



## BC First Nations Recycling Initiative 2020 IN REVIEW



## ABOUT US

In British Columbia, product stewardship agencies finance the cost of recycling certain products. In 2020, ten of these agencies participated in the First Nations Recycling Initiative, a program specifically focused on collaborating with Indigenous communities interested in participating with these stewardship agencies' recycling programs.

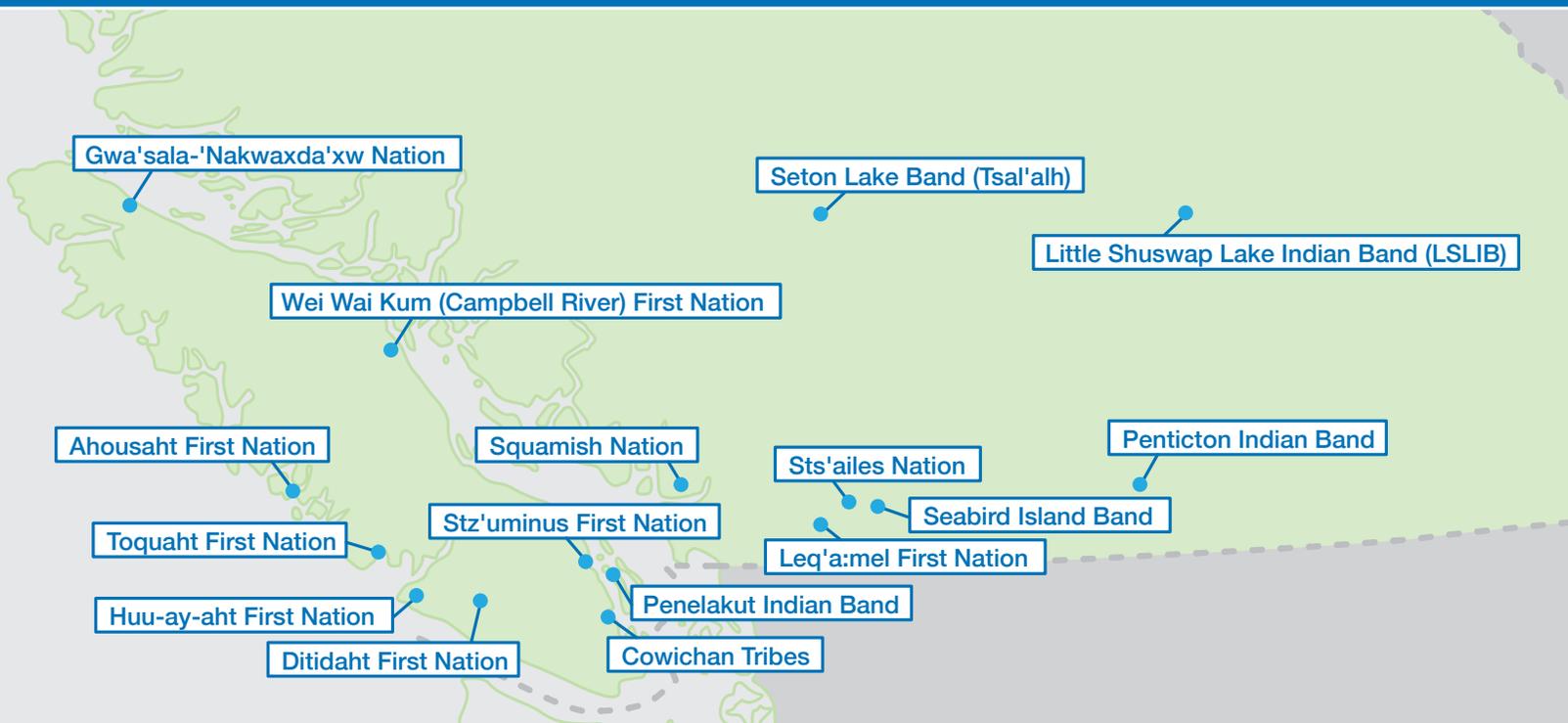
The following stewardship programs partnered in the First Nations Recycling Initiative during 2020: Call2Recycle, Canadian Battery Association, Electro Recycle, Electronic Products Recycling Association,

Return-It, Health Products Stewardship Association, Major Appliance Recycle Roundtable, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute of Canada, Recycle BC, and Tire Stewardship of BC.

The First Nations Recycling Initiative (FNRI) was created in 2017 and recently completed its fourth year of operations. A First Nations Field Services Specialist, Tim Jones, is dedicated to continuing to raise awareness of the initiative, offer resources to support recycling, and organize community collection events.

## COMMUNITY VISITS

COVID-19 restricted the ability to travel safely and thoughtfully through most of the year. When and where possible, Tim was able to complete 20 visits to 16 different communities on Vancouver Island and the southern part of the province:



Tim was also able to collaborate with the following Regional Districts:

- Mount Waddington
- Columbia-Shuswap
- Strathcona
- Alberni-Clayoquot

When not possible to travel in person, correspondence was done through video meetings, emails and phone calls.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY FEEDBACK

In addition, an online survey was created seeking information from Indigenous communities throughout BC. This survey provided three main objectives:

- Collect information on a community's recycling program and identify any locations where there may be a quantity of material for collection, or interest by a community to become a stewardship program collector;
- Gain feedback on how aware each Nation is of the FNRI, now that it has been active for four years;
- Offer a chance to annually receive feedback from community waste management representatives on how FNRI can support their efforts.

The FNRI received submissions from 39 Indigenous communities across BC. From these responses, 31% had prior awareness of FNRI, mainly through in-person visits from the FNRI representative or through email communications. The following percentage of respondents were also interested in the FNRI Field Services representative contacting them to arrange:



\*Another 53.7% are not welcoming visitors at this time due to COVID-19, but would be interested once visitors are welcome again

## COLLECTION EVENTS

Though limited this year, the FNRI was able to facilitate a couple of collection events, primarily for a quantity of tires and large appliances.

- Takla Nation: 250 tires, 4191 kg large appliances (37 fridges and freezers)
- Leq'amel Nation: 100 tires



## PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

The FNRI continues its collaboration with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), meeting on a quarterly basis, and the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG) to exchange information. All organizations share in the goal of increasing recycling access across Indigenous communities within BC. The FNRI was also featured in IZWTAG's December 2020 Merganser newsletter:



**First Nations Recycling Initiative**  
By Maureen Cooper

Ten of British Columbia's recycling stewardship agencies have come together to create the First Nations Recycling Initiative (FNRI), a project designed to assist First Nations with recycling challenges. The FNRI is available to support communities with recycling resources and transportation of collected items, for example, through community clean-ups. FNRI reps can also help present information on recycling programs in BC, and how to join individual programs for regular services.

The following stewardship programs are partners in the First Nations Recycling Initiative:

- Call2Recycle
- Canadian Battery Association
- ElectroRecycle
- Electronic Products Recycling Association
- Health Products Stewardship Association
- Major Appliance Recycling Roundtable
- Outdoor Power Equipment Institute of Canada
- Recycle BC
- Return-It
- Tire Stewardship of BC

Contact us by email at [info@fnri.ca](mailto:info@fnri.ca) to explore recycling opportunities for your community.

More info can be found online: [RecycleBC.ca/First-Nations-Recycling-Initiative](http://RecycleBC.ca/First-Nations-Recycling-Initiative).



Major appliances collected and ready for shipment out of Tsilhqan Nation.

**Zero Waste and Earth Day Grant Awards**  
By Genevieve Lindsay

Indigenous Services Canada (BC Region) offers two annual grant programs to support community and school-based zero waste and environmental projects: the Zero Waste Grant and the Earth Day Grant. It is always heartwarming to read the completion reports after each year and see how grants are often used to bring multiple generations together for neighbourhood cleanups, awareness-raising events, unveiling of community gardens, and a variety of other innovative projects. Then came the COVID-19 pandemic. As expected, First Nations are showing great resilience in the face of an unprecedented challenge and are constantly finding ways to adapt. For example, Xwisten (Bridge River) carried out the community cleanup by picking up items roadside from households rather than having individuals come to the big bins at the band office. If your community is having trouble completing the grant projects due to COVID-19 complications, please do not hesitate to reach out. Together, we can find a solution (call 604-347-6627).



Students visit the Yunesit's community greenhouse.



Klakoos First Nation Squawel Cove marine debris removal project.

Indigenous Services Canada began the B.C. First Nations Zero Waste Program in 2008 after an assessment showed that the communities have similar needs and challenges. A common theme is the desire for recycling, composting, and waste reduction activities. Solutions are developed locally and in cooperation with many different Regional Districts, product stewards, and service providers.

**THE Merganser**  
Fall 2020

Reports on First Nations Waste Management Programs in British Columbia, Canada

**Zero Waste Circuit Rider**  
By Lucinda Phillips and Emily Chu

Indigenous Services Canada has funded the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG) to conduct the Zero Waste Circuit Rider pilot program. The program helps maintain successful operations of community waste management systems and promotes landfill waste reduction.

Qualified Zero Waste Circuit Riders are contacting the 12 First Nations in the pilot to provide:

- On-site training for operators and where needed, operators will receive formal training through IZWTAG's resources;
- Practical recommendations to the community's administration;
- Funding and support to implement minor works to address safety and environmental concerns;
- Connections to resources from government, product stewards and other service providers;

**izwtag.com**  
By Lucinda Phillips and Emily Chu

IZWTAG's website, [izwtag.com](http://izwtag.com), went live earlier this year! Since that time, visitors to the website have commented on the impressive visual design and the depth and richness of content provided.

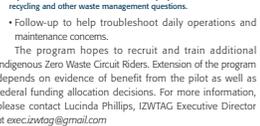
The website highlights the many community recycling resources, and examples and videos from First Nations around the province, which communities can really relate to. Recycling topics covered include:

- Waste reduction
- Reuse
- Composting
- Household hazardous waste
- General recycling
- Oversized items
- Construction debris
- Illegal dumping

To become an IZWTAG member or partner, or to register for training, go to the Programs and Partners section. IZWTAG runs several training courses for waste system operators.



The Merganser is a diving duck, found in coastal waters and lakes all over BC.



Experienced Zero Waste Circuit Riders help operators with on-site recycling and other waste management questions.

- Follow-up to help troubleshoot daily operations and maintenance concerns.

The program hopes to recruit and train additional Indigenous Zero Waste Circuit Riders. Extension of the program depends on evidence of benefit from the pilot as well as federal funding allocation decisions. For more information, please contact Lucinda Phillips, IZWTAG Executive Director at [eeec.izwtag@gmail.com](mailto:eeec.izwtag@gmail.com).

The FNRI is always looking for opportunities to partner with more stewardship agencies and organizations with shared objectives.

## RESOURCES & CONTACT INFORMATION

New resources are continually being created to provide further awareness of the initiative. These resources can be accessed on our website, at [RecycleBC.ca/First-Nations-Recycling-Initiative](http://RecycleBC.ca/First-Nations-Recycling-Initiative).

Visit our website to access:

- Our newly created brochure with a program overview
- An in-depth resource guide with details on how best to set up a recycling program and description of each participating stewardship program
- Guidelines on how to organize a collection event in partnership with the FNRI

To contact the FNRI, reach us at [info@fnri.ca](mailto:info@fnri.ca).

## THANKS TO OUR PARTICIPATING STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM PARTNERS!

