



**Williams Lake**  
FIRST NATION



## JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

May 14, 2021

### **Naming Ceremony Scheduled for Nekw7usem Bridge**

On May 17, 2021, the City of Williams Lake and Williams Lake First Nation will be conducting a naming ceremony for the Nekw7usem Bridge that connects the RC Cotton trail to Scout Island. The 200 ft pedestrian bridge was completed in 2020, with the support of grants obtained from the Rural Dividend Program and the Canada Recreation Program. With 83% of the project funding provided through government grants, the remainder was funded by the City of Williams Lake.

Mayor Walt Cobb said, “the bridge is a landmark project for the City and opens up more of the outdoor spaces that are so important to residents and visitors alike. The pedestrian bridge provides excellent viewing of the marsh and outlet and was designed to conserve the natural riparian habitat. We were pleased to have an opportunity to work with Williams Lake First Nation to choose the name “Nekw7usem Bridge” – which means “Unity”, and look forward to continuing to improve access to our natural landscape.”

At a Council meeting in February 2020, City of Williams Lake Council was excited to choose an official name for the bridge from the three names provided by Williams Lake First Nation. The naming ceremony and sign unveiling will include elected officials, elders, and community representatives from both the City and Williams Lake First Nation.

Chief Willie Sellars said, “in February 2018, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of the Williams Lake First Nation by confirming our Secwepemc ancestors were displaced by European settlers. Our ancestors considered Scout Island a sacred site, a place of refuge, a resource for sustenance, and the location where spiritual healing occurred. We are grateful to the City of Williams Lake for acknowledging the necessity for modern-day reconciliation by declaring this bridge a symbol of “one tribe, one family.” Unity, more than ever, is required for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to move forward on our respective healing journeys.”

The City and the Williams Lake First Nation would also like to thank the Williams Lake Field Naturalists and grant providers for their support.

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**Media Contacts:**

Kim Dressler, Executive Assistant  
City of Williams Lake  
[kdressler@williamslake.ca](mailto:kdressler@williamslake.ca)  
Direct: 250.392.1775

Aaron Mannella, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
Williams Lake First Nation  
[aaron.mannella@wfn.ca](mailto:aaron.mannella@wfn.ca)  
Direct: 250.552.3026

City Hall: 250.392.2311

WLFN Government Office: 250.296.3507