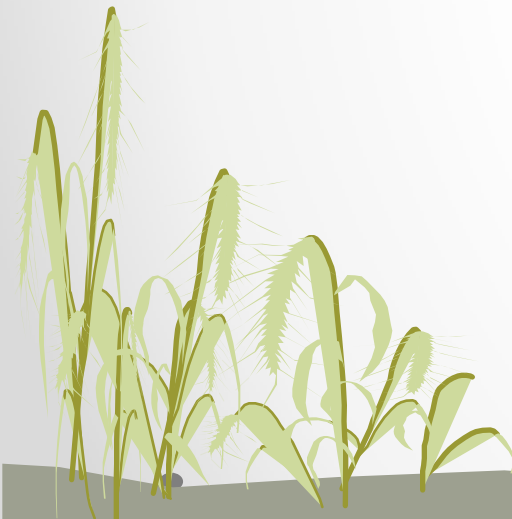


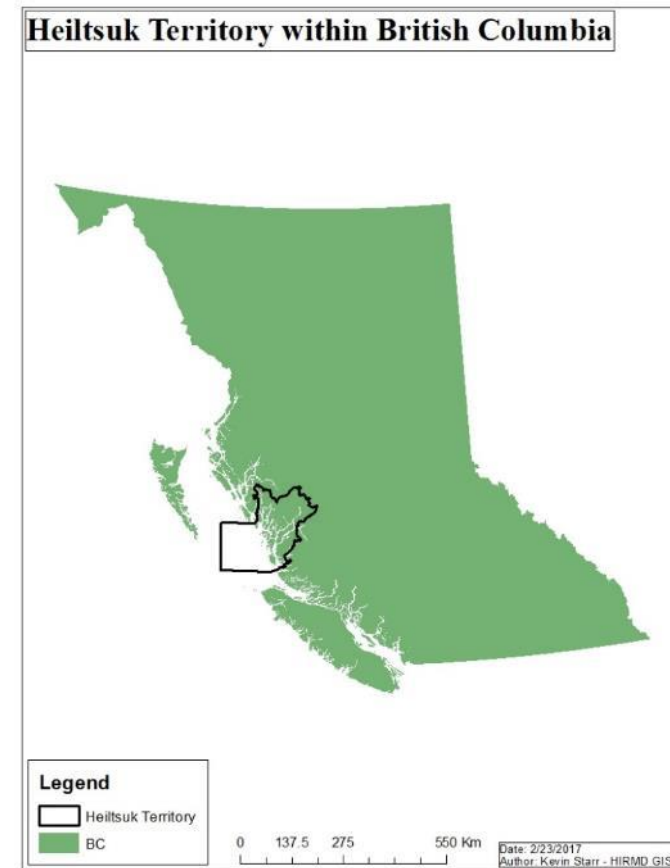
# Qqs Projects Society

An introduction



# The Heiltsuk and Bella Bella

- Heiltsuk Nation is located in Bella Bella, BC in the heart of the Great Bear Rainforest
- Membership of ~2,500 governed jointly by an elected council and hereditary leadership



# Qqs (Eyes) Projects Society

- Founded as a society in 1999 and secured charitable status in 2002
- Original mandate: “Open the eyes of Heiltsuk youth to their responsibility as stewards of their land, culture, and resources”
- Strong focus on land-based education and cultural revitalization



# Programs Overview

- ENVIRONMENT: Coastwatch Heiltsuk Monitoring Initiative
- COMMUNITY: Thistalalh Library, Koeye Café, Koeye Sanctuary, Gardens
- YOUTH: Koeye River Youth Camp, SEAS Internship





# Coastwatch Heiltsuk Monitoring

- Adding stewardship capacity to support HIRMD
- Bear research and policy
- Salmon stewardship
- Planning tools
- Training Heiltsuk technicians
- Involving youth and community in our work to protect Heiltsuk territory for future generations
- Two peer-reviewed research papers published (Ecology & Society, Taylor & Francis)



# SEAS Internship

Supporting Emerging Aboriginal Stewards

- Hands-on science and stewardship internships for Heiltsuk students
- Tied to a land-based education program at BBCS which we support through field trips
- Supporting emerging generation of stewards by fostering connection to and knowledge of their homeland and the tools Western Science provides to help protect it





# Koeye Camp

- Started in 1999 with tents on the beach
- Grew to 2 youth cabins + an elder's cabin
- Intent to reconnect kids to land and culture
- Heavily influenced by "Pops"
- Focus on "healthy living"
- Original "feast days" around a fire on the beach



# Koeye Camp

- Always included “science partnerships” so that kids could have a dual understanding of their environment
- Each weekly theme involved double learning outcomes
- Example: For “grizzly camp” we’d have bear biologists sharing about behavior and life history + cultural knowledge holders teaching songs, stories, customs & laws related to bears





# Koeye Camp

- Primary focus on culture and language revitalization as instructed by late “Pops”
- Build first bighouse in HTT in living memory in 2006, and raised first mortuary pole in living memory in 2007
- Kids who are connected to their culture in language have a strong sense of identity and personal wellness





# Koeye Camp

Activities include:

- Food harvesting
- Traditional canoe pulling
- Cedar bark pulling and weaving
- Plant dyes & bead making
- Medicinal plant harvest and preparation
- Exploring arch sites & CMTs
- Learning history & family trees
- Storytelling, singing, dancing
- Language lessons
- “Feast Day”





# Koeye Camp

- 2018 season will mark 20<sup>th</sup> year of program!
- Campers grow up to be interns, then junior staff, senior staff, directors, and often on to other leadership positions in community
- Staff guaranteed work each summer as long as they have an education plan
- Long term participants have stronger educational outcomes
- Year round support through social media networks to connect “Koeye Family”



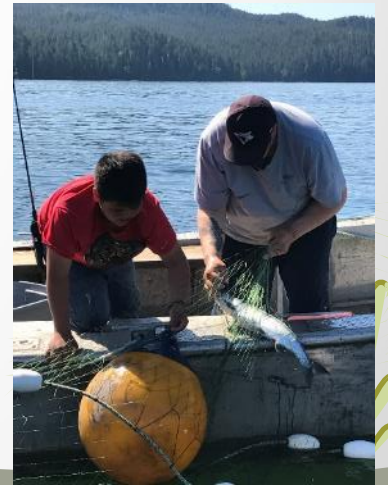
# Koeye Camp

- Sharing learning and best practices through exchanges
- Neighbouring communities (Ex. Wuikinuxv, Kitasoo-Xai'xais), other First Nations (Ex. La Loche, SK & Lutsel K'e, NWT), and international (Ex. Ainu from Japan & Agua Caliente Band from California)
- Want to maintain a program that builds resilience and wellness of Heiltsuk community & offers a path to other communities developing similar programs





# Koeye Camp: Some last pictures!





# Koeye Sanctuary

## Koeye Lodge

- Purchased in 2002, fire in 2011, reopened 2016
- Heiltsuk carpenters and sawmill
- Purpose built for Heiltsuk families and entities (Ex. Youth Centre workshops, BBCS field trips, Soc Dev family camps)
- Culturally appropriate and sustainably powered





# Koeye and Community Gardens

## Koeye Garden:

Started in 2013 to reduce the grocery costs for Koeye programs; includes berry gardens and native plant restoration + conventional garden beds

## Bella Bella Garden:

Specially created in 2016 to honour Heiltsuk responders to NES spill by supporting Heiltsuk food security in wake of lost trad'l resources; all food given away to those in need

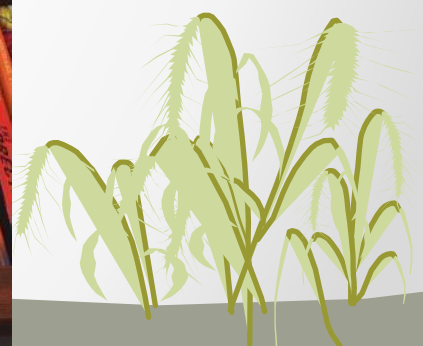
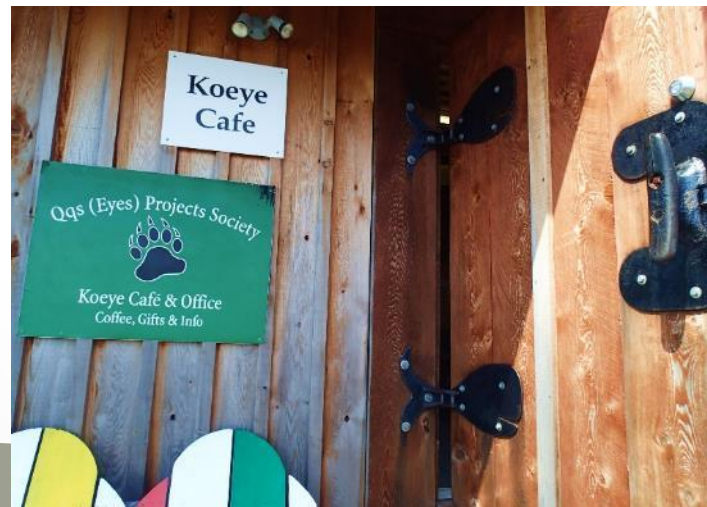
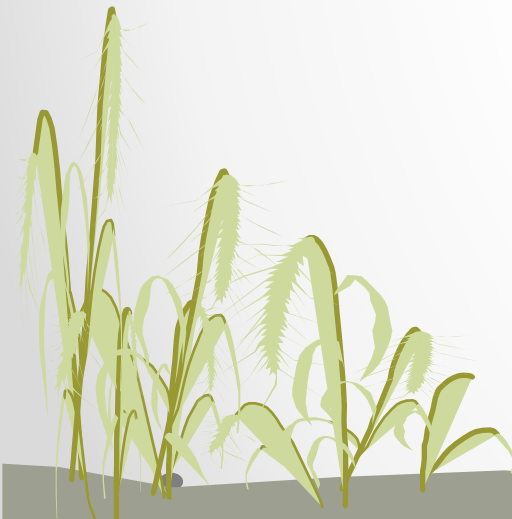




# Koeye Café and Thistalalh Library

Koeye Café: Using social enterprise to support our programs and creating opportunities for training youth in business

Thistalalh Library: First community library in Bella Bella, named for “Pops” and designed to promote and strengthen love for stories and storytelling





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