

# sməq<sup>w</sup>aʔ xeł - The Great Blue Heron Way

Presentation slides



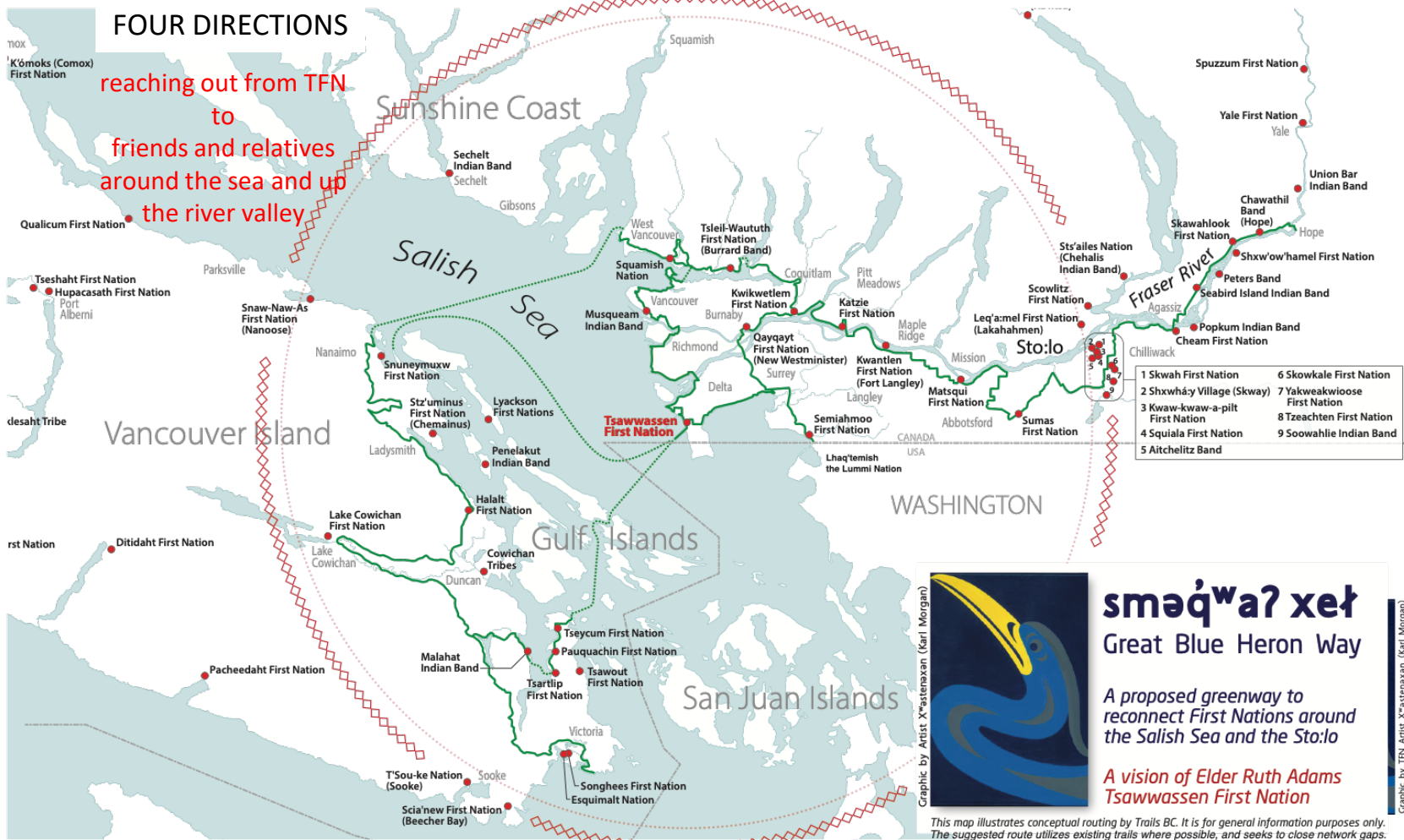
**Elder x<sup>w</sup>asteniya (Ruth Mary Adams) Tsawwassen First Nation – GBHW Team Lead**  
**Sage Flett-Kruger — Okanagan Nation, Trails BC Indigenous Engagement Manager, Contact**



Graphic by TFN Artist X<sup>w</sup>astenaxan (Karl Morgan)

# FOUR DIRECTIONS

reaching out from TFN  
to  
friends and relatives  
around the sea and up  
the river valley



- |                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Skwah First Nation            | 6 Skowkale First Nation     |
| 2 Shxw'háy Village (Skway)      | 7 Yakwekwioose First Nation |
| 3 Kwaw-kwaw-a-pilt First Nation | 8 Tzeachten First Nation    |
| 4 Squiala First Nation          | 9 Soowahlie Indian Band     |
| 5 Aitchelitz Band               |                             |



**sməqʷaʔ xeł**  
Great Blue Heron Way

*A proposed greenway to reconnect First Nations around the Salish Sea and the Sto:lo*

*A vision of Elder Ruth Adams  
Tsawwassen First Nation*

Graphic by Artist X'matenaxan (Karl Morgan)

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*This map illustrates conceptual routing by Trails BC. It is for general information purposes only. The suggested route utilizes existing trails where possible, and seeks to close network gaps.*

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## TRAIL BENEFITS

This ALL-AGES, MULTI-USE GREENWAY PATH contributes to:

- Climate change action.
- Nature regeneration and sustainability.
- Education and cultural awareness of Indigenous peoples.
- Equal access to safe active travel and economic possibilities.
- Health and well-being of those who live and work along the path.
- Reconciliation.



At the TFN Youth Job Fair

Elder Ruth, Maryanne (TFN Council), and Amy (TFN member and Trails BC staff person)



Graphic by TFN Artist Xʷastanaxan (Karl Morgan)



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## WELCOME SIGNAGE



Signs were erected on TFN lands in summer 2023.

These welcome signs tell the Vision story and officially put the Great Blue Heron Way on the map in BC.



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ELDERS AND YOUTH



**TFN Summer Youth Program - 2022 on TFN, and 2023 at Boundary Bay**

- This greenway trail enables language and cultural to be shared with residents and travellers.
- Indigenous youth are sharing their ideas to make this trail their own, and actively exploring local areas for the first time.
- The Youth would like to connect with other Nations and communities.



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ENGAGEMENT



A GBHW presentation was made, by Grandmother and Granddaughter, to Tsleil-Waututh Chief and Council in June 2023



On the Great Blue Heron Way at TFN with Squamish Nation members and GBHW volunteer team members, 2021



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SALISH SEA GREENWAY SOUTH

At Mud Bay— part of the Salish Sea greenway



GBHW team members tour and Nicomekl Riverfront Park input, summer 2023.





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GATHERING FRIENDS



**Inclusive Active Transportation panelists, 2019.**

Regional GBHW presentations have taken place at:

- BC Active Transportation Summit, New Westminster 2019
- Trails BC Inclusive Active Travel Symposium, 2022
- The Planning Institute of BC, 2022

Local GBHW presentations have taken place at:

- City of Delta and City of Richmond council committees
- HUB Cycling and TRAC Sunshine Coast bike committees
- Port of Vancouver Community Liaison Committee
- Global Container Terminals
- TFN Chief and Executive Council, 2020
- Squamish Nation staff committee, 2023
- Tseil-Waututh Chief and Council, 2023



Graphic by TFN Artist X̓ʷastənaxan (Kari Morgan)

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CONTINUING TO GATHER FRIENDS

The GBHW Volunteer Team in 2023

- **TFN Members**  
Elder Ruth Adams, Jesseca Adams, Karl Morgan
- **Trails BC Board and staff**  
Sage Flett-Kruger - Okanagan Nation,  
Amy Lachance - TFN,  
Léon LeBrun, Richard Campbell
- **HUB Cycling**  
Roel Schootman, Sandra Jones, Sheryl Atkinson
- **Infrastructure advisor**  
David Grigg
- **Further advisors**  
Carol Vignale, Anne Marie Goodfellow



Start of bike tour, with Trails BC and HUB Cycling.

Working closely with supporting organizations

*Tsawwassen First Nation, Safe Active Travel Delta • Tsawwassen First Nation*

*City of Delta Mayor and Council, City of Richmond Active Travel, City of Surrey Culture and Heritage*

*Metro Vancouver Parks, The Fraser River Tunnel Project, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure*

*Destination BC*

*MP Carla Qualtrough and more*



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## MAJOR TRAIL GAPS AT TFN

### THE DELTAPORT RAILWAY BARRIER

Closed to all trail users in 2016.



GBHW team members with supporters, Global Container Terminals

### THE HIGHWAY 17 BARRIER

Severing TFN and the beach front trail since the 1960's.



GBHW team members at the Hwy 17 pullout by the BC Ferries causeway



Graphic by TFN Artist X<sup>w</sup>astanaxan (Karl Morgan)

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A significant project for the Trails Society of BC.



**Léon Lebrun (Trails BC) and Elder Ruth Adams at TFN National Truth and Reconciliation Day**



**Sage and Richard of Trails BC at Tsawwassen First Nation Youth Centre with Elder Ruth Adams**



Graphic by TFN Artist X<sup>w</sup>astənəxən (Karl Morgan)

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- The Trails Society of BC was formed to oversee the completion of the Trans Canada Trail (TCT) in BC.
- The Trails Society of BC has expanded to:
  1. Incorporate other trail connection needs across BC
  2. Explore a southern route for the TCT from Langley through Tsawwassen to Vancouver Island
  3. Support and assist Indigenous inclusion and trail projects
  4. Have Indigenous staff and board members
- For [The Great Blue Heron Way](#):
  1. Hosts public website information and maps routes
  2. As a not-for-profit with charity status, applies for grants
  3. Has a mission and mandate that eventually puts the GBHW project under Indigenous control



Graphic by TFN Artist X<sup>w</sup>astanaxan (Karl Morgan)

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QUESTIONS?

Visit <https://trailsbc.ca/the-great-blue-heron-way-vision-gbhw/>

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Thank you!



**On the Great Blue Heron Way Boardwalk. Looking southwest towards Tsawwassen Bluffs, site of the Great Blue Heron rookery at Tsawwassen First Nation.**



Graphic by TFN Artist X<sup>w</sup>astenaxan (Karl Morgan)

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## VISION STATEMENT

*“Recognition and acknowledgement of First Nation Traditional Territories is sacred to the Ancestors and youth today. The Great Blue Heron Way honours the people and their land past and present. By presenting these important landmarks for the history of Canada.*

*The Great Blue Heron Way is a journey where people can safely enjoy the nature of lands and waters. The spirit of this path connects the people along the way, where friendships can grow naturally.*



*The Great Blue Heron Way is the vision of Respected Tsawwassen Elder x<sup>w</sup>asteniya (Ruth Mary Adams). There are many hardworking friends who believe in this spiritual path that honours traditional territories and their people, past and present.*

*The Great Blue Heron Way honours the traditional territories of the Tsawwassen First Nation people. The path will honour each and every traditional territory that it connects with along the way.”*



Graphic by TFN Artist X<sup>w</sup>asteniya (Karl Morgan)