Founder of Nanwakolas Council. He has spent his professional career working to bring greater well-being and capacity to First Nations in the Great Bear Rainforest. Dallas has built positive working relationships with all levels of government, industry, and the philanthropic community to find balance between conservation and sustainable economic development.



David Egan is a recently retired Partner of PricewaterhouseCoopers, a major accounting firm, where he worked for over 25 years as a financial advisor and management consultant specializing in financial and market analysis, strategic planning and business decision support. David has had a strong focus on public sector infrastructure and has worked on large scale complex procurements involving project financing. He has also worked on outsourcing programs and been involved in federal and provincial Treasury Board submissions to obtain program funding approvals.

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT [COASTFUNDS.CA](https://coastfunds.ca) AND SEARCH **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

OVERLEAF

Mamalilikulla Guardians survey kelp in the Broughton Archipelago.

PHOTO BY

Markus Thompson—Thalassia Environmental



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