SUMAS ENERGY 2, INC.
TRADITIONAL USE STUDY- PHASE TWO:
STÓ:LÓ CULTURAL RELATIONS TO AIR AND WATER

Prepared for:
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by
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SUMMARY

Sumas Energy 2 (SE2) is applying to the National Energy Board (NEB) to construct an international power line (IPL) that would originate in the United States at SE2’s proposed gas-fired power plant (Power Plant) in Sumas, Washington State and cross the Canadian border at the City of Abbotsford, British Columbia. SE2 undertook this Traditional Use Study as part of its application to the NEB.

This document presents the results of Phase Two of the TUS study. Phase Two is a consideration of customs, practices and traditions in relation to air and water integral to the culture of and within the traditional lands of the Stó:lō Nation located in the airshed and watershed potentially affected by the Power Plant. It has been jointly prepared by Stó:lō Nation and Arcas Consulting Archaeologists Ltd.

This Phase of the TUS incorporates information from several sources including published and unpublished anthropological, ethnographic and historic information, traditional use studies, oral history data, and contemporary Stó:lō community member interviews. A total of 19 Stó:lō community members from ten Stó:lō communities were interviewed as a primary means of collecting pertinent information for this project.

This study is an attempt to document customs, practices and traditions integral to the distinctive culture of the Sto:lō in relation to air and water, in order to provide information that will put SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation in a position to assess potential impacts of the SE2 project on those Aboriginal Traditions.

Six forms Stó:lō traditions integral to Stó:lō culture (out of eight sampled) were shown in this study to have a dependent relationship with clean air and water. Changes to the quality of clean air and water caused by the addition of pollutants into air and water systems (in measurable and/or perceived forms) will adversely affect traditions determined to be integral to Stó:lō culture. The nature of the interconnectedness between Stó:lō culture and the environment links degradation of air and water quality to the degradation of Stó:lō traditions, ultimately affecting the health of the Stó:lō community on numerous levels – spiritually, physically, emotionally, and mentally. These effects fall within the realm of Aboriginal rights issues.
This study found that the Stó:lō maintain a relationship to air and water, specifically, and the environment of Stó:lō Territory, generally, that is:

- culturally specific to the Stó:lō, and not shared by the non-Stó:lō / non-Coast Salish inhabitants of the study area
- founded on a Stó:lō worldview of interconnectedness between the nature and culture, people and the environment, spirit-body-mind-emotion, and cultural teachings, practices, and identity – of which air and water are integral parts
- requires environmental purity (i.e., dependent upon clean air and water) as integrally linked to the expression and practice of their cultural traditions
- intrinsically different in principle, content, structure, and expression than that of Western philosophy and society
- embedded with Aboriginal rights
- at risk to adverse impacts resulting from air and water pollution

Based on these findings, a series of recommendations are presented for consideration by SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation which include:

- the cultural framework and multi-dimensional structure (i.e., interconnectedness between nature and culture, etc. – per Figure 6) of Stó:lō culture be recognized;
- the adverse effects of air and water pollution on integral Stó:lō cultural traditions be acknowledged,
- the relationship between the air and water emissions associated with the proposed SE2 Power Generation Facility and the potential for such emissions to adversely affect and cause cultural degradation to cultural traditions integral to the Stó:lō be considered in the development review process, and;
- further studies are required to accommodate developing additional 'base-line' data that would provide added degree of description to the environment, Stó:lō culture, and the relationship between them;
- it is recommended that the findings of this study be included in future discussions between SE2 and Stó:lō Nation that address aboriginal rights and title.

Moreover, the deposition of air and water pollutants in Stó:lō Territory may pose an elevated biological risk to Stó:lō citizens following a traditional diet and using traditional medicines (e.g., wind-dried salmon, medicinal plants, berries). Possible biological health effects associated with the Stó:lō population and related to Stó:lō cultural practices have not been a subject of this study and have not been adequately investigated at this time. Additional studies are required to provide further input at a finer degree of scale in making more specific statements on potential impacts and defining more specific, potentially applicable mitigation measures pertinent to the Stó:lō.
The work conducted for this project is not complete and cannot be complete given that it deals with subject matter associated with Stó:lō intellectual property and cultural knowledge that is private and which is exempt from the realm of public information. The information presented in this report contains only that information which was freely shared and which is not subject to confidentiality, private knowledge, or intellectual property right issues. Stó:lō Nation retains ownership of all cultural information presented in this report.

In addition, this project -- specifically Stó:lō Nation’s participation in this project -- does not constitute consultation. Nothing in report is intended to affect the exercise or scope of, or justify any infringement of any Stó:lō aboriginal rights, nor shall anything in this report be interpreted as affecting the legal relationship between parties.

This report, and negotiations leading up to it, and information shared as a result of it, are without prejudice to any legal positions that have been taken or may be taken by either of the parties in any court proceedings, process or otherwise or any treaty or other negotiations, and shall not be construed as an admission of fact or liability in any such proceedings, process or negotiations.

The sharing of information in this report shall not be construed as concurrence with provincial policies.
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

SE2 is applying to the NEB to construct an international power line that would originate in the United States at SE2’s proposed gas-fired power plant in Sumas, Washington State and cross the Canadian border at the City of Abbotsford, British Columbia. SE2 undertook this Traditional Use Study as part of its application to the NEB.

The TUS is a two-phase project. Phase One concerns historic and current traditional uses within the IPL Right of Way (Arcas Consulting Archeologists and Stó:lō Nation, 2003). During the planning phase of this TUS, Stó:lō Nation representatives expressed the view that a TUS concerned only with the Right of Way would be of limited value, and that the Stó:lō Nation would not be interested in participating in such a study. The Stó:lō Nation asked for a broader study that could be used to consider the potential effects of the power plant project on the relationship between the Stó:lō people and water and air resources. As a result, Phase Two of the study was developed. Phase Two is a consideration of customs, practices and traditions in relation to air and water integral to the culture of and within the traditional lands of the Stó:lō Nation located in the airshed and watershed potentially affected by the Power Plant (Figure 1).

This document presents the results of Phase Two of the TUS study. It has been jointly prepared by Stó:lō Nation and Arcas Consulting Archaeologists Ltd.

The work conducted for this project is not complete and cannot be complete given that it deals with subject matter associated with Stó:lō intellectual property and cultural knowledge that is private and which is exempt from the realm of public information. The information presented in this report contains only that information which was freely shared and which is not subject to confidentiality, private knowledge, or intellectual property right issues. Stó:lō Nation retains ownership of all cultural information presented in this report.

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Figure 1. Stó:lō Traditional Territory

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of Phase Two of the TUS is to gather information regarding customs, practices and traditions integral to the culture of the Stó:lō in relation to air and water, that could be used for further discussions between SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation, to assess the potential impacts of the SE2 project; if any, on the Aboriginal Traditions of the Stó:lō people.

1.2 Scope

Phase Two considers the traditional lands of the Stó:lō Nation within the airshed and watershed potentially affected by the SE2 project. Although the geographical scope of the study is focused on the potentially affected airshed of the Upper Fraser Valley, this study is concerned with Coast Salish cultural traditions, specifically those of the Stó:lō people, which are also relevant to a wider geographical realm.
1.3 Objectives

The objectives of Phase Two are to:
1) document customs, practices and traditions integral to the distinctive culture of the Sto:lo in relation to air and water (collectively, the “Aboriginal Traditions”)
2) provide information that will put SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation in a position to assess potential impacts of the SE2 project on those Aboriginal Traditions, and,
3) make such recommendations as appear appropriate for consideration by SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation.

1.4 Definitions

Certain terms used in this report require discussion and definition. The first of these is the word *pollute*. A standard dictionary definition of this word provides two meanings: 1) to make ceremonially or morally impure, or 2) to make physically impure or unclean; to contaminate (an environment) especially with man-made waste.

Man-made pollution includes matter which is often not perceptible to the human senses. Human understanding of pollution is primarily based on what is perceived directly through the senses, smog causing poor visibility as one example, or what is understood through information sources such as the news media.

The distinction between actual levels of potentially harmful pollutants and human perceptions of pollution are core to this study. In this study we examine the potential effects of SE2 on Aboriginal Traditions. In doing this we take into account both the potential effects caused by actual release of emissions into the air and its subsequent effect air and water quality, as well as the potential effect on Aboriginal Traditions caused by Stó:lō perceptions of pollution.

The second term that requires definition is *tradition*. A standard dictionary definition includes the following meanings: 1) an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or a social custom), 2) the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction, and 3) cultural continuity in social attitudes, customs, and institutions. This term is central to this study as it concerns those aspects of Stó:lō traditions which are unique and central to their identity as Stó:lō and are not generally shared by non-Stó:lō people who live in the study area.

Additionally, the term ‘clean’ in reference to air and water is used in the report as describing ‘pure’ or uncontaminated air (O₂) and water (H₂O).
1.5 Glossary

In order to facilitate understanding of the content in this section for readers not familiar with *Halkomelem*, this section provides brief definitions for a number of Stó:lō words and cultural traditions used in this study. Providing a comprehensive review of each item listed below is beyond the scope and objective of this report. Rather, the background information presented below is intended to provide a brief synopsis or summary of terms which will be expanded upon in the body of the report, and which can be referred to as a form of glossary. Definitions in this section are derived from the *Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual* (2003) and sections of *A Stó:lō – Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (Carlson et al 2001).

*Chichel Siya:m* the Creator.

*Halkomelem* One of the languages spoken by the Coast Salish peoples of the southern Northwest Coast. Halkomelem is the native language of the Stó:lō of the lower Fraser River watershed and their relatives and neighbors from southeastern Vancouver Island. Halkomelem is made up of three dialects - *Hul’q’umín’um* ('Island' Halkomelem dialect), *Hun’qumyi’num* ('Downriver' Halkomelem dialect) and *Halq’eméylem* ('Upriver' Halkomelem dialect).

*Mimestíyexw* ‘little people’, or small beings, who inhabit remote mountain regions and assist spirit dancers (*Syuwel*).

*S’ólh T’éméxw* Stó:lō Territory; the *Halq’eméylem* word for “our world” or “our land”, including the lower Fraser River watershed downriver of Sailor Bar Rapids in the lower Fraser River Canyon. *S’ólh T’éméxw* represents the world transformed by the actions of the *Xeła:*s, Tel Sweeney and other ‘agents’ of *Chichel Siya:m*. *S’ólh T’éméxw* is defined through the known extent of occupation and land use of the Halkomelem speaking peoples of mainland British Columbia.

*Shxweli* “spirit”.

*Shxwlá:m* Stó:lō doctor(s); people who treat spirit sickness and other spiritual, physical, mental and/or emotional maladies within a Stó:lō framework of health and well-being.
**Squelqwel**

“True Story” (or stories); oral narratives relating to personal history.

**Stl’áleqem**

“Stl’áleqem” is the word the Old People use to categorize certain spiritual beings inhabiting parts of S’ólh Téméxw. These beings’ spiritual potency affords them a significant place in Stó:lō culture, yet they are difficult to describe or explain to people raised outside of the culture. Metaphors of “monsters” and translations of *stl’áleqem* as “supernatural creatures” fall short of conveying the full meaning of the word and carry a western perspective that robs “*stl’áleqem*” of its Halq’eméylem essence. Likewise, the distinction western society makes between “real” and “unreal” is not applicable in categorizing *stl’áleqem*: some spiritual beings, such as the hairy giant *sásq’ets* (sasquatch), the “water babies” who live at the bottoms of certain lakes and deep spots in rivers, the *mimestíyexw* (little people) who inhabit remote mountain regions and assist spirit dancers, and the majestic *shxwexwó:s* (thunderbird) whose flapping wings make thunder, whose blinking eyes make lightning, and whose urine is rain, are all thought to be just as real as bears, chipmunks and sturgeon, and are not considered *stl’áleqem*.

Perhaps the best way of conveying what a *stl’áleqem* is simply to identify them by name and then describe how they are referred to within *s™w™wiyám* and *squelqwel* (oral histories). The Old Ones speak of at least five different types or kinds of *stl’áleqem*: *Sí:lhqey*, the two-headed serpent; *St’qoya*, the frightening glowing red eyes sometimes seen at night; *Ápel*, the large maggot who inhabits the rock bluffs and deep bays above and in the southeast corner of Cultus Lake; and *Tlïtego Spá:th*, the underwater black bear who lives in the waters of the Fraser Canyon near Lady Franklin Rock. An encounter with any one of these creatures can be dangerous, holding the potential for mixed outcomes. *Stó:lō* therefore regard places inhabited by *stl’áleqem* as *xá:xa* (spiritually potent; ≠ taboo). Since many current *Stó:lō* activities – hunting, ritualistic spiritual swimming, and “leaving our things” – lead people to visit places where *stl’áleqem* reside, it is important to know their locations and to follow proper protocol. Those who have been taught how to act appropriately, such as *shxwlá:m* (Indian doctors), can attain spirit power by showing respect to
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*stl’álegem*. For instance, rather than turning and running upon seeing a *stl’álegem* – a typical reaction of someone not prepared for the encounter – one should face it and slowly back away until the creature is out of sight. Another teaching specifies that a person should pluck hair from their head and blow it towards the *stl’álegem*. Failure to follow these or other appropriate, sacred teachings can lead to serious consequences. Common reactions to mild, unintentional *stl’álegem* encounters are often described as "causing the hair to rise on the back of your neck" or producing a feeling that an unseen presence is near. Those who are warned away and yet knowingly trespass into a *stl’álegem* site may suffer *xó:lís* (to twist up and die). Children are particularly prone to this condition. Those who do not immediately die require the treatment of a *shxwlá:m* to relieve their sickness.

**Stó:lô**  
The *Halq’eméylem* word for “river” or “river of rivers” – in reference to the Fraser River; also the name used in self-identification by the Halq’eméylem speaking people whose ancestral territory is the Lower Fraser River Watershed (see Figure 1 – Stó:lô Traditional Territory).

**Sxoxomes**  
“Gifts of the Creator”; resources, such as red cedar, that were provided to humans by *Chichel Siya:m*.

**Sxwôxwiyám**  
oral histories that describe the distant past "when the world was out of balance, and not quite right." *Sxwôxwiyám* account for the origins and connections of the *Stó:lô*, their land, resources and *sxoxomes* (*gifts of the creator*). There are many heritage sites throughout *Stó:lô* Territory that relate to *sxwôxwiyám*. These sites are among the most culturally important *Stó:lô* heritage sites and continue to function as essential parts of the contemporary *Stó:lô* world.

**Sxwó:yxwey**  
The *sxwó:yxwey* is a comprised of a mask, dance, regalia and songs that are aspects of the traditional culture within the contemporary *Stó:lô* community. Taken together, the *sxwó:yxwey* serves primarily as a “cleansing instrument” at significant events such as naming, puberty, wedding and funeral ceremonies. Though fulfilling an important function among all *Stó:lô*, the *sxwó:yxwey* is "carried" only in those families who can trace
ancestry to its origin along maternal lines. Women, who own the masks, regalia and songs, privilege certain men in their families with the right of performing the sxwó:yxwey dance. Today, only women are permitted to sing the accompanying songs.

**Syuwel**
Stó:lō winter-time ceremonial commonly known as ‘spirit dancing’ or ‘winter dancing’.

**Tel Swayel**
'Sky-Borne People' who's actions of the distant past account in part for "making the world right"; linked to sxwóxwiyám.

**Tómiyeqw**
The Halq'eméylem term for “great-great-great-great grandchild” as well as “great-great-great-great-grandparent”; when linked to the self (mestíyexw), this terms links the present with both the future and the past – seven generations distant, revealing the connection between the past, present, and future generations in the Stó:lō worldview.

**Water Babies**
Small beings who live at the bottoms of certain lakes and deep spots in rivers; also associated with sxwó:yxwey.

**Wind Dry / Dry Rack Fishery**
The Stó:lō practice of catching, butchering, and hanging salmon fillets on a wooden rack to be dried by wind action. This practice has roots ion ancient Stó:lō history. Specific environmental conditions known only to the area within Stó:lō Territory between Hope and the Fraser Canyon permit the wind-drying process.

**Xegá:ls**
The 'Transformers' who's actions of the distant past account in part for "making the world right."

**Xwelítem**
literally translates as 'hungry people' describing the condition of some of the first non-Aboriginal immigrants into S'ólh T'éméxw (during the 1858 Gold Rush) who lacked access to the resources and food needed to ensure their survival. In later times, the Stó:lō used this term to describe the seemingly insatiable appetite of Colonial-period immigrants in consumption the land and resources of S'ólh T'éméxw. This term is currently applied to those in-migrating (or in-migrated) people who lack land title
supported by spiritual / ancestral / historical connections to Sólh T'éméxw).

Xwélmexw  “people of life”; ‘people who speak the Halq’eméylem language’; reference to the group of people recognized by the Stó:lō as their own versus ‘others’ (such as Xwelitem)
2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Project Description

The SE2 Generation Facility is to be constructed in Sumas Washington, south of the U.S./Canada border and north of State Route 9. The SE2 generation facility is a 660 megawatts (MW) combined cycle, electric generating facility. The Generation Facility consists of two natural gas-fired combined-cycle combustion turbine generator units and one steam turbine driven generator. Each gas-fired generator is expected to have a nominal power rating of 186 MW at average annual ambient temperatures. The Generation Facility will be fired by natural gas. Natural gas will be fired in the turbine's combustion section using Selective Catalytic Reduction as a post-combustion NOx reduction device. The Generation Facility shall operate only in its combined-cycle combustion configuration.

The Generation Facility will use two sources of water supply: 1) industrial water from the City of Sumas' May Road well field; and 2) municipal water from the City’s municipal well field. All process wastewater and sanitary sewer water from SE2 will be discharged to the City of Sumas’ municipal sewage collection system at the boundary of the Site.

Per the report prepared by MELP-EC-GVRD (2000), the proposed 660-megawatt SE2 Inc. power plant is described in the project specifications as likely to emit the following types and quantities of matter into the atmosphere on a daily basis:

- 202 tons of particulate matter (PM 2.5 microns) - approximately 9% of the total of particulate matter now emitted in the Fraser Valley Regional District
- 142 tons of nitrogen oxides (NOx)
- 142 tons of volatile organic compounds (VOC)
- 125 tons of ammonia (NH3)
- 96 tons of carbine monoxide (CO)
- 41 tons of sulphur oxide (SOx)

On an annual basis,

- 2.2 million tons of carbon dioxide would be emitted annually - 4,000% more than is currently emitted within the Fraser Valley Regional District, according to Environment Canada calculations.
2.2 Air Flow Patterns of the Upper Fraser Valley

The seasonal patterns of air flow in the Upper Fraser Valley—roughly defined as that part of the Fraser Valley between Abbotsford and Hope—are complex function of its topography, its proximity to the Pacific Ocean and the Strait of Georgia, and the principle air masses affecting this region of North America. In aggregate, these factors combine to significantly accentuate the negative effects of air pollutants present in the Upper Fraser Valley portion of the Georgia Basin airshed. A key question of concern to Stó:lō community members is the extent to which air pollutants originating in the Greater Vancouver Regional District, and the Georgia Basin more generally, are subsequently concentrated in certain areas of Stó:lō traditional territory. Any spatial concentration of pollutants almost certainly presents a degree of health risk to Stó:lō as well as other Canadian citizens (see Figures 2a, 2b, 3, 4 and 5).

The annual patterns of airflow roughly divide into a season of outflow dominance (winter and fall) and a season of inflow dominance (Figures 2a and 2b), although each of these principle wind patterns occur at any time of the year. The location of the proposed Sumas Energy 2 (SE2) generating station will result in net transport of emissions from the site to the west and south in the fall and winter (i.e., down valley) whereas net transport to the east and north in the spring and summer (i.e., up valley).

However, when these wind patterns are combined with the temperature regimes of the spring and summer months and their higher frequency of atmospheric photochemical reactions, reactions which produce the damaging secondary pollutants, the resultant concentrations of primary emissions and secondary pollutants in the Upper Fraser Valley portion of Stó:lō Traditional Territory are disproportionally higher than that which would arise from local emissions alone (Figures 3 and 4).

Key pollutants of concern include ground-level ozone (O\textsubscript{3}) and particulate matter (PM), both PM\textsubscript{10} and PM\textsubscript{2.5}. The 2000 Emissions Inventory for the Lower Fraser Valley (Greater Vancouver Regional District [GVRD]-Fraser Valley Regional District [FVRD] 2002), a study which covers a lot of Stó:lō territory, indicates that the majority of emissions for primary pollutants originate in the GVRD primarily and Whatcom County secondarily. Across all pollutant categories, the Fraser Valley Regional district is a distant third in its contribution of pollutants to the Fraser Valley Airshed. Yet, we find some of the worst results for key air quality parameters in specific up-valley communities: ground-level ozone is highest at Hope B.C. (Figure 3). There is an
obvious trend in PM$_{10}$ levels as well (Figure 4, Tables 1 and 2); however, PM$_{10}$ levels seem to taper-off east of Chilliwack towards Hope. It is self-evident that the local concentrations of O$_3$ and PM observed in up-valley locations such as Abbotsford, Chilliwack and Hope are the combined result of relatively high-levels of emissions in areas west of the Fraser Valley Regional District in concert with strong up-valley wind flow in the spring and summer.

An additional factor confounding the topographic and airflow patterns of the Upper Fraser Valley is the reduced atmospheric mixing heights characteristic of periods of high-pressure dominance and atmospheric stability in Coastal B.C. When these weather patterns are persistent, the airshed is essentially capped at a fixed altitude for several days at a time limiting the extent to which air pollutants are able to disperse vertically (Snyder 2002). Because the airshed is horizontally bounded by the South Coast Mountains to the north and west and by the North Cascade Mountains to the east and south, such periods of limited mixing result in chronically poor air quality conditions until the high pressure ridge breaks-down and vertical mixing heights are able to return to altitudes above that of the surrounding topography.

There are current sampling gaps for many regions of Stó:lō territory commonly used by Stó:lō citizens. Because of this and the pattern of pollutant concentration, it is difficult to adopt all of the general findings of major reviews of the SE2 project by credible agencies (B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks-Environment Canada-Greater Vancouver Regional District 2000 [MELP-EC-GVRD 2000]) as they pertain to portions of Stó:lō territory not included in their evaluation exercise (e.g., Hope, the Lower Fraser Canyon, the Chilliwack River Valley, the Harrison Lake region). However, it is noteworthy to reiterate that report’s predictions of negative impacts arising from the operation of SE2 in the vicinity of Sumas Mountain—an area which includes Sumas First Nation’s reserve lands on the mountain’s south slopes and is also relatively close to lands of the Leq’a:mel First Nation, situated directly northeast of the mountain.

A comprehensive network of monitoring stations is required to quantify the environmental impacts and health hazards of current levels of pollutants present in the Upper Fraser Valley airshed outside of the areas of historic data collection. Once a more comprehensive understanding of present site-specific concentrations of pollutants is attained for such areas, modelling the incremental impacts associated with SE2 emissions throughout Stó:lō territory will be possible. Not-withstanding current data

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1 Concentrations of PM$_{2.5}$ typically correlate well with concentrations of PM$_{10}$. Given a source of precursor pollutants, relative concentrations of PM$_{10}$ between different spatial locations can be used as a proxy for relative concentration of PM$_{2.5}$ where direct data is unavailable.
gaps, existing sampling does indicate that base-line air quality conditions in the Upper Fraser Valley occasionally exceed established standards for certain pollutants at certain locations--e.g., $O_3$ exceedances at Hope, B.C. (MELP-EC-GVRD 2000) and the overall spatial trends throughout the airshed (Figures 3 and 4). Furthermore, there is ongoing debate with regards to how well Federal Canada-wide standards actually reflect real thresholds of health impacts from pollution. Notably for $O_3$ and PM, there is clear evidence that negative impacts to health are detectable at pollution concentrations substantially below the ambient air quality standards current in use in Canada for these pollutants.

An analysis of wind patterns at Abbotsford, Agassiz and Hope, B.C. (Table 3) indicates that pollutants originating in the GVRD and the Lower Fraser Valley are likely transported to up-valley locations including the Harrison Lake-Chehalis region, the Lower Fraser Canyon, the Coquihalla River-Highway 5 corridor and the Nicomen River-Highway 3 corridor. Prevailing wind directions in spring and summer in conjunction with local topography suggest that dispersal of pollutants into the Chilliwack River Valley would be less than that expected in the aforementioned areas.

There is ample uncertainty regarding the extent of pollutant dispersion to locations outside of the main Fraser Valley corridor. Key areas of Stó:lō territory that are frequently used by our members for cultural, medicinal and subsistence practices require further monitoring to determine the actual concentration of pollutants in those areas. These include, as per Figure 5 and air flow patterns relevant to this study:

- the Chilliwack River Valley;
- the Coquihalla River-Highway 5 corridor;
- the Nicomen River-Highway 3 corridor;
- the Lower Fraser Canyon;
- the Harrison Lake-Chehalis region.

Each of these areas is up-valley from the proposed location of SE2 and down-wind during the spring and summer.
Figure 2a and b. Seasonal patterns of wind direction at (a) Abbotsford and (b) Hope, B.C. Outflow winds are: 330° through 150° at Abbotsford and 350° through 170° at Hope. Inflow winds are: 151° through 329° at Abbotsford and 171° through 349° at Hope. (Source: Environment Canada, National Climate Archive)
Figure 3: Ground-level ozone concentration for select communities in the Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Fraser Valley; data are for the annual 4th highest 8-hr daily maximum ozone concentrations averaged for 1998-2000 (parts per billion). Canada wide air quality standard of 65 ppb is marked. (Source: B.C. Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection ‘State of the Environment Reporting’ from Environment Canada)
Figure 4. Annual patterns of PM$_{10}$ exceedances of the 25 µg/kg standard for select communities in the Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Fraser Valley. Current Canada-wide standard is 30 µg/m$^3$. Source: Environment Canada.
**Table 1.** Excerpted frequency distributions of 24-hour average PM10 concentrations (in µg/m$^3$) at available SSI and Partisol monitoring sites located within Stó:lō Territory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>min</th>
<th>med-ian</th>
<th>75$^{th}$</th>
<th>95$^{th}$</th>
<th>max</th>
<th>% Sample s &gt; 25 µg/m$^3$</th>
<th>% Sample s &gt;50 µg/m$^3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbotsford Library</td>
<td>May '92</td>
<td>Mar. '95</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilliwack Merlins</td>
<td>Nov. '90</td>
<td>May '94</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope Firehall</td>
<td>Mar. '91</td>
<td>Nov. '96</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Pioneer</td>
<td>Aug. '92</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Secondary</td>
<td>Dec. '97</td>
<td>Jun. '00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt Meadows Airport</td>
<td>Feb. '91</td>
<td>Feb. '96</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.** Excerpted frequency of 24-hour average PM$_{10}$ concentration exceeding specified thresholds at TOEM monitoring sites located within Stó:lō Territory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% samples &gt; 25 µg/m$^3$</th>
<th>% samples &gt; 50 µg/m$^3$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbotsford Library</td>
<td>Jul. '94</td>
<td>Sept. '98</td>
<td>1391</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilliwack Airport</td>
<td>Mar. '95</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2067</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Moody Rock Pt. Park</td>
<td>Nov. '93</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2449</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Ridge Golden Ears Elementary</td>
<td>Feb. '98</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>1020</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond South</td>
<td>Oct. '93</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2557</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnaby Kensington Park</td>
<td>May. '94</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2379</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbotsford Bevan Ave.</td>
<td>Sept. '98</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnaby South</td>
<td>Mar. '94</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2443</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey East</td>
<td>Jan. '94</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2487</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Delta</td>
<td>Dec. '93</td>
<td>Dec. '99</td>
<td>2088</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver International Airport #2</td>
<td>Feb. '98</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>1055</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope Airport</td>
<td>Dec. '96</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>1477</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitsilano</td>
<td>Dec. '93</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2527</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langley Central</td>
<td>Jan. '94</td>
<td>Dec. '00</td>
<td>2398</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Comparative wind observations at Abbotsford, Agassiz and Hope, B.C. for a select period of the Pacific 2001 Air Quality Field Study (which ran from 13 August to 31 August 2001). This period that containing the study's maximum observed levels for O₃ and PM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Abbotsford, B.C.</th>
<th>Agassiz, B.C.</th>
<th>Hope, B.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ave. wind direc. (°)</td>
<td>ave, wind speed (km/hr)</td>
<td># hours calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daytime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th day</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th day</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>11.73</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th day</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th day</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>10.73</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th day</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>10.82</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th day</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>11.45</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th day</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>11.91</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day average</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10.69</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th night</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th night</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th night</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th night</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th night</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th night</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th night</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night average</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>39.56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5 – Approximate primary airshed corridors associated with emissions originating from the proposed SE2 Power Generation Facility within the airspace of Stó:lō Traditional Territory
3.0 METHODOLOGY

Terms of Reference (TOR) which guided the research for the TUS were developed jointly by Stó:lō Nation, SE2 and Arcas and are attached to this document as Appendix I. The TOR provides specific guidelines for the TUS methodology, information sharing, personnel, schedule, and deliverables. The TUS methodology is designed to be consistent with the guidelines and terminology of Stó:lō Nation’s Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual (2003).

3.1 Data Collection

This Phase of the TUS incorporates information from several sources including published and unpublished anthropological, ethnographic and historic information, traditional use studies, oral history data, and contemporary Stó:lō community member interviews.

3.1.1 Sampling Strategy and Topic Selection Process

Conducting a ‘blanket’ survey of all Stó:lō culture elements and practices regarding connections between air and water was not feasible given the time and funding constraints associated with this project. Rather, it was decided that a sampling strategy be applied in the selection of ‘focused’ topics of study. Three main criteria were developed and used as principles in sampling among the set of Stó:lō cultural elements potentially applicable to this study:

1. any potentially selected cultural element must first meet the definition of ‘cultural tradition’ used in this study;
2. any potentially selected cultural element must be of a custom, practice or tradition “integral to the distinctive culture of the Stó:lō” – per the study Terms of Reference;
3. any potentially selected cultural element must possess the greatest apparent likelihood of providing insight into the nature of the relationship(s) -- via the greatest apparent degree of connection to -- Stó:lō cultural traditions and air and water; which would provide information putting “SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation in a position to assess potential impacts of the SE2 project on those Aboriginal Traditions”.

The following eight elements of Stó:lō traditional culture and cultural practices were defined as focused topics of study and applied to meeting the project objectives set out in the term of reference:
- Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery
- Sxwo:yxwey
- Syuwel/Winter Dance
- Fishing/Hunting/Gathering
- Shxweli
- Sxwoxwiyam
- Stl’aleqem
- Water Babies

Brief descriptions of these Stó:lō traditions are presented in Section 4.1.

3.1.2 Data Collection - Documentary Research

Background information and data relevant to addressing the research questions proposed in this study were collected through documentary research involving the review of published and unpublished ethnographic, anthropological, historical, and oral history literature and records pertaining to the Stó:lō. A record of sources referred to in this stage of research and cited in the report is listed in the bibliography for this report.

3.1.3 Data Collection –Interviews with Stó:lō Individuals

A total of 20 Stó:lō community members from ten Stó:lō communities were interviewed as a primary means of collecting pertinent information for this project.

Joe Aleck (Cheam), Mel Bailey (Katzie), Diane Charlie (Chehalis), Dr. Rose Charlie, Grand Chief (Chehalis), Sidney Douglas (Cheam), Riley Lewis (Skway), Allen Gutierrez (Chawathil), Tilly Gutierrez (Chawathil), Herb Joe (Tzeacheten), Grace Kelly (Soowahlie), Johnny Leon (Katzie / Chehalis); Frank Malloway (Yakweakwioose), Ken Malloway (Tzeacheten), Albert McHalsie (Shxw’ow’hamel), Annie Narte (Skway), Grand Chief Clarence Pennier (Scowlitz), Cooper Pennier (Chehalis), Wilfreda Paul (Skway), Gwen Point (Skowkale), Catelina Renteria (Skway).

The Stó:lō community members listed above represent a form of ‘focus group’. That is, this group of individuals were selected as potential interviewees based on their extensive knowledge of Stó:lō culture and traditions, as practitioners of Stó:lō cultural traditions, and the likelihood of their being able to address the questions posed for this study. Many other people could be added to this list, however, limitation of time and funding served to limit our inclusion of others as participants in the interview process.
The participants in this study represent a sample rather than a complete set of Stó:lō individuals with the knowledge to speak on the subject(s) of this study, address the study questions, and provide information pertinent to addressing the study objectives. This study is, thus, not comprehensive can only be considered as a preliminary or ‘pilot’ endeavor.

The people who participated as interviewees in this project did so as Stó:lō individuals, not as community speakers or representatives. The contents of the interviews represent the views of these individuals rather than ‘positions’ of any particular Stó:lō political organization or community, beyond that of the ‘cultural’ community of which they are a part.

The interview questions were designed to address the eight Stó:lō traditions described above. A set of questions were developed for each tradition beginning with questions intended to establish the nature of the tradition, and its importance to both the interviewee, in particular, and to Stó:lō culture in general. The questions then moved to explore the relationship of each tradition to air and water. Following questions were aimed at exploring the current state of the tradition and the potential effect of pollution of the air or water on the practise or observance of each tradition. Final questions were designed to make sure that any aspects of the tradition in relation to air and water that were not already addressed through the questionnaire were elicited. The interview questionnaire developed for this TUS is presented in Appendix II.

The Interview questionnaire was developed with the awareness that some information about the traditions may be considered sensitive or confidential by the interviewee. A modular approach was adopted so that interviewees who were knowledgeable about specific traditions could answer questions related to only those traditions if they chose. Each of the eight sets of questions could stand alone in an interview if the interviewee chose to answer only one set. This approach allowed for necessary flexibility in the interview process but also created some repetition in the questionnaire when viewed as a whole.

The entire questionnaire was presented to each prospective participant with a brief description of the potentially affected airshed (see Figure 5) and the proposed SE2 Generation Facility in advance of the interview to allow the interviewee the opportunity to review the questions and decide which portions of the questionnaire they would address, if any. An interview release form that indicated the intended use of collected information and consent of the interviewee was filled out for each interview and signed by the interviewee.
All interviews were audio taped and transcribed. All audio cassette recordings, interview transcriptions, consent forms are held by the Stó:lō Nation in the Stó:lō Nation Archives.
4.0 Findings

4.1 Documentary Research

This section provides references from reviewed ethnographic, anthropological, historical, and oral history sources documenting Stó:lō connections to air and water as expressed through the set of traditions focused on in this study.

Due to time and funding constraints, and the large scope of this project, it was not feasible to review all known documentary sources containing pertinent information. Also limiting the amount of useful information found in this stage of background research was the fact that the questions produced for this study have generally not been asked in prior anthropological studies. The background information found to be pertinent to this study tends to be more indirectly rather than directly linked to addressing the objectives of this study. The primary set of data relied on to directly address the study objectives derives from the results of the Stó:lō community-member interviews developed and carried out specifically for the purposes of this project, presented in Section 4.3. Presented below are the findings from the review of documentary sources. This section / review is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather provide substantiation from an anthropological perspective of the Stó:lō traditions used as the core of this study -- identifying in brief where they were subjects of study in the past. For consistency, ease of classification and presentation, findings are grouped according to the Stó:lō traditions earlier defined in this study and also applied to structuring the interview phase of research.

4.1.1 ‘Wind Dry’/‘Dry Rack’ Salmon Fishery

Caroline Butler worked in Stó:lō Traditional Territory in 1997 and 1998, studying the wind dry fishery as a member of the UBC Ethnographic Field School and, following that, to complete her MA thesis. Butler interviewed people who currently participate in the wind dry fishery, Elders who participated in their youth and other Stó:lō who do not participate in the wind dry fishery in addition to conducting a comprehensive literature review.

Butler’s research demonstrates that wind drying remains a vital part of the contemporary Stó:lō way of life; “Dried Salmon is part of the Stó:lō heritage as the People of the River and wind drying persists despite changes in the physical, social and economic environment” (Butler 1997).
Participation in the wind dry fishery has doubled in the past twenty years and more and more young people are becoming involved in the practice. People interviewed by Butler said:

“It has been our traditional way for many centuries. What I am doing now is for my children and grandchildren and for generations to follow: that we will hold on to our traditional ways, our traditional fishing grounds.” And “Wind drying seems to be building up. A lot of the young people want to take over. This younger generation are more involved that I was or my children. We were residential schoolers” (Stó:lō community member as quoted in Butler 1997).

Throughout her report, Butler makes the point that food gathering activities in Aboriginal communities are invested with social and cultural value in addition to their subsistence value.

Butler concludes that, “Wind drying is considered one of the last traditional activities; it is spoken about in the same way as spirit dancing and other smokehouse ceremonials. The adjective “sacred” has been used by several people to refer to both the product and the process” (Butler 1997).

4.1.2 Sxwó:yxwēy

“The natural elements of air and water (associated with many Stó:lō Healing rites and spirit power stories) are closely connected to Sxwó:yxwēy origin.” (McHalsie 2001:10). Duff, Teit, Lerman, Hill-Tout, Barnett, and Boas have collected Sxwó:yxwēy stories, sharing common elements of healing, cleansing and water. In these stories, when a person spits into the water, the spittle causes the Underwater People to become ill. The Sxwó:yxwēy ceremonies remain an integral part of Stó:lō culture.

4.1.3 Syúwél / Winter Dance

“We may note here that the proper procedure for the initiate from this point until the end of the dance season is for him to bathe in cold water early every morning....bathed in a shallow pool of a small creek which wends it way through one of he few remaining wooded areas of the reserve” (Kew 1970:169).
Guardian spirits associated with visions and power were sought by dancers frequenting “wild places”. (Amoss 1978:52-53)

Bathing in the river during the dance season keeps the dancer strong when he or she dances. (Amoss 1978:61-62)

### 4.1.4 Fishing/Hunting/Gathering

Traditional food and medicine gathering have been well documented by ethnographers and anthropologists (Barnett 1955: 59-67; Suttles 1987; Duff 1952:73, 74; Carlson,2001:62,63; Hill-Tout 1907:90-109; Stó:lō Nation 1998). Documentation and discussion of Stó:lō use of the mountains is discussed by Bierwirt (1989), Schaepe (2003), and Poulsen (2003).

*General preference for “country food” derives from the subsistence harvest’s cultural connotations, more than from its food or economic value.* (Butler 1998:12)

### 4.1.5 Shxweli

*“Every object had its own soul or spirit”* (Hill-Tout 1907:166).

*“…and their perception of its (Nature’s) laws is to endow every object and agency in their environment with conscious power and being”* (Hill-Tout 1902:10).

*“We drink the water; it’s alive. We breathe the air; it’s alive too. Respect it!”* (Orchard 1983:5).

### 4.1.6 Sxwōxwiyám

Stó:lō origin narratives -- sxwōxwiyám (“narratives of the distant past”) -- tell us that the ancestors were “sent down from the sky by the deity” (Bouchard 2002: 102, 104; also see McHalsie et al 2001). Oral history collected by Jenness in 1934/35 confirms this: “In the first times a being, bright and dazzling, came from the sun...” (Jenness 1935). Mrs. Louis George tells a story about Raven and Robin in which Raven disparages Robin because she is not from Sun. (Lerman 1951: 30). In addition to the origin stories,
sxwōxwiyám tell of people living in or visiting sky land. When Xexá:l, the Transformers, made the world right through transformation some people and animals were transplanted to the sky where they became constellations. (Bouchard 2002: 95). For other stories about beings in the sky – Tel Swayel -- see Jenness 1935, Maud1978: 128, 141, Bouchard 2002: 123,125, and Lerman 1952:100.

Transformer tales tell of people transformed into objects imbued with their spirit (Teit 1917:129)

“...many of our resources were at one time our ancestors. (Carlson 1995:2)

Our Elders tell us that everything has a spirit. So when we use a resource…we have to say a prayer to our ancestors who were transformed into these things” (Carlson 1995:3).

4.1.7 Stl’áleqem

Albert (Sonny) McHalsie describes Stl’áleqem as spiritual beings “essential to Stó:lō well-being” (McHalsie 2001:8). Stl’áleqem sites are documented in Stó:lō oral histories and in the literature (see Duff 1952:117-119, Jenness 1935:1, 10; Lerman 1951; Maud 1978:56, Orchard 1983 and Oliver Wells Field Notes.) When disturbed by human activity Stl’áleqem will leave a site, “It is therefore essential that their homes be protected” (McHalsie 2001:8).

4.1.8 Water Babies

According to respected Elder Dan Milo “…the old Indians always fed their water-babies, that came out from the rocks, by throwing food in the water for them. White men thought they would fish them out. The first one caught one, but it just held the line in its hand and stopped right where it was. The Indians all left (knowing something unnatural would happen, because the water baby had been caught. The Baby opened its mouth to squeal, and fog came out of its mouth, and it filled the valley with fog” (Oliver Wells Field Notes: 49).

Dan Milo also mentions water babies in an interview with Oliver Wells in July of 1964. (Transcript available in SN Archives.)

John Wallace tells of water babies living at the south end of Chilliwack Lake and many locations along the Chilliwack River. Catching them was very difficult and if one was
caught it would invariably bring heavy fog and rising waters and generally upset nature until it was released and returned to the water. (Oliver Wells Field Notes: 50)

In 1935, anthropologist Diamond Jenness collected a story about Baby’s Lake (Chilliwack Lake) that tells of two babies living in the lake. When they were caught by a white man, “They opened their mouths as if to cry, and streams of fog issued from their lips that began to cover the whole landscape. Then a mighty storm arose” (Jenness 1935:10).

4.1.9 General References to Air and Water

Dalton Silver (Sumas First Nation) speaking to Megan Gough (Gough 2003), “…they are destroying water, the industry [unclear] technology…and we’re supposed to look after it for future generations, and it’s gonna be gone…and soon the kids, they are gonna be Elders, and their great grandchildren aren’t gonna be able to experience the things that we talked about.”

Roger Andrews (Shxw’ow’hamel First Nation) speaking to Megan Gough (Gough 2003), “…You take care of that river and it will take care of you. His teachings [Roger’s Grandfather’s teachings] were to keep it clean.”

Evangeline Pete (October 22, 1985), “The River is my friend…that was the only consolation I use to have, the river…”

Arvid Charlie (Cowichan First Nation) speaking about culture, pollution, air and water quality at the Coast Salish Traditional Ecological Knowledge Conference, November 2003:

“The environment is spiritual for us you know. We can measure pollution, either by seeing it; by seeing it when I go up to the mountains at home, on Vancouver Island, I can look across the mainland on Seattle, Bellingham area, Vancouver, even Powell River and I can see all that haze, just a big dark cloud hanging over there, what is that pollution doing to us?... You know when modern medicine is made; it’s made in a lab, spotless place. Well our medicines is no different, many of us still harvest our medicines that’s applied to our people. We’re having more and more problems finding good places to get those medicines. For us that area has to be pristine...even though there’s medicine there the quality’s gone, it’s no more ...We’re all related...work together we can survive, but also the land is all connected together. You take one piece away it will start to fall apart.”

4.2 Interview Results

This section, while lengthy, provides the primary set of information critical to addressing the objectives of this study. In order to avoid misrepresenting the ‘Stó:lō voice’ projected in the interviews conducted for this study and represented in these transcripts, a strategy for data presentation was developed that called for presenting the content of the interviews in as complete and unedited a manner as possible. Only minor editing of transcript contents was performed for inclusion in this document. Editing consisted of removing irrelevant material not pertinent to addressing the questions being asked and/or the objectives of the study, and adding topical headings correlating with the question set within the body of the text. Table 4 shows the topics addressed by each interviewee. The interview transcripts are presented in alphabetical order by surname.
Table 4. Interviewees and Interview Topic Index

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4.2.1 Joe Aleck

Interviewee: Joe Aleck, Cheam
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date of Interview: January 5, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you?

JA: As far as I can remember from when I was very little, I am 72 now, and I was up in the Fraser Canyon with my mother and great grandmother and my lots of my aunts. Everybody used to move up at the end of June to dry rack the early Stuart run. It is the best run of fish to be dried. Especially at the that time of the year, it’s warm, the sun is out and there’s always a good clean air of wind blowing down the canyon. That’s over sixty years now, and its’ been going on for hundreds of years, generations of our Sto:lo, not only Sto:lo, but people come from lower Sto:lo, the Musqueams, the Kwantlens, the Squamish, across the waters the Seschelts, the Cowichans and even further up, that came up to the canyon to wind dry salmon because it is the most ideal place to wind dry salmon.

Our people still do the wind drying to this day, maybe not as many people, but whole families move up the canyon in June. This is our lifestyle, the way we live, we live by the Sto:lo, which means by the river, the Sto:lo, and we survive by the river with the salmon and other species in the river and around the area.

So, it’s very important for us as Sto:lo and people from the lower mainland that we have a good clean area, clean water. We’re quite concerned right at the moment about the purity and cleanliness of our river the Sto:lo. Very concerned.

Some of the elders noticed that the pollution has gotten worse in the last few years from the pollution. Even right now we cannot drink the water from the river. We used to be able to do that. I lived by the river in an old homestead in Cheam here, about a mile from the river. In the summertime the well would go dry and as a little boy, eight, nine, ten years old, I’d walk down to the river with my pail to get our drinking water, I’d never do that now.

As a matter fact, I do a lot of fishing myself, and if I handle the net everyday for a length of time, my hands begin to feel dry, everything dries out. In the air, we are well aware of all the mills happening in our area that affect the air. Our Sto:lo elders
say that all the water, all the elements are important to all our people, to all people, not just Sto:lo people.

We are a spiritual people. Everything is alive and we have to treat it as such so we can all survive in this world. Not only us but our children, our grandchildren, and past the seven generation to come. It’s really important to us, and we are concerned about what’s happening to our clean air and clean water. Many of the Sto:lo, the Upper Sto:lo have been affected with asthma and other ailments because of the current pollution that comes from Vancouver and other places. You can really see it in the summertime. It’s just like a cloud of smoke that hangs over us in the valley. We’re well aware of the pollution. Our people feel it. Even at this time we feel the pollution from the air and water, and even on the ground.

We’re well aware that when the water comes down from the sky that it takes down all the pollution from the air. It affects our people, our land and the water.

PK: How are Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery connected to air?

JA: Wind Drying our fish and salmon is one way of preserving the food, not only the fish but berries and medicinal plants. So, the air is very important how we live our lives. It’s not the most important, how we breath the air, the more naturally pure, naturally the better our health will be, for all people, all animals including the salmon.

PK: How are Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery connected to water?

JA: As the run comes up the Sto:lo [the Fraser River], they come from the ocean into fresh water. We call the river fresh water because it’s not salt water. And, it seems to cleanse itself, the salmon changes texture as it comes up the river. We depend on the good texture in our salmon that comes up the river that it’s not affected by things in the water.

However, we know very well right now there’s already too much pollution like raw sewage going into the Fraser River. It certainly affects whatever is in the river, whether its salmon or anything else.

PK: How important is clean air to Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices?

JA: Since we tried to dry a lot of salmon for our winter supply, if the air really clean, the Sleegis [Halq’eméylem for ‘Wind Dry Salmon’] turns out good. It’s a very stable situation.
PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by air pollution?

JA: Definitely that can happen, and it has happened. As I mentioned earlier, the increase in mills and cars and the pollution from all these vehicles that goes up and down the river all affects our air and water. As time goes on, there’s going to be an increase in people, many more vehicles and boats will further impact our air and water.

We no longer travel by canoe as we did in the past year. Everyone now has a boat with a boat and motor, with gas and oil, and this certainly doesn’t help with keeping the water clean either.

PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by water pollution?

JA: Definitely, if the fish survive in the water and you live in good clean water you are healthy. The whole body of the salmon will be in a good state. One of our old people mentioned about the pollution and how bad some of the salmon runs are. If you live in a sewer you cannot be healthy. Well, in some places it’s like living in a sewer. That’s really bad when the water is polluted in a state like that, nothing can survive in a state like that.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect practice and teachings of Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery?

JA: Now a days there are still a lot of our people/families move up to the canyon where it is the best place to wind dry salmon because of the river and the canyon and how the wind blows there, and how the heat develops in that certain area in the canyon. When that’s affected by pollution, whether its’ by air or water pollution, or the fallout from the rain, it certainly affects the way we wind dry salmon. We try to let our young people know about this to be careful in catching and hanging up the salmon. We have to be well aware of what’s going with our air and water today. We have to be quite selective in catching the salmon. As I mentioned, the fish that come up river now is very polluted. We have to be careful to take only the healthy salmon.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery by affects of water and air pollution?

JA: Well, it’s not only my main concern, we’ve discussed this. I’m in the House of Elders at Sto:lo Nation and we’ve talked about this. All the elders are very concerned about
this. They are concerned about not developing or putting up any other types of systems or factories, or plants that would develop. Even a certain amount of pollution let alone a tremendous amount. Even with the little amounts that is produced by some mills, and factories and plants will become more affected, all accumulated into the air, so the elders have said we do not want to see anymore pollution from anymore types of systems that will further pollute the air and water.

**PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery practices in relation to air and water and Sto:lo traditions?**

**JA:** One thing that I would like to see myself after going up to the canyon many times with my relatives in the past year, my aunt still goes up, my uncle still moves his family and other relations for the summer. It depends on the weather, if the weather, the air is polluted, that affects the way we wind dry salmon. Sometimes we have to put it off for a few days because the water and air isn’t as clean as it should be.

We have to be selective about which salmon to take from the river. That’s why in the past hundreds of years the first run, which our people believe has the best oils and textures for wind drying salmon.

**PK: Do you have any other concerns about the affects of air or water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?**

**JA:** If there is a way our Sto:lo leaders and the voices of our elders can prevent further pollutions either into the air, water or land, I am certainly emphatic about preventing more pollution. In the past years, as river people, as Sto:lo, we live by the water. A lot of our people know how the water is compared to even a few years ago, same with the air, our people are getting affected by what’s in the air and water now, either through allergies and asthma and many other illnesses that affect our people. We’re very concerned about what’s going on with our air and water.

**Sxwo:yxwey**

**PK: How important is the Sxwo:yxwey tradition to you?**

**JA:** This is one of the ceremonies out of many ceremonies we do for different things to help us survive on this mother earth, our *Solh Temexw*. We do this ceremony sacredly
and very strongly in a good way, because we know it’s going to help us. All of our people are spiritual. We’re close to the land, water and air.

We use one of these ceremonies, many ceremonies to help keep ourselves pure and clean. We ask our Chichel Siya:m to help us, not only us but also all people to do what is right. We hope that in the future that all people will look at us in a good way so that we will survive. Not only us, but our children and past and future seven generations.

**PK: How important is Sxwo:yxwey to Sto:lo culture?**

JA: As I mentioned, this in only one of our very sacred ceremonies, I will not go into detail, because it’s one of our last things sacred areas that we still do, these special ceremonies. This ceremony is one of the most important ceremonies to us. The Sxwo:yxwey is very important to us, that we use this ceremony as purifying with the air, water and land, but for ourselves, for our spirits, our own lives and all people.

**PK: How is Sxwo:yxwey connected to air and water?**

JA: The Sxwo:yxwey is very special. As you are well aware, Sxwo:yxwey came from the water. We’re all aware of that. So, it came from clean water, clean air and we use it especially for cleansing ceremonies. As many people use clean water for special ceremonies, which I also do for myself.

**PK: How important is clean air and water to Sxwo:yxwey?**

JA: Same as ourselves, we’re all spiritual people. Sxwo:yxwey is to us similar to the Great Spirit. Sxwo:yxwey helps us cleanse many things. So, Sxwo:yxwey is very important to trying to keep clean all what’s on our mother the earth.

**PK: Can Sxwo:yxwey be affected by air or water pollution?**

JA: Some of our elders mentioned, anything that affects our way of life, whether its material or whether its’ spiritual. It’s not good. We know when something is not good, not clean; when something causes a negative affect for all people.

**PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Sxwo:yxwey from effects of water and air pollution?**

JA: Again, as our people say, I believe very strongly, the life of all people on Mother Earth, our S’olh Temexw must do things to work out things, and do them in a good way.
I'll tell you what I mean by a ‘good way’. Try not to develop things or build things that will cause a certain amount of pollution to the water and to the air.

As soon as time passes, once you start pollution it going to increases, and when it increases, it affects the air, water and all people; people then won't think properly of how to resolve things or do things in a good way.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Sxwo:yxwey effects of water and air pollution?

JA: I was thinking in my mind, I went to a big gathering in Mount Currie. Some of the very impressive, like Dr. Suzuki who speaks very well about our environment and land, our S'olh Temexw. He says, “If we don't take of our land, water and air the animals will disappear. They are the first to go, and the next to go will be us.” Our aboriginal people have been saying this for many, many years. When the salmon, birds and animals disappear, we know the end is coming because of pollution. We have to be very careful and work towards cleaner air, cleaner water and have more organization working towards developing better systems to maintain a cleaner environment.

Syuwel/Winter Dance

PK: How important is the Winter Dance tradition to you?

JA: Again, this is one of the most important ceremonies we have. My feelings is, and a lot of our elders and people believe it is the most important and most sacred to our way of life. I don't believe I have the authority to talk about it, or any of our people because of the sacredness of the ceremonies. All I have to say about Syuwel is that it is one of the most important traditions we have that effects all our lives as Sto:lo people, and again, how it brings the good spirit into our lives through ceremony and makes us new people, better people. Syuwel helps us to be healthy with the environment around us with our Mother the Earth, to be more balanced and in harmony with our environment....

I realize this is one of the most important things that Sto:lo people should be aware of. Without going into all the details, this winter ceremony entails all what’s on mother earth, especially the water and the air that we breath. Also, the mountains, the air in the mountains are part of the ceremony; and the water. Above all, with this ceremony, traditionally, we have always survived on the food that we gather from S'olh Temexw. Whether it's salmon or wild game or wild birds or all the special plants we rely on, this is all used in special ceremonies. Above all, it helps develop the person spiritually, mentally, physically, and emotionally to become a new person on our
Mother the Earth. Everything is taken into consideration involves everything in our environment.

**Fishing/Hunting/Gathering**

**PK: How important is the Gathering and Hunting tradition to you?**

JA: Even up to today, our people still continue to gather whether its berries, fruit, wild plants for our survival. We pick in the summertime and many other things up in the mountain. We’re well aware if the air is polluted. Polluted air affects everything on our land, whether its berries or plants and the encroachment of our land by digging up and leaving contaminants on the land. Contamination affects all plants, berries and medicines that we collect from the lands, the forests and the mountain. And, the hunting, we’re well aware – before we would get game in our backyard. Today we don’t see any game.

I remember when my family and I lived in a little homestead here, we would go outside when I was very young, I would see rabbits running around and grouse, willow grouse, pheasants. If my family needed food we would go get it for our sustenance. Today, I don’t see anything up there, I don’t even hear a bird? Why? Because of pollution, not only pollution but encroachment, and people come and have no thought in how to take care of our land, our air or our water, our plants. So, all animals and wild game, we have to go further to get them now.

**PK: How is the gathering, hunting tradition connected to air and water?**

JA: Again, gathering of many types of food and medicine that we need is affected by what’s in the air and in the water, and how the wild berries, plants and medicines will grow from the mountains and if the air is very polluted it affects the growth of all these plants and berries. Maybe it’s not effective anymore. The effectiveness is destroyed by pollution.

We know very well this is happening. So, it’s very important that we let all people know, all people that we have to take care of Mother Earth.

As you mentioned the facts about pollution that may go into the air, tons of this and tons of that, we know even just a little bit of that pollution will affect the clean water and clean air that we have left and it will affect the people, not only our Sto:lo people but, all people. As I mentioned about a story I heard about at another gathering, once all the animals disappear and game disappear, we are next, and there’s no doubt about that.
PK: How important is clean air and clean water to Gathering and Hunting tradition?

JA: The air and the water that affect our hunting and gathering as I mentioned, when pollution or whatever is in the air and water comes and affects the salmon, plants or berries are affected, maybe the quality is destroyed or very minimized. We Sto:lo would no longer get the benefit of the berries, plants or fish, medicine or anything.

Big organizations including the Department of Fisheries and Oceans blame us for destroying the runs of the salmon. I wish they would look at this whole process in a really good way, like our people are and take good care of the water. As an example, get those mills and the sewers going into our river to be stopped. The dumping of many pollutions in all our rivers and streams, and lakes so that our salmon can survive and we as Sto:lo can survive.

There are effects of all the contaminants in the air and in the water in our land that affect our people. Our talk about all of this, it seems like we’re talking and hollering into the wilderness and nobody hears us. So, I hope in time that some people will hear us and listen to what we as Sto:lo have to say about our land and environment, and we will only do this in a good way not only for our own people but, for all people.

PK: Can Gathering and Hunting practices be affected by air pollution?

JA: Definitely! I just mentioned how our plants, animals and we survive on Mother Earth is what’s in the air. Whether it’s the oxygen, the rain it all helps to develop things we survive on. Our people believe strongly that everything is alive. Non-Aboriginal people disagree, but everything is alive; if they weren’t alive, would the grass grow, would a tree grow? Would fruits bloom at certain times of the year. We believe our Mother the Earth is completely alive, and we have got to take care of her. If we don’t take care of everything about Mother the Earth nothing will survive. We as Sto:lo will not survive. So, we must not only satisfy ourselves but to satisfy our Mother the Earth so that we can remain here as we hope our grandchildren and great grandchildren will be able to survive here too.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect practices and teaching of Gathering and Hunting?

JA: Again, if there is an increase in pollution...as we’re aware of people discussing pollution in the air and the effectiveness of the ozone layer. It’s only going to get worse if you develop more pollution. Not only will our hunting and gathering will be affected but our people will be affected if more pollution is created. All people, so we will not be
able to lead very good lives if there is more pollution on Mother Earth. It’s very important that we do not develop or build anything that will produce more pollution for our air, water and lands. I cannot understand how some of our people cannot see this in a good way, to work very hard on our environment, to make it a good place so that we can all survive. Will save the last three questions until the end of the interview...

Shxweli

PK: What is Shxweli?

JA: Our people believe, as spiritual people, Sto:lo people believe that Shxweli is our life force in all of us. We have to take care of our life force, our being, our spirituality, our soul within us in order to make us a better people. In order to take care not only of ourselves but all people and everything on our land, especially our air and whatever is in the water that will help us survive.

Shxweli is very important. Our people believe very strongly in this life-force. Because the Shxweli is given to us by our Creator, Chichel Siya:m. Chichel Siya:m has given us a choice to use it properly. If we don’t use it properly it will destroy us. And, that is one of the biggest concerns our people have, that I have. We must use Shxweli in a good way. We are not to build or manufacture or build things that will cause more pollution to Mother Earth, to our air and water. We have a choice given to us by Chichel Siya:m. We must develop things but look after our people and all people so that we can survive. If we don’t look after our people and don’t make that right choice we will no longer be here. We will destroy ourselves.

PK: What is Shxweli’s place in Sto:lo tradition?

JA: Myself, I believe that Shxweli is the way Sto:lo people have survived the oppression all over the country. That is how we are still here, that is how we have survived. Our Shxweli gives us the strength to survive, even through oppression and eradication measures, assimilation and integration that has been developed against us as Sto:lo people. I believe strongly that Chichel Siya:m gave us our Shxweli in a good way and for us to survive and that is what we are doing. It’s very important for us as Sto:lo people, that we push to all other people and other leaders, to look at this in a good way, to have some type of Shxweli in their lives to take care of our people, our land, air and water.
PK: How can you tell the health of Shxweli?

JA: Oh yes, the same as anything else. If the spirit is strong, if the force is strong, then everything is strong. But, if something happens, people make the wrong choices, the Shxweli is minimized and maybe even with time, people actually lose their Shxweli. So, it’s really important to develop, keep working on it and among our people is we as part of our Sto:lo traditions is to look after one another, share with one another, help one another so that our Shxweli stays strong. Our life-force will help us to survive, our great-grandchildren.

PK: So the health of the Shxweli is determined by looking at the strength of the person or the strength of the trees?

JA: Everything on S’olh Temexw has a Shxweli, has a spirit and is alive. If we don’t look after all the plants and animals the trees, the land, the water, the air, and if we want to destroy it without thinking and taking care of it, naturally the Shxweli of all things and ourselves will be gone.

We have a choice to do something. I wish that all our leaders in the country would look at it in a good way and develop their Shxweli in a good way and not destroy it, each other, the land and the environment.

PK: Is there a Shxweli of air and water?

JA: Our people have always believed that there is a spirit to all things so as to take care of everyone and everything on mother earth. That’s what makes us survive. We lose one or two that will affect our life and survival and in relation to S’olh Temexw, our people are more spiritual than any other cultural group that I am aware of here in Sto:lo territory. We always talk to Chichel Siya:m, we pray and ask for help that things will go right in a good way all the time?

PK: What is the current health of air Shxweli and water Shxweli in Sto:lo territory?
JA: As I mentioned before, I am very sad to say that it’s getting to a state where it’s all unhealthy and it’s already affecting our survival, the health of our water. You can’t drink the river water anymore. I used to pack water from the river to the homestead and use it for drinking and cooking and everything else. Right now, I wouldn’t drink the river water because of the level of pollution that’s in there right now.

All water quality it being affected by pollution. If we don’t make the right choices and do the right things in a good way, all of us will be affected in our lives and our Shxweli. So, it’s (Shxweli) very important that the health of our water and even the air. We know about carbon monoxide and everything else, because of all the vehicles and any thing that goes up into the air and especially if they built this Sumas Energy 2. I seems like there is no thought in taking care of our air and water. By taking care of the air and water, you are taking care of human beings.

If we continue to think of the monetary end of this SE2, again, that’s a downfall. Maybe in saying our Sto:lo Xwilmuux destination in life, our Sto:lo destination is all together different than non-Aboriginal destination. Because our belief in life is that first of all we look after each other, we look after S’olh Temexw, we look after all the beings that are on our Mother Earth, the animals, the birds, the salmon and all the wild game. We would take care of that, and we learn and take our lessons from our Mother the Earth. We take those teachings, learn them, share them with the young ones, and look to the seven generations, to teach them how to survive in this life. That is our destination in this life is to learn what the Creator has taught us and to share among the will of all people these teachings.

There’s still another thought in my mind. Even in the last ten years, the people in North America have gained and progressed to a great degree in technology, more so in the last ten years than the last fifty years. Why can’t our scientists and well educated people seek other means of developing other than using the same thing that we know very well its’ going to our downfall, pollution. That’s another thought I had.

PK: Do you know of some types of resources that have a Shxweli more sensitive than others to disturbance?

JA: Well, definitely, human beings on Mother Earth are more fragile, therefore we have more Shxweli. We can decide. We have choice. We have the choice of what to do and how to take care of things, whereas the trees and grass and other things cannot decide for themselves what to do.

We humans have the full-choice, humans choice is more important that we take care of the plants and animals with their Shxweli to make them be able to survive. Just like out there, the buds are coming out. As an example, if we decide to chop it down or put something on Mother Earth to ruin the buds, that’s our choice to decide, if
we want to put concrete in our backyard, and make highways and cover up all the plants, that’s our choice to do that.

We can make it better, if everyone would get together. Not only the new technology that’s coming about, but our people are learning new knowledge for themselves, hopefully for the betterment, not only for themselves but hopefully for mankind, not just for a few people. Definitely we have choice. Same thing with this energy thing, we can let them go ahead or we can stop them. We can let them be aware of the consequences of the mission.

Sxwoxwiyam

PK: Are there any Sxwoxwiyam that explains the relation between the Sto:lo and air and water?

JA: I would believe that, because our people have stories about the air, water and land and everything else, different stories about how important it is for us as Sto:lo to look after everything, to make choices to do things right.

A long time ago, important people who were Siyams spoke to our people and said we have to tell stories of how it important if we wanted to do things right, if we didn’t, it would be our own downfall.

We must all believe and take care of one another and have the people to tell our children and grandchildren all the importance of taking care of not only ourselves but everything on Mother Earth. So there are many Sxwoxwiyam stories concerning everything to do with Mother Earth, the Shxweli, the plants, the trees, the mountains, the air and water. How air and water affect everything on Mother Earth. If we don’t decide to take care of Mother Earth, we’ve made a wrong choice. People have made wrong choices.

PK: What are Tel Swayel?

JA: Tel Swayel, maybe a shxweli or the spirit that’s in the air, you might say that takes care of everyone. I think that’s an important issue because it affects the air and the water. Like maybe even, it came to mind now, I heard my mother singing a good
weather song. You speak to it, if you want to call Tel Swayel or something. The good spirits up there that look after the air. We believe everything is alive, and everything has a spirit. It can be good and it can be not so good.

You even see things in the bible about that. So, it’s how it’s controlled maybe, how we have a lot of ceremonies, how we do offerings, whether they are to the special forces or spirits to Mother Earth asking for help to guide us. From what I understand, that’s one way I understand.

Some of our people still do that very strongly, we’re losing elders who had a stronger belief, but we still have people who tell you stories, Sxwoxwiyam. They tell you stories about what happened along time ago and how we should practice our ceremonies in a good way.

KP: Are there any teachings that you know of in the Sto:lo Sxwoxwiyam about polluting air and water?

JA: Just as I mentioned about Shxweli or spirits of air or water, the growth of what’s on land, wild game or human beings, there’s many things about Sxwoxwiyam, the teachings of long ago. Some of our people, that’s all they did was tell stories because our we had no written language. So, we had gatherings, we had no television or radio. Sto:lo would gather in certain places, few to several people and we have a person doing Sxwoxwiyam of the teachings.

And, sometimes I heard that Sxwoxwiyam would go on for days. Because when you start to talk about something, whether your talking about human beings and all of life, the Shxweli, the spirituality and the beliefs, and the physical beings right down to the animals that walk the forest, the ones that fly, the ones that swim, the ones that crawl, you talk about their Shxweli through their Sxwoxwiyam. We talk about their Shxweli and how it is important for us to understand to learn about them and teach about them.

Some of the things at gatherings along time ago, I spoke to my uncle, Ska law’, he said sometimes during the winter ceremonies, a ceremony called a Sacota. Sacota is a gathering of people. It’s not a spiritual dance, it’s telling stories, Sxwoxwiyam or just sometimes entertainment. Sacota is a time when people are finished doing their harvesting before coming winter to tell about the good times in the summertime and how well the air was, the water was, the game was to tell the Sxwoxwiyam.

PK: Seqota? I wonder how to spell that?
JA: *Seqota*. There’s a thing over the ‘o’ as in Sto:lo. That means that this is not a sacred ceremony gathering, it’s Sxwoxwiyam, recollecting harvest times, sharing of songs and entertainment dances. I tell my children, oh, I remember *Seqota* gatherings. We were up Mount Cheam, with my mom. I was pretty little. We picked huckleberries and blue berries or whatever the case may be.

On the other side of the bush I saw something black. I was going to go over there and shake hands, but he was a bear. He was picking berries too. I took my bucket and started running. Or, I got this salmon, it was so big, it couldn’t fit into the canoe and tipped the canoe right over, I fell over...these are Sxwoxwiyam at the *Seqota*, they’re entertainment stories.

**Stl’aleqem**

**PK: What are Stl’aleqem?**

JA: Stl’aleqem, if I could remember correctly. There’s different meaning for different things and Stl’aleqem are things that we see, hear, feel or know about. Some people don’t believe they’re real.

How would I say Stla’aleqem, they are not ghosts, some people believe in them, some don’t. I don’t know if Sasquatch would fit into that category. There are many other things that they believe to be Stl’aleqem, I don’t know if Water Babies would fit into this category or not. I know some of our people tell stories about seeing things and like I say, the Sasquatch, nobody has really come into contact with one or caught one, but they are talked about today.

**PK: Are Stl’aleqem important to our culture today as they were yesterday?**

JA: I believe so, not only amongst the Sto:lo, but other peoples of different locations have Sxwoxwiyam, stories of Sl’a’leqem, that have connection to their culture, same with us as Sto:lo, certain things like this have an affect on our lifestyle. There’s a connection between our tradition and culture and Stl’aleqem.

Quite often you hear stories, Sxwoxwiyam about a Stl’aleqem, more often than not it has a teaching in our Sto:lo tradition about what is good and what is not good and
how to resolve it, and again, you have the choice to decide whether it’s how to resolve in your own way. There’s all kinds of stories like this to bring teachings.

PK: Where do Stl’aleqem live?

JA: First of all, it can be anywhere, and it all depends on the story, you Sxoxwiyam, what you are talking about, whether you’re talking about the mountain, rivers, lakes, or the trees or whatever the case maybe. Again, it depends on the type of story you are telling, and where the Stl’aleqem are.

PK: Are there the same numbers of Stl’aleqem today as there were in the past?

JA: Oh yes, I believe what our old people heard these stories heard them and told us. Some of these people are no longer with us, so, some of our younger people may never have heard these stories and may not be fully aware of them. Now they can read about it in a book, and never really know about Stl’aleqem, but it’s still there. If people want to learn or have a teaching about it, Stl’aleqem is there.

PK: Do you know of any disappearance of Stl’aleqem due to disturbance of their environment/habitat in relation to air and water?

JA: Oh definitely yes, our peoples have talked about that and archeologists that do the research in what has happened to some of our sacred places and sites. Stl’aleqem sites have been affected by man’s development of the land, water or building things that affect the air. So, stories of Stl’aleqem has been affected, some of it’s lost because and we will never know because of the development of our land and the passing of our elders. Some of the people don’t want to divulge any stories because the advantage some non-Aboriginals take on behalf of these sites.

PK: Can you explain affects of air and water pollution on Stl’aleqem?

JA: When the land is developed and the site is lost or changed, then the only memory that our people have, those that are still with us, are just stories, Sxoxwiyam of what has taken place in that certain are.
There’s some things up in the canyon where we had this rock up in the mountain, it was blasted by the CN railway. It’s lost, it’s gone, except these things that have been destroyed, lost, developed or displaced, people just go over it, or destroy of it without any knowledge of it, or have knowledge of it, and don’t want to acknowledge to the Sto:lo people that Stl’aleqem site is there.

**PK: How do you expect additional water and air pollution to affect Stl’aleqem?**

JA: It would increase the destruction of other sites of our Stl’aleqem, our sacred sites of our Stl’aleqem, and in time people will forget we’ve lost it. There’s many types of Stl’aleqem sites that are still with us, but our knowledge is decreasing all the time. Not only that, our old people are gone, were losing them, and they are the ones with the Sxwoxwiyam, the stories. It’s sad. If things go on, like SE2, that just increases the disruption of our Sla’leqem sites because of more air and water pollution, it will affect all these areas on the land.

**Water Babies**

**PK: What are Water Babies?**

JA: My understanding of Water Babies, stories I’ve heard, and things that are written by it, again, it’s another type of story about our culture, people that live our traditions and culture. People that live in the water, they have a Shxweli, where we get our food supply, but some of the things, for instance our Sxwo:yxwey comes from the water. Maybe other things that come from the river or the lake, Water Babies is just one type of beings if you want to call it that; a Shxweli that survives or have stories that come from the river or lake.

**PK: What is important about Water Babies in Sto:lo tradition?**

JA: I’m not really that familiar with stories of the Water Babies. I have my ideas, but real stories that some of our old people tell are stories that they were taught.

**PK: Are Water Babies required to continue Sto:lo tradition?**
JA: Oh yes, same thing as everything else, like the Sxwo:yxwey, maintaining the water is important because that is the Sxwoxwiyam, that's where it came from. That's where it comes from, same thing with the Water Babies, or the spirits in the sky, things like that, that's where they are. That's the environment, like the mountain, the water, the air.

PK: Are there the same number of Water Babies as in the past?

JA: Again, the same thing with the other things, my belief is that there are the same number, are there still the same number of Sasquatches in the forest. I believe there still is. It's just that we've lost that connection if you want to call it that, with this type of Shxweli. We're getting like, if you live in a concrete jungle, you've forgotten or lost it if you remove yourself from Mother Earth. If you remove yourself from Mother Earth, you lose a lot of these spiritual teachings, or Sxwoxwiyam?

PK: If not, what happened to them? Why are there fewer now?

JA: Because our people who have forgotten or weren't made aware for all the things that exist in on our Mother the Earth. As an example, Tillie Guterriz, she's full of stories about how Xals came to this territory. When some of our people weren't living our traditions properly, they were reprimanded and turned to stone, to rock.

Since we’re Sto:lo, along the river, a lot of people and animals were turned to stone. So, Xals, the Transformer came like the Creator came and tried to tell our people or teach our people to change our ways and live better. There's all kinds of these stories about different matters.

PK: Can you explain the affects of air and water pollution on Water Babies?

JA: Yes, the pollution that affects the air and water, same as anything else, well maybe the salmon will disappear, but I doubt the Water Babies will, pollution will affect them, or they will move maybe. Of course there are special places for them but it will still affect them.

Even with us, the pollution to the air and water is definitely affecting us, pollution is affecting everything, the water, the lands, the trees, the grass, the salmon,
game, so I mean again, we really have to make good choices and let the SE2 people know what our choices are. Otherwise it gets worse.

PK: Is there anything else I should have asked you about the topics mentioned that would be important to this study?

JA: Just to conclude, the pollution of the air and water is going to affect everything that we believe in, everything about our traditions, everything about our ceremonies in a bad way. For instance, in our winter ceremonies, we depend on our traditional foods, the salmon, the wild game, and if they are affected or depleted and we’re eating it, it affects us.

So, it’s very important that we take care of Mother Earth, our air and water, because it affects the plants, the food, the berries and the medicine that we pick, and the salmon that we eat and the game, so, it’s very important that we make the right choices. It’s up to us and to our leaders to make the right choices. It’s up to us as Sto:lo people to voice our opinions very strongly in what we believe in regarding pollution and how it can damage almost everything on Mother Earth.

PK: Here’s my own question, if you could speak to the National Energy Board, what would you say to them?

JA: Well, if it’s a short thing, our Sto:lo beliefs, traditions, we’re in a state now where the pollution is very dominant and we don’t want to increase the pollution of our water and air, anymore. As a matter of fact, it’s almost gone beyond the state of reversal. We can’t go any other way. Either stop pollution or change our technology as a means of developing energy.

I would say that, this is Sto:lo belief. I’m quite sure that other people that have a strong culture would say the same thing. A lot of learned people will certainly agree with what we are saying.
4.2.2 Mel Bailey and Frank Malloway

Interviewee: Mel Bailey (Katzie) and Frank Malloway (Yakweekwioose)
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: December 19, 2003

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the dry-rack fishery and wind-drying fishery to you?

FM: The dry-rack fishery to me is, it used to be important to my grandparents, you know, but because the change in our lifestyle, it’s still important, but it’s not important that I go out and dry fish; it’s important that my supplier gets out there and dries the salmon. And the pollution issues, you know, according to the dry-rack, you know, you need clean air. Even the air can contaminate the meat of the salmon. And when the fish are coming up the river, they pick up everything that’s in the water, you know, and before the late Jimmy [Scotchman?] died he had some carcasses sent to a lab, you know, that they pulled out of the river, the Fraser River, in Lillooet, sockeye salmon. And they were checking it for the contaminants that were in the meat and there was mercury and there was everything in there. Whether they got it in the ocean or in the river when they were swimming through, you know, you can’t answer that. Anything that fish live in, you know, they pick up the contamination from the water, because they’re living there. Same as us. They cut us open and checked our lungs, you know, what’d they find in there, you know?

MB: Nicotine?

FM: Nicotine? Export A, or Players Light? See that that’s--And Mel, Mel’s from a different nation, you know, and dry-rack fishery to them is not that important, because it’s...same as me, we look to the buyers, or the sellers, so we can buy it, you know. Or trade it, you know. So it’s probably about the same importance to him, you know, the same as the smoking of salmon, you know? Fish have to be clean, you know? No contaminants.

PK: What about the importance of the dry-rack fishery and wind drying fishery to Sto:lo culture?
MB: Well, I think that’s been going on since the time began, hung to dry. Ever since I can remember that, as a kid, I’ve always enjoyed it, and uh... But now, you’re talking about pollution, he’s talking about pollution, our water, our river. Our river is filthy; our air is filthy, and when you combine those two together, that’s what our fish are coming from. The water is contaminated, is polluted, and we’re using that fish. And the air, the pollution in the air, is contaminated. And we need the air, the wind, to dry their fish—our fish. And it’s, I mean, it wasn’t us polluted the rivers, it wasn’t us polluted the air, you know, and it’s every day that it’s happening. You can see it, and you can smell it, and you can taste it, you know, so, there’s no, they’re not going to stop. The big industries move in and destroy our mountains, and destroy our rivers, destroy our air.

And uh, it’s very hard to talk about our way, nature. Nature is our, is our friend. We look after nature; nature looks after us. We look after Mother Earth; it looks after us. We look after the water, cause that’s our drinking water; the air we breathe, see. And white man don’t respect nothing. Right from day one, he don’t respect. He don’t ask for anything, he just takes. And anything that we do, right to this day, like if I come up here, and if I have to do anything, I ask him, I just don’t barge in and say, I’m going to do it this way. I talk it over with Frank, or any other place I go to. You don’t walk into some place and say, ‘You’re gonna do it my way, if you don’t like it you leave.’ That’s not our way; you always ask permission, no matter, can I come into your place or can I, can I use your fishing ground, can I use your hunting ground, can I pick your berries, can I harvest your berries can I, can I dry my fish. You always ask. That goes back day one. That’s our teaching. And we’re losing it, see people don’t care anymore. People fight amongst themselves: that’s mine, that’s mine. We’re acting like a white man, and we’re not. I have no use for them, and I hope they hear it, you know, I’ve got no use for them. Never did and never will. Brought up the old way, and I like to keep that old way alive.

Lot of people don’t agree with me; lot of people don’t want to listen to me, that’s okay, go right ahead. That’s your own opinion; I have mine, and it’s the old way. I like the old way. [Unclear] [155]. I have a question. Somebody asked me a question I can’t answer on my own. I will consult three or four people before I make a decision. You never make a decision on your own, that’s not right. You discuss it with the rest of the people, then the right answer will always come out, it’ll always come out, the right answer. Nobody makes a decision on their own, you know. At least our people we don’t, we respect that kind of a law. It’s not a teaching, it’s a law. And that’s [unclear][166], so. That’s the way I think, and I’m not going to change. I’m very sensitive about pollution, and our game, and our harvest our berries and everything like that.
PK: How important is our dry-rack fishery and our wind drying to our Sto:lo culture..?

FM: It’s very important. To think there’s so many things that we’ve lost from the past, that anything that our old people did is very important to us. It’s, uh, traditions that were handed down from generation to generation, and we have to keep it alive. And if they’re air is polluted and the water’s polluted, what can you do, you know, you’ve got to stop that, or you’ll poison people. So it’s very important.

PK: How is dry-rack fishing and wind drying connected to air and water?

FM: The fish is dried by the air, so it, you know, without the air you don’t have a dry-rack. And the salmon that you pull out of the water, it has to be clean, you know, no contaminants in it, you know. Or well, you’re gonna get your family sick, feeding them contaminated fish. And it’s happened before, you know, in Northern BC, where they had those mines, you know, and there’s mercury, in those lakes, you know, the people are eating mercury, and they’re, people are dying at forty years old; forty years old and they look sixty or seventy, you know. They lose they’re hair and everything. They’re told not to eat the fish in the lake, you know, and, well, what are they gonna do? Starve to death, you know? So they can’t stop eating that salmon, even they know it’s going to kill them. What’s happened now, that uh, the nations up there are going after the mining companies for compensation. And I don’t know if they’ll every clean those lakes out.

One young man said, well he’s old man now, but he said when was a kid he used to go down there and he used to pan for that mercury like it was gold, you know? And he used to play with it, fill up a jar with mercury. And that’s all coming from the mining tailings or whatever you, or however it gets in there. They use it to purify, or separate, their metals. They used it in panning for gold too, you know, they used mercury. Old [Choppy] used to buy, go in there and buy some mercury from the drug store. I asked him what he was going to do with it, he says, ‘Oh, gold sticks to it,’ he says. When you’re panning for gold you put the mercury in there and the gold dust, it’ll stick to it. And you screen it through a, one fella told me through buckskin. You put it in a buckskin pouch and you wring it like a, like if you were wringing water out, the mercury’ll go through there buckskin and then you got gold dust. And that’s how they used mercury to separate, or pick up the gold, then they’d separate it. And now imagine they did that with other, other, minerals too, like lead, you know, whatever you’re looking for, zinc or whatever.

PK: ...Regarding dry-rack fishery and wind drying fishery practice, can it be affected by air pollution and water pollution to our culture?
MB: ...there’s only one answer. There is the pollution, in our water, in our air, everything. It affects the whole atmosphere; the whole world is affected by pollution, not just in our area, it’s worldwide. You know, the acid rain comes into our drinking water. Take for instance your pulp mills. They use a lot of chemicals to make the paper and it’s all along our river, the Fraser. They’re not really supervised about where they dump and how they dump, the waste. I mean there’s nobody around and they’ll just open the dam and let, let all that pollutant go in our water, see. I mean, it’s all the, all the questions here lead down to one thing—it’s pollution. You’re killing it. You’re killing the, you’re killing the world, that’s what you’re doing, you know. Everything that survives the—the animals, the fish, the berries that we pick—you know, they’re all dying, we don’t have anything anymore. The trees, you’re killing our trees and the trees are our, our filters of the world, eh? They purify our air and the pollution comes in there and you log it off and you have no more timber in our hills. And that affects our waters and streams because once you log off a side hill there’s nothing there, it’s just like a bare rock. And then it rains and all the silt and everything just comes into our water. And when you get a lot of silt in the water it gets into the fish’s gills, and the gill’s of smoltes, the young ones, so it’s, ah, one big word, is pollution.

And careless, nobody ah, they know what’s going on. I mean this is, I mean ah, it’s greed too, you know. When they make a lot of money, they can just take care of, walk through a continent. And then they can just clean it right out, then move on. It’s, it’s simple as the nose on your face that what you’re doing you’re kill-- Look at the ocean, is polluted. [unclear] Where can you eat shellfish on the pacific coast, without it being polluted, you know. Same as our, same as our rivers. Last couple of years now, cleaning my fish, [and I didn’t know where to go?], ah, round by the heart there was a very large ball, little smaller than a tennis ball, growing right into the, the guts of the fish. I didn’t know what it was, so I just threw it back in there, so it’s some kind of an infection from the river, an infection from ocean, you know, cause the ocean they dump tons and tons every day in the ocean. And into our river, every day. Raw sewage—

PK: And who is it watching them?

MB: Nobody. And everywhere you see, it runs into our river. From the ditches from our highways, see, all that oil and pieces of your tires, and anything that’s on that highway, runs into a ditch and that ditch runs into our river. Then there’s smoke from the plants, they say that we’re going to use natural gas, or whatever they call it, but they want to buy the cheapest natural gas, it’s not number one. Got your premium and your low-level, they will go with the low-level to save there, to save money. It’s all political too. Don’t really...
FM: If you're asking about how to protect, you know, you have to define our culture meaning the way we live. You know, I've been trying to push that forward before, you know, a lot of people say, 'What is your culture?' Our culture is way we live, the way we look after each other, the way we ... You know, when you talk about culture, people talk about language, and the smokehouse and different things, but on the whole it's the way we live, the way we were taught to live by our grandparents, and a lot of people are drifting away from our culture. You know, in the same [unclear] you're affecting wind drying, it affects our culture, because we're drifting away from it, you know, and if everything's contaminated, you know, you give it up. And so, that's how it affects our culture. We'll be giving it all up, we'll lose something again; like our language, we lost our language.

And I think that pretty well answers all those questions on there, you know, because they're, you know, under number 10 there, you know, I have a... my answer to that would be very strong, you know. Question is, 'Do you have any suggestions on how to protect dry-rack fisheries and wind drying fishery...by effects of water and air pollution...you know the way you would protect your water and air would be to get rid of all the immigrants, all the white people that came to our country. You know, and that's impossible. So you have to deal with the next best thing and just try to stop them in what they're trying to do. And that's how my hands go up to the ones that are doing it. Both Sto:lo and non-Indians, you know and to continue in the work that you are doing, and it affects everybody. Our culture is the way we live.

Sxwo:yxwey

FM: We talk about Sxwo:yxwey, you know, and this is what Mel and I were talking about before. Sxwo:yxwey is a spirit form, you know, it comes from our legends and our sxwoxiyám and it... the way it affects us is the way it affects the person that uses the [unclear], the masked man, to himself. You know, if he gets weakened by contaminated salmon, or contaminated air, that's the way it affects the sxwo:yxwey. Because the sxwo:yxwey gets it's strength from the person that's wearing it, using it. And if that person that's using it is weakened by contaminated salmon, contaminated air, then the sxwo:yxwey can not do its work.

I try to talk to the young people, and tell them, you know, new masked dancers. I say, you keep going for your swim, and go up in the mountains and purify yourself. Because you’re mask will never be as strong if you just, smoke and you drink and you use drugs, you know, and people will find out that, and they'll never ask you to dance at any of their ceremonies. Because that mask is not doing what it’s supposed to do. Because it gets, it gets its strength from you. And that's what, you know, in those few
words, I think I've answered all your questions. All twelve of them. And we don't want to really talk about any more, about sxwo:yxwey.

PK: Okay, okay. I can respect that.

**Syuwel/Winter Dance**

FM: And the same as the winter dance ceremony. The same thing goes to the winter dance ceremony as it goes to the sxwo:yxwey. Sxwo:yxwey is stronger than winter dances if they look after themselves that same way winter dancers look after themselves, you know, and winter dance is very important to our culture. There’s been a revival for the last 50 years; it almost died away 50 years ago. And you can see in our people how they come together, how know each other, how they found their relatives, and their family, and that’s very important to our culture, and the way we live, the way we look after each other. How am I going to look after somebody who lives up the river, if I don’t even know him? You know? Through the longhouse, the longhouse gatherings, you know, you find those people, you find your relatives, then you look after them.

I had some kids come into this longhouse, and because they were non-status they figured they didn’t belong to anybody. And if, boy went in there was initiated in the States, and I called him in here and I introduced him to my family. And I said, he comes from my dad’s side of the family. He’s related to us, through my dad and his grandmother. You know and he stood there later, come back couple years later, you know, and he old enough to get up and talk, and that’s the speech he made, you know, he said when I first put on my paint and came home, I felt because I’m non-status, I felt, you know, I didn’t belong anywhere. And I go to these longhouses and travel and people claim me. They say, “That’s my relative.” You know, and that’s our culture. Once you find out your relative, you know, you go and claim him, you know, let him know who he belongs to. Like lot of our young people are going around now, feel left out or feel all by themselves, but they don’t participate in the traditional gatherings of our people to find out who they are, or where they come from. Pretty soon they’re hanging themselves from the rafters, you know, because they don’t know who they are and they feel left out and all by themselves. You know, and that’s where our culture comes in, and the winter dancing is very important because it brings our people together.
PK: And there’s more and more every year.

FM: More and more and more. And you, when you deal with pollutants, you know, the air it makes unhealthy people, you know, and then you wouldn’t be able to do these things. The water we drink, you know, now we’re drinking water—watered bottled—bottled water. Mel is laughing at me. So anything regarding air and water is very sacred to our ceremonies because it aff—it’s our life. And uh, we have to be healthy to participate in the ceremonies. If we’re not healthy, we can’t do it.

PK: In order to preserve [something], or winter dancing, how would you conduct yourselves to keep the clean air and clean water that we have now? What would you do to, to...

MB: Well, ah, your body has to be the filter of everything. It’s hard to explain. When you’re sxoxome you have a gift that makes you strong, but you have to respect your spiritual sxoxomes, so it’ll respect you and look after you, you know. If you just put it aside, then you’ll go down, you’ll become sickly, see. You have to work as a team. Anything in our culture that’s very sacred to us; everything in our life is sacred. The fire is sacred to us, our food is sacred to us, all the animals, the little bugs, animals or birds, anything like that, is, is sacred. It’s, it’s food for us, food that make us strong, you know. Then when it becomes polluted or something like that, then it affects our way of life and it affects our younger generation, and ah, I don’t know, it’s...we’re losing a lot of our culture to the white, you know. They want to go white man culture, but maybe they think it’s easy. Our life is not, not hard.

We learn—we’re taught at a very young age to share, to be humble and respect other people, other people’s smokehouses, other people’s territory, other people’s fishing grounds, hunting grounds, respect, all that, you know. And we’re taught that at a very young age, you know. It’s ah...that is our, that is our law, like that, we just don’t...go to...I don’t go to your territory and fish or hunt and without your permission, see. See that permission comes in all, all through our culture, whatever we do, you know.

And the longhouse brings us together to find out who we are, what we are and why we are, you know. This is...I went in at a very late age, and every time I come here, I learn something new, everyday, every week, every month, I learn something; I listen to the people talking, you know, and ah, and it’s very educational, ah, it brings back teachings that I almost forgot, that’s brought up as a young child, and ah, it’s bringing our spirits back to life again, and giving them strength, you know. We have to build ourselves up to be very strong spiritually, otherwise if you don’t, then you’ll just deteriorate and you will disappear and then that’s the end of it. And it’s gone, like our language and a lot of our traditions, a lot of our cultures are completely forgotten, you
know. And it’s very sad for our young generation that they don’t...They are grasping out, you know, but ah...

PK: We need to keep what we have.

MB: Yeah, then we have to explain to them, tell them where we’re—why this is, why it’s, it’s here and... Parents nowadays, they got no time for their children. Long time ago, you only had one provider, see I argued with my niece one time about that. She says, we have to both work, and I say oh, well that’s your generation, I said, I’m not part of that. There was one provider and that was my dad. He was a hunter, fisher, trapper, all that. He provided for the family. And my mother was—the house was hers. She just cooking, cleaning, washing whatever you want to do, see that’s, that was the way.

But now you, with both parents working, and the kid just sitting there, all alone in the house, watching TV, playing video games and nobody says, “I love you”. Nobody says, do this, do that, eh? You know, he’s, he’s got nothing. He’s got no education—spiritual education. He’s got—what he learns is off the screen of the TV. Not like old days, when somebody was doing something, you were there watching. Watching your grandfather, watching your dad make a canoe, or build a—or make a paddle, or nets, or hunt, or he cleans his gun or how he cleaned the ducks and how he prepared them and all that, see. Like you see kids today, they don’t know how to clean a duck, they don’t know how to cook a duck, or fish or something—fish, you know? Like that. All that is drifting away from us, you know. Long time ago that, your grandmother, you know, was always the teacher, right there your grandfather, he was always there. Not in a harsh way, you know. He just, when he went out, you went out, and you watched him, eh, you know. Then when you became older, how to swing an axe, what kind of wood to burn, when to burn it, and how to burn it. To do things, you look after everything that you own, you know.

Like your gun, a gun provides food for you, you just don’t throw your gun in a corner and just leave it lay there and rust. And all the old people, when soon as they come in from hunting, they took their gun apart, they grease, and they oil it and wipe it all clean and put it away and clean the barrel, all that eh, when you put it away in a nice spot. And when your finished cutting wood, and they put their axe, or their saws in a special place, because, then they, they want it and they need fire or they need wood for the stove and every—they know where everything is. Then when you want to go hunting, you gun is all clean and ready to go, not, you’re not running around, I gotta do this, I gotta do that. See they don’t look that far ahead, you know. You gotta, you gotta realize that this is, this is what I go shopping with. See this is how I get meat for the table. And if you go out hunting with a dirty gun, or a [unintelligible]. Or you don’t take care of your nets, you know, you don’t store your nets in the wintertime. Or your
boat, or in the old days, your canoe, see? That was ah, that was your transportation, so you just didn’t leave it deteriorating on the beach or something like that. You looked after everything, doesn’t matter what it was, you looked after it, eh, you know.

And now somebody just buys a new motor, or something like that, outboard motor, like that. You go up and down the river and [unintelligible] boat sunk, boats down, the motor’s down, and when the fish are running and there you’re running around, oh no I gotta do my motor was under water all night. Well how long does it take you to take that motor off the boat and back it up the house, you know? You have to look after things like that for things to look after you. That’s how you make your living, that’s how you get your food, you know, when things work right, it’s just lot a common sense, you know? Our ancestors, you know, all had that, eh, not just at the spur of the moment. Oh I gotta do this, you know? I’m having a gathering tonight, I got no wood cut. You should have had that wood cut there last summer, you know. Well, I haven’t got any groceries, you know. Well what the hell you were doing, eh, you know. See there’s lot of things there, you know, that the old teaching, you know. You remember the old ways, when they had money, little bit of money, like that, then they started buying. Put it away...can...You can berry, some canned berries, canned fished, smoking fish, putting things away. It doesn’t matter, you don’t have to have, but it’s nice to have lots of food cause there’s always somebody that might need a hand during the winter, having a hard time, or lost a loved one, and you bring your stuff, pay your respects to the people, eh, you know. Then they don’t do that, they just, they just go buy things now, eh, you know, instead of preparing it themselves, you know. And that’s the our way, that’s the old way, that’s the old culture way. You gotta look at that.

PK: ...How would more pollution, air pollution and water pollution, impact what we have now?

MB: It’s killing everything—everything. A very strong point of mine, from where I live is oolichans. You know about oolichans.

MB: And ah, now, I can only get a few hundred pounds for the people, and for the others [unintelligible] supply the others. And ah, we been, I have some friends there, that we been doing studies and the biggest problem is our river is too polluted for oolichans to come up and spawn. There used to be a sandy beach in our river at one time. Now it’s sludge. So the oolichans when they spawn on top of that sludge, you don’t know what’s in that sludge, eh? It could be just anything there really, and then they lay their eggs on that, and they die, you know. They don’t have a chance to hatch, eh. So that’s...oolichans are very, ah, very, very sacred to us. If you go back—you listen to stories in our history, that was our, that was our number one. It was, it was—the old people call it the spring tonic, because you got our oil [unintelligible] in the
spring...smoked salmon... Get these oolichans, like cod liver oil, or something like that, builds your system up, you know. Then when the river gets polluted and the air, the air goes into the water, then the water, affects our fish. All our food, all our food, comes from the river, that’s why we’re Sto:lo, we live by the river.

...That’s where we do all our...where we get all our food, you know. And the salt water’s the same way now, there’s no more anything out there, that you can. Our people love halibut and cod and all that and now that there all fished out and...pollution and greed, that’s what it comes down to, and I mean, if you don’t [heard] about that yet, well look at it then, you know. Why the hell are you letting 19 boats go at one year for oolichans and we were’nt even getting a hundred pounds a day, or a week. And DFO lets 19 commercials got out? Where the hell is your justice? Where is your sense, or where is your eyes, your ears? There’s no—there’s nothing—You want to kill the last one, you know? I got no use for DFO, or any of them outfits. They got no brains.

PK: How important is the gathering and hunting tradition to you and Sto:lo culture?

FM: ...here you’re talking about the gathering of food.

PK: Yeah.

FM: You know, I think the gathering of food is almost obsolete right now. Because our lands have been taken over by the settlers, and anywhere our people went to gather food, you know, it’s all private property now. And so the gathering of food is obsolete. But hunting traditions also is almost the same. But, you know, if we do, like to go gathering berries, you know, and we found a place where we could go, you know, contaminates water, contaminated the soil, you know, and the berries get contaminated and the air is also, would contaminate berries. Anything that grows, roots or whatever. Like in the interior, we still go after roots, you know, and it’s a delicacy, now it’s same as wind dried salmon. You know, but there’s still groups of people that go out and, go out and gather roots.

....And uh, that’s how important it is. And hunting, you know, if uh, if uh, your animals aren’t healthy. I went to a food contamination—traditional food contamination workshop. And they talk about all the deer that they’re contaminated, and the moose that were contaminated, you know, and it—mostly through air and water—water they drink, you know. And the salmon—anything. The gathering of the traditional foods. And today, you know, we’re pretty well, we’re pretty well assimilated, you know, and it’s only the traditional people that go out and do these things, you know, and it’s so
very important to them, that they have healthy animals, and good berries and that, there, it’s very few that go out and gather anymore.

**PK: How would more pollution impact our ability, as Sto:lo, to fish and to hunt and to gather?**

FM: It’ll affect us the same as it’ll affect any—anybody. You know, because the white people have a different culture and they get their food from a lot of things... root stuff, you know, animals and all that? And it’ll affect everybody. Not only the Sto:lo people; it’ll affect everybody. You know, there’s farmers down the road that produce milk, you know, and what is that milk used for? All the things that you buy in the superstore. You know, and by processing it you don’t get all that contaminant out of it. You know, and the beef that are raised, they eat the grass, you know, and eat the grains, you know, to fatten them up. Any contaminated things, you know. And then they’re injecting more things in them, you know. Make them fat, or make them heavy, you know, and not only affect our people, it’ll affect everybody. And like I say, we’ve lost lot of our traditional things, you know, and we have rely on the same food source as the other people, and that’s the way it affects us. Our culture’s the way we live and we live a different culture today.

**Shxweli**

**PK: What is shxweli?**

FM: Shxweli to me is your soul... Yeah shxweli is our soul. What’s its place in Sto:lo tradition? Well, it’s the way we live.... How can you tell the health.... You can tell the health of shxweli by anybody who walks in. If you have the good eyes, the trained eyes of the person that lives it, conditional life, you can tell when somebody’s [word] is not well. And, and we don’t know whether it’s polluted through the air or the water. Usually it’s in spiritual form though. Air pollution will have affect on [word], if the person gets ill from it. You know, we have a lot of people that are...asthma, you know, and it affects them in that way. Water pollution the same thing, mentioned it earlier, some places like Kilgard you know. I was going to bring 10 gallons of water this morning just for their coffee, but they got a—they can’t use their water anymore. You know, the wells that they have are contaminated. And they have to buy bottled water. And I seen in their hall last night, they have a big bottle of water near the door. Anybody wants to drink they gotta go to that—they can’t take it from the tap.

**PK: What about the current health of—**
FM: ... We know, we know through our teachings in the longhouse, we know air and water is alive and has it’s own shxweli, and it’ll, it will get affected by pollution. You know, because you go up there and get, you pray to the water when you go swimming to clean you off, all the contaminants, you know, and if the air is contaminated itself, the water is contaminated itself, how’s it going to clean you off? You know, we could answer that question in that way, you know?.. You can’t get clean with dirty water. *By dirty water, I mean not muddy or anything, but contaminated by other things, you know?*

**PK: You’re saying then that there is a shxweli of air and water?**

FM: There’s a spirit of everything—everything has a spirit. You know, the teachings of our people, everything has a spirit. That’s why some people get a *west wind song*.

MB: I know.

FM: You know, *north wind song*—

MB: North wind, *south wind song*—

FM: Water, you know, the water, my father used to tell me that, well not only my father, George Clutesi, from Port Alberni, they used to ask him, “Where do you get all these songs that you sing?” He said, “You go down the water, and you sit there and you listen to the water. And the water’ll start singing to you.” [unclear]. There’s lot a the songs in the water. And when we go swimming, you know, lot of them pick up their songs from the water.

MB: Wind and trees.

FM: In the...if that wind and that water is not clear, you know, we don’t know, but we’re pretty well sure, you know, that it won’t be as strong as it is now. Everything has a spirit.

**PK: What about... do you know of some types of resources that have a shxweli more sensitive than others to disturbance?**

MB: That’s a no. It affects all things equally

**Sxwoxwiyam**
PK: On to sxwoxwiyám. Are there any sxwoxwiyám that explains the relation between the Sto:lo and air and water?

MB: Each sxwoxwiyám has a teaching to it. Each time you hear the story, they're just bedtime stories, but each one has a teaching in there. How, how you carry that when you grow up; how to be polite; how to be respectful. And all that is taught in the stories, sxwoxwiyám, you know, when you're small your mom tells you all them stories, you know, bedtime stories. But they all have teachings, and that was our schooling, you know, and our ways, our ways of living, treating one another, sharing one another. Not to be selfish, not to be greedy. All that is he's a [unclear word], he a greedy one, he's a selfish one, you know. He's always the trickster, and selfish, and he don't care about anybody else, he just cares about himself, his own family, see.

PK: ...is there anything additional that you’d like to say about sxwoxwiyám and--

FM: ..Sxwoxwiyám, you know, when the people were using sxwoxwiyám, they couldn’t foresee the future that far, you know, to really understand pollution. Because the sxwoxwiyám are old, they come from way, hundreds of years back, you know. Maybe, maybe some of them seers, or whatever, could see into the future, maybe they had stories, but I never heard any about contamination of air and water. Because to them, maybe it, you know, couldn’t even happen... They didn’t know how fast the world was going to grow in the last 200 years, you know?

Stl’áleqem

PK: How about stl’áleqem?

FM: Stl’áleqem as we mentioned earlier... stl’áleqem is in spirit form. You know, when xwelítem, or xwelítems read stories about the stl’áleqem, you know, they figure, you know, our people are kind of nuts to read to talk about a bear that was in the late, you know, imagination, you know, but. Any culture you read about their history or their legends, you know, mythology, you know, you find stories like that. And the sxwoxwiyám, to us, is uh, sort of like, teachings too, you know. We use them for teaching. And its legends, and mythology.

PK: So stl’áleqem and sxwoxwiyám are similar then?
FM: Yeah. Well sxwoxwiyám are stories, you know, but stories are used to teach. And the stl’áleqem is the same. Stl’áleqem comes in under sxwoxwiyám… Stl’áleqem is part of sxwoxwiyám…. and it’s in the spirit form, you know... there was a stl’áleqem in Cultus Lake. And it was a big black bear, and it’d eat people and spit out their bones. And there was a story, story even, I think it was a [name/unclear] with, reciting it, that were told to him. And about those people from your, your, your village, Leq’a:mel, that came over because Cultus Lake was known as a place for Indian doctors to go and practice. To do their fasting and their training there, so there’s a place there where they call it Doctor’s Point. And the story goes anyway that this fellow went down to look for this sxwoxwiyán—not sxwoxwiyán--stl’áleqem and ah, his partner got tired waiting for him and pulled up he was tied himself to, and there was just bones. Ate off, ate off these bones, you know? And that was the stl’áleqem that was in Cultus Lake.

FM: Where the stl’áleqem lived, and they mostly lived in lake waters, you know, any water, you know, and there’s a little lake up, going towards Hope, you know, and they built that new highway, the Haig highway, right at Haig there, you go through that rock cut, and then on your right side, just past the weigh station, right behind the weigh station, where the trucks---and there’s a little lake there. And Bill Chapman was telling me that his grandmother had a story about that lake, grandfather had a story about stl’áleqem that lived there. And same as that other lake, going to Yale—there’s a stl’áleqem. Local people know their stories, but you heard about them. So any lake you come to, you know, there’s always a stl’áleqem attached to it.

And I think most of these stories were dreamt up by the elders to keep their children safe, you know. Don’t want to go out there and swim and drown, you know. Stl’áleqem in there. You know, so they stay away from those waters. So when we, we were talking about things that you had your, you know, and a lot of them is spirit form, and when you’re fasting, when you’re out in the bush by yourself, you know, you see these things. And like I said, they’re from another dimension, because when you, you’re by yourself, you can see old people from the other side, stl’áleqems from the other side. And that’s when you see them, you know, like the doctor, the Indian doctors that went to Cultus Lake, trained to be doctors, you know, they fasted for days and days and days, then they could see these forms, you know. And then they come back, tell them about it, you know, people think they’re real, but they’re spirit form. They’re real—but they’re in a another dimension. So because stl’áleqem is in spirit form, you know, I don’t, I doubt if water and air pollution would affect them, because it doesn’t get to their side. ...But uh, Mel’s got a picture, I don’t know if he’s got it with him—

MB: No, I don’t.

FM: And they found it, found it up Pitt Lake?
MB: Laney Bog, in that area.

FM: Laney Bog. And it’s a great big snake, and you know, you could call that a stl’áleqem. And they don’t know what it is, but when those guys found it, it stunked like if it was dead for a long time. Nobody knows what it is, but they took pictures of it. We asked [someone] if they’d ever seen anything like that.

MB: I asked quite a few elders, you know, or anybody, and they said no, they never seen it. It almost looks like an octopus, like a leg of an octopus... And it’s got a head on it one end, or looks like a head, but you know.

PK: When was the picture taken?

MB: Two years ago. There was guys out there [unclear]. They were surveying and mapping, they were going to develop Laney Bog and they found this. It was twenty feet long and they found it up on the bank, there was a creek runs right there. But no, no animal touched it, you know, like a bear or coyote or something. Scavenger would eat that, you know, and it’s not. It’s black, real pitch black, like a... It’s a colour picture. I’ll bring it up with me. I had it with my nephew who took it, and he wanted to look at it. And he can see things in there that I can’t, you know. He’s young, eh, you know.

...You know, right from mouth of the Fraser, right up, each village has their own stl’áleqem. Down there they destroyed, I don’t know what they [unclear] had a great big rock, I don’t know what they done with it, they pushed it way, they threw it out, and that was one there, that lived there. [245] And used to eat the sockeyes going up it, you know. There was a mole, a giant mole, and he lived behind that rock and when the Pitt lake sockeyes run up, then he’d come over to the main river where I live. There’s a big eddy there. Real nice eddy, but you never caught fish in there, because he was there. And Douglas Island, there’s a big snake there, and all—Pitt Lake is real, real strong. Any lake has—

PK: Stl’áleqem.

FM: Like, like one of your questions, not yours, but what happened to them? You know, they’re still there. Nothing’s happened to them. But because, we said earlier we live in a different lifestyle, and a different, you know—we don’t have to tell our children those stories anymore. You know, to keep them away from the water so they won’t drown. You go to the water now, there’s lifeguards there. So you don’t have to tell them bad stories to keep them away from there... Yeah. So there’s just as much stl’áleqem
today as there ever was. Only we don’t see them, we don’t talk about them. Maybe if we had to, we would. Maybe if we went and fasted by the lake we’d see them.

MB: That’s where they trained long time ago, to be doctors. You went up there, that lake [unclear]… whenever your spirit is. You walking, [unclear], nothing. Keep walking [unclear]. And that’s where you stay. You swim wherever you want and everyday, every day, every day. He lives there, and he watches you, and he listens to you, and he sees how you’re sincere and maybe 10 days, 10 weeks, or 10 months, whatever. You just stay there, and you swim and you swim and you swim. He says, well this person is sincere and honest and he’ll come up like that and it’s [something], scary, you know. You stand there and you face him like that and you’ll talk Indian then [unclear] He’ll say, Okay, I watched you for a long time, you give me [unclear] then you come back down. And you’re a doctor, eh. Good doctor, not a bad one.

Water Babies

PK: What about water babies?

FM: Water babies are mentioned earlier, you know, water babies are in spirit form also, you know, I have, I was just telling Mel, I haven’t heard any stories about water babies since I was a teenager. You know, and that tradition of telling stories, you know, disappeared when I was young, and so you don’t hear stories about water babies. And Stan Mussel, the late Stan Mussel, from Soowahlie, he was the only one used to tell me about water babies. And I don’t remember his stories, and I was going to go back and see his son Ed Mussel, you know, and but he died, you know, and I didn’t get back. And I thought of—maybe some of his daughters still remember the stories, because that was their entertainment in the evening, you know, because there was no TV or radio. Well, they had radio, but no TV, you know and he used to tell stories. And I was going to ask one of his daughters if she remembers, you know, all these stories her dad talked about, you know…. I heard one story from Reena Point, when we were teenagers, and it wasn’t really…just explained what a water baby was, you know, and somebody picked one up from the water and hung in a tree. And it rained and rained and rained and the river came up and soon as the river touched the water baby hanging there, it slipped out of that neck and it got free, you know. It’s power of the water. And it’s mostly stories, you know? Like sxwoxwiyám, we got back to sxwoxwiyám. And water babies were sxwoxwiyám, stories. And they had meanings to them….There’s stories about the little people. And I don’t know any sxwoxwiyám about the little people, but I know one man who seen one. And it was Donald Charlie, and you can still go and see him...
they're in spirit form. Like, like I said, you know, the water babies, and the stl’álaqem, and the little people, are all in spirit form.

...But you have to believe in them, you have to talk to them, you have to real—it’s belief. It’s same as when his auntie was going to work on somebody, she says, I can only help you if you believe that I can do it. Belief is the strongest thing.
Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and wind drying tradition to you?

DC: It is very important. We go up and we get our fish, do it our traditional way every year, in July, and do our preserving, you know, and canning and salt fish, and to stay up there for that period of time is very important to our family.

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and the wind drying fishery to Sto:lo culture?

DC: It is very important. That’s our number one food. I mean we live off—most of our people—we live off the fish. You know, going way back, my great-grandmother—it’s tradition the different ways that we eating the fish, or our people’s ways.

PK: Can you elaborate for me, about your—what you’re saying about your great grandmother?

DC: Yeah, cause ever since that I can remember, is that when I was nine and ten, that I can remember, that we used to go up there, up Yale, and fish. You know, we stayed for the summer, July and August, and then we came back home after, to Seabird. So that was what we did. And that wasn’t just our family too, there was a number of different other families from all over the place. Right from near Kwantlen area, over that way, and then some real [?] people too. We all fished, and we all helped one another, the ones that couldn’t do other things. That’s what us kids would do, we’d go and help our elders get water and, not like today you know, we have containers and things like that to carry, but before we used to just have everything, whatever we had on hand. We had to help us out just to survive.

PK: How is the dry rack and wind dry fishery connected to air?
DC: Now we have acid rain and we have the whatever, you know, when it rains and we have the dust and everything else that gets on our fish, things like that too, you know, and that isn’t very good for us. And then the train, all the pollution from the trains that are there now, never used to be there before. That cut a lot of our wind drying areas off, after they put the railroad track in. And then even the planes, you know, all the airplanes, the pollution that comes from there. And then the boats that used to come in too, and now today even we use little boats up and down the river, that’s pollution too in the air.

PK: Okay, can we do the flip side now and talk a little bit about air in relation to the air that we need to carry out our wind drying practices?

DC: Well, it helps to dry the fish, eh? Because you have to cut it and then you hang it. What we do is hang it for four days. It all depends how dry you want it, eh? The fish? If you want it half dry or you want it full dry and that’s how it’s, you know, gets onto our fish. And then even the rain, you know, if you don’t have it covered right, then the rain gets on your fish too. Because, you know, it dries and it’s so windy up there; that’s what you need, is the wind to preserve the fish. Yeah, that’s what we have to do.

PK: Without the wind, there’s...

DC: Yeah, if you don’t have the wind, then it would just rot, the fish. So, I think that’s the main purpose for going way up there...

PK: And to dig a little deeper here, I want to talk a little about way up there, as to where we are usually for the other eight months of the year.

DC: Okay, like Chilliwack, for instance, or Seabird Island, where we live all the time, we go up higher because during the summertime the heat is dryer, compared to down here. Plus it’s more windy, and that’s what you need, is the air to preserve the fish fully, cause, you know, there’s the flies, all the different other kinds of insects too. The wind really helps to keep everything away.

PK: How is dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery connected to water?

DC: Water? Well our fish live in the water, right? In the—in the, Fraser River. Forgot how to say it in English for a moment. But anyways, it comes from the ocean, and then into our rivers, and so that’s all. You know, every four years for change—change of life of the fish, so. So that’s how we, when we hang our fish, that’s how we
preserve it, and that’s how all the pollution that’s in there, that’s destroying our fish also.

... Even compared to the days when I used to wind dry fish when I was ten, twelve years old. Used to be able to see the fish jumping over one another in the river, but you don’t see that today. Maybe ten years ago I did, you could hear then coming up the river, there was so many. But now today there’s hardly any. There’s maybe one eighth of the fish, not even that, that comes up the river. And it’s because of the warm water, before I was talking to our elder about it too, and she was saying that it was so cold, the Fraser River too before, you used to be able to drink it. But now you can’t because of all the pollution from the dams that were made from here to way up north, in Alaska. And then that stops, you know, the stillness of the river going down until it comes down into our area, where we wind dry, so it still makes a difference, eh? On how the fish are, how healthy they are because of the—never used to happen before there was some spring salmon that were going belly up that were getting these weird worms or whatever on their stomachs and that. Things that were happening, it was because the water was too warm and they were getting wormy, some of them. So there’s different areas that were happening. It’s been these last few years, and now the water is so warm, and the water’s gone much lower than it used to be, say then, fifteen years ago, so it has made a big difference for our fish, and the waters. So I imagine the ocean is the same way, it’s not as cold as it used to be any more.

And then plus even, they were doing a study way up north too, on some language and then they were talking about how the cariboo, they were falling in the water because the water was melting, I mean, the ice was melting, so they were falling in the water. So it’s global warming, coming from up north and down lower this way. So our earth is really changing a lot to do with the pollutions in all different areas, air and the water. Really makes a difference for our Native people, what’s happening.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to our dry rack fishery and wind drying fish?

DC: Well, it’s very important. It’s like, you know, the dust and everything that comes from the rain, that really makes a difference from the fish. You know, when you’re wind drying it. It just like, for instance, if you were going to hang some white sheets out, if it’s dusty and blowing, they’re going to be all dirty. And that’s just the same way for our fish.

PK: Can dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practices be affected by air pollution and water pollution?
DC: Yes, I think it will be, very much. Over the years, it’s getting worse. Because of all the things we use to—at home. You know, all of our refrigerators and everything else brings all the pollution up in the air and then in the water too, eh? Just like our sewage system, it goes into the rivers nowadays. Way up north, it goes into our rivers, and then it’s up and down BC that our waters are getting polluted.

PK: Can dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practices be affected by water pollution?

DC: Yes it will be. Because of the fish that aren’t growing to be—you know, they’re not normal after they’re in the river a certain amount of time. Because of the pollution that is in there now.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect practice and teachings of dry rack and wind drying fishery?

DC: Well. I guess today I know we, I think there’s only like half our people that actually get to go up there because of the amount of fish that are up there. And some of them they don’t even want to go out, so they go out and buy it instead from our own people, or they trade, but that makes a big difference when how the change of life, how we used to go all the time, but now we don’t, for most of us. Because of that, it’s changing over the last few years. It’s important for them to be going up there like the way we used to... —we always say you are what you eat, today. Doesn’t matter if you eat fish or if you don’t eat fish, [unclear matters, you know, how much you do eat it and go out and get it, there’s a big difference in just your body, eh? Of how you eat. I eat fish at least three or four times a week...So that’s my way of living and what I passed for my kids. Like we eat a lot of fish, so that’s what was passed on from my grandmother. If it wasn’t fish then it would be more what we call nowadays is our wild game. That’s all I eat, so. It’s still our traditional ways that I still like to pass on to my kids and that they enjoy eating.

PK: What about other concerns you might have about wind dry and dry rack, in relation to air and water?

DC: Well, I guess within the years to come, there’s not going to be, I don’t think. We’re probably going to be slowly cut off because of all the water and all the air pollution, because we’re not going to be able to go up there anymore. Just like, for example, there’s so many creeks that used to go into the river, but now they’re all dried up. You have to dig ten feet in order to find those creeks where we used to live before, when I
was little. So there’s a big difference. And we used to go across the highway from where we were camping and down the hill and we used to be able to—like a great big pool it used to be. But now, like I say, you have dig way down. All you see in the frame of the rocks, like I say. That’s all you see now up there, so there’s a lot of big difference from the way when I was little compared to my kids now when they go up there, and even they noticed it, like the bigger creeks that used to have a bridge across, but now it’s just like a puddle. You have to go way down the rocks are still there but then there’s just a little puddle and then there’s—then it goes into the river after. That’s where they used to go swimming before, is that one big creek, now it’s just not even three feet deep. Before it used to be fourteen, fifteen feet deep, at least. Now only comes up to your neck and still, three feet wide, or four feet wide, that’s it. It’s not very big anymore, and a huge creek.

**Sxwo:yxwey**

**PK: How important is the sxwo:yxwey to you?**

DC: It’s very important, I follow our ways for the longhouse. Our traditional ways that not very many non-Natives know, yet today there are a few that go now. Which we never used to allow before, so it’s changing. Our culture and ways are changing... It’s like every hundred years things change, like even with our language, it’s changed a lot too. That’s the way it is. Because we’re getting pushed more, I think we’ve gone almost to our limit, where we can be pushed, all of our reserves, there’s so many people now around. Never used to be before.

**PK: How important is carrying on the sxwo:yxwey to our children in our culture?**

DC: Well, that’s all part of us, no matter what nationality, you know, like if you are Indian Indian. My grandmother would say that it’s part of you, you live it.

**PK: How is sxwo:yxwey connected to air and water?**

DC: Well, it’s—well we live it, it’s part of us—kind of hard to explain, because we live for the land and the water and the air. We are as First Nations people—if it’s polluted we can’t follow some of our traditional ways, we can’t go in the mountains where we used to go before any more. There’s just certain areas that we can go anywhere—you know, we’re blocked out of there. So if makes a difference, in our lifestyle.
PK: How important is clean and clean water to sxwo:yxwey?

DC: Cause we have to go out and...follow our ways, so it’s...it is a hard question to answer. But we live it, and like any other normal person we need clean air, right? And clean water to drink. So that’s what we have to follow.

PK: With the teachings?

DC: Yes.

PK: Can sxwo:yxwey survive if our air and water is polluted?

DC: Well, I guess we can’t because we’re no different from non-Native except for we follow these other rules compared to a non-Native person would. Just like if you were Jewish, or another nationality they follow their ways, they follow their religion, eh? I know a lot of people who are non-Native they say that ours is another kind of religion, eh? They look at it.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect sxwo:yxwey?

DC: I guess it would be—because if we weren’t able to go and go the things that need to do, to go up there, or to follow those rules for the sxwo:yxwey, so it’s another concern.

Syuwel/Winter Dance

PK: How important is the syuwel tradition to you?

DC: It’s very important, it’s gone back to my ancestors; my grandmother used to bring me and we used to go to our longhouses for everything that was to do with syuwel is left in our—because our language is all oral and so our syuwel ways, it was never talked about to non-Natives until just recently in the 1900s, the late, so that’s all I can say about the syuwel part actually.

Fishing/Hunting/Gathering

PK: Okay. Onto fishing, hunting and gathering. How important is fishing, hunting and gathering to you?
DC: Well it's my lifestyle actually. I don't go out and hunt, but we do get our wild game [unclear] from other people. And saying that the fishing is—we eat a lot of fish, so. We survive for all of our fishing and our hunting ways today.

PK: Can you describe methods or ways about each of those aspects fishing, hunting and gathering. Can you give me a little more detail about each?

DC: Yeah, well I do a lot more modern ways now. I do a lot of canning, I do a lot of the canning of all kinds of fish, whatever is out there. Plus all the salt fish I do and then praising of the fish. Preserve the fish now today and then wind drying, we do. And then the hunting, we do the same thing. I can it, or I freeze it and sometimes we even, I forgot about smoking, we smoke the fish too. Not myself, but extended families, we do that. It’s very important to most of my family. We do lots of fishing and [unclear] the meat.

PK: And can you talk about the gathering?

DC: Oh actually going out? We follow, you know, like seasonal, you know like all the different, like the early sockeye, the late. And then saying the spring salmon, the early, the late, and then the one in the fall. All seasonal kinds of fish, eh? Now we don’t have as much the oolichans as we used to anymore, it only comes up to the mouth of the river, and then they’re gone. And we don’t even get to—we only get one bucket full. Before we used to have like tonnes. Like a whole—you’d fill up your great big smokehouse before, but know we can’t even think of that anymore because that’s been taken away from us and now how the quantity of fish that we are allowed to have—I mean, we were able to go out every day of the year and just throw our little net out and then we were able to get some fish. Or we used to fish [unclear] before, but now we can’t even have that anymore because of the lack of fish, and we way we’re allowed to—we have to follow the Department of Fishery and Oceans rules and it’s more of their way than our ways now. How everything’s been slowly taken away from us, and but pretty soon it’s going to destroy everything that’s out there anyways...

...like we say the water and air pollution—everything that walks on land and what’s in the river. Just like our elder was saying, even though it's the river or the ocean, it's still part of the land. Cause if you take the water away, it's the land that's left underneath. And it’s all getting polluted everywhere. Like all the oil spills in the ocean, it comes up our river, everything that’s in ocean it comes up our river. If it goes up and down. It makes a big difference. And even from big cities down south, all their pollution comes up our way too. It makes a really big difference for our people.
PK: In relation to land and gathering, would you discuss more about gathering from the land?

DC: Well, just for example, even for I asked the elders how—we never had oranges or citrus fruits before, like how did we survive? We never—today we go and buy some apple juice and orange juice at the store but before we used to go and get it ourselves. So what kind of fruits and vegetables did we have? They're out there, there's just very few there and it's very remote there where we have to go and get it today because down this way you wouldn't want to pick it because everybody's walking all over it. They don't know that it's the wild potato or the wild onions that they're walking on, or herbs for example. [Unclear] or the frog leaf, how important it is to us, or the stinging nettles, [halkomelem word], you know how that's a really good medicine for you. It's internal and external for your body and it's the same thing for all the berries and how we used to preserve them, dry them, or make juice out of them and have it that way. And then there's very few of them.

For example again, when I moved up north, I couldn't get over how much, well we call it wild berries now, the wild raspberries, the blackcaps, the different types of blackberries they have up there compared to here. They're just all over the place, and then we have to go up the mountains to get it because were we are now there are all city sidewalks and, even where I live on the mountainside, there's very few because of the—probably because of the pollution and everything else. There's not very much game anymore. We have to go further up north. Even before the—all our animals are dying out, even the birds, you know, what we used to eat. You used to be able to, no problem, you used to go out and get a hundred birds. Ducks too, you know, for having our weekend longhouse tradition. Like when we have our gathering it wouldn't be a problem of getting that much birds, but now we can't. We have to ration on our things. Unlike before, we used to be able to get lots.

PK: How is our fishing hunting and gathering connected to air and water?

DC: Well, if we didn't have any of that, how would all these things be able to survive? That's the way I look at it too. If it's not clean and it's dirty, if it's too warm and it's not cold enough, for our food, same with the fish, and they get wormy. There's something wrong, that's why, eh? Just like if you put a little goldfish in a tank and you let it go until it's all green, before it gets green the fish is going to go belly up. So that's what's happening in our air and our water for our fish, our wild game, they're out there that's not being healthy, and so in return, it's not going to make us healthy either. So that's how I mean it's gradually going to taper off, they're not going to be able to survive out
there. It’s going to get so bad that it’s not going to be able to live to go out and eat those kinds of things anymore.

PK: How would you protect some of those aspects of our culture—the fishing, the hunting, the gathering? If we could do something to protect those parts of our traditions.

DC: Well it’s one way of not having all these big plants that are wanting to come into our territory it’s very important to not have them here. I’m sure our ancestors if they had their way, if they seen it coming, but we were just so open to people, invite them to come in our house, or invite them to come to part of our area, so you know, that’s what we’ve done so many years, and now it’s come to this point that of protecting ourselves. In one sense, you know, it’s almost too late for everybody that’s around here.

Even though we have our inherent right, they call it now, for as we First Nations person, you know, for all our hunting, our fishing, all these traditional ways, the sxwo:yxwey, the sxoxomes, and you know like, now we have all these high-tech things that are going on in our land, when we only had our gift of being able to walk, being able to go out and get these things, with our not so, you know, high-tech things, as a bow and arrow, for an example, or we made our traditional fish nets out of stinging nettles roots, of cedar bark roots that we make our own fishnets. Things like that would deteriorate and on their own that would break and go back to the land that we use and that would replenish everything into the ground, but not now today we have all this high-tech equipment that hydro needs, and that’s one example.

**Shxweli**

PK: What is shxweli?

DC: Shxweli is our—what we call is our--within ourselves is our life spirit. It’s not something that we always talk about because it’s one of our traditional ways. Today it’s brought up a little bit more to let people know that what we have and what other people don’t have and that’s the way we—what ways we are following in our cultural ways. That’s what I got to say.

PK: Okay. Are you willing to talk more about Shxweli, or...

DC: I don’t think so. I’d like to just leave just that it is one of our spiritual things...
Sxwoxwiyam

PK: Okay, thank you. Sxwoxwiyám. Are there any Sxwoxwiyám that explains the relation between Sto:lo culture and air and water?

DC: Yeah, there are. There’s lot of our Sxwoxwiyám is what we call—in English it would be, what they call is, myths and legends. How we lived was that wherever we walked, wherever we brought our children our families went, we always had a Sxwoxwiyám for everything we done. And it’s a lot different compared to a non-Native family of how they’d integrate their ways with ours. Cause there was always a purpose for a Sxwoxwiyám, even if, nowadays we do have, some that are—some stories that are just meant for, you know, a fun day. You know if you are going to be telling a comedy, for example, you know, or something. That was your—because they’re so open book now, because our language is getting more written and our language all used to be oral before, so that’s why we have so many stories, Sxwoxwiyám, that’s what we lived for. That’s way I was brought up anyways, with my grandmother. Because from the time you got up until you went to bed, there was always something, some kind of story that she’d tell you as we went along.

PK: Are there any teachings that you know of in Sto:lo Sxwoxwiyám that relate to polluting water, or air? Like if somebody did pollute our water, what happened? Are there any stories like that?

DC: I guess you’d…for our people, we always, we used to pray, like in a different way, eh? And so, how we’d bring it out then like through our grandparents, you know, like they taught you how to look after the water, how to look after, you know, where you were, so that’s the way that I was brought up.

PK: Do you have any concerns about Sxwoxwiyám in terms of air and water and how we relate as Sto:lo to them? Are Sxwoxwiyám still well and alive in Sto:lo culture?

DC: Yeah, they’re—we are documenting some of them... We still practice it.

PK: If there’s anything else about air and water that you could thing about? I’d really appreciate hearing.

DC: That’s regarding Sxwoxwiyám, you mean? I know there’s just like, for an example, I know there’s how there—even the bear story that we have out there. You know, how
the mother—the story is telling how the mother went out and got fish, eh? And then she had her cubs—her cubs when she was barbecuing it. So that’s one example for how we, how we’re able to you know—we go out and get our fish. But are we going to be able to—you know, like—be able to eat that. That’s what’s going to happen. That’s another way of looking at it—at the story, is how much longer are going to be able to have our fish to go out and eat, no matter which way we preserve it? Is radiation going to really destroy our fish gradually? Or is the pollution in the water—all brings back to, they are different stories, like are we going to be able to swim in the water? Things like that too. There are stories that are talked about in a non—like we can look at it in different ways. That’s important to us.

Stl’aleqem

PK: Stl’álaqem. What are Stl’álaqem?

DC: That’s one thing that just makes me—how do you say it—we don’t really talk about it. Because it’s when you translate it into English, they are spirits. And when you’re non-Native, you can talk about dead people, you can talk about—people that—the spirits that are in the house and things like that. But for our own ways that was very seldom brought up. That was brought up in a teaching way to our people. This is things that you have to watch out for, but it tells you, you were saying, in a story of our Sxwoxwiyám is there’s a reason why—you trained your children until they are adults, and even then adults forget sometimes, like don’t eat in the nighttime. That’s one way of—I’ll just say. Because what things can happen to you. What non-Natives are seeing now are the ghosts, they’ll want to film it right away, they want to see it. But in our Native way, we don’t want to see it. It’s because it’s our ancestors that are gone. That’s all I can say about that part. And we respect it, you know, like I’m not saying that they’re not respecting of it, but there’s a certain—we respect them because one day we will be one of them, everyone of us, our human life is going to—we have our life on earth, and then we have our life later. So that’s what Stl’álaqem is about.

Water Babies

PK: Okay, thank you. Water babies.

DC: That’s another thing too. I know there’s one area that [unclear] I’m not sure, today they’re still there, but it is one of our other ancestors that are gone, that were there. I know it was traditionally brought on to our people, you know, like how they lived and
things like that, so and people were told where they were and that, but that’s all I can see for that area.
4.2.4 Dr. Rose Charlie

Interviewee: Dr. Rose Charlie, Grand Chief (Chehalis)
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: January 19, 20, 2004

[Intro to Jan. 19th interview:
RC: I am Dr. Rose Charlie, Grand Chief and I am a Stó:lō woman, an Elder Stó:lō woman and so, I certainly feel that I’ve come a long way, I’m now 73, in May I’ll be 74, so I am considered an Elder and I’m really happy I was able to experience many things in my lifetime....]

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: Rose. I'd like to begin asking the first of, the part of the study, how important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you?

RC: It’s so very important because I grew up with it ever since my childhood, going with my parents up the river with my grandmother and grandfather. It’s something that I have always lived with and it will always be part of my livelihood. And that the dry rack is something that we depend on, its not only for our consumption of food, but it also acts as a medicine for us and the medicine is part of the salmon itself when we dry it, like the heads, the heart... The whole fish itself, we don’t waste any part of the fish.

I think its something that when they tell us to cut out the dorsal fin, that’s important to us. They tell us to cut off the head and toss it away – we cannot do that because that’s important to us, and the gizzard, the heart.. I said all of that , we don’t waste any part of the salmon, so that’s really important.

And too the wind and sun drying the salmon is so different than smoking it or it’s so different than canning or brining. You know, the salmon is really important as well as just the fresh salmon itself. Each one of those that I mentioned is a different meal for every one of us and part of it is for medicines as well, like when we sun dry the heads and all that, when we get sick we boil it and then we drink it you know so that it really is (unclear)... so I really have taught, my husband and I have taught, our children, our children are teaching their children, so that’s my grandchildren and my great grand children now so that’s been part of our tradition for many years, like I remember my grandmother teaching me what to do, how to cut it, how to cut the salmon and why we do it that way, so that there’s no waste and so that’s really
important to us and with anything that’s going to be destroying all the waters and salmon I certainly do not agree that that’s something that should be happening.

**PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and the Wind Drying Fishery to Stó:lō culture?**

RC: ...It’s very important to us. It is always; it’s something that our traditions and our history of our foods, that’s part of our main course so it is important. What else can I say? But the importance of it is real, it is real, it is for our health and that’s why it’s so real.

**PK: How is the Dry Rack Fishery and the Wind Drying Fishery connected to air and water?**

RC: Of course, as far as the water is concerned, our salmon are coming up the river and the air; if the air is polluted then we will not have fresh wind dried salmon. If the air is polluted that would destroy our wind drying and the water, if the water is polluted that will destroy our salmon before we even get it. And that’s something that we feel is very important, you know everything ties in with our culture and our traditions and I think that our, and I think that our main food consumption so that’s something that we’re really concerned about.

I think like, the more central areas is something that’s polluted already and its coming up here and we have to go far out of the way in order to be able to make sure that our food is clean and that our water is not polluted and that is something that’s so important to our people, and our children and our grand children and our great grand children.

I see them growing up now and some of them already have respiratory diseases they have asthma and that’s something that you know what can we do about it.? What can we do about all of this that’s already in our air? And I think it’s important that we do not agree with anything more that’s going to be polluting our air and our water. And I think that seeing some of my children that already have, and others within our community with respiratory diseases, I have a grandchild that’s already using a spray for his respiratory disease and he’s just six months old and, you know, what else can we do to stop that? But I think its so, so important for us only to think about this type of disease that’s already destroying our people, our elders and our children, our infants. They’re just babies and its already getting into them.

**PK: How important is clean air and clean water to Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery?**
RC: It’s the basic, the basic ingredient for our fish to have clean water for them to be able to come up our way and to be able to have clean salmon when it gets here. There’s already, we have to be so careful already of the salmon with the diseases in them when we cut them open and we see that they’re infected that we have to make sure that that is destroyed somehow, and then. So what else are we going to do? We need to be able to keep our clean air and water; of course when the air is polluted naturally the water is going to be polluted and vice versa so it is really important.

What we need, you know, with our government is already having air care for our cars and if they’re going to be doing that then why we would agree with something else that’s going to come in? The SE2 for instance, that’s going to come in and pollute our water and air more than it is now. For fish, our sun dried salmon, is that the air will be polluted so what is it going to do to our salmon when it’s hanging out to dry racks? When it’s hanging out to dry racks its, the air is already polluting our salmon before we get to consume it and the same with the water we need to have clean water. I think that we’re trying so hard to be able to see that our water is kept clean as could be. It’s not only for us to go and swim in for to clean our bodies and our clothing but it’s also there to keep our salmon fresh and healthy because that’s our livelihood.

PK: ...Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by water and air pollution?

RC: It is. It certainly is; if the water is polluted, well then naturally our fish is traveling through the river and then they will become full of disease and then that is our consumption, our traditional foods, and we want to make sure that’s going to be healthy enough for us to consume. And air, of course, air is so important to it, it really is important, overall important, not only for our dry rack and salmon but for our health as well.

Sxwo:yxwey

PK: ...How important is the sxwó:yxwey tradition to you?

RC: You know, I don’t know why sxwó:yxwey is brought into this, sxwó:yxwey to me is so highly important and that sxwó:yxwey is something that we never do discuss with anyone and I don’t know why that’s in there and that’s for the highest prestige of people belong to sxwó:yxwey and so this here, I would rather not say anything about and I do not want to mention anything about something that’s so prestigious to us and then it’s the highest honour of any family to belong to sxwó:yxwey and that’s for us and that’s something that should never ever go out to public.... so that’s how strong our
sxwo:yxwey is with us and its something that we never ever talk about out. Because it’s really sacred to us, it’s so sacred, it doesn’t go anywhere.

**Fishing/Hunting/Gathering**

RC: ...knowing what’s needed and knowing how important, how important it is for our people to be able to survive with their need to survive by having clean air and clean water. You know that’s really the base of our livelihood and we need to be able to continue on, trying so hard, that’s why I think its important for all of us to know, understand and realize what is the industry doing to us, what is all of this doing to our livelihood and that’s going to really do an awful lot of damage, if we didn’t have clear air and water, not only to us as human beings but we live off the land, we live off the land and also that our wildlife, they, our hunting and fishing rights, what will happen to our animals? You know, that we depend on? And we know for a fact there’s an awful lot of foods that are sold over the counter is not good for our health, we still depend on our wildlife, our deer, our moose, our ducks, our, you know fish it’s so important to us and without that, what have we got? And if we’re going to pollute the air and all of that is going to settle on our medicines that we rely on and our wild berries, you know, even our gardens what have we got left? And there’s enough respiratory disease out already and this is going to cause multiple more respiratory diseases as far as our people are concerned. And we don’t only have us to think about here in the valley, we have our visitors that are coming in; we still have our bartering rights as far as our salmon is concerned, or exchange of food with our seafood and our ducks, our deer and so that’s going to spread all over the country so.

PK: ...As a Stó:lō woman who cares deeply about our culture, our traditions and our practices, without mentioning anything specific, why would further air and water pollution be important to you?

RC: It’s important for life and death, you know, what else am I going to say, but it is important to us to be able to stay alive. What about the respiratory diseases that it’s going to bring? You know, what is it going to do, what harm is it going to do to our bodies, our children’s bodies, and our grandchildren and our great grandchildren? I have great grandchildren now, what is it going to be doing to them? You know, they will be deformed, their children will be deformed and that’s why it’s so important. I don’t want my children to have that kind of overlook in their lives, or their grandchildren, or their great grandchildren in times to come. If they want that kind of a plant to come to be a being, they could take that elsewhere into their own country, not into ours. You know, I feel very strongly about this and I think its really a strong
matter, not only for people that are in this Stó:lō Territory, but our neighbours... all people, and I think that since we mainly, our people, have lived on the land, by the land, by the water, of the life that’s growing within the water and the land that that’s our, that we consume all of that. Our medicines and our berries, all of that is going to be polluted and then we're going to go out there and think we’re going to pick that when it gets ripe and eat it, and what are we doing to ourself? And if we think we're going to agree with such a factor like that, that industry that we, someone would have to be out of their minds.

**PK:** Ok if I can stick to the traditional use part of being Stó:lō, if there was one thing that you could say to the traditions and the practices and culture, how would you protect our water and our air from SE2, or I guess any industry if I can ask that?

**RC:** How would I protect it?

**PK:** Yeah, it’s a pretty serious question you know, in relation to...

[Tape turned off - Rose suffers some sort of asthmatic attack]

**PK:** Ok, you needed a breather there Rose... and I’d like to continue again here. If there was one thing that you could do to protect the clean air and clean water that we, from further degradation, what would you do?

**RC:** You know, I really have to think of my past experience that I’ve had with so many things that my people have been faced with and I’ve gathered our people, I’ve organized our people within the province and across Canada and I think that with, you know, there’s the discriminatory section seven, the Indian Act, with so many other things that with that past experience, I know what I need to do if it comes to it, is that we have to educate our people of exactly what we’re faced with to get their support and also with the governments as well, you know it thinks it’s important for the governments to know exactly what our rights are, to remind them if they’re not sure, to remind them of what our rights are as far as our clean air and water is concerned and everything else, our spiritual ways. And with my children, that I do have great grandchildren and on and on, I think that that is my concern and I think that I’ve went right across the whole country, met with people right across the whole western hemisphere in the past and I’ve always had favorable response in giving them the information of what our needs were and got their support and I don’t think it would take very much for the people to understand what, not only myself, but my people and family are up against with SE2 and that’s what we could be educating them on and
knowing, we need to gather the people and be sure they know what section 7 right to personal security and health, and section 35 is our Aboriginal right to exist, never been, it’s never been extinguished. So I think that, you know, that I think that Mr. Martin will have to understand and realize, that’s something that he has never, I don’t feel he’s been, ever considered anything of our rights, but I think it’s time he did.

**PK: Is that Mr. Martin, the Prime Minister or Mr. Martin, SE2?**

RC: Mr. Martin, SE2... So, and like I did say, if we have to re-educate our own ministers of, and review our section 35 with them, that that’s something that we’re going to have to do, it’s got to take place. And I really don’t appreciate the deadlines that were given as far as our people were concerned, for the fact that it takes our people time and with their cultural ways and spiritual ways of their prayers and know what direction that they’re going to have to go into. That, that’s the way our people are, but a deadline, it’s their agenda, it’s SE2’s agenda, it’s not our agenda and we hope that he will take our agenda into consideration.

**PK: Thank you. Is there anything further that I should have asked you then regarding clean air and clean water in relation to Stó:lō culture, practices, and traditions?**

RC: I think that, I’m also an intervener to SE2 and I have already stated that within my position papers to them and I would like to have that attached to this... And that’s something that I really would, it’s just a reminder to Mr. Martin with SE2 as well, that I have made these statements and I’m just reminding him of reviewing them again.
4.2.5  Sidney Douglas

Interviewee: Sidney Douglas, Cheam
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: December 16, 2003

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and wind drying tradition to you?

SD: It’s a very important part of our tradition because I know our people have always used that as a source of food. It’s getting to be a delicacy because the limited amount of time that we’ve had in the last few years for our people to actually dry fish, so it is an important way of us preserving our food because, you know, maybe we may have to revert back to dry rack food.

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery to Sto:lo culture then? If you say we might have to revert back to it.

SD: Well, I guess, you know like the way it’s going today, we may have a big war and we all our electricity would be gone out again, and we won’t be able to use our freezers and everyone would have to start curing fish in a more natural way. And that’s the way our people used to do it years ago, so I think we have to preserve that part of our culture.

PK: How is dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery concerned—pardon me—connected to air?

SD: With the wind drying we use the natural wind that was created by mother nature to cure our salmon and if there’s any pollutions in the air that’ll affect the quality of the preserved foods we have.

PK: And what about dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery is connected to water?

SD: That way again too, if our water’s polluted then our fish also intake the pollutants the water carries. So, in that same respect our fishery will be polluted as well. It’s part of our food chain and if we have to eat the fish, then we’ll get polluted.
PK: So, in addition, then how important is clean air to dry rack fishery and wind drying fish practices?

SD: Well, it’s very important because if we don’t have clean air then our wind dry fish is not going to be clean either. It’s going to absorb the pollutants in the air.

PK: ...how can it be affected...?

SD: I guess if the air is polluted then people refrain from drying fish and then further down the road, not our generation, but maybe a generation or two down the road, they’ll completely stay away from dried fish because they know that they’ll be eating some polluted foods, contaminated foods, if they try to wind dry it.

PK: Can dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practice be affected by water pollution?

SD: I guess again that the way it can be affected is the fish that we’re taking out of the water will be affected by the polluted water, so it still affects our wind dried. I guess, to some extent we can boil pollutants out of there, kill the bacteria when we boil; boil it and use high heat in our foods, but to wind dry it, I don’t think so. There’s nothing there to defer the contaminants.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect practice and teachings of dry rack fishery and wind drying fish?

SD: I guess again to that effect, if people aren’t practicing it themselves, then they’re not going to teach the younger generations how to do it.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery by effects of water and air pollution?

SD: I guess, cut down on the emissions that are created from industry and vehicles, by the power plants—they’re the main contributor. But a lot of our everyday vehicles that are used around the corridors, they all pollute. Lot of the bigger vehicles that create more pollutants than the small vehicles aren’t regulated as of yet, where as the small vehicles are... Seems like the bigger the industry, the less regulations.

PK: ...I wonder if there’s any other questions regarding dry rack fishery and wind drying practices in relation to air and water and our Sto:lo traditions that you might comment on, little further.
SD: There’s many things. If the air is polluted, and the water’s polluted, then we start slowing down on our practices, then the Sto:lo traditions may fade too, as well. Then in the future, we’ll be having hard pressed time to practice our traditions because people have been reverting to other sources with their incomes and livelihoods.

PK: What about other concerns about the effects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

SD: I guess some of the concerns would be that some of our practices, we use the water for purification and ceremonies and maybe we won’t be able to use certain places because the water will be too polluted for us to go and enter in there. And I know it does affect a lot of our local streams, the waters are already polluted, not only air pollutants, but farm pollutants have had a drastic effect on our local streams.

PK: Would you be able to elaborate a little more?

SD: Well, farmers fertilizing their fields, the only place it can go is into Mother Earth and it’s got to get into the water system somehow, and it does affect our fishery. It creates less oxygen so our fish can’t live in the waters. And I know some of the waters have got so much chemicals in there, if you enter in them it has an effect on your skin; makes rashes and stuff.

Sxwo:yxwey

PK: How important is the sxwo:yxwey tradition to you?

SD: Oh, it’s very important because it’s one of our traditions used to help take care of our people. And if we lose that, then it’s just another step down the road to our traditions being lost.

PK: How important is sxwo:yxwey to Sto:lo culture?

SD: It’s very important because it’s one of our sacred practices that -- we only bring it out at certain times, but it’s something that is there to help heal our people and to take care of our people.

PK: How is sxwo:yxwey connected to air?
SD: Well, sxwo:yxwey—reason it’d be connected to air is, ah—those people who carry the mask, they have to breathe the air that’s around us, and in order for them to be pure, the air has to be pure, and whoever carries this mask, they’re supposed to be pure, pure people. And if we’re breathing contaminated air, then we’re not carrying pureness into our healing when we work with the people.

PK: Into the healing ceremonies. How about sxwo:yxwey and the connection to.. water?

SD: That’s very important because that’s where our sxwo:yxwey really originated; it came from the water, and it’s given to our people to help us. And our sxwo:yxwey [unclear], they use the water to help purify and strengthen them to carry on with their traditions and with polluted water then we’re—we’ll be stressed to find clean water somewhere that we can purify ourselves.

PK: I’d like you to elaborate a little bit about that aspect as far as finding clean air and water in relation to who we are and where we come from. If it’s okay.

SD: Well, I guess, one of the things is—right now, where we’re situated is -- we do get, what do you call? The updraft of the city pollutants and the Lower Mainland pollutants, they all get blown right into our own territory and then when the pollutants do come in, well, it’s contaminating the air and if it does settle within our territory, then it’s going to start contaminating our water. We’ve seen that in Eastern Canada, where the industrial world of the States, the air has drifted northward and it’s called—created what they call an acid rain and it’s contaminated some of the Great Lakes in the eastern—and we’re in the same situation here, where we’re taking all the pollutants from the Lower Mainland and we could be having what they call acid rain into our water streams. That’s why I was saying we’re maybe stressed to find clean water; we may have to go to our neighbour’s territory, because they’re not affected as great as we are.

PK: And would that be okay?

SD: Well, I guess we’d have to talk to our neighbours, and I don’t mean our next-door neighbours across the river, but I mean maybe we’d have to go up into the Interior, Shushwap or Okanagan territory, or...somewhere where it’s not as drastically affected by our industrial, you know.
PK: Thinking on the spot here, we're Sto:lo, and this is the territory that we were born to, how important is the clean air to sxwo:yxwey and to us here?

SD: Well, it’s really important, you know, as I said before, we need to have pure bodies when we practice our sxwo:yxwey and ones that practice it, you know, they have to be in good health, and if we're breathing bad air then our health is going to be diminishing. And make it harder for them to practice because they need their strength and good health to be able to help the next person.

PK: And if you would elaborate a little bit regarding water pollution. How would water pollution affect sxwo:yxwey?

SD: It’d be the same because our people we’re going—whenever we practice our traditions and they go somewhere, they have to eventually go out to a stream; they go and try to purify all their regalia by bringing it to the stream and washing it off with the waters. If our waters are polluted then we’ll have a hard time doing that as well.

PK: What about additional pollution, you already mentioned that we’re dealing with vehicle pollution and other industrial pollutions... How would that affect sxwo:yxwey?

SD: I guess it’d affect it the way that a lot of our people may feel the effects of extra pollutants in the air, health wise. Maybe some of the streams that we have may not be able to handle some of the fallout from some of this, that we normally used. Some of our members in the community that use certain streams, well maybe the streams—maybe an over-concentration of these pollutants that may be produced with the SE2 generation plant, and then we wouldn’t be able to use those streams.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about sxwo:yxwey in relation to air and water?

SD: Not at this time, I don’t think.

PK: Okay. What about any other concerns about the effects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

SD: Well, I just have to repeat myself, in the last page thing. If our health starts falling down, then people be scared from doing certain things because of the pollutions in the air, then we’ll stop doing them.
Syuwel/Winter Dance

PK: Okay. I wonder if you’d want to make some comments now with syuwel... Our winter dancing. How important is our syuwel, winter dancing, to you?

SD: It’s very important because it runs in my family, and I think it needs to be preserved for generations to come because it’s another healing process that our people go through.

PK: What about the importance of syuwel to Sto:lo culture?

SD: There again it’s becoming more important for some because in order for them to stay away from outside evils like drugs and alcohol, the spirit dancing is something that is good for some. That can deter them from using bad practices.

PK: And it importantly, steers them in a good way. To be able to live in two worlds on an even keel is very tough as it is. How is the winter dancing, syuwel, connected to air?

SD: Well, I guess it’s the same as our sxwo:yxwey right now. We have to be in good health and good shape and when you’re spirit dancing you have to be—lot of times you’re in a training program where you have to run and breathe the air extensively. So if we’re breathing poor air, then it’s going to affect our health.

PK: And how is syuwel ceremony connected to water?

SD: There again our people use the water for purification, and if our water’s contaminated then we’ll be searching for areas that the water’s not affected.

PK: What about the importance of clean air to syuwel? The ceremonies that we do. How important is clean air to syuwel?

SD: Well, there again it’s really important because if you don’t have clean air then you’re going to be affected. People will just—the health wise is what gets affected when you don’t have clean air. Our spirit dancers, we want them to be in good health, especially when they’re new dancers we need to keep them in clean air and clean water, keep them purified.

PK: Can syuwel, the winter dance ceremonies, be affected by air pollution?
SD: I suppose it can be depending on where you’re situated and which way the wind is blowing the pollutants in your direction. So clean air is a major factor in good health, so we need that all the time.

PK: Again if I can just interject and elaborate with the study, the National Energy Board and Sumas Energy 2, they want to know if the new—the proposed SE2 power plant will affect our culture. And so I guess the next question would be: How would additional pollution of air affect our winter dance ceremonies?

SD: If we get too bad air in there, near where we have to practice our ceremonies, our people will be affected by the poor health conditions. I know a lot of people are affected by the air as it is today, if have more pollutants in the air, that’s just that much more they have to deal with and maybe their health wouldn’t be able to hold out for that.

PK: ..here’s a possibility...that more pollution could kill the practice.

SD: It could hinder it a long ways.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect syuwel, winter dance ceremonies, from effects of water or air pollution?

SD: Cut down on pollutants and not generate any more.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about syuwel ceremonies in relation to air or water?

SD: No, not right now.

PK: Okay. And about the further effects of air and water pollution to Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

SD: I guess, the only thing I can see is that it affects your health and it’s going to affect our ability to practice our traditions...and our culture.

Fishing/Hunting/Gathering
PK: I Regarding fishing, hunting and gathering, how important is the gathering and hunting tradition to you?

SD: It’s pretty important because we use lot of plants for medicines, and I know some of our people they don’t eat domestic meat, they prefer wild meat, so it is important to me because I know we do use a lot of plants still today, and they’re getting scarce.

PK: How important is the gathering and hunting tradition to Sto:lo culture?

SD: It’s very important because, I know some of our gatherings—gathering where people get together—lot of the main food dishes are from hunting and fishing. So that means we’re still practicing sharing from Mother Earth with our visitors when they come.

PK: What about—How is the gathering and hunting tradition connected to air?

SD: Well that way, in the sense, you know, the air carries whatever gets put into it, and if there’s contaminants put into the air then it’s going to be carried along to the plants and animals that breathe it. So whatever they consume comes right back down to what we consume.

PK: How is the hunting and gathering tradition connected to water?

SD: It’s the same, like we do fishing, the animals have to drink water to survive; plants need water to survive. If the water gets polluted because of the air pollutants, well then it runs down the chain again. It always reverts back to man needing the plants and animals.

PK: So then, how important is clear air and clear water to our gathering and hunting practices as Sto:lo?

SD: It’s very important because if we don’t have clear air and clean water, then we’re going to be consuming contaminated food that’s generated through the clean air, and the air and water that’s available to the plants and animals.

PK: How can gathering and hunting practices be affected by air pollution?
SD: Same way that polluted air, if it affects man, then it’s going to affect animals. Maybe some animals can’t survive under certain conditions that the air produces. So they may die off, and we won’t have those to be able to help us remember their lives.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect practices and teachings of gathering and hunting?

SD: Well again, pollutants in the air may change the quality of plants that we gather, and may affect the animals that we want to hunt in a way that plants and animals may not be edible or usable for medicinal practices, so we may have to abandon using certain plants and some animals may not survive, I think, with the different pollutants in the air.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect gathering and hunting by effects of water or air pollution?

SD: Just cut down on what pollutants there is, and try to eliminate as many contaminates that are airborne.

PK: ...is there anything else I should have asked you about gathering and hunting practices in relation to air and water and Sto:lo traditions?

SD: I guess one of the things is lot of our traditions are getting affected by the surrounding environment as it grows—industrial world. As the industrial world starts to grow a little more, and then we’re going to feel more adverse effects. So we really don’t want any more pollutant generation; generating industries.

PK: Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions or practices?

SD: One of the main ones is we wouldn’t be able to use them, that’s all; unusable. If they’re ever contaminated.
4.2.6 Tillie Gutierrez and Al Gutierrez

Interviewee: Tillie and Al Gutierrez, Atwel ???, Chawathil
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: January 7, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: ...how important is the dry-rack fishery and wind drying fishery tradition to you?

Tilly: To us? In my time it was very, very important and the importance of that drying fish started from July.... So in July they used to hang their fish... It gets to the month of, let’s see, July, August? We have that whole month and we’re still working on our dried salmon, but by the time the middle of August, they’re making thin ones. [slepatchil], they call it. They make it thin, because it’s right in half, and then they open it like that and they open it, then they hang it up. It’s real thin. Yeah. They call [slepatchil]. Oh, they’re so nice to have, you know, in the winter. Then August, September then they start salting.

PK: How important is the dry-rack fishery to Sto:lo culture?

Tilly: How important? It’s very important...

PK: How is the dry-rack fishery and wind drying fishery connected to air and water?

Tilly: Drying the salmon—

PK: But why is clean air and clean water important to wind drying?

Al: You won’t get the same today as you got it then. There were nice color, than today, and today they’re darker.

Atwel: Cause if you had polluted air, everything goes green, okay? That’s poison, goes poison. And it’s same with the water. If water is stagnant? Is that what they say? It gets stagnant.
Tilly: That’s poison.

PK: How important is clean air to the dry-rack and the wind drying practices? How important is clean air to those practices?

Al: That’s a tougher one, because we just took for granted that’s that was good then—smoke and other things in the air... [unclear because of two people talking].

Tilly: The clean air, clean air used to dry the fish right away. But now the polluted air will take more than four days hanging up there before it dries. Then you get nothing but hard, like wood. See, that’s almost like wood.

PK: Right, and in clean air you’re saying, clean air—

Tilly: Dries right away.

Al: Oh Yes.

Tilly: And it’s soft.

Al: They always pray for the—from July the first on, when they’re up there in one week before to prepare things, [unclear], that’s what they couldn’t do, that’s why they hired me to go and do it.

PK: Okay. So you actually go up in—

Tilly: July.

PK: —in June and prepare [unclear because of talking].

Al: Just a few days before the first and the first is when they can put the nets in—

Tilly: Ending of June, all that month.

PK: hm-mm, right.

Al: July is about the best month to have—to do it right. Because that is from history, from a way back farther than themselves. And they learned it from them and they carried it on as the years past. And into the next group. Lot of children were there to grow up and know what to do.
PK: How would more pollution impact our wind-drying and dry-rack fishery? If there was more pollution generated?

Tilly: Probably by that time when that product comes on, people start dying away anyway. See, that's what we're looking at, right now, you and me. And the people down there. We're all looking at this, if we let them go on the people will start going...

Tilly: The river is very important, and as long as they're polluted, we're going to have no more fish. What are we going to do then, you know?

**Syuwel/Winter Dance**

PK: I'd like to ask, how important is syuwel, the winter dance tradition to you?

Tilly: Uh, syuwel?

PK: Syuwel.

Tilly: ...is important for the ones that have it, see.

PK: ...can winter dance ceremonies be affected by air and water pollution?

Tilly: Yes, very much. Especially the water, you know.

Unidentified Voice: And the air.

Tilly: I think it has something to do with our mind, when they go in a trance, you know? I think the air has something to do with it.

PK: How would additional air pollution affect syuwel, winter dancing?

Tilly: I guess because it comes the whole year, the whole year. Comes, not only in winter dances it starts affecting though. It’s the whole year it’s affecting the mind of the person and the pollution—

PK: In terms of air pollution and water pollution... how do we protect our winter dancing?
Tilly: How do we protect that? [whispering] Maybe forbid the xwelítem to come in. Forbid them.

**Fishing/Hunting/Gathering**

PK: Right. I'm going to move on, Auntie, to fishing, hunting and gathering. How important is the gathering and hunting tradition to you? And even to you, Uncle. How if the—how important is the fishing, the hunting, and the gathering to you?

Al: I don't know, it's whether you can get it back again. I was going to say something before about the deer, you know, and fishing [tape noise] [320] and that's the tradition...

Al: Yeah, I've done all that, see. I'm the last hunter up here, and the last mountain man up here. All the mountains that you see around here, here and across the river, all around Hope and up the American bar. I go along. My dad showed me the places first, and all I had to do was just go from there on. So you don't see nobody going up now on the hills there. Even her, when she seen [unclear] pick berries, you know.

PK: To pick berries.

Al: Yeah, huckleberries and blueberries.

PK: Up on this mountain behind, the north side here?

Al: What they did was dry those before the white man came, and be there for, you know, maybe week, two weeks in drying them. You know, big basket full and come down to little bits, you know, dried. In the winters usually they want something sweet, eh? So they'd mix it with whatever they had and they had lots of that, the berries. Now it stays up there and it don't grow as the same as it used to be. The weather is changing different ways, you know. [Unclear] [343]. I used to go up there and pick them berries.

PK: ...Right. I want to ask you both, or even all of you, Atwell. **Why is clean air and clean water important to hunting and gathering?** Clean air—

Al: ...it's no good for the animals or us. So, I think they think, maybe if it's contaminated enough, why go after it, you know?
PK: Right.

Al: If the damage now of that area they’re in, there won’t be no game there. They lost all interest in their hunting.

Tilly: *Clean air is so important for our trees and our medicines up in the mountains and many other things that grow, we need that clean air. We need that clean water for processing our food. So this is the most important part in our lives is to have that air and water clean all the time. Now the waters are polluted so badly that people get sick anyway. Get sickly; they get TB and cancer, what else, you know? Can’t even use our medicines anymore hardly.*

PK: How, Atwell, how would, in terms of this air and water study and what your mom and dad have said, how would, do you have any suggestions on how to protect the hunting and the gathering?

Atwell: I would suggest that they don’t develop in the like, in the mountains. Near creeks, near waters, where there’s water run-offs, like mountains and stuff, but in regards to this proposal that they’re asking for it’s like, you know, the old people have seen and witnessed the pollution that we’re even suffering today, and the massive development that’s going on within the communities that are closer to like, say Abbotsford, like Sumas. They have a hard time getting to their swim holes now and their gathering places because there’s so much development on that mountain now, it’s unbelievable. They’re way up there now. And I’m like, oh my god, pretty soon our syiowlwel people won’t be able to swim—... They have to respect who we are— we’ve been pushed back so far, up against, you know like—

PK: The wall.

Atwell: You know, there comes a time when we’re going to say well no more, we’re not going to move anymore. Cause we’ve been moved from place to place and moved back farther and farther and because they, you know, they couldn’t, you know our...I believe our culture and our spirituality can’t be around all this development that’s happening around us, because it doesn’t, it’s not a part of who we are...

Al: I don’t see anything that can be done myself right now, unless you’re going to be rude, you know, or real tight... and say you can’t take our water, we use it... it’s our livelihood.
Atwell: You can’t pollute it. We won’t allow you to come here and develop on it, or over it, around it—

Shxweli

PK: Do you know anything about shxweli?

Tilly: Oh the spirit.

PK: Ah, ah. What is shxweli’s place in Stol:lo traditions and culture?

Tilly: This is something new to me because my granny used to call it, *Memstixw*

PK: *Memstixw*.

Tilly: Yeah, little person in you.

PK: Ok, so maybe instead of going with shxweli, can I talk about *Memstixw* in relation to this air and water study?

Tilly: Yeah, cause I’ll tell you in Indian right now, my granny used to say, *[Halq’eméylem phrase]*. She said, when the Lord Jesus came by, he gave us this land. This land is your land, now you look after it.

PK: Okay, so moving back to the air and water study, with *memstexw* is there *memstexw* of water and air?

Tilly: Water and air...

PK: *Memstexw*.

Tilly: I think there’s a connection with us. We’re connected to that water, we’re connected to the trees, or whatever, medicine.

PK: But I in terms of *memstexw*, if it was on it’s own, without human connection to it, for a second, if I can just, you know, is there a *memstexw* of water?

Tilly: No, I don’t think so. I think it was—to me that was what God left for us and it’s up to us to look after that. Yeah, that’s the way I look at it.
PK: And the same with air?

Tilly: Yeah.

Atwell: I think what she’s saying is more or less that we are reliant on both of those. How would you say reliant? Like you depend on water and air? You need it... Like if you're in a canoe and you need a paddle, how do you say that? I need a paddle, I need something.

Tilly: Okay, we'll have to look at it as the animal, the deer. He knows where to go for water. He can sense it, that it's good water, so he'll take it. Same with us. We won't touch that water if we know it's stagnant.

Al: The mother deer takes all her little ones and shows them all around after they’re born, in the spring is it? And they keep them down here for maybe two, three weeks, then they take them up and show them all the places where to drink water and where not to drink the water. The little marshes, you know? Some of them are contaminated. She won’t—she’ll hit them like that with her paw, like that. With her hoof. Now you put salt down in a big block, like that, and the mother deer will [unclear][518] she knows she has enough. Then the little ones, oh they love it, they keep on eating. Then she’d hit them with her paw, with her hoof. And they’d run away. Then the other one comes around wants some more, hit the other one, runs away. Then they started to come walking slowly toward her and she goes like that and they move away. That’s only way she could tell them that too much salt is not good for them either. You got to only have so much salt, then they go—she makes them go away.

Tilly: So they lose the connection of the earth too, by if the mother don’t look after it. She’ll keep eating that salt, you know.

PK: Until they get sick?

Tilly: Yeah, until...

Al: Salt lick.

Tilly: Hurt their body.

PK: Okay, so if I can move back for a second to memstexw. Is there only a memstexw of humans in your eyes, or...?
Al: Little people.

**PK:** Little people. But—

Al: Little people, isn’t it? Memstexw.

Tilly: Yeah, it’s inside you, your spirit like.

Al: That’s your spirit, yeah.

**PK:** But what I’m getting at is all elements. Is there a memstexw of fire, of the earth and everything that comes from our mother the earth?

Tilly: No. No, I think it’s more of a knowledge. You get a knowledge there’s going to be fire over there and that’s dangerous. So you don’t go over there. It’s just a knowledge…. Our connection of our memstexw is medicines. Water, yeah. Medicines, water, and what else? That’s our connections, you know? But we also have to know. We also have to have them eyes. We have to have ears, we hear what’s good, from long time ago. And that’s what I used to hear my granny say: “[Halq’eméylem phrase]”.

**Sxwoxwiyam**

**PK:** What about sxoxwiyám? Are there any sxoxwiyám that explains..?

Voice: Sxoxwiyám!

Tilly: Sxoxwiyám?

**PK:** Are there any sxoxwiyám that explain the relation between the Sto:lo and air and water?

Tilly: Just what I tell you about Xexá:ls, you know, he goes around. That’s about the only thing we could talk about is Xexá:ls, the Great Maker. He’s the one created all these things we have here….You get nothing if you don’t listen. See, we need a preacher to talk to them people out there.

**Water Babies**
PK: I want to ask about water babies. Do you know anything about water babies?

Tilly: I heard about them but I don’t know about them at all. I never really heard of.

Atwell: Wasn’t it Auntie Amelia that was saying that in... um, *squii-squeeala*, they used to come out of the water there and take the fish.

Tilly: Oh yeah.

Atwell: *Squii-squeeala*. That’s how I heard it.

Tilly: Well I never knew about it.

Atwell: That’s what Sonny was saying, he says, the real Coquihalla is actually right there. That’s it right there—it’s not the main river, that main—it’s that small water coming out right there. That’s the *Squi-quipala*. He said the people used to—men used to fish there and then they would [unclear] then those water babies would come up and take their fish away on them, when they were pulling them out. That’s what Sonny was saying.

Al: *Squii-squiala* is the stingy river. That’s what it means. Stingy river. *Squii-squiala*.
4.2.7  Herb Joe

Interviewee:       Herb Joe, Tzeachten
Interviewer:      Patricia Kelly; Marianne Berkey
Date:             January 15th, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: First off I’d like to ask, how important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you?

HJ: Important in that I still eat and enjoy wind dry fish. The only thing that I, I have with regard to the dry rack is that I have known people in the past who owned them and have visited the dry racks. And if the wind dry fishery ceases to exist, then of course I’ll have just memories. Yeah it’s very important to me.

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery to Stó:lo culture?

HJ: Well. Specifically the wind dry and dry rack fishery to Stó:lo culture, they’re part of the Stó:lo culture. It’s part of who we are historically as a people. It had historical impacts in that, the salmon made the Stó:lo people who we are. And also made us one of the riches tribes in the Pacific Northwest. So, it is when drying and the dry rack fishery are a part of who we are as Stó:lo people. Culturally, spiritually, it’s a part of who we are.

PK: How was Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery connected to air?

HJ: Oh simple ways, there got to be.... have no air, you don’t have no wind dry. If you have polluted air then.. the airs going to carry pollutants in it. And when it hits the canyon, it will become part of the wind that dries the salmon, and I would assume that the salmon would become polluted as well. I guess if it become polluted enough it’ll destroy the fishery.

PK: And... if it destroys the fishery?

HJ: It destroys part of who we are, culturally. Part of us will cease to exist. So culturally it’s very important.
PK: How is Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery connected to water?

HJ: Well the very obvious thing is that the salmon swim in the water. And the salmon go up through the canyon, and that canyon was made by water, flowing water was, the beginning of time created the canyon. So it in affect is connected from the beginning of time. And the water, again if we have polluted water the salmon are going to die off and we wont have a fishery anymore. So it’s all connected. It’s like our old people used to tell us, if we don’t live a harmonious life and a well balanced life, then we’re not going to be healthy and well people and we will certainly die, or get sick as they used to say.

So, and the same applies to water and the air. We’re all connected. And if water and the air cease to be healthy, then it’s going to have an impact on us, we’re going to be less healthy. It’s going to impact on every part of our lives.

PK: How important is clean water to Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices?

HJ: Well clean water again goes back to the health of our salmon. And of course the physical health of the canyon, and all of the people, owls, birds that course live in that environment. If the water’s not clean of course it’s going to impact on everything else that is around it. It can’t help but impact on everything else. Clean water supports all of that, polluted water will kill all of that.

PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by air pollution?

HJ: I believe it can. Yes I believe that air pollution will definitely impact on that, as I said earlier there are air pollutants, there are pollutants in the air. And the air carries those pollutants to the canyon, and become part of the hot and dry wind that dries our salmon then of course these pollutants are going to become part of the salmon that we would be eating, and it would have an affect on all who ate it. You therefore would be eating the pollutants.

....It’ll be part of the air that we breathe. A part of.. the whole ecosystem. It’s all connected that’s what our people used to tell us. It’s all connected. We are all one. If one part of us goes down, we all go down. It’s very simplistic but, in my opinion it’s very true.
PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by water pollution?

HJ: Of course. If the water’s polluted then the salmon aren’t going to be able to live in the water. If the salmon stop migrating up the river then there will be no more wind drying and racks, or dry rack fishery, or wind racks etcetera. It’ll cease to exist. There’ll be nothing there to wind dry. So it’s going to, it’s going to impact of course.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect practice and teachings of Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery?

HJ: I mean, so we’re going to get dirtier, dirtier air?... Well it’ll kill us too! It’ll kill not only the more fragile part of our environment, and all of those that live in that environment, but it’ll kill us as well. And that part of the environment ceases to exist what happens to the people who actually live in that, in that area, that geographic area in the canyon? You know, there’s not just the Stó:lo who are being impacted by it, but the.. Thompson people.. would be just as impacted by this because of the (unknown words) into them. And the group of tribes, smaller tribes that live in the canyon, Boston Bar and those people, they’re sort of a buffer tribe between the two larger tribes but they’re there. They live there. They’re going to be impacted by this too. How are they going to survive? Will they survive? I rather doubt it.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery, by affects of air and water pollution?

HJ: The simple answer is, is keep our air as clean as possible and our water as clean as possible. Again they’re both connected. And if we, pollute one you pollute the other, you pollute all, everything. And it’s going to have a chain reaction affect or a domino affect. Once the air is polluted then all that else is part of that ecosystem, part of that environment will also be affected, and it, more and more polluted as you go along.

PK: If there were options that we had to protect dry rack fishery and wind drying practices, how do we do that? Or is it us? Would we be the ones to protect it?

HJ: All going well and being of, in a perfect world according to the legends of not only our tribe but other tribes, you know the red man is suppose to be the protector of the environment, protector of mother earth, protector of the place that we live. And we are, we were put on earth to, maintain and sustain a healthy place to live. What I suggest, I would suggest that all the pollutants that go into the air be stopped! If that’s
at all possible. ...if we come to a more contemporary way of looking at it, if there are practices in driving vehicles, industry that will cut down on the pollutants then we’d necessarily need to do that. How can I as a Stó:lo person, help to create a better place? Keep on talking about it and hopefully somebody will hear. That if we don’t take care of the place that we live, then it will cease to look after us, it will cease to take care of us. And then we’ll parish.

PK:  Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery practices in relation to air and water and Stó:lo traditions?

HJ:  I don’t know other than the fact that, dry rack fishing and... the wind dry fishery, that it was created is a part of the economic system that evolved from the Stó:lo people. The salmon, both fresh and preserved, became part of our economic system and a major reason why the Stó:lo people who are one of the richest tribes in the Pacific Northwest, so something like that should be noted.

And of course if.. that is an issue, with regard to fresh salmon with the federal and provincial governments, and as well as our own government system, our own people. So it’s an ongoing issue that I think needs to be connected to a traditional use or a cultural practice that belong to the Stó:lo people... I think that point needs to be made that besides the obvious there were other impacts. An economic impact. The salmon and the dried salmon, are a part of what made us successful as a people. And with that gone, what’ll happen to us then? Well part of our identify is gone. Part of who we are is gone. It would be like a dear elder once told me about the draining of the Sumas Lake. He told me that our people are sick, our people are ill because that lake was drained. When you drained the lake you drained the heart right out of my people. You know, what is a human being without a heart. A shell. A dead person walking. I hate that, you know to be mellow dramatic but I think that that is a logical consequence. A logical result of not caring for mother earth.

Sxwo:yxwey

PK:  How important is the Sxwo:yxwey tradition to you?

HJ:  It’s really important. It’s a part of my family. The name Tíxwelátsa [Herb Joes’s Halq’eméylem name] is connected to a part of Sxwo:yxwey. The man who carried this name before I have been asked to carry it, was my great, great, great, great grandfather on my mother’s side. And according to family legends and stories that old
man had three Sxwo:yxwey masks that he was the caretaker of, the user of so it’s very important to me. It’s a part of who I am as an individual. Even inside I carry the name Tíxwelátśa, and all of the elders that taught me, told me that now that I carry the name... that I need to be very much aware of who Tíxwelátśa is and all that he was a part of. And all of the Tíxwelátsas before him.

So Sxwo:yxwey is very much a part of Tíxwelátśa. And, Sxwo:yxwey is a tradition that we almost lost... We need to carry on what was good from the past, to ensure that our young people are going to be healthy and well in the future. So it’s extremely important.

**PK: How important is Sxwo:yxwey to Stó:lo culture?**

**HJ:** Sxwo:yxwey *is* Stó:lo culture. Without Sxwo:yxwey Stó:lo culture becomes much, much less than it is. If Sxwo:yxwey wasn’t a part of the culture, it’s possible our people wouldn’t be here today. Sxwo:yxwey was given to us as a gift to keep our people healthy and well. So that, and it’s again. All of this is connected. The gifts, the spiritual gifts, the cultural gifts that were given to us as, as a way to keep us healthy and well, define who we are culturally, spiritually as well. So, it’s important to us, our culture they’re one in the same.

**PK: How is Sxwo:yxwey connected to air and water?**

**HJ:** Well, the very first Sxwo:yxwey mask was born out of water. Water people, the water people had ownership of the first Sxwo:yxwey. And, it was only given to us human beings as a gift for doing, for helping others, for helping the water people. So, the first time that our masks were born and saw, or saw air was because of good deeds of a particular young man. So historically, culturally, spiritually, water and air are a part of what Sxwo:yxwey is today, and historically as well.

**PK: So then how important is clean air and clean water to Sxwo:yxwey?**

**HJ:** Well, that’s for me hard to predict because it’s my personal belief through the teaching that I have received from my dear elders that all of the Sxwo:yxwey masks that were born up to this point in time are all that will ever be born. So given that as a basis for an opinion I would have to say that in the future the only impact that it’s going to have [on] it [is] that it will kill us a human beings. So they’ll be no one left for, on earth, mother earth to use the masks. And then they would go back to mother earth and to the water people. If we cease to exist so will the Sxwo:yxwey.
PK: Can Sxwo:yxwey be affected by air and water pollution?

HJ: Indirectly, through the carriers of the masks. The air and water pollution will kill us poor weak human beings. And therefore indirectly kill indirectly Sxwo:yxwey as well. 'Cause there will be no one left to carry the masks, to dance the masks.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect Sxwo:yxwey?

HJ: Oh, in that it would just hasten the demise of Sxwo:yxwey. The more pollution the quicker the people get killed off, the quicker our Sxwo:yxwey dies as well. So, additional pollution just quickens the demise of us.

Syuwel/Winter Dance

PK: How important is the Winter Dance/ Syuwel tradition to you?

HJ: I guess it’s extremely important. I’ve been a, as you say, a winter dancer/Syuwel for 35 years now. This’ll be my 35th winter I guess, so. Yeah it’s extremely important to me. If it hadn’t of been for this way of life I personally feel that I’d probably be dead now. I would have killed myself somewhere or another through alcohol abuse or whatever other abuses that I was walking towards. Very important.

PK: How about Syuwel to Stó:lo culture?

HJ: Again, Syuwel is, is Stó:lo culture. It’s an integral part of Stó:lo culture. I can make a comparison for instance to religion in the contemporary world that we live in. Religion is an extremely important part of a culture. It doesn't necessarily mean that everybody has to practice their religion in the same way. But it is, religion is a component of our contemporary culture. And the same applies to Syuwel as a part of the Stó:lo culture. It was and is an extremely important part of the culture in that it brought back to our people a way of life, a very structured way of life that certain people need to survive. So it brought back tools for our people to use to keep our people healthy and well. Extremely important...

...Without Syuwel, many of our people would certainly have been lost. People who are still alive today would have died have of something or other, some form of abuse. Syuwel brought back a very structured way of life. That we as poor weak human beings, some of us need the structure, while others can survive and thrive without much a structure. But for those who do need the structure, need a guiding hand to maintain a healthy lifestyle then Syuwel is extremely important. It’s a spiritual tool if
you will, that was given to our people to use again to keep our people healthy and well... I happen to be one of the beneficiaries of Syuwel. And many other people have been as well.

...It’s, as I say, Syuwel to me is Stó:lo culture.... As the simple human being, one can’t say they are the reason for other people’s being, Syuwel itself is the reason for people being healthy. And, it’s important that we maintain it because it’s a tool, a tool that our people’s can use to, work towards being healthy and well.

PK: How is the Winter Dance/Syuwel connected to air and water?

HJ: Well, the Syuwel teaches us that air and water being a part of the gift that comes with being mother earth. It has to be healthy and well, to be of benefit to all those who are Syuwel practitioners. If, if we didn’t have clean air and clean water, then the tool that we use would not be as healthy a tool. And when you change or amend old practices, sometimes the effectiveness of those practices cease to exist. I would hate to think that. In the winter months I need to go to a place that has clean water, clean cold running water. It’s part of Syuwel. It’s part the revitalization - cleansing of one’s body as well as the cleansing of one’s soul if you will, your spirit... Without clean water, without clean air we won’t have a place to go, to do that cleansing. And it’s a necessary part of Syuwel.

PK: How important is clean water and clean air to Syuwel?

HJ: From a very practical perspective clean water and clean air are how Syuwel works. Syuwel uses clean air and clean water... uses those gifts as tools to help us to regain our health. Regain not only physical health, but spiritual health as well. So that, it’s extremely important.

PK: Can Syuwel ceremonies be affected by water and air pollution?

HJ: Yes, definitely. Water in particular, clean water, if we cease to have clean water then, a very important part of the ceremonies that go with the Syuwel lifestyle will cease to exist. And once those parts of the ceremonies cease to exist, then that certainly is going to endanger the existence of the ceremonies. So you kill the water, you kill the air, you kill the ceremony. Therefore you are in part and parcel killing Syuwel. It’s all as I say it’s connected.

Fishing, Hunting, and Gathering
PK: How is the gathering and hunting tradition connected to air and water?

HJ: Well, again, Mother Nature, is so intertwined with other parts of the world that without clean air and clean water, you know Mother Nature is going to die. And if Mother Nature dies, that because we’re all connected, all the rest of us are going to die as well. So to me, you can’t have one without the other. You have clean air, you have a healthy mother nature. You have polluted air you’re going to have an ill mother nature. You kill the air and the water, you kill Mother Nature. And the domino effect continues on everything else that’s connected to mother nature also dies. Sometimes it’s so simple that people look right beyond it.

PK: How important is clean water and clean air to gathering and hunting traditions and practices?

HJ: Without clean air and clean water there would be nothing to hunt and nothing to gather. Because, the animals, the fruits and vegetables if you want to call them that, the HJs and all of the wonderful gifts that mother nature has given us. Clean air and clean water go together with other aspects of Mother Nature to support and allow those gifts to thrive. Without those gifts like air and water, if we well, we can compare them to being the bloodstream. The waters is the actual veins that carry the good stuff to us. And air, it enhances and strengthens and combines with the water to provide healthy food via the veins to make sure the human being continues to live. The same would apply to mother nature. So without healthy water, healthy air, the rest will be impacted very, very negatively.

Shxweli

PK: What is Shxweli?

HJ: Shxweli to me is what some peoples of the world would call your soul. To me it’s that, it’s an essence of life, that makes us who we are. It’s that spark of life that, that keeps us, for lack of a better word alive. It’s many things... that’s very difficult to explain in English. Shxweli is all of that. Shxweli is the aura that we have all around us. Shxweli is the energy that is contained in that aura. Shxweli is the feelings that you have inside you. Shxweli is all of that. And more.

PK: So what is Shxweli’s place in Stó:lō traditional culture?
HJ: We've always been a very spiritual people... Stó:lo people. And I think it's because of the way we evolved as a people, living in a place that offered us all that we needed to survive and actually thrive. Shxweli is, I guess. that life's spirit that makes it all possible.

... it goes back to one of the very basic teachings.. from our ancestors, and that was that each one of us is a unique and special human being made up of four parts. The physical part of us. The mental part of us. The emotional part of us. And the spiritual part of us. Shxweli is what connects all of that. Shxweli is the glue that sort of connects it all and makes us into one human being.

PK: And so if I can add also, Syuwel. .Why?

HJ: Syuwel is a way of, is one way that Shweli has, has of expressing itself. You know there are parts of Syuwel that make our Shxweli able to express itself. It gives it voice. It gives it, it gives it a physicality. It gives it a body. That's, the way it was explained to me... that was one of my teachers that said that.

PK: Is there a Shxweli of air and water?

HJ: Yes I believe so. I've been taught that, air and water are a living entities, the same as you and me. And if that’s true, and we have a Shxweli, then of course water and air have Shweli. [Halq’emélem name] my dad used to describe Stó:lo - the Fraser River over there...Used to call it, ‘that river’, used to call it an old lady. Described it as an old lady. And he used to tell me that as I was growing up, to be very, very careful. And I needed to respect that old lady. Because if I didn’t respect that old lady, she's going to take me. And for those of my family and there have been many who didn't show that respect, we lost them to the river. And some of them who showed such disrespect, that it was unforgivable. We never ever got them back from the river, and they're still there in the river. It has Shxweli, yes it certainly does.

PK: What affect then does air and water pollution have on Shxweli?

HJ: Again because we're, we're interconnected, unhealthy water and air are going to contribute to an unhealthy Shxweli. And, an unhealthy Shxweli will lead to an unhealthy human being, or many human beings, or all humanity. And that is eventually going to lead to the demise of humanity. And it starts with the very basics that Mother Nature gives us - air and water.
PK: What is the current health of air and water Shxweli to Stó:lo?

HJ: In my opinion....the current condition of Shxweli with respect to air and water, is not in very good condition. Our Shxweli is showing that. Our Shweli cries. As a people, our Shxweli cries. There’s a story about a young man from Cheam who was walking up the mountainside with his grandfather. And they stopped to rest and they turned and sat down on a rock and looked out over the valley below them. And the young man, was actually a young boy really, the young boy said ‘Poppa what is that in the river down there?’ And he looked down, Poppa looked down at the river and he sees these black patches moving up the river, up the Fraser River. And he looked down and he said, ‘oh sonny those are the salmon. They’re migrating up. You can see them, you can see them moving. They’re coming up in large groups.’ So what does that tell you? Well it tells us first of all that there was enough salmon in that river to cover the whole bottom of the river, so that you couldn’t see the bottom of the river... and that moved. What does it also tell you? It also tells us that the water was clear enough in the Fraser River to see the bottom of the river. So if we were to go up to the river, up to that same spot today, what would we see? If we could see through the pollution and the air, the brown air that’s there we could see the top of the water. And I would venture to see that you would see nothing beyond that. So, now you know why our Shxweli cries. Because our water isn’t healthy. Our air isn’t healthy. Hasn’t been for a long time.

Our more contemporary condition for our people, particularly our children. More and more of our children are showing signs of asthma as a very, very early age. I personally, one of the elders in my family have asthma now. And unfortunately out of my 10 grandchildren, I would say probably three or four, even as small as they are, are showing signs of having asthma. And where does that come from? I think polluted air. Polluted water. Polluted living conditions are part and parcel of what makes asthma a more dominate part of our health scene today.

PK: And in relation to Shxweli, that there were signs of ill health is a reflection of the health of our Shxweli?

HJ: Yes. Of course it is. If your Shxweli continues to cry, just as you as a human being, if you were to continue to cry, you couldn’t stop, our old people we’ll say you’re going to get ill, you’re going to get sick, and you’re going to die. So you, we have to find a way to stop you from crying. What does that mean to us? We have to find a way to stop our Shxweli from crying. If we don’t, as a people we’re going to die. Very simple.

Sxwoxwiyam
PK: Sxwoxwiyam. Are there any Sxwoxwiyam that explains the relation between Stó:lo and air and water?

HJ: I think they all do. Sxwoxwiyams - old stories about who we are as a people. They all talk about the connectedness of us all, including all of those that walk on four, those that crawl on ground, those that swim and those that fly. And all that our creator gave us here in the form of mother earth, it’s all connected. All connected. And that’s what Sxwoxwiyam is all about. It gives us what our ancestors give us. It’s the legacy if you will, that our ancestors left us. And if we were to study Sxwoxwiyam, understand Sxwoxwiyam, and then live by Sxwoxwiyam we’d be very healthy people. So that’s to me what Sxwoxwiyam is all about.

PK: Are there any teachings that you know of, in amongst Stó:lo Sxwoxwiyam about polluted air and water?

HJ: Gosh. I’m sure there is. I simply can’t remember them at this particular point. Yeah, yeah there are. I’m sure.

PK: So if somebody or something got caught polluting, the water or the air?

HJ: There were repercussions. The same as there, there were repercussions for anything that you do against Mother Nature. There are repercussions. There is an impact. And most part a negative impact. So this would be the same.

PK: But for the most part I can add, with the old practices, it’s certainly, was very difficult to pollute other than our natural daily functions. To pollute.

HJ: That’s not pollute. That’s returning to mother earth. What mother earth gave us... So. You know what we, what we, discharge as human beings, in its purest form there is, it’s still what mother earth gave us, and so it’s returning to mother earth.

PK: You wouldn’t consider it pollution?

HJ: No! No. Certainly not. Certainly not. No. It’s a natural function that the creator, made for us. And it not just us as human beings or the other living beings that are a part of mother earth, but mother earth itself. Goes through the same cycle. What happens when a tree dies? It rots. Returns back to mother earth. And provides fertile
ground for the seedlings that are falling on it to grow again, to become another tree. Human functions are simply another part of that, that whole process.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about.. Sxwoxwiyam.. in relation to air and water?

HJ: No other than that Sxwoxwiyam, the essence of Sxwoxwiyam tells us how to live, and how to maintain, and how to nurture. So if we’re able to go back to the old ways and take Sxwoxwiyam, and use it as a guide for the way we need to live, we wouldn’t have the problems that we’re having today. We would live in a good place. Surrounded by good things. So. I mean that’s to me what, what’s it all about.

Stl’aleqem

PK: What are Stl’aleqem?

HJ: If I remember correctly it’s some of the, more mysterious and spiritual part of our history. The Stl’aleqem took many forms. And were, and I think we tend to as human beings, we tend to interpret Stl’aleqem as being bad, only and only being bad. Stl’aleqem wasn’t bad in itself. It’s neither good nor bad. It’s how we perceive it that makes it that way... if you were to solve the riddles that come with Stl’aleqem, you can get much good out of it. It can improve your life immensely. On the other hand if you show disrespect or choose not to, show the respect and obey the old teachings Stl’aleqem could be very dangerous to you and to those that you love. So, it’s Stl’aleqem is how you, how you take it. And as I say it takes many, many forms. Snakes, mystical figures and beings. Like for instance a two-headed snake.

PK: The one at Cultus.

HJ: Yeah, one at Cultus. There’s one that lives up the Chilliwack Valley. Chilliwack River Valley. There’s one that lives out here at the flats, Chilliwack Prairie. They call it a Prairie out there, so there’s one that use to live out there as well.

PK: They’re all over the valley as far as I heard.

HJ: Probably! You know ever part of the valley, there would be a different form of Stl’aleqem. Yeah.

PK: Why would Stl’aleqem be important to Stó:lo tradition?
HJ: Well. Again, what I said in the beginning, we were taught that, and given these lessons by the creator, that we need to live in a harmonious life, in balance with ourselves and all that is around us. And Stl'aleqem can provide that balance. It’s like in Chinese philosophy ying and yang, you know. There needs to be balance. In the scientific world there, for every reaction there’s an equal and opposite reaction you know, reaction. For every action there’s an equal and opposite reaction. So, you know that, that talks about [unknown word] . And I think Stl’aleqem can try, historically, some balance.

PK: Okay. Where, I’m not going to ask you where because you mentioned where Stl’aleqem live. Are there the same number of Stl’aleqem today as in the past?

HJ: Of course there are! Stl’aleqem don’t die. We don’t have, as much knowledge that we share with each other about Stl’aleqem. And we may give, give it different names today. You know we, we don’t speak Halq’emélem in most part. You know we speak English. You know and Stl’aleqem isn’t an English word.

PK: Do you know of any stories of the disappearance? I guess that’s. I think you’ve already answered that. No we still have one. The disappearance of Stl’aleqem?

HJ: Yeah, they’ve never disappeared. They’re still a part of who we are Stó:lo people. We simply don’t talk about them in the same terms anymore. Because they’re aren’t the ones who are fluent in our language to talk about them, as they once were talked about. We can talk about it today but we use different terminology. We use different ways of describing what Stl’aleqem is about. It never died, it’s still there. Just as Sxwo:yxwey never died. It’s still there. It simply went into hiding for a while. And I would think that we can say the same thing of Stl’aleqem.

PK: Okay, moving to the concept of air and water in relation to Stl’aleqem. Would you be able to explain how clean air, clean water say verses polluted air and water may affect Stl’aleqem?

HJ: Well I don’t know enough Stl’aleqem stories to actually, you know really fully answer that… I would guess that again, where does a lot of the Stl’aleqem live? They live in water. You know and, being a living thing you would, you would assume that they would need healthy water to stay alive. So, and the same would apply to the air.
There’s those Stl’aleqem that fly. You know with, unhealthy polluted air, it’s going to affect them. The same as it would kill us. That’s what I would assume.

Water Babies

PK: What are Water Babies?

HJ: Well they are in every tribe, of, along Stó:lo have stories of Water Babies or little people who live in the water. There are a number of different stories that I am aware of that relate to little people who live underwater. Sxwo:yxwey, it originated in a village of little water people. There are other stories that talk about little people who live in the water or in the swamps, little people not necessarily children. There are these little people who live in those places. To me that’s what Water Babies are. I’m sure that others would describe Water Babies in a very different way, a very specific way. But that’s the context that I know Water Babies.

PK: What is important about Water Babies to Stó:lo tradition and culture?

HJ: Well, with respect to water, the Sxwo:yxwey for instance. The Water People were ill because human beings were polluting the water. They were spitting into the water and polluting the water, therefore making the Water People sick. And they were dying, because of it. So, yeah. Water Babies need clean water to live. And air, air is like a filter or a supplement for water. Maybe both, a filter and a supplement for water. So if we’re going to have clean water we need clean air to help clean the water. It too is impacted by pollution, whether it’s created by human beings or other pollutants.

PK: Do we need Water Babies to maintain who we are as Stó:lo?

HJ: Water Babies are a part of who we are as Stó:lo. Again if you loose Water Babies then you loose part of your identity. It would be like, to me, this is a horrible analogy, but if I were to cut your arm off, you know you would, you could still live, go on living. But you wouldn’t live at the same, level that you would if you had both arms. Or, or if I, you know cut off one of your legs. You would continue to live but you would need support to live, go on living and do some of the activities that you had once done. So yes we need Water Babies. Yes we definitely do.

PK: Can you explain affects of air and water pollution on Water Babies?
HJ: **Yeah, very simply. If water is polluted then, as our Sxwo:yxwey tell us, our Water Babies are going to die. They can't live in polluted water. Or, again because the air, if the air’s polluted the air will pollute the water and also cause our Water Babies to die.**

PK: **Can you explain affects of additional water and air pollution on Water Babies or on Stl'aleqem as a generic way of expressing... how would more air and water pollution impact Stó:lo?**

HJ: I would think that it’s going to, the demise of all of that. It’s like if you want to, in a Stl'aleqem for instance, how do you kill a Stl'aleqem? You cut off his head and the rest of the Stl'aleqem dies. You know, and if you use that analogy with regard to, air and water, you pollute the air and water and you kill the rest of, the rest of the, of everything that’s connected to air and water, which means basically everything including us. You kill the air kill the water you kill everybody else, kill everything...

I need to say that with additional pollution you are, that - because I sincerely and honestly believe that everything that is connected - then additional pollution, air and water is simply going to make the demise of all else come that much sooner. And if there’s any way that we can turn that around, is to be exactly, do the opposite. Remove the pollutants from the air. Remove the pollutants from the water, by whatever means.

PK: **Don't add any more.**

HJ: And certainly don't add any more because, the existing level, levels of pollution are at I would say saturation point now. Any additional pollutants in the air, no matter how much rhetoric the others who are involved and promoting, SE 2, no matter how many, how much they try to use words to sway the pubic, additional pollutants in the air is just not acceptable because it’s going to kill. It's simple, that's it to me. It's that simple. And, I don't believe, that by making it complicated, and using all kind of scientific fact, or fiction, is going to make it any less real for us as Stó:lo people. **The pollutants that are going to go into the air and therefore into the water are going to kill us. And to me it's that simple.**

And I think that's the message that I personally would, give to you and to any others who are willing to listen to me. But then again, see I was taught that I need to be humble, I need to be, as a human being, I'm only one human being. If others are willing to listen to me and, share with me their views then I would be willing to share my views with them, and hopefully we'll all come out the better for it. So I'm hoping that, for instance that the, sharing that I've done with you today is going to be of some benefit to you. I truly hope that they will. I guess, I wouldn't be here if I didn't believe
that, I needed to say these things, because of the name that I carry. I represent a family. And I need to do that in a good way. If I don't, then the work that I do will be of less value, or of no value, and I actually hope it never comes to that. Thank you for having me here.
4.2.8 Grace Kelly

Interviewee: Grace Kelly, Leq’amel
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: December 29, 2003

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and the wind drying fishery tradition to you?

GK: It’s pretty important to me. I’ll just read what I have here... I’ll read some of this but I’ll tell you some. This is some what of the most important says. This tradition is the main lifestyle of living in the aboriginal way of life, which direction charts are viable. We need the fishery in our life cause we don’t have any other way like we can go farming, like the... You know, we need our fishery to depend on to make it in this way of life.

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and the wind drying fishery to the Sto:lo culture?

GK: This is part of our life where we depend on that for our culture. Like we wouldn’t have a culture if it wasn’t for our type of restoring or looking towards our fishery, like we need it as a dependent in our way of life. The importance will continue in our Sto:lo culture according to our criteria if left alone by our government state. If we depended on our government state, they will take all that from us. You know like they say in order for the proposal of the SE2 to go through, it will affect our fishery all together, like our air quality, like you say, will be damaged. We need our fishery to depend on for the way we live.

PK: How is dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery connected to air?

GK: We will always be adverse to clean air as this is our requirement to our fishery. It will lead us to tomorrow, to our future, for our children. The air quality that we need for this is most important because without the clean air our fish won’t survive as well. Like they can’t breathe too. Their air quality is needed more as a human as it would be a fish cause without the air they’ll be dead. You know they can’t breath.
PK: What about dry rack fishery and wind fishery connected to water?

GK: We as First Nations rely on our water. We would generally require clear, clean water as to without this we have a dying industry. Our salmon stocks would definitely die off. Without the water we don’t have any fish. We need our water to be clean because without our fish we don’t have any industries regardless of what anyone else would think. We depend on our salmon and our clean water to be part of our survival and our industries. You know, that’s what I would think on clean water.

PK: How important is clean air to dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practices?

GK: Clean air around our distributed type of industries is very important as we will be infected by a negative dirty environment involving many type of allergies and sicknesses throughout our aboriginal people. In order to carry through with these practices we need our clean air, without all the debris.

PK: Can dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practices be affected by wind pollution?

GK: Clean water is another of our most important needs involving our fishery. We will not survive in any of these important practices according to our aboriginal way of life and survival.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect practice and teachings of dry rack and wind drying fishery?

GK: Well, without our clean, our air quality...I just see us going into the third world country if we act like... pollute our air so badly. We’ll be living like those people that have nothing. Yes, our practices are very initially affected by air pollution as the fish flavor and the fish color sets in to our fishery. We would ruin it altogether, if our air pollution wasn’t the way it is now; if it gets any worse we won’t have a way to fish at all.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery by affects of water and air pollution?

GK: Yes, our water is used in many ways to accommodate our fishery. The pollution will kill our fishery. Thus the water is very useful to our fishery living and health
matters.... The additional air pollution will give our fishery a core business routine. This is unacceptable as this will lead to sickness in our society. Like, we wouldn't be able to carry through with the practice or the teachings because a lot of our people end up getting sick, you know, get sick and they won't be able to practice the teachings or any type of fishery if there's sickness in the air. You know, we'd be poor.

PK: Sorry, I meant to say I was on number 10. I should have been clarifying that with you as I went. No. 10. Do you have any suggestions on how to protect dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery by affects of water and air pollution?

GK: We need to think of our future generations without our input on how to save our air quality for restoration for our youth will not have a general direction of support of how to prosper in life with our fishery. They wouldn't be able to carry through with that, like we do from our forefathers. That's what I would, you know, put down there.

PK: I presented a bunch of facts from Martin for you and those, the particulate matter, nitrogen oxide, carbon dioxide, all of those, to have these things flowing into our air and our water, and if there was a way to stop that, what would you do?

GK: To stop any of this stuff coming into our airs I would try to get all of our, like a way to stop a lot of this would be to involve a lot of our aboriginal people into, you know fight against all of this from coming into our territory. To get more people involved and to say this is what you are going to be sick of in the future. Your granddaughter or your grandson will die from too much ammonia in the air, or just better yet let’s just cancel it altogether and put this problem somewhere else, like out of BC. Let’s just save our province, never mind our pollution in our own faces, you know just remove this whole thing altogether and put it in a different territory. You know, because if they keep all this, all the oxides and all the organic stuff, you know and take it right out of our territory, and think about our generations and our children’s children, for our future fishes, and you know like our hunting, we depend on. You know if we don't take this out of our territory we are going to be having some really, really serious matters for our ongoing life in the future.

PK: health matters?

GK: Our health matters, yea. Like just remove it right out of the territory. That’s what I would come up with. You know, as an aboriginal person to speak for our people, I think the best thing would be, is to remove it and get this Martin guy to take his SE2
and plant it somewhere else, but not in our faces. You know because we already have poor air quality from a lot of pollution from other places we live in this day and night and to be honest it’s just gotta be changed. You know, I know its contamination here. That’s what’s going to go on with our people. A lot of us are going to start getting sick. Not only aboriginals, a lot of our territorial people in BC will be having to check into the nearest hospital every other day with all the oxides that I’m seeing here. You know that’s not fair to the people. We’re trying to live a healthier life, not make it more poorer. The breathing is important and with all these things, like the nitrogen oxides and organic compounds, ammonia – that’s going to kill people and people have got to realize that. We aren’t going to have this clean air that we have, if this goes in. It’s a sad story.

PK: So if I can move forward is there anything else that I should have asked you about dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practices in relation to air and water and Sto:lo traditions?

GK: Well, I think if our people have to be faced with this SE2, Phase 2, I think we should think of our dry rack fishery in our territorial where we do all this, cause we use this for something to depend on. You know if we don’t do something about this air and the water quality today, what do we have for tomorrow? You know where do we go? Are we going to have to relate to the farming? Like get into the cow industry? And that’s not our way of life. We depend on our fishery, for our air and our water to be clean, for our children’s children or even for our future generations. You know if we don’t have this in order for ourselves, how can we do it for our children? You know like our future is what I think about because without our peoples depending on the air quality and the clean water, where can we go? We need to clean this up now and without worrying about the air getting more dirtier. Let’s start cleaning it up for the fishery and our people. You know it’s a dependent that we make this happen without all the extra debris in all our lives, with this SE2.

PK: Do we have any other concerns about the effects of water and air pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

GK: Well, like I was saying the practices in our fishery department there I think the effects of the water and air pollution on our Sto:lo culture could be prevented by adding an SE2 because without If we have to add in all that other... like all that...without adding all this other pollution that they have named here, I think without all that the air quality or water pollution would...we will have to be cleaning up one big mess after they put in all this power plant here. And I don't agree that they should put the power plant in because who will be cleaning up all this nitrogen and the compounds and the
ammonia. Like we won’t have any more fish or we won’t have any clean air with this in our faces. You know our little babies will be dying before they are born with this SE2 power plant in our lives here. Because it’s not going to benefit us. They are not thinking about us when they add this into our lives because we don’t need this. I think we are living fine right now. We need to get our own power. We can build on that for our future in our own way without someone polluting us in that way without our permission. It’s not permissible by me, you know, like I disagree with it. They should consider the future people before they say ok to this you know. Like, without thinking about it, they are going to damage a lot of life including our air and our water. So I think it’s really, really important to take another look at this and turn it down before it gets any bigger. Because it’s a sad story. It’s not anything to be happy about. It will affect our language too because the way that our breathing like, with me as having been asthmatic now for 26 years now I find our air quality is already poor. You know, I’m holding on to this life here to just breath everyday properly, and be safe in it and with this I don’t feel safe at all. Might as well put a bottle of ammonia right in my face to drink if they are going to be putting this in our faces. And that’s not fair to anybody especially our aboriginal people. You know, like I hope I speak for all the people and not just myself. We do need more clean air quality and more water in our lives cause without the water we won’t have any fish. We rely on our fish.

...fish. It looks really nice on the outside, like it’s really nice. But you cut it and fillet it, flip it over, like right down.... Like, I’ve noticed with a few of my fish you have to cut away that much of the fish and chuck it away because of the damage from the river inside the fish. You know, it’s damaging to the meat. Like it’s all soft like the blood, the blood line of the fish is right there and some of that blood goes to the soft... and it’s like a big blood bank right there and you’ve got to cut it away and chuck it away, and give it to the dog because you can’t feed it to the people. You know, I don’t know if many people noticed that about the fish but I think it’s from the water damage...I thought about that and I thought, how the heck did the fish get like that? Then I think about it and I know its the damage from the water.

... Like I’ve seen that in about, I think with this fishing season, I think I done that with about five fish or more, like a nice beautiful silver fish on the outside but when you get it cut open and fillet it and then you see about that much in the stomach area, not at the tail, not at the head, in the middle of the fish.

**PK:** Gosh, eight to ten inches.

**GK:** Yea. That much you got to cut off and throw away.

**PK:** Is that close to the bone?
GK: Uh-hu. Right off the back bone, right off the back bone when I fillet it. Right there after the bone, the meat it’s like gushy, its soft. But the tail is fine, the head is fine. It’s the stomach area that takes the beating from all that pollution. You know that’s what I noticed with the fish because I thought – this isn’t right. You know it’s a perfect looking fish on the outside, it’s mouth is fine. It hasn’t been forced. There’s nothing in there. But the stomach.

PK: What species of fish are you talking about?

GK: Sockeye. An odd Spring, happened to the Spring where the meat is damaged. You know it wasn’t done from infliction of a man. It was done from what the fish is eating or how it was taken care of in the river. You know like it was something it ate or from the water, the poor water quality. That’s what I thought about when I cut it open. I thought cause I have to think about that, you know like – hey, I’m losing half of my fish here, what’s wrong? And it happened over and over and over. And I think that’s from the debris and stuff. You know what’s its intake from living in the water. Cause it’s not the whole fish. If it was the whole fish, then I guess we are getting the shit end of that deal, already you know, before this happens. But it’s going to happen that to all the fish, if this goes in. People will cut their fish and lose all around, finances, we’re going to lose our, you know like, to be able to go out and distribute our fish. We’re going to lose all our food fishery, like we’re depending on that. We’re going to lose like a whole bunch of ways, like the way I think about the fish if I smoke the fish. I depend on getting, you know, my quality worth out of my fish, and if we keep this in here I’m just going to get a little tiny bit like that, out of that much worth. Where would that leave us? Not in good standing. Our kids won’t even be able to touch a fish if they do that. Like what was that? You know they’d be pretty upset about it. How come our forefathers were doing the fishery and now we can’t do it? It’s going to shut it right down, you know. We won’t be able to fish because it will all be polluted. Like who’s going to want to be eating a rotten fish? Cause, you know, if I didn’t cut that fish open and I sold it to the white people, they’re going to say ‘I want that replaced’. But how do we replace it? Cause there’s too much pollution. Like from all the pollution that’s in our rivers, our little sloughs and stuff now, it’s not even safe to go swimming in there. You know like over here, you know we used to swim over here. You wouldn’t even think of diving in there today, you know. We used to drink that water. We can’t do that now.

**Fishing/Hunting/Gathering**

PK: How important is the hunting, gathering tradition to you?
GK: I think our gathering and our hunting traditions are a great part of our lives for aboriginal people. If we don’t do that part of our lives, we don’t have a hope in hell. You know what are we going to rely on without our hunting or our gathering. Like it’s a way of life for aboriginals to turn to when we need to depend on ourselves for how to look after each other.

**PK: How important is the gathering and hunting traditions to Sto:lo culture and to you as a person?**

GK: Well, without the hunting and the gathering in our culture we wouldn’t have a culture. You know we wouldn’t even...there is no other way of defining our culture if we didn’t have the gathering and the hunting in our traditions. We rely on that for a way of life...

**PK: How is the gathering and hunting tradition connected to air?**

GK: ...for the ways of the hunting we need that, for the animals to breath in a clean environment, and with the gathering... we need that air quality, otherwise everything will die without the clean air.

**PK: And what about gathering and hunting and fishing in relation to water?**

GK: Again, in the same category connected to the air quality as the water quality. Without any of that, those kind of things to rely on, we wouldn’t have any hunting or gathering traditions because our hunting, our animals need the water to survival in their own way, and with our gatherings, our plants and our berries and our aboriginal ways we need that water for these things to live with, you know, in the gathering and hunting tradition.

**PK: How important is clean water to gathering and gathering practices?**

GK: It’s very important like I was saying without our clean water our hunting wouldn’t be hunting. Our gathering would be no more gathering because our clean waters is the most important thing to our hunting and our gathering. Like, without our clean water, we wouldn’t be able to do that.

**PK: How important is clean air to gathering and hunting and fishing traditions?**
GK: Clean air? We need our clean airs as we need it as to breath as well as in our hunting practices, our gathering practices. We do need our clean air because without the clean air we wouldn't be able to breath in order to do the hunting or the gathering for our aboriginal people.

PK: Can gathering and hunting and fishing practices be affected by air pollution?

GK: Yes, I think it could be affected in a negative way because the pollution will kill the animals out there that we need for the hunting and any gathering that we need to do. If there’s no clean air pollution there’s no gathering because its been polluted too much, you know, by garbage, or debris like I would say you know, it would affect it in a poor condition. We need to have clean air for our hunting and gathering practices.

PK: Can gathering and hunting practices be affected by water pollution?

GK: Yes. I'd say that that would be a great deal of part of that to be a negative way of, like for the hunting and the gathering, like the water, without the water there, we wouldn't have any animals. The animals would die without the water. And if it was polluted in a horrible way our animals would die right away cause they can’t stand the pollution, of any sort.

PK: Do you have any... suggestions on how to protect fishing, gathering and hunting by affects of water and air pollution? How do we protect what we have left?

GK: Well, I would say in order to protect any of the gathering and the hunting is to avoid adding any other, any way of pollution into our society. Like, don't add in that SE2 because that will be a big quality for air pollution and water pollution. You know let's just deal with what we have... avoid adding any more pollution into our society, so we can breath and... drink more clean water.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about gathering, hunting and fishing practices in relation to air and water and Sto:lo traditions?

GK: Well, the thing that I would have mentioned in there too would be to preserve our clean air and our water, and that would be to avoid adding in that SE2. You know, like stop the pollution before it gets any worse and stop adding any debris into our waters,
to collect, to kill the fish. You know to stop anything from getting any worse in our society.

**PK: Do you have any other concerns about the affects of air or water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?**

GK: Well, I would mention to say that the affects of the air and water pollution on the Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices would be more along the lines of our communities to get more involved with each other, to bring back our Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices... You know if we don’t stop this now we are not going to have any more culture or traditions or practices to preach to our children... We need these practices to learn from. Without any of these practices or anything that we are learning today to pass on, we won’t be able to pass it on.
4.2.9 Riley Lewis

Interviewee: Riley Lewis, Skway
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date of Interview: January 29, 2004

Syuwel/Winter Dance

PK: How important is the Winter Dance tradition to you?

RL: Winter Dance means everything to me. To me, Winter Dancing is more than a religion. It’s a way of life. It means everything, and everyday, in everything that I do. I hope that answers your question.

PK: How important is the Winter Dance to Sto:lo culture?

RL: I reiterate everything I just said for the first question.

PK: How is the Winter Dance connected to air?

RL: There are four elements that we very much respect, they are very integral to Syowen [alternate pronunciation of ‘syuwel’]. People have connections spiritually, and I can mention one today, a baby [i.e., initiate] we brought in, he’s a fire eater, that’s one of the elements. There are three other elements, there are air people and water people.

I once seen Isadore Tom, his Indian name was ‘Patoose’ help a young girl who was having some spiritual problems. He had a bowl of water in front of him and he made it boil, he was purifying the water in order that it was purified water to be used as medicine on for my wife at the time, to help her. She was the one who seen this. He put some on her as a medicine. I was there, and I remember what ever was on her was so strong, somebody put something on her down south. We had to bring in more drummers to help, because the more drummers he had to work with the less he had to concentrate on his own song. He didn’t have to do his own song so he could concentrate on what he was doing...

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to our ceremonies?

RL: Well of course we have to drink water, we have to breathe in order to live. What the chemicals list that you showed me seem to be toxic, maybe some of them are
carcinogens that can cause cancer, which shortens our life time, which again shortens our spiritual life time. What we need to grow by, what we need to further ourselves in the after life, if that is shortened, that takes away from our growth. That takes away from why we are here what we are here for, what we need to experience to make ourselves better in this life. If we have pollutants in our air and water, it cuts off that process. It cheats us as a cultural people and our way of life, and that's very wrong to do that.

It (Sumas Energy 2) is threatening to our winter dancing that is about the future, it’s about our children, it’s about all the resources that we live by, whether it be animal or medicinal plants, everything. It’s inhibits any of those things, it affects the longevity of our way of life and the winter dance.

**Fishing/Hunting/Gathering**

PK: *We have our winter ceremonies which last roughly three to six months of the year. We have another three to six months of the year. How would we conduct ourselves as Sto:lo people around fishing, hunting, and gathering? We know, what we do during the winter ceremonies, but, because we live year round.*

Riley: *How would the other parts of the year be affected? Okay, this would also have to do with a way of life. With Sywel, Winter Dance, things don’t start and begin and end at the Winter season. It’s a yearly occupation of fishing and hunting. There are many who go out after the winter season to collect medicines.*

Some collect cedar buds, it’s used in the mouth when a person is working around dead people, so that you as a person stay yourself, and do not pick up any benevolent spirits that don’t belong to you. There are people that I know who have done this work that didn’t use it (cedar buds) and they got spiritually sick and had to sing another song. There were two men moving one casket to another cemetery and they didn’t use this (cedar buds) and they got very sick.

There’s also gathering of other medicines that only occur during the Spring. You have to collect in the Spring and dry them out so they can be used year round. There’s swamp tea that grows around water. A chemical, a chemist came to our reserve where there is lots of swamp tea, and it’s also known as Labrador tea; he did a chemical analysis on this tea.

Since I was a small boy I’ve been drinking this tea. We endeared this a very strong medicine. I’m forty-nine years old. My grandmother died at one hundred and ten years old. I lived with her when she was eighty-nine to ninety-four years old. I lived with her for five years then they took me away because she was getting too
old...but anyway, this chemist said that that, Labrador tea has the most vitamin C in it than any other substance in the world by weight, pound for pound. And that’s part of the water. Labrador tea lives in the water, it receives its’ nutrition from air, it also needs air...

Shxweli

PK: What is Shxweli?

RL: Shweli is the spirit of all things.

PK: What is its’ place in Sto:lo Tradition?

RL: Like I said, it’s the spirit of all things. It has its’ place in each and every living thing, whether it be animate or inanimate. Whether it be tree, animal, insect, rock, everything.

PK: How does Shxweli relate to Sto:lo tradition?

RL: We understand that Shxweli is in everything. When we gather plants it has a Shxweli. There are attributes about it. Some people long, long ago had much more spirit, had much more belief than us, so they were able to collect much more than us now. The plants would reveal themselves as a certain medicine or may comes in different ways.

PK: ...How can you tell the health of us and our Shweli?

RL: That’s obvious. When you look at ourselves in three different ways. All three attributes are healthy then we are healthy as a whole, the spirit, mind and body. If our spirit is healthy usually our body follows along. Same with the mind. Also, doing the wrong thing in life can make both body and spirit sick. They’re all inter-related.

PK: What affect have does water or air pollution have on Shxweli?

RL: In my mind there is a great sadness. There’s a distraughtness and grief and negativity of what’s going on today in terms of what’s happening with pollutants...It’s all one Shxweli, our Mother the Earth, we are only part of that Shxweli as a whole, that’s why we revere every living thing. That’s part of us and we are apart of them, including the air and the water. So, when you change one thing, we are all affected.
Stl’aleqem

PK: What are Stl’aleqem?

RL: Stl’aleqem are what most people consider legendary mythical beings. But, they’re not, they’re real beings. I’ve seen Sasquatch. I’ve seen, smelled and heard Sasquatch on the way home from work, three or four o’clock in the morning when I used to work in Washington State, along with one other person. “Did you see that, did you see that?” With these glowing eyes, it was almost like these eyes that had flashlights in them.

PK: What is important about Stl’aleqem in Sto:lo culture and traditions?

RL: I can tell you in terms of a winter dancer, there are people who have Sasquatch as Stl’aleqem. My sister has a Stl’aleqem as her partner [source of spiritual strength / power], or the double headed snake or serpent...

PK: Are Stl’aleqem required to maintain our Sto:lo traditions?

RL: Required? They are an inherited part of our way of life. Required, what a funny word to use. They’re just there, they are part of our way of life...

PK: Where do Stl’aleqem live?

RL: All depends on which Stl’aleqem you’re talking about. Talking about Thunderbirds, I seen one once, but I’m not sure, it might have been a young eagle. Sasquatch, at most times live in the mountains, but I heard one lives in the lowlands in Lummi. There’s Water Babies, I don’t know much about them, so I will not comment. About the Sxwo:yxwey, I shouldn’t be the one to ask those questions. Those are the two Stl’aleqem I mentioned, the two headed snake and the Sasquatch that I can mention in a fair way.

PK: Do you think there are the same number of Stl’aleqem today as there were in the past?

RL: I’d say they are still out there. As far as I know, I don’t know whether anybody knows about that,...I’d say they are there. Whether they are multiplying or not, whether there are more or not, I don’t know how to answer that question.
PK: Do you know of any stories about the disappearance of Stl’aleqem due to disturbance of their environment/habitat in relation to air and water?

RL: I imagine there are disappearances. There is one Stl’aleqem I didn’t talk about, the Little People. The Dad’s way from Washington, Ceeat-co [phonetic spelling], they live in the woods. They live in an obscure way. With the cutting down of trees, with the development of lands without trees, it’s obvious they don’t have territories they used to have. It’s probably true for other Stl’aleqem too.

My son saw Small People. I remember it was at this spiritual spot, which I didn’t realize it was a spiritual spot at the time. It was right at the ocean, my wife and I were facing the ocean. We were picking wild strawberries at the time. My son was in and around brush up to his knees and was facing the forest, he was standing there, all of a sudden he says, “Dad, dad a munchkin, a munchkin.” All I could see after turning around, all I seen was the bushes moving back and forth as if somebody might have just left from there or something. Or it may have just been the wind. But, my son wouldn’t have said that unless he watched The Wizard of Oz. That’s where he got the word, right, so he could relate to me what he saw.

My wife too, she remembers seeing little people. They were trying to lure her and her brother into the woods to go play with them.
4.2.10 Johnny Leon

Interviewee: Johnny Leon, Chehalis / Katzie
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date of Interview: February 5, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you?

JL: Oh, that’s very important to all of us... It’s our winter food. It’s very important to us, that Wind Dried food. We gotta have that.

PK: How important is the Wind Dry and Dry Rack Fishery to Sto:lo culture?

JL: Well, that’s very important to all the people. We gotta have that one, we can’t go without that one...

PK: Why is Wind Dry and Dry Rack important to you and us?

JL: ...Well if they pollute the water, then we're in trouble. And air, we use the air to dry the salmon. It’s not going to be very good for us, we’re going to be in deep enough trouble now the way things are. I’m really against this here, it’s not right what they want to do. I don’t know too much about it through the media, but, I just don’t know how much it’s going to affect us. I think it might be terrible.

PK: Can you talk about Wind Dry and Dry Rack from your years of history?

JL: Well, the Wind Dry is done up above from Hope, up that way. We also dry up this way, but not that often now. Mostly our drying is done in Hope and Yale where the air is good, it’s nice and windy. That’s why we have to go up there to do that. I’ve got a picture upstairs of Ed Leon and your Grandma (Margaret Leon), drying fish up in Yale. They have to go up there to do that you know. I got the picture of them close to where they dry the fish, good air up there. We don’t want to pollute our air.

PK: Why would Wind Drying and Dry Rack be so important to our culture?
JL: Well, that’s our livelihood. You know we can’t go without that. I wouldn’t want them to see that ruined any further. They’ve ruined so many things already. We haven’t go much territory. Yes, it’s terrible.

PK: In relation to air and water, and our culture, can you discuss more about what we do with Wind Dry and Dry Rack fishery. Do you have experiences going up to the canyon?

JL: Yes, well, we do that for our winter supply for one thing. We’re limited quite a bit, fish is disappearing, it’s pretty rough on us...

**Sxwo:yxwey**

PK: How important is the Sxwo’yxwey tradition to you?

JL: The Sxwo’ywey is one of our oldest customs you know. Sxwo’ywey is an old, old thing. They had Sxwo’ywey in Chehalis, then it faded away for a while. That’s why it was supposed to appear in Agassiz. Right at the foot of the mountain, they call it Hook Nose, where the mountain goes into the water. The mountain goes into the Fraser River at Agassiz, they call that little mountain Hook Nose, the old timers claims that’s where it popped up.

But all this other stuff, they probably have a different story on the coast. That’s more important out the island than it is to us. But, it’s coming back here again.

PK: How important is Sxwo’ywey to our culture?

JL: I don’t know. As I say, it just came back not to long ago. So it must be important to the people, cause it’s coming back strong.

PK: Can you talk about Sxwo’ywey in terms of how we are related to us?

JL: ...I don’t know, there’s suppose to be a lot of power behind that, spiritual powers. Healing powers. You call it healing powers. Just like what they did to me down here. They had the Sxwo’ywey working on us, [name] and Me.

The reason why they put that on us was my brother just passed away, my brother Jim (Leon), he was ninety-four years old. I was sick at the time, I was about to get pneumonia, the doctor said there was fluid in my lungs. But, just starting pneumonia,
and the doctor got a hold of it, he gave me antibiotics to try and cure it. They almost sent me to the hospital...I missed my brother’s funeral. I told her it’s really bothering me. In fact I’m getting kind of sick. It’s really bothering me. It’s knocking the hell out of me.

I’m doing something, I’m watching television or something and he comes into my mind. I dream about him. When I dream about him, he’s alive with me. All that stuff is knocking the hell out of me, in my mind... That’s why she got the Sxwo’yywey to work on me, spiritual powers. So, the Sxwo’xwey is important.

PK: There was some kind of closure there for you then.

JL: Yes, there was some kind of closure for me right there. I think it helped me, I feel much better. I don’t know what it is, you just think that, but I do feel better.

Syuwel/Winter Dance

PK: We were talking about mask dancing and Syuwel.

JL: Syuwel, we call it Syuwel....That’s where the water was important. You had to go swimming everyday when you become an new dancer. Water is really important... Water is very important to dancers. Soon as they feel something wrong with them, irritable, they would jump in cold water, a cold pool. They’d feel better, it sort of cures them, water is very important to those dancers. It’s quite a custom you know. That goes a way back. It does dancers a lot of good... They want to better themselves, and they’d become a dancer and a singer, and it cures them.

Fishing/Hunting/Gathering

JL: And the water in the sloughs in there were, a little creek that would flow in from the top end, and the sloughs are about sixty to eighty feet wide. About three or four feet of water in the slough, and the salmon would come in there so thick by the hundreds of thousands.

All we’d do is come and spear the fish for the people, bring it to them and they’d dry it. That water is clean, good water, no pollution, nothing. That water is absolutely clear, so clear, six feet deep you could see right to the bottom. Clear water. That’s all we’d do.
PK: What slough and creek are you talking about?

JL: That’s the one where the village was in Chehalis. And, there’s other sloughs up above it, there’s about four or five more sloughs up above it. All nice clear water and that’s where the fish spawn. They spawn by the thousands. You should see it, you’d be surprised, oh, fish by the thousands. Nice clear water. No pollution... But now there’s hardly any that go in them sloughs, they tell me. I was just asking the boys. There’s some but not that many. There getting all fished out up the coast. That water was nice water, you could drink that water, it’s clean water...

....We can’t go without our fish. Fishing and Hunting.

....More discharge. They are really going to ruin this country you know. I understand Abbotsford is really against this. On the Sumas prairie, there really against this here... I wonder how come they are having such a hard time stopping this. They can’t stop this. It’s so close to the border.

PK: Parts of it would be in Sumas and parts of it would be in Abbotsford.

JL: They’re going to pollute the air, there will be no place to live. Because most of the air moves in from the states and comes this way, it comes into Canada. That’s why they are so against it. It’s too bad. We don’t need that, we have enough problems with out that.

Water Babies

PK: What are Water Babies?

JL: ...Well I got a couple of stories about the Water Babies in Chehalis. We’re only talking about Chehalis, that’s where I come from.

There’s a story about Water Babies right in front of the church in Chehalis. The water comes right in front of the church, kind of a shallow water there, but, muddy. You can’t walk in it, it’s so muddy, you would sink down. The old timers claim they used to see these little babies come out of the water and they’d be talking. They would be talking to one another and then they would disappear. Little people would come out of that water, but, you would never see them on shore.
They tried to find them, they tried to see what they were, and the only time you could see them was at night. They would come out at night, you could see their little heads in the water, just like babies. They talk like babies. The old timers said they tried to see them, they would sneak down there at night and try to see them, or they would sneak down there in the day time and try to see them. You cannot see them. There’s nothing down there. You can’t see them. They used to tell us, well, you don’t go in the water, they would tell us. Something might happen to you. That’s where the little babies are.

...And, the old timers always said, they were always up Sukwala, them little babies. They’ve known that for years. It’s always there.

....They call it Stl’aleqem too, something out of the ordinary.
4.2.11 Ken Malloway

Interviewee: Ken Malloway, Tzeachten
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date of Interview: January 5, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you?

KM: Well, I've always been involved in the Dry Rack Fishery with my mother over the years and my step dad, Felix Victor. We've been drying fish in the canyon since I was fourteen years old, which was 1967. So, my mom and our family has been drying fish since then but, my grandfather and his brother have been drying fish since before that. I used to help them as well. So, it's been a big part of our family over the years.

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery to Sto:lo culture?

KM: It's pretty important. Maybe there are three dozen dry rack operating usually. Each of those dry racks represents a number of families, not just one family, I mean extended families, not just one family. There are a number of people that would use each site.

The elders, there are several elders using that site go to a lot of people. Also, canning goes to a number of people. So, it's pretty important.

PK: ...is, how important Dry Rack is to our people and our culture?

KM: Well this is important to our culture and our tradition. It's part of our economy. The Dry Fish is part of our culture, tradition and economy. We've dried fish for thousands of years. Our people dry fish to put away for use in the winter so that we have that kind of protein available to us for the winter. We have been doing Dry Rack for thousands of years. It still remains very important, culturally important. We want to practice our culture, teach our children how to dry fish, how to prepare them, how to look after them. We need to be able to make sure that is something that we keep doing. It's part of our culture, it's part of who we are.
PK: How is Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery connected to air?

KM: Well, the air, the factors are we need warm clean air so fish can be dried in July and part of August. Dry Rack is very time sensitive. We need to be able to dry fish when the Early Stuart Sockeye are in the river. Those are the best fish because of the fat content. Also, the time constraints, you can’t dry too early because it’s not hot enough, and you can’t dry too late because the fish become infested with bees and flies. So you need to stay at a certain time, and we need hot clean air so the fish dry properly and they’re healthy.

PK: What about Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery connected to water?

KM: Well, we need clean water so the fish that we prepare, that we eat are healthy. The fish themselves need clean water so they can migrate to our territory and through our territory, they need that so they can survive, and thrive.

PK: How important is clean air to Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices?

KM: Clean air is important because these fish that we prepare at the Dry Racks are going to be fed to our families, to our elders, to our young children and to our guests. When people come into our territories, they expect to be fed dry fish, smoke fish and fresh fish. We need to be able to hold our head up when guests come into our territory, and part of that is being able to feed them in our traditional manner. The clean air is vitally important, we make sure the fish we prepare for our families or guests at a gathering are good clean fish.

PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery be affected by air and water pollution?

KM: Yes, Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery can be affected by air and water pollution. I remember a couple of times over the years, I’ve seen fish glowing in the dark. They were really concerning me. Others in the St’a:le’muux Territory found fish that glowed in the dark on the dry rack. They were trying to find out what was causing them to glow. They weren’t able to get them tested, but the river needs to be cleaned to be able to support the stocks running through here. The fish pick up things once they enter the water. The fish need to be able to make their way to the spawning grounds without getting polluted themselves.
It’s not enough start now to curb what’s going on. We need to find ways to stop what’s going on, because municipalities up and down the Fraser River who dump all kinds of effluents into the river. Some of the sewage is untreated. Some sewage is primary treated, like the big chunks are taken out, like paper and stuff may be taken out, but there are other places that may have secondary treatment, but they’ll have some bacteria involved, so they will try to break it down before they pump it into the river. But, there needs to be more work done in the municipalities. The treatment should be tertiary treatment, they need to be treated more so they stop sending things down the river that affect us and affect the fish.

There’s a lot of things especially in the lower part of the river in the Fraser Valley with the Dairy Farms and the vegetable farms. There’s a lot of stuff that leaches into the river and I think those things are detrimental to the fish and to people.

**PK: How would additional pollution of the water and air affect practices and teachings Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery or any fishing?**

KM: What I think additional pollution might scare people away not only from fishing but from consuming the fish, because, people may become afraid to eat the fish. That could be detrimental to our health.

One of the things I heard recently from talking to our dietician at a diabetes workshop that I was at, they tell us that Omega 3 is contained in red salmon fish oil. It’s one of the most important things to our diet as Sto:lo. If those fish become tainted, our people.. become afraid to eat them, then the epidemic of diabetes which is upon us now will get even worse.

When I was a little boy, I didn’t know on First Nation person with diabetes. Not one. But, my uncle who was Dutch, he had diabetes. They were real big dairy farmers. But now, seems like everyone is diabetic. Most people that I know that are over forty, and First Nation, a lot of them are diabetic. I think it’s because of our diet. If we eat less of our traditional diet and more of the white man’s diet then we’re doing a disservice to our people and to our bodies.

I think that’s why so many First Nations’ people are diabetic.

**PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices by affects of water and air pollution?**
KM: Well, for air, we need to make sure that we do something about the amount of pollution that comes up the Fraser Valley, because the Fraser Valley is a funnel. In the summertime all of the pollution that comes up the Lower Mainland ends up hanging in the air in the Chilliwack and Hope area.

Especially, there are days in the summertime when it’s a clear sunny day but you can’t even see the mountains because of the air pollution. The haze gets so bad that you can’t even see the mountains. It’s because of the air pollution we get from the lower part of the valley. The wind blows consistently east at that time of the year and it funnels into the valley and it settles up there. So all of that pollution, when the wind blows it up to the head of the valley up at Hope and Yale, it settles up there. The pollution settles in the trees and the plants, in the river. So, the air is polluting everything up there. The water is being polluted upstream by industry in the municipalities, by farmers, agricultural uses, and big business.

PK: How would you propose to protect what we have left, how would we protect the clean air and water that we have left?

KM: To protect the air, we need to get a handle on where the pollution is coming from. We’ve been able to identify pollution coming out of different industries. We need to curb that, stop that if we can, the particles sent into the air, we need to find ways to stop that. Otherwise we’re going to end up like Tokyo where on days when the pollution is so bad the police have to put on gas masks, they breath for a while, they walk a block, stop for a while then put their breathing masks back on. Los Angeles gets like that. There’s days like that. There’s day they advise people and older people to stay in doors because it’s too dangerous to walk outside.

That’s something I can see coming towards us in the future because Vancouver and the Lower Mainland is growing. There’s more and more people which means more and more industry, so we have to stop that pollution from happening, find out what’s causing that pollution and put a stop to it.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery practices in relation to Sto:lo culture and air and water?

KM: No, I think you covered it quite well. The bottom line is that it’s part of who we are and what we are and in order to continue to practice our culture and traditions our we need clean water and clean air so that we can carry on this thing we’ve been doing for thousands of years.
PK: Do you have any other concerns about the affects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

Well, I have concerns about the affect it will have on our people on our health. That’s one of the things that really concerns me is that we’re breathing this stuff in. Everyday we breathe this stuff in. We’re here forever. We’re not going anywhere, we’re not going to pack up and leave, because it’s getting too polluted, because this is our territory, this is where we were born and raised. This is where our forefathers have been here. Our children are here, their children will be here. We’re here for the long run. So, I’m concerned with the stuff that we breathe, the stuff that we eat, the stuff that we drink. I am very concerned about all of these impacts on our people.

Sxwo:yxwey

PK: How important is the Sxwo:yxwey tradition to you?

KM: Well it’s very important to our people. For a number of years Sxwo:yxwey and spiritual dancing was outlawed by the Indian Act. People actually went to jail for practicing our culture in the forms of spiritual dancing and Sxwo:yxwey. Sxwo:yxwey is very important to our people and it’s very important to our families. Because Sxwo:yxwey masks are owned by families, there’s Sxwo:yxwey masks in the Malloway family, there are Sxwo:yxwey masks in the Silver family. Those are two of my families, the Malloway family and the Silver family from my mother’s side. It’s very important for our family.

There are all kinds of connections if you look to the past of where they came from, who owned them, how they were past on and who has a right to them. The Sxwo:yxwey is very important to our Sto:lo people to carry on our culture and our heritage.

PK: How is Sxwo:yxwey connected to air and water?

I guess the way Sxwo:yxwey is connected to air and water, Sxwo:yxwey masks originally came out of the water. There’s a couple of sites where they came from. One site is Harrison Lake, another place is Kakawa Lake, and there’s another site that’s just off the river near Hope. There’s a pool there, when the water is high it’s full, but when the water drops down, it leaves a big clear pool. I’m told that’s another site where the Sxwo:yxwey masks came from. There were originally four Sxwo:yxwey masks in that
area that belong to different families. They came out of the water, they came out of the lakes and the Fraser River. There is a big connection that we know about.

As far as air goes, they were pulled out of the water and when they came into the air they changed and our people donned the masks and they use them to perform ceremonies that heal. That set the ground for doing other works so they’re very important to us and our culture.

PK: Can Sxwo:ywey be affected by air and water pollution?

KM: Yes, I think Sxwo:ywey can be affected by air and water pollution as we can all be affected. The Sxwo:ywey masks are carried by families, different families members that wear them, they need clean air and water to do their job. The Sxwo:ywey dancers have to go out and go for a swim, they need to find clean places to swim. If they can’t find clean places to swim, then that becomes detrimental to the work they have to do. They need clean water to do their jobs. They need clean air to breath because the Sxwo:ywey dances are quite long and they spend quite a bit of time dancing and that’s quite rigorous and they need clean air to draw into their lungs to continue to function.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air and water affect Sxwo:ywey?

KM: Well, I think it would be harmful because the Sxwo:ywey masks, they’re human beings and they need clean air and clean water to function. To be able to go out to ask somebody like that, you could compare them to an athlete. They need clean air and clean water to function to be able to do their job. If the air and water aren’t clean, they won’t be able to do their job properly.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Sxwo:ywey in relation to air and water pollution?

KM: We need to make sure the water and air are kept clean so that our dancers will be able to function properly. The Sxwo:ywey masks, without the dancers, they’re inanimate objects. The Sxwo:ywey masks aren’t going to get up and dance on their own. The mask needs to don the mask, wear it, and go out and dance. The mask dancers are a very integral part of the mask to function properly, they need to be healthy.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Sxwo:ywey in relation to air and water?
KM: No, I can’t think of anything further.

PK: **Do you have any other concerns about the affects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?**

The concerns that I have are the way things of have been going. Colonization of our territory is ongoing, the thing that First Nations people need that are in longhouses are a place to go to swim. They swim all year round, in the dead of winter they go out and swim, but it’s getting harder and harder for them to find places to swim. Some places the water is too dirty and polluted and they can’t swim in place like that. We’re having to go further and further into the wilderness to find a place clean enough to swim.

With industry, logging and mining and things like that, it’s getting harder and harder to find a place to be alone and go for a swim. With tourism being the way it is, snowmobiles and cross-country skiing, it makes it tougher and tougher to be alone with their spirit and to be able to practice our culture.

**Syuwel/Winter Dance**

PK: **How important is the Winter Dance tradition to you?**

KM: Well, it’s very important to me. We’ve had a revival of spirit dancing, Syuwel, or Syuwen, depends on how you pronounce it. The Syuwel was almost gone, because for many years it was against the law. The Indian Act prohibited it. It was nearly gone, and the people who practiced it went underground and kept it alive for about fifty years. They kept it alive until the law was changed. The Indian Act changed and it was no longer against the law and our people started to practice it again. About 1968 we got our new dancer in Chilliwack in years and years. In 1969, we got several dancers. In 1970 we had probably about two dozen.

The revival started to build in 1968, by 1970, 1971, there were a couple of dozen dancers in our area. People started going back to the longhouse. People started to build longhouses. For a long time there was not one longhouse in the Fraser Valley. There was one built in Tzeachten in 1971, and after that one, they started building more and more longhouses throughout our territory. Now there are many, many longhouses where people practice our culture and traditions. So, it is very, very important that people are keeping our ancient practices alive and building on the past. It’s essential to our community.
PK: How is the Winter Dance connected to air and water?

KM: Again, the dances need clean air and water to function. Some of the dances are quite rigorous and they need to be able to get up and dance and breathe clean air and have clean water because they swim in the wintertime. They go cleanse themselves to prepare for their dance. They go swim in clean water.

The dancers are going further and further a field to find clean water so they can practice their culture. It’s really important that our dancers do have that. Like earlier, some of the dancers are so rigorous are like athletes, and after they’re finished dancing they need to be able to breathe clean air into their lungs.

PK: Can Winter Dance ceremonies be affected by air and water pollution?

KM: Yes, they already have been affected us. Especially water pollution, because when I was a new dancer in 1971, there were many places that we were able to go and swim. But, now those places have become too polluted and those same places have become too polluted. There’s scary stuff in the water, we don’t want to go in the water now, it’s becoming too polluted.

We’re going further and further into the Chilliwack Valley trying to find clean water, a place to go and swim, and where we’re not going to face curious on-lookers. We need our privacy. So, the pollution has affected us already. Some creeks are unsafe.

PK: How would additional pollution of air and water affect Syuwel ceremonies?

KM: Additional air and water pollution would make it tougher for us to continue our culture. One of the things that our people grew up with, it wasn’t only the Indian Dancers that swam, all our people swam in the wintertime. They would all cleanse themselves. When she was my great-grandmother born, she was born near the river, and her mother dipped her into the cold water when she was born. That’s the way she started her life, and she grew to be one hundred and twelve years old. So, we need to have that clean water to continue our culture and traditions. It’s been kind of been left to people in Syuwel to carry on our traditions. Being Urban Indian, a lot of the stuff we had in the past is kind of driven away by Christianity.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Winter Dance ceremonies from affects of water and air pollution?
KM: I guess the way to protect them is to try and find a way to insure that our people have clean air and clean water. We need to keep the air clean for when we go out and practice our culture. A big part of our ceremonies and rituals are done in the wilderness, and we need to be able to go where the air is clean and water is pure to carry on the different traditions and ceremonies. That’s vital to our culture.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Syuwel ceremonies in relation to air and water?

KM: No, I think that about covers it.

PK: Do you have any other concerns about the affects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

KM: There are some ceremonies that are conducted in the Longhouse with new dancers that would rely on clean air and clean water that I couldn’t go into detail on. But, we need ducks, deer, fish, things like that for our ceremonies that are sacred and secret. We need those animals to finish up our ceremonies. We need to be able to know that those animals are healthy because they are vital to part of our ceremonies that are conducted in the Longhouse.

Fishing/Hunting/Gathering

PK: How important is the Fishing, Hunting and Gathering tradition to you?

KM: As far as gathering goes, there are still people in our area that go out onto the land and gather plants, animals and medicines, and herbs that we need. So, that aspect is important, there are still some traditional medicines that are able to do things that some white medicine hasn’t been able deal with yet. Some people have knowledge about what’s out there. That traditional aspect is important to us, those people that go out onto the land to gather medicines are important.

People that gather the berries are also very important to us. Berries are also important to the wild life. They eat berries. Bears eat berries and roots to survive. The deer that we eat, they need clean vegetation to thrive. The fish also need clean air and clean water so that they can perpetuate themselves. It’s all connected. The air and water, the things that we eat, be it vegetable or animal, they’re all connected in one way or another. They’re all very important to our people.
We still hunt and gather and fish. It’s all still a big part of who we are and what we are.

**PK: Can you provide a little more on the fishing in relation to our culture and this study?**

KM: Fishing is huge in our culture. We are ‘People of the River’. When you actually sit down and look at the way our people thrived in our area, there was supposedly thirty-thousand Sto:lo here before small pox and the other epidemics hit. Thirty thousand of us in the valley here.

Our people thrived, they didn’t just survive, they thrived. They were able to go out and fish for two or three months out of the year and have enough fish to last them for a year. So, I think our people were the richest people in the world. We were able to work hard for two or three months of the year. Then we would make ourselves busy for the rest of the year dealing with our cultural traditions. We didn’t have to work twelve months of the year.

**PK: How important is the Gathering, Fishing and Hunting tradition to Sto:lo culture in relation to air, and water?**

KM: It’s very important. One of the things that our people are just now starting to realize is our movement away from our traditional diet. It seems to be having a really dramatic impacts on our people with the advent of diabetes especially.

Because we moved away from our traditional diet, we’re suffering more and more now. I think we’re more likely to end up with diabetes, I think it’s linked to our diet. There are many of our people out on the land, hunting, fishing and gathering, so it’s very important for us to get back to the way we used to eat before the Europeans got here.

Even when I was a boy forty years ago, the food we ate when I was a boy, most of it came off the land. My dad was a hunter and trapper. We ate the things that he hunted and trapped, the beaver, the muskrat, the deer, the geese, the ducks that he got. He also spent a lot of time gathering seafood for us because our family was a big family.

He had relatives in White Rock, so, we were able to go there to harvest crabs, clams, oysters and things like that. We also have family in Lummi, so, we went down there to harvest. Every summer we’d pile into my dad’s car and we’d go to White Rock or Lummi and we harvest seafood and bring them home.
The water that’s going through here now is going to end up down there. So it’s going to impact those people and it’s going to impact the stuff that we’ve relied on for years. So all of these things connected. That’s the thing that people don’t get, the people don’t realize that everything is connected. It’s all very important to us. Over the years our people have seemed to have grown away from conducting themselves the way we used to.

One of the things that happened was the provincial and federal governments made hunting seasons. They told us you can only hunt this time of the year, you can only fish this time of the year and so for many years our people weren’t able to go out and live the way they used to. When I was a boy my mom used to can everything because we had no electricity. There would be canned oysters, canned clams, canned deer meat. She would make stew out of geese and ducks. She would make stew with deer meat, and fish, everything was preserved. Our family lived on everything that my father hunted and gathered. It was very important to our people, it was very important to us to survive as a people because it set us apart from the people who colonized us.

We knew that when we were growing up that we were different from the other people that we went to public school with. We knew we were different, we could see it, because of the way we conducted ourselves, the way our father provided for us. We knew we were different people.

**PK:** What you are suggesting there is the changes from when we grew up off the land, we relied more on the land than on Save On Foods?

**KM:** Yes, I think that’s a huge downfall for our people is the reliance on Save On Foods, especially Urban Indians like us, we spend so much time at Superstore and Save On buying these commodities that are foreign to our culture and foreign to our diet.

It’s a huge impact on us, you look at the people who still live off the land, you look in the more isolated areas, they’re healthier than we are because they live off of their traditional foods. They have their traditional ways of life. They are way more healthy than urban First Nations because we’ve moved away by necessity from the way we were.

We aren’t able to go fish all year round. I can’t go fish today, or I can’t go fishing this month, I can’t go fishing next month. I might be able fish the middle of March, but then, when I want to go fishing in my traditional fishing area, I won’t be able to. The law will say, “no you can't fish there.” If I am to do anymore fishing in the middle of September, October or November, I’m not allowed to go in my traditional area. The
aspect of being able to catch the first fish like I used too, I used to fish all year round. December, January, February, I’d be fishing for steelhead. Right now, my grandfather and uncle and I would be up in the canyon catching fish, thirty years ago, forty years ago. That was part of who we were, and what we did. Today, we can’t do that anymore. There’s only a limited amount of time that we’re allowed to fish.

The other thing up until just recently because of court cases we won, we weren’t allowed to hunt certain times of the year. We were told you can’t hunt deer or black bear this time of this year. You are not allowed to hunt ducks or geese at certain time of the year. You are not allowed to shoot in certain areas, like Sumas Mountain is outlawed to firing rifles. So those people down there, their traditional hunting grounds are off limits to them, unless they use a bow and arrow. There’s more and more people building up there now.

Our traditional way of life, the way we knew it for most places, we aren’t able to practice it. For those people who are lucky and have some areas where they can go. Like the Chilliwack Tribes, they can go in Chilliwack territory. But areas like Matsqui, Kwantlen, where can they go. Their territories are over run. It’s really been detrimental to our way of life, the colonization of the Fraser Valley.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to our Gathering, Hunting and Fishing practices?

KM: Well, it’s vital for a species to exist and to reproduce and thrive. It’s very vital. As I was growing up, one of the things that I noticed when there were almost no local birds of prey in our area. It was almost gone. It was because of DDT. DDT was being used by farmers and it ended up in the food chain. So, birds of prey who ate other animals were picking it up. So every time they laid and egg the egg couldn’t hatch because it was so brittle and thin, so that when they sat on the eggs they would break. Birds of prey almost disappeared because they are at the top of the food chain in their area. They prey on other birds and prey on other animals that live off of other things. So, being at the top of the food chain, they were very susceptible to DDT. Now that DDT has been outlawed for the last twenty-five to thirty years, birds of prey are making a come back.

There was a time when you would never see a hawk, or you’d never see them. The eagles would gather at Harrison at certain times of the year to harvest chum salmon, pink salmon, and other salmon that was spent dying on the sides of the river. The rest of the year you wouldn’t see them. But, now because you wouldn’t see them, but now because the government outlawed DDT they are making a big come back. Now there’s
thousands of eagles. Now there are resident eagles that we see all year round, we never saw that, they would leave and go wherever they go and we’d see them at certain times of the year. Now when you drive to Vancouver from Chilliwack, you probably see two dozen hawks on the way, hunting for mice and other animals that they eat. You’ll see them all along the freeway.

If you could see them on the freeway, you can see two or three dozen there, there must be hundreds that are away from the freeway. So, they’ve made a really strong comeback. And, even Falcons, which we only saw in books or on television for many, many years. Now Falcons are making a comeback. I’m seeing Falcon more often. I saw one on my in my back yard, ten feet away from me planted right on a tree, it looked me right in the eyes and then he flew away. We are seeing more birds of prey because the government finally found out that DDT was killing off the birds of prey, like the hawks, eagles and falcons.

So, what the farmers do to our water has a huge impact on all kinds of animals including us.

PK: Can Gathering, Hunting and Fishing practices be affected by air and water pollution?

KM: Yes, especially the pollution of water would have a bit impact. The food that we eat, the ducks and geese and things like that, they are impacted by water and air pollution. If there is something in the water that is bad for them, and it ends up in their bodies it will end up in our bodies, because we live off of ducks and geese that we harvest. If there is something in their bodies, we’ll have it in our bodies. The things, especially things that they get in the water would impact us.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air and water affect practices and teaching of fishing, hunting and gathering?

KM: The way that it would affect us, firstly, it would affect our health. We need nutrients, we need traditional foods to practice our culture and tradition. We also need those things to sustain ourselves to be able to thrive, to be able to have something that we could eat and live off of that is not processed through Save On Foods or Superstore.

We don’t know all the things that go into raising those kinds of meats. There’s chemicals, steroids and all kinds of things that go into. We don’t know all the things that go into store bought foods. I sure some of them might be harmful for us. So, we need our traditional diet. We need to be able to rely on them. We need to be able to take
our children out, to teach them how to hunt and fish. So, clean air and clean water is vital for that, because if the fish, bears and deer are gone, the ducks and geese, we need them to be there so we can practice our culture and traditions and to teach our children and their children how to be Sto:lo.

Shxweli

PK: What is Shxweli?

KM: Shxweli is our spirit, it’s who we are as a people that’s something that’s continues to be very important. Because of the Indian Act, because of Christianity and we are people who are governed, we are people who were taught in residential schools. Our Shxweli was suffereing, it was oppressed, Shxweli was even driven out of some of our people. Even today after all those years, I still feel like I am a Catholic even though I don’t go to church, I don’t practice being a Catholic.

I feel like a Catholic because it was driven into my head day after day from the time I was a baby until after residential school when I was thirteen years old. Being a Christian was a big part of who I was and what I was. Even after I left residential school, I still attended church and I was a local altar boy at the local church, Saint Teresa. They did an awful lot to suppress who we were, because the Catholic religion was way different than Syuwen, what our people practice. There are some people who would say that was a lesson after seeing Syuwel or Syuwen, however you want to pronounce it. They said we were in league with the devil or we worshipped the devil.

Our spirit suffered for many years. But, it’s making a big come back. Our people are beginning to be proud of who we are. We don’t hide anymore. For the most part they would sneak off to some secluded area to dance and sing. They didn’t want to use more than one drum, if you used a whole bunch of drums you’d attract attention. People went to jail for practicing our culture. So, our spirituality suffered for many, many years because of the Indian Act and how it made how we put up with things illegal. Our Shxweli suffered for too many years.

The other thing is our language. Many of your elders have told us, “language is culture,” without our language, we can’t be a people anymore. Our language is finally making a come back after being suppressed by the church and by the government. More and more of our people have started to learn our language again. Our spirit suffered for too many years because of church and government imposition. In order to protect and enhance our Shxweli we need language to continue to practice our culture,
traditions and as a people. Without that, I don’t know where we will be in one-hundred years, I don’t know where we will be if we can’t practice being Sto:lo.

**PK: What is its' [shxweli’s] place in Sto:lo tradition?**

**KM:** I think it’s vital because our children need to know who we are and where we come from. They need to know who our people are, and how our people have been here since time immemorial. We’ve got evidence now, archeological evidence showing that we’ve been here for ten thousand years, maybe longer. It’s very important that our children know that we’ve always been here, and we’re always going to be here. I think that’s a big part of our identity. Our children need that identity, especially when they go through public school. They need to go to school to learn Halq̓e’meylem language. They need to go to school and learn about who our people are, and what tribes were part of and where our people come from. How did our people conduct themselves, how did they survive and thrive in our area? There are many things that we’re just now trying to revive.

When I was growing up, my grandfather and his brother would sit me down and talk about the Chilliwack Tribes and about our territory, hunting and fishing, they’d talk about the Longhouse. For years and years they sat me down. I never understood it for years what they were up to, until I grew into a young man, then I finally figured it out. When they gave me my name Wee lay look, it all occurred me why they were putting these things into my head for years and years.

From the time I was a little boy, they’d already decided I was going to be Wee lay look, that I was predetermined that I was the one they were going to teach, I was the one they would give the name too. So, I’m doing the same things now, I’m looking at my sons and I’m preparing to pass my name onto one of my sons. You look at my five sons and after years and years of studying them, I finally come to a decision on who will carry my name after I’m gone. My daughter, I talk to her about it, now she wants a name to carry for my family. So, it’s coming back and our people are looking for names. However, many of our names were lost because of Christianity and the Indian Act. But, it’s making a come back, we need to survive and thrive again as a people.

We were expected to be able to feed not only ourselves. We were expected to feed our visitors, because when our Salt water visitor came, they didn’t just visit for one night with us then leave like they do now. They would come spend weeks with us. Some times months, they would spend the entire winter with us. They would stay here, we were wealthy people. When people from the Salt water because we had enough, we were wealthy enough we could feed them all winter. That’s something that escapes
some peoples thoughts that we were amongst the wealthiest people in the world at one time.

To do that now, we have to plan just ahead to have people here for one night, we have to plan here for a year just to have people here for one night. We have to have enough fish, vegetables, and, blankets. So now, as I plan to pass my name onto to my son, it’s not going to be done this year, its’ going to be done in 2005. So, I’m planning for it now. But, in the past our people planned for the winter to feed themselves and our visitors in a good a manner, so that nobody left wanting, and when they left we gave them food to travel. They would take food when they left.

**PK: How can you tell the health of Shxweli?**

KM: I think part of it, especially for our young people, they need to know who they are. Some of the people who I talk to over the years and even in my own family, I talk to them, I thought that they certainly needed something. They have told me they were ashamed to be ‘Indian’ and wished they were ‘white.’ They grew up ashamed because of the way we were treated by the public. They grew ashamed to be Indian, because they wanted to be white because of the stigma of being an Indian, incorrect term, but we grew up calling ourselves “Indian.” But, people were actually ashamed of it, and tried there hardest to be white because it was more acceptable. Some of our people needed to ground themselves on who they are, being Sto:lo and who they are.

Our elders played a strong part in that. Coqualeetza has played a strong part in that, trying to people who they are and what they were. And Sto:lo Nation, we’re trying to make it so people are proud, and comfortable in who they are is a big deal. Because our young people are growing up in a different culture than I knew when I was a teenager. For example, they’re growing up with Rap music and things like that. They’re growing up emulating gangster rappers and things like that. I think it is important that we try to bring them back to Sto:lo and traditions. I think their spirits are suffering because they’re trying to be somebody else.

Part of what I was talking about, we want to be able to try and teach our children who they are and what they are and to be proud of who they are. Well, in the 1970’s, I started hearing the “Black is Beautiful,” before that, it wasn’t, you know. Black wasn’t beautiful. Black was frowned upon. To be black was to be relegated to the back of the bus. Because of the civil rights movement, people started to started to say, “yes, I’m black and I’m beautiful. I am who I am, and I have nothing to be ashamed of.” I think that’s how they got there, it was a conscious decision at some time to be proud of who they are. Maybe not to be down right racist, and pretend to be racist or try and be
superior to others, but to be proud of who we are and what we are. I think that’s
something that needs happen in our community. I think its’ happening now, but it’s
something that we need to work harder at, to revive our culture and our tradition and
our spirit and tradition, so that our children can be proud to be Sto:lo, and not to try
and emulate others.

Where they are still trying to be something they are not. They don’t put much thought
into being Indian, here they emulate rap stars and things like that. They dress like
them, talk like them, act like them, dance like them.

PK: Is there a Shxweli of water and air?

KM: Our elders always told us that everything is connected and everything is alive.
When you cut a tree down, or strip bark off of part of a tree, when you use those things
you were taught to pray. You were taught to pray for the tree giving of itself. You were
taught through the First Salmon Ceremony that we need to thank the salmon for
helping our people survive and live all these years. We are taught that when you hunt
a deer and you killed a deer, that that deer gave himself to you. He offered himself to
you. I think the animals, the air, the water, it’s all connected. They all have some kind
of a life force. The Shxweli. Everything is connected, and everything has a life force.

PK: What affect then does air pollution and water pollution have on Shxweli?

KM: We need the clean water so we can sustain ourselves, we need to drink water, we
need to cook with water and to bathe ourselves, so that we can go into the pure clear
water and renew ourselves. It’s vital, it’s very important.

The air pollution, it impacts the not only air, it impacts water and it impacts
plants and animals. All those particles, they settle somewhere. It eventually is going
to end up in the water. If those particles are air borne they will settle in the leaves and
branches and the ground and eventually it all gets washed into the streams, rivers,
lakes. It’s all connected. That’s one thing I will stress over and over, everything is
connected. One way or another, whatever impacts the air will impact the water,
because of their connection?

PK: What is the current health of air Shxweli and water Shxweli in Sto:lo
territory?

KM: I think a lot of it depends on where you are and when you are talking about. For
the summer time, the air is really bad in our area. You can actually taste it. You can
taste and smell the air, you can feel it, because of the amount of pollution that’s in the air. It’s not healthy right now.

The water, it’s becoming more scary. When I grew up, we drank our water right out of the pump. When our water was determined to be unsafe we went off of our pump and went onto city water. But even city water sometimes ends up with things in it that shouldn’t be there. Things that are unhealthy. Pretty well all the water that we drink now is bottled water. It’s been processed so that supposedly it’s safe. I think our air and water is unhealthy right now.

As I was growing up, gasoline was really expensive and water was free. But now, water is getting just as expensive. If we don’t watch ourselves, and we are not careful the way we treat our water, we could end up in the same predicament that California is in. If you go to California and you go down the supermarket isle, you will find one huge isle dedicated to water, bottled water from all over the place. But, not from California, it’s water from some place else, and it’s more expensive than gasoline. So, if we don’t have a look at what we’re doing to our air and water now we’re going to end up in the same predicament that our cousins are in down in California. We will be consuming nothing but bottled water. We’re already going in that direction now, because many of our people are scared to drink what’s in the tap, because they don’t know what’s in there.

The wells that we grew up on, they are no longer safe because of the pollution that’s in there. My mother’s well was condemned, my well was condemned, so we weren’t able to use it anymore. Even though it seems like we have lots of clean water and we have lots of water, it’s not all healthy water.

PK: How would additional air and water pollution affect Shxweli?

KM: I think it’s already bad now. It can only get worse, if we continue going down the road we are on now, it’s only going to get worse because the things in the water now, it could take generations to clean. Especially stuff from the pulp mills, heavy metals and things like that. They are going to be there for hundreds of years. There are things in the water that impact things well into the future.

As an example, up until recently, people who hunted with shot guns used lead pellets. Now they use steel pellets, because if a duck, goose or a swam ingests steel pellets it doesn’t seem to do them any harm, but if they ingest lead pellets it makes them sick and some of them die. Some of them just don’t have a tolerance to having too much lead in their bodies. They get lead poisoning and they die. Even though lead shot has
been outlawed for maybe twenty-five years in Washington, swans, ducks and geese are still ingesting lead because it’s still in the water. It’s still there, and when they are at the bottom of the pond feeding on plants and animals, they are still ingesting the lead pellets because they will be there forever. It’s still affected them, the swans and other animals that live off of that stuff. They are still being impacted many, many years later.

PK: Do you know of some types of resources that have a Shxweli more sensitive than others to disturbance?

KM: For people that go to the longhouse, and spend their time in the longhouse, the things that they practice there are very sensitive. Those spirits live in our territory. They live in our Chilliwack Valley, more and more they are being disturbed because of the industry that’s going on there. The logging, the mining, the building of new houses, it’s all becoming more and more of an impact on our spiritual helpers and spiritual guides. They need a place to go. They need quiet places to be and we are running out of them.

Sxwoxwiyam

PK: Are there any Sxwoxwiyam that explains the relationship between the Sto:lo and air and water?

KM: There are some, there are stories that talked about the first Sxwo:yxwey mask. This man was defecating in a lake, it was dripping down onto the people who lived in the lake. People actually lived in the water and it was making them sick. It was making them break out in sores and it was making them unhealthy. That was one story I heard, that you just don’t do that. This person came out of the water and was covered in sores and things like that because people were polluting his environment. That’s one of the stories that I heard.

Stl’aleqem

PK: We have Stl’aleqem and stories related to Stl’aleqem. They are all over our territory in different forms. Can you tell me more about them in relation to Sto:lo traditions and culture.

KM: I think they are important. There is a story about a double-headed Serpent that came out of water in Squiala. That double-headed Serpent is part of my family history,
culture and tradition. My grampa’s brother, Bob Joe talked about a longhouse in our area where over the doorway they had a double-headed Serpent and that was the one that came out of Squiala, it came out of a pond. It was a magical serpent that had magical powers that was part of our identity. It’s a part of who we are.

They are very important, like the Sasquatch is important to the Chehalis people and who they are. It’s right there on their logo, the Sasquatch is a big part of who they are and what they are as Chehalis people. The are people who grew up with a giant Serpent, they grew up talking about it, our elders told us about it, and it’s part of who the Soowhalie people are. Over the generations these things are passed down, generation after generation. People have had experiences with them, people have interacted with them, and they pass these things down to their grand children. It’s part of our creation stories. It’s very important to our people.

**PK: How would Stl'aleqem be affected if they were polluted?**

**KM:** Part of the things have happened. For example, the pond where the two-headed serpent came from, that was part of my family history is gone. It’s covered over by a farm and they’re probably covered over by a sub-division right now. The Cultus Lake, I was brought up to believe there is a Cultus Sea-Serpent that lives in the lake. Some people have had interactions with it, some people have seen it, not only First Nations, but we’ve heard non-Indians have seen it and had experiences with it. Those kinds of things need clean air and clean water to survive. Cultus Lake is not a pure as it used to be.

There are hundreds and hundreds of houses up there. That water maintains the septic tanks and is being polluted by all those people. The water ends up polluted from those septic tanks, those hundreds and hundreds of people are polluting Cultus Lake. It becomes unhealthy for the people who live up there and including the Stl'aleqem.

**Water Babies**

**PK: What are Water Babies?**

**KM:** I’ve heard different stories about Water Babies. One story I heard, well, the description about them, I heard they were pink babies, some of them are brown. I heard that they live in different places. The ones I’ve heard about live in lakes.
When I was a new dancer in 1971, I saw some Water Babies in Chilliwack Lake. I’d heard about them, but I never saw them when I was a new dancer. We saw these Water Babies in the water. They were white. They look to be about the size of a two or three year old toddler, I saw another one swimming in the water. I talked about it later with my brothers about it, they were telling me that I was extremely lucky to see them. Because they are just about never seen. We know that they are there, we hear that they are there, but hardly anybody ever sees them, and I saw them in the lake.

I believe Water Babies are there, I believe that they exist and I believe they live in certain places in Chilliwack Lake. Chilliwack Lake is probably one of the last lakes that seems to be pure. There’s some logging up there, but there’s no industry up there. There’s hardly any house up there. So, Chilliwack Lake is still in a fairly pristine way right now. But, if things carry on the way they are going, with people moving into the valley, they will pollute Chilliwack Lake as well.

The Water Babies, I heard about and saw them. I know there are other people who saw them. Other people talk about them. They do exist and they live in lakes.

**PK: Are Water Babies required to continue part of Sto:lo culture?**

KM: I think everything is required to maintain Sto:lo culture. All of these stories, the Creation Stories, the Flood Stories, the Stl’aleqem, the different beings we hear about, that we know about are there for a reason. They are part of who we are, and what we are. Once we start losing them, we lose bits and pieces of who we are, they’re all important. The Water Babies are just as important to our culture, traditions and stories as any other Stl’aleqem; I think they are equally important.

**PK: Can you explain the affects of air and water pollution on Water Babies?**

KM: I believe that Water Babies live in the lake and they need clean water in order to survive. If they going to survive and exist, they need clean water, Water Babies live underwater, and they need that water to be pure and healthy to survive. It’s vital that they continue to exist in a place that’s pure.

**PK: Is there anything that I should have asked you in relation to air and water in any of the topics I’ve mentioned?**

KM: I think the one that’s most important is fishing. We teach our children to be fishers. We teach them to be able to go out and make a living off of fishing. We teach
them to go out and feed ourselves and feed our families, feed our guests. And, for us to continue to carry on as a distinct people we need to be able to go out and fish.

My youngest son, he’s determined to be a fisherman. And, my late son, he was a fisherman. That’s what he lived for. He would skip out of school to go fishing. He would make up stories and say, “oh, I got a day off today, it’s Pro D Day.” Just to go fishing with me, he’d find an excuse so he could go fishing with me. It’s a really big part of who we are, and what we are. The fishing is very important, the air and water are all connected, all these things are connected to us and to the fish that we need. That’s one of the most important parts of who we are, the very aspect of fishing, to catch fish, to eat those fish, to provide those fish to our friends and family and guests is a very big part of who we are. And, for us to have self-respect, when we have guests come in, we need to be able to feed them in a good manner. We need to feed our guests healthy food.

There are a lot of people scared that maybe this generation or the next generation might be the last ones who will be able to practice our culture and traditions as fishers, harvesters and caretakers this resource.

PK: Final question. Do you have any other concerns about the affects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

The final thing that I want to discuss, we’ve covered many of the aspects of our culture and traditions, however, specifically about the Sumas Energy 2, I am concerned about those water ways that are going to be impacted directly, because, the waster water is going to be pumped into the, eventually into the Fraser River.

There are streams that go through there that contain salmon, trout and steel-head, that go right to that area, where the Sumas Energy 2 plant wants to go, and where the power-lines are going to go. So, I am very concerned because I have already seen streams go barren in my life time, places that my mother brought me when I was a baby and a boy, everything is dead, the fish are dead, the frogs are gone, the insects are gone, everything is gone from those streams are now barren. There is nothing left because of the air and water pollution.

I am concerned those streams were just the tip of the ice-berg. What’s next, Marshall Creek? Is that the next creek that will die? So, that’s what I’m concerned about.

I would try to impress on the National Energy Board is that everything is connected. The way they are trying to divide these things into tasks that they want to do. For
example, talk about air here, talk about water over here. They are trying to divide
everything up. But, one of the things that our people tell us is that everything is
connected.

If you do something to harm one part of the food chain, it’s going to impact everybody
on the food chain, if you do something to the water and air in one area, its’ going to
impact the whole area, because everything is connected. Whatever you do to one part
is going to impact the rest. So that’s what I would like to impress upon the National
Energy Board, you can’t just hide of one thing and say the rest doesn’t matter.
4.2.12 Albert McHalsie

Interviewee: Albert ‘Sonny’ McHalsie, Shxw’ow’hamel
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: January 26, 2004 and February 3, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and wind dry fishery tradition to you?

SM: It’s extremely important to me. There’s a whole bunch of different reasons as to why it’s important. One of them is that the wind dry fish is one of our most traditional foods; so there is an element of tradition that’s important there. Also, there is a place where each of our different families have a place to go dry salmon up in canyon, it’s important to maintain that. It’s places where we’re very aware or ancestors [unclear] grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great great-grandparents, as many generations as we can go back. Places where they are buried, where the burial grounds and that are. So all of that makes it all-important to us. And, well I like the taste of died salmon as well, I have to have it each year, and it’s important to me that it’s done properly. So, it’s really important.

PK: How important is the dry rack fishery and wind dry fishery to Sto:lo culture and people?

SM: Oh, again, really important. Because of the elements of it’s connection to all the people throughout the Sto:lo territory, the family connections that allowed people from the mouth of the river, all the way up, up to the canyon to go up and dry salmon with each other. In the past it was probably more important because it was the main way that we preserved our food. For drying sockeye in spring, so more important back then. Now we have canning and that, but still, the fishing grounds that we use in the summer are still the places that we like to go to do our canning, and that as well. It is extremely important to us. And again, because of the same reason I mentioned in the first questions, it’s an important part of our culture and our tradition, there’s words in the Halq’eméylem language that teach us to all the different aspects of fishing, and drying is just one component. But there’s other aspects of smoking, there’s other aspects of different techniques to fish. There’s also the fact that studies have been done to show that in past 80 percent of our protein was derived from salmon.
PK: I’d like to just kind of go a little further with that. I’m looking at a global aspect of—and the importance of wind dry and dry rack fishery. And when I say global, I mean, say reduce [unclear] to the year, the time of year, the uses. Why is wind dry fishing important to us? Now there’s timing and uses that I’d like to...

SM: Well, there’s only one time of the year that we can dry salmon; that’s meaning in the month of July, so there’s only a small window there, so we need to get our salmon at that particular time. That’s when the whole connection, I guess, between our livelihood up the salmon, and nature itself how it all comes together all at once. [Unclear] the sockeye and the spring salmon start their journey up the Fraser from the mouth, they traveled over 100 miles or so by the time they get to the canyon, they lost a certain percent, somewhere around 12 to 14 percent of their body fat. And then at the same time we have the summer weather, where it’s quite hot up in the Canyon, down here and the Fraser Valley, from Chilliwack, well actually from Hope down to Vancouver, we have a very different climate, there’s a lot of moisture in the air, whereas when you get up to the Canyon, it’s very dry; air’s very dry up there. And then also you have the funnel effect of the mountains, like you move from Vancouver east up towards Hope, you see how the mountains kind of come together, forms that funnel effect, creates a steady breeze. So by the time that breeze gets up to Yale, you know, then also you have the warm sun that’s a lot hotter up in the Canyon than it is down this way, for some reason... So with the salmon arriving at that particular time, with the wind and the heat on the rocks, it just makes it ideal for us to dry salmon. And the fact that the past techniques including dipping, which is still a technique that’s still used today by some of the fishermen. Because when you get to the Canyon, when the salmon get up to the canyon, they like to travel along the rock walls along the edge, staying away from the swift current in the middle, which just made it a whole lot easier to catch them as well. So dipping a rock in front of your dry rack is an extremely excellent way to catch salmon deemed from selective fishing...

PK: How important—pardon me, how is dry rack fishery and the wind drying fishery connected to air?

SM: Yeah, it’s really connected because of the fact that you have the two different winds—I mentioned earlier that there is a funnel effect of the wind that blows up from this area; from down the Fraser Valley, goes up to the canyon. That’s during the first part of the day, and then there’s a switch. There’s a switch where the wind starts blowing—well, no, in the morning, the wind is blowing from the canyon down and then in late afternoon, it blows from down below, like around four, five o’clock in the
afternoon. It switches, and then the wind is blowing up. So early in the morning when you have the wind blowing from the Interior, you have the dry air. And that’s the time when people like to dry their salmon, and that’s why most of the people like to get the salmon higher early in the morning, while it’s still nice and cool as well, because you don’t want the heat. I mean, if it gets too hot, if you get direct sunlight on your fish, then it’ll spoil right away. So people like to get it hung first thing in the morning when you have that dry air that [unclear] that kind of skins over the salmon. And then it kind of protects it, and then it continues to dry. So you have those two different breezes that blow; one from the Interior, blows downriver, and then you have the one that blows upriver as well. And so most people prefer to use the wind that blows from the Interior because it’s more drier. So most people prefer to have their fish done by the morning, or the afternoon. Or it gets too hot.

**PK: How is dry rack fishery and wind dry fishery connected to water?**

**SM:** How is it connected to water? Well, the fact that the salmon come from the river. The fact that the rain, the rain waters that come off it, the mountain slopes, okay and then that creates the various streams that provides the drinking water for our fishing camps, as well. So, I mean there’s a time to camp up there that there’s a need for drinking water and for water that you use to wash the salmon, you know in preparation, and just for the camping. But it’s—okay—highly connected to the river too, I mean that’s where the salmon come from, so it’s extremely important that whatever’s in the air will eventually make it’s way down to the river, so, you know, take care of the air.

**PK: How important is clean air to dry rack fishery and wind dry fishery?**

**SM:** Extremely important because the air is what we use to dry the salmon, so that has to be clean, because if there’s any particulate or any matter that’s in the air that’s going to get onto the salmon as well. You know, it’s one of my big concerns, it’s the coal. I’m not aware of any studies that anyone has done to see whether or not the coal dust from the trains actually ends up on the dried salmon. You know, or even the pollutants that are out there right now. I don’t think anyone’s ever done any studies to see what sort of pollutants are on our dried salmon right now. And now if there’s any increase in that, it’s going to be a major detriment to our salmon and to the health of our people as well. Because we’ll be eating that same salmon.

**PK: How important is clean water to wind dry and dry rack fishery practices?**
SM: Well, it’s mainly connected again to the migration of the salmon. Salmon have to have clean water to make their way up the river, and if there’s any pollutants that are in there, then it’s going to hinder the migration to the spawning grounds. There’s already a hindrance there already, once the salmon reach the mouth of the river, and they no longer feed, they go through a change of their digestive systems and then they have to travel up-river without feeding. They only have so much stored energy in them to get to wherever they have to go spawn and some of them go quite a ways, past Prince George, it’s a long ways to go to go and spawn and you just have to rely on the storage of fat and energy that they have. And not to mention they already have the different fisheries, you know, fishing groups, they have to go through to make their way up there. And if there’s any kind of pollutants that are inside the water, then that, look at their gills, their gills, that’s where they get their oxygen. And so anything small that gets into there it already clogs it up, I mean, they already have to flush their gills out at the mouths of streams. Annie York and some Elders talk about how they’ll go into the mouth of streams and rest in places and try to clean out their gills because of the silt; there’s already the silt that’s in the Fraser River, already. And if there’s anything added to that, then it creates more difficulties for the salmon making their way up the river.

PK: Can dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practices be affected by air pollution?

SM: Oh yes. And I think they’re already being affected. There’s a time where we need to actually just do some studies, and I think that we need to do that. And I know that a couple years back, we talked about this... looking to see whether or not we could do a study to see what is on the dried salmon. Cause I’m really concerned that there probably already is pollutants on there and we’re eating it. You know, it’s our main, one of our main foods, and we rely on it. Lot of us, we have to have our dried salmon... So I think there’s probably pollutants on there already and then if there’s any increase in it, or even if there isn’t any right now, which I doubt, any increase for sure, we’ll get some pollutants on our salmon.

PK: Can dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery practice be affected by water pollution?

SM: Oh yes. I mean, it’s already been affected. My uncle was telling me that when they were—in his younger days there were [unclear] in the Fraser River as water took for tea and coffee, and stuff like that; never do that now...
PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect dry rack fishery and wind drying fishery by effects of water and air pollution?

SM: Just reducing—looking at ways to reduce the contaminants that are released into the air. I know there’s already studies being done, I know there’s certain restrictions that are put out there already, but you know, any major development that comes up is going to increase the contaminants in the air, and that shouldn’t even be considered. Look at the document that you presented there at the beginning, and 4000 percent higher that what’s being produced now? That shouldn’t even be considered if it’s going to be that high... There’s go to be other ways to create power.

PK: What about any other concerns that you might have about the effects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions, and practices? Do you have any other concerns about effects of air or water pollution—

SM: Oh yeah, there’s all kinds of different practices that we have that involves our people going out into the forest, you know, to hunt, gather berries, to do spiritual questing, fasting... spiritual ceremonies. If there’s a lot of air pollution when you get our there, that’s going to have an effect on all of that. We really just finished talking about the salmon, but then there’s so much more out there, I mean, it’s like a big connection that we have to everything else around us...

Sxwo:yxwey

PK: How important is the sxwó:yxwey tradition to you?

SM: It’s very important. I was told by one of my elders, that sxwó:yxwey—...my mother was from Chowéthel, grandfather was from Chowéthel, great-grandfather, from Chowéthel. My great grandfather actually lived up near Iwówes, or lived at Iwówes. Iwówes is the village where the original young boy and girl got the masks, is from there. Anyways, when I had gone to see one of my cousins because one of my cousins had joined the winter dance and I wanted to ask how I can support my cousin. We talked about the winter dance, but then he wants to talk about the sxwó:yxwey. He said sxwó:yxwey is ours, it comes from here. Whereas the winter dance, especially the way they do it today, comes from the coast, and made its way up river in the older days. Yeah, the winter dance is done differently. And while I was there visiting and talking about that, I mean, like a lot of people used to say [pronounces sxwó:yxwey differently—two different ways], always used to pronounce it wrong. And of course, I was doing the same thing. So when I was doing the interview, every time I had to say...
sxwó:yxwey and said it wrong, he’d stop me and make me say it again, importance of it, as he shared the story about what he knew of the origin of the sxwó:yxwey. Over the years I’ve read many different versions, you know, that anthropologists have collected of the sxwó:yxwey. And it was important, it’s origin to me is an important part of our culture.

That’s the very first contact we had with Europeans, and the Europeans weren’t even here yet, and yet a disease that [unclear] across, infected our people. It’s an important chapter in our history, the fact that at least 66 percent up to 90 percent of our people were wiped out, from that smallpox epidemic. Even though our elders don’t tell us, none of them have ever said that to me, sores on that young boy was smallpox. None of the elders have ever said that, but just looking at the study—looking at the information as provided by our elders to some of that, all that, it seems pretty clear that probably was what it was. Because Wilson Duff, one of the anthropologists, he looked at that looked that and looked at the genealogy of some of his informants, and he estimated that the sxwó:yxwey must have originated around 1780. And we now know that in 1782 there was a huge smallpox epidemic that went through our territory here, killing from 66 percent up to 90 percent of our population. In some cases, all of the whole villages or even whole micro-dialects of our language, so it had a huge impact. But one of the things too, is that whenever there’s something negative, there also has to be something positive. There’s something bad that happens, there’s always got to be something good that comes out of it.

So when you think about it, all of that happened and something had to come out of it, you know, and that’s what I look at is that sxwó:yxwey came from that. Cause that little boy had those sores, he went to kill himself, went into the lake, and ran into the underwater people, and was given the mask and brought it back with his sister, cause his sister had to carry it, and then from there it made it’s way back down the river. Along with it was all the important songs, dances, and teachings that go along with it, so really is a big important chapter of our history. Cause it is—well a kind of bounce back. If you look at the ceremonies that it’s involved with, births, weddings, name givings, funerals and it’s all important parts of our life where there’s a change that’s happening. Almost like a new beginning kind of thing, phases of our life, right? So it’s an important part, I think it is almost lost; very close to being lost. Right now I think it’s going very strong, I think there’s still a lot of mistrust amongst our own people, a lot of mistrust of the Xwelitem society, but at the same time, yeah, you should have some mistrust riding in there. When you look at it, it is a very important, and a very sacred part of our life.
Sometimes I feel that it should be something that we hold up. Maybe we should be holding it up and telling everybody, this is us! Sxwó:yxwey... Even though the mask and the dances and the songs, may be only a couple hundred years old, from 1782 or whatever, the teachings that are incorporated in there are thousands of years old. When you think about it, that young boy and sister, they received all those teachings, it wasn't something that we just made up. It had to be something based on other aspects of our teachings as well, or something that supported other teachings within our culture, in order for it to be accepted.

PK: How important is sxwó:yxwey to Sto:lo culture?

SM: Well, it's extremely important because of the, well there’s different teachings in there and those are the teachings you can’t talk about, right? I guess the most I can mention... is the fact that it's an important chapter of our history, and it's connected to the other things that are out there... it's not just a mask and a song and a dance. There’s a whole lot more to it that makes it connected... like... underwater people. Those underwater people lived throughout the territory, not just in one place, different places where—probably places I don’t even know about, but there’s some places I’m aware of where they’ve been seen, or people are aware that they live. Right, so there’s that connection there. Just a whole connection, just of shxweli. And that important Halq'eméylem word that needs to be understood as well. I mean, if you understand shxweli, then you can understand our whole connection to the whole environment itself.

PK: How is sxwó:yxwey connected to air and water?

SM: ...Well it’s origin is from water. Hmm, I can’t think of any specific connections to the air, other than, well, whatever’s in the air, ends up in the water. You see, when we look at the environment, let’s say for instance, that story about the origin of sxwó:yxwey talks about how those underwater babies... underwater babies, underwater people... had those sores of their body. Those sores on their body was created from us up top here, spitting into the lake. And they drift down in there and they create the sores. They couldn’t see the spit, all they could see was the sores. But that young boy that went under there, he seen it, he could see it was the spit, and he’s the one that scraped it off. So when we’re told that story, that’s an important teaching to us, not to spit into water. And I was taught that for years, but I never knew why. My dad said, don’t spit in the river, don’t spit in that creek, don’t spit in the lake. Don’t go swimming in the swimming pool, go swimming in the river, things like that, right? All those kind of teachings, and I never knew why. And it wasn’t until I heard that story, wow, that’s why we’re not allowed to spit in the river or in the lake, because those beings are in there. So if we’re not even allowed to spit in there, we shouldn’t be
allowed to put anything in there. And then here we are now, looking at the question, should we allow them to dump all these different things that’ll go into the air, make it’s way down through the streams and through the rain and into the lake. We can’t even spit in there, but yet they want to dump all that other stuff out there.

PK: Big connection, and I’d like to ask if you would elaborate a little bit for me that sxwó:yxwey, in terms of the use, as people with the mask. Can you talk a little bit more about that connection to our culture? Know that without people, the mask is inanimate, right? And so, I wonder if you would talk a little bit more about the importance of the sxwó:yxwey to our culture, our traditions, and our practices. I [unclear] a little bit more information on air and water, in relation to that whole picture with the people, the masks, the songs, the dance itself. Or do you feel comfortable...

SM: Yeah, well there’s the...okay all I can say then is that there is a connection to what we call memstixw as well... So there’s people live underwater, people that live in the forest [memstixw], then there’s the shxweli as well. Then there’s us, as people. All those things are connected. Now the memstixw are little people, live in the forest, important part of our [unclear], there out there. And it’s an important part of sxwó:yxwey and of winter dance, that’s connected to it... That’s probably all I can say about it, I guess.

...Memstixw are little—I can talk more about what they are, but probably nothing more about it [unclear]. Memstixw are the little people that live in the forest. You know, you can see them. You’re not supposed to tell people about it when you see them; it’s a special thing. That’s another of our core beliefs too, that there’s some experiences that we have when we’re out there fasting or if we’re out there just walking in the woods, wherever. You’re out there and there’s something that happens; like something comes to you, or something that you see and it’s something special. And it’s something that allows you—or exposes you to something that you believe in. And it’s almost like it’s telling you, yeah, these things do exist. I think you’re blessed if you do that; if that happens to you. And I truly believe in the memstixw, think they’re definitely out there. And there’s a number of stories that I could share, that I do share with family members and others, you know, that, yeah, there out there. The elders talk about them, an important part of different aspects of our culture, and they’re there. All of those, memstixw and water babies... All those different cycles are all tied together as well. Very important part.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to sxwó:yxwey?
SM: Well, like I mentioned before, where those, where they came from we have to take care of them. The fact that the mask comes from those people that live underwater, and you know, they’re a big important part of our beliefs. They’re still there. People still talk about seeing them, you know that they’re there and we have to take care of them. *Clean air and clean water is one way we make sure that we take care of them...* [directly continued in next paragraph]

**Shxweli / Sxwoxwiyam**

[Directly continued from previous paragraph] See that word I mentioned earlier, *shxweli*. I didn’t understand too much of it the first time I came across it; you look at that Halq’eméylem classified word list, it just says, ‘life force’ comma ‘spirit’. I remember seeing that when I first started this job and I said ‘oh okay’. Never thought too much about it. And it wasn’t until the whole thing happened at Xáytem, when the elders where talking about the spirit of the rock and then that’s when they said, the shxweli of those three men that were transformed into that stone is still inside that rock. So they were talking about that and I still couldn’t quite grasp what they were getting at. And then I started hearing all the different stories [Shxwoxwiyam] about *Xexá:ls*, they traveled to our world, transforming people to animals, transforming people into mountains, rocks, whatever. And then so that meant the shxweli of each of those ancestors was in those things. Like the cedar tree. [someone], a very generous man, transformed into that cedar tree. So when we say our prayers to [someone], we’re not saying to the tree, we don’t pray to trees, we pray to the spirit of [someone], that man who was transformed into the tree that gave us all these different things. So the best explanation I got for what shxweli... this is how she said it... “*Shxweli is inside you here. It’s in your parents, your grandparents, your great-grandparents, your great-great grandparents, it’s in the rocks, it’s in the trees, it’s in the grass, it’s in the ground.*”

**PK: So you look at stories of creation?**

SM: Yeah... the world... was already here, but it was mixed up when Xexá:ls came along. But Xexá:ls in a way, did different things of creation as well, right? Just like, creating mountains, creating different animals, or even improving on animals, so that, improving them so we could use them, right? So that’s all our connection to them, is that shxweli. So you grow up for years, like I did, with the elders saying, everything has a spirit. Okay, but it was kind of shallow to me, I didn’t fully understand. Now I understand. So when someone asks me know, what is important the sturgeon to me? It’s extremely important because one of my ancestors was transformed into that sturgeon. The shxweli of that ancestor is in that sturgeon. Just like these Chilliwack
people, story about one of their ancestors been transformed into the black bear. The black bear is extremely important to them because the shxweli of one of their ancestors, lives in the black bear. There’s a rock out in the middle of the river, out towards Yale, you know, a woman transformed to stone. The shxweli of that woman is still there.

So that big stone, makes it important. If there’s any kind of teaching about that woman was doing things bad that she shouldn’t be doing, well those teaching are still important to us, to make sure we don’t do the same things that person was doing. Shxweli is an important part of our belief system as well. Shxweli connects us to all of that. I mean even the river itself was a transformation. Xexá:ls created the river, created that water. You know there’s other teachings, not to spit in it and to take care of it... Because our whole belief system too, it comes down looking at our ancestors, looking at our future generations, right? So when we’re looking at our relationship to the land it’s got to be based on all our ancestors’ connections to the land. Well you go far enough back you have an ancestor that’s transformed into a sturgeon, ancestor transformed into a mountain, ancestor transformed into the beaver, into the mountain goat, into rocks, all those different things.

And you start making your way up this way and you have all different ancestors who lived in certain places, lived in these villages here, hunted here, did different things, and you get up to present time. And our belief is that we have to take care of the ancestors or they don’t take care of us. We always go to remember the future generations. And that’s why you see—you still hear all the elders, chiefs, leaders, they always [unclear] just been totally put into our head, it’s a big part of our culture. Can’t just remember the ancestors, always got to remember the future generations. There’s a connection there, an obligation that we have there, to those. I mean if that’s why we have those Halkomelem words that say that seven generations back, seven generations in the future, it’s the same word, for those people. The same respect that you have to your ancestors, or the same obligations you have to take care of them, same respect and obligations you have to the future generations. Cause you say that one word, [tomyeauk] It’s ancestors, it’s future generations too.

**Syuwel/Winter Dance**

**PK:** Syuwel.

**SM:** It’s quite important, very important again to our belief system and to that connection that we have that I talked about earlier, this memstixw, being our there in the forests, water babies, the shwelis, we put all those things together.
...what is syowel? Well, it’s that song and it’s a dance that’s being shared that comes in a certain way that comes out. But again, it’s connected to everything else too. That’s why you don’t just get it in the longhouse, they don’t just sit around in there. They have to go out. Go out into the water, they have to go out into the mountain, out into the fresh air, so all of those things are important to it. Again it’s that connection. In the past, it was more so that than it is now. Nowadays, like I mentioned earlier, how one of my elders had explained that the way they do it now comes from the coast. There’s a whole initiation that people go through now in the longhouse and all that stuff that they do—all that stuff—is from the coast. When it was from the past, it was all out in the mountains. You had the person that was being initiated, and we had two people with them. And you can see why they mix up some of the words now for the new initiates, the Hollkomelem words, you can see how they mix them up, because of the past tradition. How they used to have to run them, they just run them, out in the mountains...

PK: How important is Syowel to Sto:lo culture?

SM: Again because of its connections to the land, and to the mountains, those connections to those things that reside in the mountains, it continues to be an important connection.... and it’s never been said that it’s for everyone, although everyone has it...

PK: How is syowel connected to air and water?

SM: Well, it’s connected mainly through the beings that are out there in the water. See it could come from anything. The [unclear] in that could come from anything that’s out there. Could even be just a dead fallen tree, as I was told. Even come from that. All the training and the different things that are done, the different ceremonial parts is [unclear] [223]. It’s almost like, what’d she say, like taking the mask off, or [unclear] Halq’emeylem word, it’s like those things are inside there, so it’s in—it’s like we talk about shxweli—it’s in the rocks, it’s in the trees, it’s in the grass, it’s in the ground, it’s in the animals. It’s all those things that are out there. So all of those things are tied to where you are. They’re all important to it.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to Syuwel and all our ceremonies?

SM: Extremely important because of the fact that the training, the ceremonies that are done, are all connected to that. It’s not something that you can just say, it’s in here, in the longhouse, or the building. Syuwel’s right here... The training includes fresh pools
of water, fresh water that... for bathing. It includes going out into the mountains, into the fresh air. So they're [air and water] extremely important to it... Air and water is really connected to it, an important part of it. Not just the initiation, but even after that it still has to be maintained, has to be taken care of. Going out into the water, going out into the mountains, into the fresh air.

**PK: Can syuwel ceremonies be affected by air and water pollution?**

SM: Yes, quite certain that it would be. And, well it is... That would mean there has to be fresh clean water, and again, because of our connection to it. We have to take care of it. If we can't go out there to practice, then that aspect of our culture gets lost.

**PK: How would additional air and water pollution affect syuwel and our attention to those ceremonies?**

SM: [unclear] I mean, the proponent here is developing in an area right next, or almost in the heartland, in the centre, of our territory. And if you look at the fact that a lot of our people already who are involved with syuwel are already going out to remote areas... then all of a sudden there's pollution in there, forced to go further out, forced to go further into the more remote areas.

**PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect syuwel ceremonies from the effects of air and water pollution?**

SM: Yeah, reducing any contaminants. Not allowing any contaminants to get into the water and the air, that has to be taken care of. Not allowing any developments, I guess, into there to pollute the air and water. Any other ways of reducing the pollution...

... Our health is already affected by whatever's out there. I'm quite certain that our asthma, I mean, people within our society, there's probably a higher number of people with asthma than people in non-Sto:lo society. And now we're going to increase that particulate matter by 4000 percent, like what's that going to do to us? It's not only going to increase our already high number, but it's going to increase the non-Sto:lo. Society as well...

**Fishing/Hunting/Gathering**

**PK: How important is the gathering and hunting and fishing tradition to you?**
SM: All three of them are important to me. It’s still something that still being done and I mean my family, my own family, we have our own places where we go gather berries, we have our own places where we go fish, he have our own places where we go hunt. In all those places that we go to, it’s important that the environment be maintained and cared for... And it’s very clear that the wild salmon is important to us, wild game is important as well.

I mean there’s already been some effect already. One of the important animals that we used to hunt in this area was the mountain goat, and right now there’s restrictions on mountain goat, we can’t hunt mountain goat, because the numbers are so low... But in Lower Mainland, Sto:lo territory, there’s one community that looks at the mountain goat as being one of their ancestors that transformed into the mountain goat, and they rely on that, it’s an important part of their heritage, an important part of their connection to that and yet, not allowed to hunt them, there’s restrictions on them. Already, there’s different animals already that are being affected. And by pollution or development, or whatever it is. So you can take care of them as well, and if there’s going to be any contaminants that are going to go to the air and land on the mountains, then it’s going to have a detrimental effect. I’m not sure whether or not there’s ways to look at bettering that, but that could be. Or if it’s going to introduce some kind of diseases again, if you look at the that farmed salmon are getting, so what kind of diseases are the pollution going to create. I mean, it’s a whole new thing that’s just kind of coming in. I mean, there’s some of it there already, but nothing in terms of the numbers, right, I mean, if it’s going to be increased 4000 percent, then what’s that going to do to the berries? We have all that pollution dumping down into the mountains, cause that’s where most of it’s going to go, dumping into the mountains, dumping onto the wild plants that we use, and the berries, and then having the deer and the different game eat those same berries. Most of them eat the same foods that we eat. The deer are known to feed on those things as well.

...so those things are extremely important to us. Those have to be taken care of.

PK: I wonder if you could add a little bit more regarding the gathering and the fishing. I know we spoke earlier, primarily about the wind dry and dry rack fishery, but that concentrated on the July’s part of the year. I’m looking to discuss a little bit more around our habits, our lifestyles and our dependency—that interconnection that you mentioned. About the gathering and the fishing.... What about squalitch [Sturgeon]?

SM: Squalitch? The sturgeon? All throughout the area, and it’s our main food for the winter months, and that’s how it used to be, although, because of the restrictions, and
again here’s another restriction, because of the pollution and whatever. We’re not
allowed to catch the sturgeon...

...Yeah. I mean, you look at that and that’s one of the biggest fish species that we have
in our river, it’s dying out on us now. You know, for me that’s really hard to deal with,
right, because our ancestor [at Shxw’ow’hamel] was transformed into that sturgeon.
And so whenever we have burnings, or ceremonies where we need to take care of our
ancestors, we need them.

... Even looking at the Coho spawning grounds and looking at the—those fish all rely
on the lower Fraser River. There’s all the other things that are creating detriments to
them. Development, and roads, dykes, all those things are already creating problems
with that. And then all of a sudden now you have all of this matter being dumped into
the air, making it’s way into the river, it just makes it that much more difficult for all
of the species, sockeye, spring, sturgeon, Coho, pink, chum, steelhead... when we think
about it, those fish rely on other fish as well, for to feed. And then you have all these
other [unclear] species that reside in our streams and that. What’s going to happen to
them? You think about the spring salmon, you think about the particulate matter that
might be leaked in the water, you think, what’s that going to do to the spring? But
what about all those little fish, skulpins and stinklebacks and those sort of fish that
reside in the small streams. What sort of effect will it have on them.

PK: ...How is hunting and gathering tradition connected to air and water?

SM: How is gathering...?

PK: Hunting and fishing traditions connected to air and water?

SM: Well, they’re all connected again, because each of them rely on the air and water.
Animals that we rely on for hunting, of course live in the mountains and again the air,
anything that’s in the air is going to make its way into the mountains and it’s going to
create a detriment to those species that we count on for food. Same with the berries.
The berries that we pick are usually in the higher elevations, and again, that’s where
the matter is going to get dumped, in the mountains and right on top of those berries.
And so, it’ll have an effect on that as well. And same with the fishing and then that
whole connection again that we talked about. Have an effect on the fishing as well.
Cause anything that’s dumped on top, makes its way down and goes through the whole
food chain.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to our fishing and hunting
and gathering practices and traditions?
SM: Very important. Right now we already have different things that affect berries. We already have different worms that come in and affect the quality of the berries, berries have different diseases. Now what’s going to happen when you have all this other stuff that comes and gets dumped on it. There’s other diseases or other things that it’s going to create. Like who knows? Who knows whether or not it’s going to affect anything else? Something else that’s just all of a sudden going to be created by all that stuff dumped on to it. Get more diseases for the berries. And when you have animals that rely on those berries, they’re the ones that we hunt, too. And if the berries are dying, what are they going to have to eat. Everything is all connected in that sense.

PK: Hunting and fishing be affected by air a water pollution?

SM: Quite certain. And again, just looking to the importance of fresh air and water to the berries and to the animals and just if it’s not, if there’s any pollutants in there, of course it’s going to have an effect on them. To their health, to disease, the kind of disease that could come about. Berries already have to put up with logging and different things like that as well. If the animals are already pushed back into the forest. Some of our [unclear] mountain goat and elk and now you have this new introduced pollution, I’m sure it’ll have some kind of effect on them.

PK: How would that additional pollution affect our practices around hunting, fishing and gathering?

SM: Impose restrictions on our use. We had to impose our own restrictions on ourselves for the use of sturgeon. And then all of a sudden if there’s risk of losing our deer and losing our whatever animals we use out there, and losing our berries and then it’s going to impose restrictions on our livelihood as well. We already have those restrictions, we already have [unclear]... blocks our access to them, and that would be just increased...

PK: Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air and water pollution on our culture, traditions, and practices?

SM: Well, on our own health, I guess. We talked about the fish, the animals, plants, and of course that all comes back to us...

Shxweli
PK: We have a little bit of tape left, but I’d like to talk about shweli with what’s left. What is shxweli?

SM: Well, as I mentioned earlier, shweli [unclear] life force. And shweli is that connection we have to everything... shxweli is inside you. It’s in your parents, your grandparents, you great grandparents, your great great grandparents, it’s in the rocks, it’s in the grass, it’s in the trees, it’s in the ground. So everything has shxweli and that’s what connects us to it.... That’s why we have to take care of all those things, because we’re connected to them. It’s either an ancestor’s been transformed into it, and that creates that connection. If you look at some of the stories I mentioned earlier about people being transformed into sturgeon, Sasquatch, black bear, beaver, type of plant, you look at all those things and that’s the connection. And that’s what shxweli is. And it’s an obligation that we have to take care of that, to respect that connection. It’s not just a fish that provides us with food; it has the spirit, the shxweli, of one of our ancestors. So have to look at it with respect as well. It’s not something we just go and fish it out, sell it, feed it or whatever, it’s got to be something that’s got to be taken care of.

PK: What is it’s place in Sto:lo tradition?

SM: It’s a very important part of our tradition, a very important part of our teaching, that whole teaching that everything is connected. Important Halq’emeylem word, and people need to understand it. I think that’s why our language program is called ‘Stó:lō Shxweli’.

PK: How can you tell the health of shxweli?

SM: How can you tell the health?

PK: Looking at all those living things that we’re connected to, how can you tell the health? Is it discernable or?

SM: That’s a really good question. How can you tell the health of shxweli? Well there’s two ways of looking at it. I think there’s one way is that shxweli—like a lot of people—like we mentioned earlier—have lost our culture. Then there might not be a lot of people out there that know what shxweli is. Like when we say, what is shxweli? Lot of Sto:lo people might go, well, I don’t know. But then you go, well, what do you think about cedar tree and deer and elk, and then they might go, oh well [unclear] everything’s got a spirit, that sort of thing they’ll understand, but they might not know what shxweli is, so in that sense, I think that the understanding of it is there, and I
think people need to realize and learn more about that connection, so there’s that part of it there that you can look at, I guess.

But then the other part of it, I mean you looking and knowing that for me, that I feel bad about the sturgeon, because the sturgeon was one of our ancestors that was transformed. That shows the shxweli of our ancestors in that sturgeon. And look at the health of the sturgeon, it’s not doing too well. And so I feel bad, so my shxweli feels bad, because there are certain times of the year when I should be having that, and I can’t. I can’t have it. Most of the year I can’t have it. Twice a year you can have it, it’s kind of an acceptable thing, it’s an obligation to have it, the rest of the time—

Sxwoxwiyam / Shxweli

...But I failed to talk about the story that late Agnes Kelly had shared... when the late Agnes Kelly had told me about it... specifically with Shxw’ow’hamel. And she said that a long time ago during the time of famine, in the winter months, everyone was hungry. Now as you know, today, most of the salmon, well back then too, run during the summer months, and then in the winter there isn’t any salmon, except steelhead, which really isn’t a salmon, but steelhead is also a food that many Sto:lo people don’t eat because it’s considered to be a snakefish. And then there was no sturgeon. So one of the men in the village was asked, or told by [someone] to go stand by the river. So he went down to the edge of the river and he’s standing there and [someone] told him to dive into the river and when he dove into the river, he was transformed into the sturgeon. And then, he said he was transformed into that sturgeon so that we could have food during the winter months. But as time went on, his wife, his mate, she missed her husband very much and she was constantly moaning and crying for her husband. [Unclear] He told her as well, for down and stand by the edge of the river. So she took some deer meat, tied it around her wrist and she went and—that’s how people used to carry their lunch—tied that around her wrist and she went down and she was by the edge of the river and all of a sudden her husband came in the form of a sturgeon, and he just called her. Called her and so she dove into the river and she was transformed into the female sturgeon. Both Agnes and Kelly say that truth of this story lies in the fact that when you cut the head off of a sturgeon, you find the piece of brown meat right behind the gills and that meat is there because that woman was carrying that deer meat around her wrist and she jumped into the river and was transformed into the sturgeon.

...So with that story then, the sturgeon then isn’t just looked upon as a resource, as a food. I mean, it is an important resource, it’s important as a food, but also there’s that relationship, you know, we talk about shxweli, there’s that connection that we have. Our shxweli is connected to that shxweli, because that’s one of the shxweli of one
of your ancestors, well a few of our ancestors are in the sturgeon. Of course that requires us to have a lot of respect for that sturgeon, and holds a special place within our traditions.

In fact, Ralph George, one of our elders, now lives down in Lummi, and Les Fraser another one of our elders, now lives up in Prince George, they had one time had talked about remembering a dance, a sturgeon dance, in the sturgeon outfit and dance. I can't remember, I think Ralph was mentioning part of it came to him in a dream and part of it is memory. He remembers as a young boy seeing the elders doing this dance, and they danced on into the river, and actually they'll walk right into the water with their outfit on and come back out of the water. And he said it was the sturgeon dance and he said there's a special song and a dance that was done certain time of the year, to show respect and that to the sturgeon.

SM: And it's not just--And that's just one of the examples from Shxw'ow'hamel, you should go down the river [rapid list of place names] they both have their own stories about their relationship to the sturgeon. You get down to Musqueam, and of course, there's a story down there about a certain plant that grows down there, where one of their ancestors was transformed into that plant. So it seems like there's local resources that people have an established relationship with them through the shxweli. Through an ancestor being transformed into that resource, like the mountain goat too at Cheam.

PK: What is the current health of shxweli in Sto:lo territory?

SM: I think it’s kind of dipped. It’s at a dip. When I think about it, like the example I've given with the sturgeon, the shxweli is still there, the relationship that we have, the connection to it. But then at the same time, that connection is an obligation to take care of them.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how we could protect the shxweli?...

SM: ..we protect it by sharing that we take care of it. That’s the—we take care of those things, if it’s the sturgeon, the black bear, the beaver, or whatever it is. The connection that we have with it obligates us to take care of them. So if we take care of them, either through developing policies, conservation of them, or developing policies, how we develop lands, developing policies on the emissions, you know, into the air.

PK: Do you know of some types of resources that have a shxweli more sensitive than others to disturbance?
SM: More sensitive?

PK: Yeah, so one [unclear] that's more sensitive. Or one living thing that has more sensitivity than another resource or another thing?

SM: I never—

PK: Given that all things that you mentioned have a shxweli. What has more sensitivity than [unclear] something else?

SM: I've never looked at the result of it in that terms. But I imagine any of the species that are at risk would be more sensitive. If it’s going to be something that going to be lost, or declining in numbers then that’s something that because of our connection to shxweli that we should be putting more efforts into protecting or to taking care of it. But I can’t think of...like to me that’s the sturgeon, that’s the important thing to us, but then there’s also the—other First Nations have their own connections to different things. Like even the salmon, I mean that’s important. Important part of our—well it’s the main, our main supply of food, the salmon, and that’s declining in great numbers over the years. It seems like each year we’re constantly being closed, I mean there’s always closures on the river, they don’t allow us to go catch those fish. It’s really easy to see that it’s has a lot to do with the pollution.

...if you’re looking at the proponent here, SE2 is planning on dumping all of this pollution; it’s going to go into the mountains, it’s going to be in the rain, it’s going to washed down, it’s going to [unclear] to the fish. So that would be one of our primary concerns, anything that’s in the water. It’d be the salmon, the sturgeon.

Sxwoxwiyam

PK: Are there any sxwoxwiyam that explains the relation between the Sto:lo and air and water?

SM: hmm, sxwoxwiyam, air. I can’t think of any for the air, other than the fact that the air is the medium that was used when Xexâ:ls traveled from the sunrise to the sunset, it was through the air. Through the sky. I can’t think of a story.... There may be a story about air. There may be a story out there that might have been told already that relates to air and I never really thought of it. Sometimes you return back to some of the stories and all of a sudden you find some significance of it to something else. So I think that would be a good start is to look at some of the stories that have shared already to see whether or not there is. I know with the water, there is a story about
Xexá:ls making the water; the Chilliwack River was a transformation, as was the Fraser River. That was created as well by Xexá:ls. There's a story, a sxwoxwiyam about both of them.

PK: How important are sxwoxwiyam to the Sto:lo?

SM: Well, sxwoxwiyam, I think that’s the most important part of our oral history that there is. I mean, when you look at the two parts of our oral history, it’s sqwelqwel and sxwoxwiyam, those are the two most important parts. Sqwelqwel being like the history or news incorporates both of that. So when you talk about your grandparents, like where they lived, where they fished, where they hunted, that’s part of your sqwelqwel. But when we talk about sxwoxwiyam, sxwoxwiyam is the stories of creation, or part of creation. When you look at the sxwoxwiyam, the world was already here, the world was created, there was animals, there was people. But the big thing was that it was mixed up, there was chaos, and it needed to be put in order, or as the elders say, it needed to be made right. So Xexá:ls then, they were the three daughters, or the three sons and the daughter of red-headed woodpecker and black bear. They were given special powers and given the responsibility to travel through the land, through our land, or through the Sólíh T’éméxw to make the world right. They started at the head of Harrison Lake, made their way down to the Fraser, headed up river and once they got up the canyon, they had to go towards the sunrise, and once they reached the sunrise, they traveled through the sky to the sunset and traveled back up river again to the sunrise once more and were never seen any more. And all throughout their travels, they did different transformations. Transforming some of our ancestors into stone, some into mountains, some into the different resources that we have today. It’s those stories that really make up the relationship that we have with our land and resources. Those stories and the connection that we talked about earlier, with shxweli. Each of those places then, wherever an ancestor’s been transformed into a rock or a mountain, each of those places are sacred to us. And each of those places that they have a story to them and usually there are other morals or other teachings that are included with the telling on that story. So sxwoxwiyam is really important to us.

Like sxwoxwiyam is the word for the stories and sxwoxwiyam is also the word for the time period when the stories happened. Like I mentioned, there more like—they’re a lot about creation stories. Even though the world was here, other things were being created. Sturgeon came about from sxwoxwiyam; some of the rocks that are in the river came about from sxwoxwiyam; some of the mountains came about from sxwoxwiyam. A lot of it has to do with creation, and just the telling of each of those stories is important.

... They’re really important to me... if you want to look at a metaphor, it would be the Bible for Christian people. The importance of the Bible to Christian people,
sxwoxwiyam is important to us... it provides a foundation for our culture. All those different places, important places and the stories that are told about those places where people were transformed, there’s teachings in there on how to act, how you should be, behave and things you have to be careful about...

PK: What about sxwoxwiyam in relation to our ceremonies, how important are they?..

SM: ...the water is important because it’s—because of our sxwoxwiyam that we have a connection to our salmon, the origin of the sockeye, that story. That’s a sxwoxwiyam that tells when the sockeye first start coming up the river. And the river is an important part of it because it’s through the river that the salmon are able to return to us each year. And when we have our ceremony, for the first salmon, when the first salmon is caught. It’s important that it’s shared with as many people as possible, a special prayer is said for the salmon before it’s eaten.

PK: That’s a form or sxwoxwiyam?

SM: That’s...yes. That’s a form of it. Well it’s a ceremony that comes from sxwoxwiyam. Like the ceremony isn’t a sxwoxwiyam. It’s based on a sxwoxwiyam, like the ceremony comes from a sxwoxwiyam. And then when the salmon is returned back to the river, like that’s a big part of it, the bones and any of the unused portions of that first salmon is returned back to the river. And a prayer is said and it thanks the river for returning the salmon each year, and it thanks the salmon people for sending the salmon back each year. So that’s a connection that we have to the salmon through sxwoxwiyam. First Salmon ceremony is based on that connection.

And so same with the—when we have burnings, it’s important for me, for our people at Shxw’ow’hamel, that when feed our ancestors, we’re always taught to be sure that we feed them with traditional foods. I mean, it’s that time to ensure that there’s smoked salmon, or deer meat, or elf meat or dried salmon, oolichan, there are all these different types of traditional foods, we’re taught to share that with them. So, the importance of the sturgeon then, to us, people of Shxw’ow’hamel, it’s important that we share that with them and that we get a share of it too. So that’s the time of year, twice a year, that we have that sturgeon. And I’m certain that other people as well, like in Chilliwack, they probably do the same thing, I’m just assuming. More likely they probably share, you know, when they have their burnings, they probably make sure their ancestors get a share of the bear meat, or whatever it is. I think the Q’eyst’i [Katzie] have a story about the oolichan.
PK: Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices in relation to sxwoxwiyam?

SM: Well, there’s a story that’s considered to be Sqwelqwel, although it has elements of sxwoxwiyam, and I think we already talked about it and that’s the sxwó:yxwey. And the thing that always comes back to me about that is the whole thing about not spitting into rivers and creeks and lakes. And so, you can imagine then, I mean if everyone was aware of that, if everyone knew that we weren’t allowed to even spit in the river; and it’s like, you look at all the stuff that’s going in there, we’re letting it go in, were not even allowed to spit in there, but look at all the pollution that’s going in there, with all the different septics, septic waste that’s being dumped into the river. And here we are, not allowed to spit in the water and yet other societies are dumping their waste...

Stl’aleqem

PK: What are Stl’álaqem?

SM: Stl’áleqem are beings that inhabit different parts of the river in places that we need to respect and stay away from. ‘Cause they tend to be in sensitive areas, places where there’s [unclear] water, or places where we just need to stay away from. Either because of resources or what [unclear].

Let’s see, good examples. There’s Stl’áleqem, according to Tillie Guiterrez, who was told by [name], there’s a Stl’álaqem up the creek, up [unclear] creek by [unclear] there’s one up there and it’s supposed to be kind of like a serpent and seems like, she seems to think it’s protecting some pictographs that are on the rock wall above it. So there’s that one. So children are supposed to stay away from there, they’re not supposed to go to that place because children are more susceptible to Stl’álaqem, being harmed by them.

There’s a place up above Yale too that’s called [Halezah], and [placemeans ] many lakes [unclear]. There are different lakes up there and in the fall time in the past, back in the early sixties—I think there might be still some families that go up there—but it was back in the sixties, early sixties when lots of people used to go up there and camp up there. People would go up there in the fall, they would pick some of the lower berries on the trail on the way up, spend a couple weeks there, and then they would make their way right up to [Halezah] and they would start at the bottom lake, which is the largest lake, and make their way up. Cause the berries would start ripening in the lower section they’d ripen moving up to the higher elevations. They would camp at the lower larger lake and then pick berries as they ripened going further
up, higher into the mountain to the [unclear] kind of hanging valley that’s there. But anyways there was the lake there, the lowest lake has a Stl’álaqem in it. And again, it’s a place that people have to pay respect to. Paying respect meaning not whistling, or not hollering, being quiet around there, and children weren’t allowed to be there. Ralph George, one of our elders was telling us that there was two trails that went around that lake. One trail, like on east side of the lake, it was right parallel along the edge of the lake, and he said that’s the one the adults used. But if they had children along, there was another trail that went way around in the bush, and around the lake, and that’s the one the kids had to use, they weren’t allowed to use the trail that went right along it, because of the Stl’álaqem. There not sure what kind of Stl’álaqem is in there. But it required people to be quiet and respectful, in that place.

It’s an important resource gathering spot, where there’s deer there, there’s what are those animals that live in rocks. One of the elders from Yale, Laurence Hope, was talking about the animals that live in the rocks, they’re small little—not gophers, but something similar to them. But it is considered to be a delicacy to the elders when they went up there, that’s when they caught those and cooked them and ate them. Not to mention the berries and the vegetables, or the wild roots and things like that, and also the deer. There was a lot of resources that were used up there. For some reason the lower lake had a Stl’álaqem that required a certain degree of respect. This is a story my mother had told me and Laurence Hope also mentioned it because he had went with her and Alan.

.....Stl’álaqem [unclear] the double two-headed serpent that lives in the river. Basically all the slough channels along the edge of the Fraser, right from the mouth all the way up to Hope, all those slough channels are basically the trails of the Stl’álaqem. So any of those channels that have been blocked then it’s pretty well blocked the trail of the Stl’álaqem.

...Then another one is up in Cultus Lake, supposed to be a large maggot... It’s another Stl’álaqem right in the lake there by boat launch, or by the boat...

PK: Marina?

SM: Marina. Yeah, the boat marina. Then of course there’s others, Seabird Island, down around Cheam, different places... There’s a number of people that have come forward to talk about different Stl’álaqems that they’re aware of. Oh, and Cheam Lake used to have a Stl’álaqem there as well. It all seemed like Stl’álaqems seem to have close relationships as well with the local families, there all seemed to be certain families that had the teachings to deal with the Stl’álaqem and if any other members came in, or anybody else came, who didn’t know, or weren’t connected to the family, you weren’t allowed to go there. I can’t remember who shared the story, but there’s a story there about a Stl’álaqem that resided in Cheam Lake and one of the women from
Cheam had taken a husband from the coast, down Cowichan way, or something like that. And he was warned to stay away from the lake because he wasn’t an immediate member of the family, he married into the family. So he wasn’t allowed to go there, otherwise he could suffer from what’s called ‘xyiolis’.

PK: ‘Xyiolis’?

SM: Yeah, ‘xyiolis’ is twisting, causing you to twist up and die. And it only happens if you’ve been told not to go to a place and then you go. If you didn’t know about it and you went to a place where something were there you can’t really suffer from it, but just if you’re told, don’t go there, then you can suffer from ‘xyiolis’. So it seemed like the Stl’álaqem then was connecte to certain families, and it helps protect the resources. Like Cheam Lake, for instance, was an important place for all kinds of different resources in the lake, trout, and different types of salmon, different types of plants that grow in the water, different types of berries that grew along the edge as well, so it’s an important resource the area. If you weren’t part of the immediate family that knew how to deal with the Stl’álaqem, you weren’t allowed to be there.

It’s the same with this story up in Hope there, there’s a mountain. Devil’s Mountain; it’s a small little mountain. There was a story there about a hunter, one of the local hunters there, probably from Skám [near Hope], went hunting, or he maybe was from Ts’qó:ls [near Hope], but he went hunting up in the mountain there and he sat down, he got to the top and he sat down on a log to take a rest. And while he was sitting there the log started moving, so he went back to his village and warned everyone to stay away from that place because of that Stl’álaqem that was there. So a lot of people stayed away. A couple of years ago I was talking to my uncle, Bob Peters from Squám, and he was talking about that little mountain, how much deer is there. He said it’s such a small mountain, but he said, you’d be just amazed how much deer is up there. Really good place, good habitat, I guess, for deer. When he mentioned that I was thinking, well gee. That hunter then was using the Stl’álaqem to keep people away, like protect the resources again. [Unclear] is true stories, it’s a matter of looking at other places that have Stl’álaqem and trying to see that they’re there protecting resources as well….

PK: What is important about Stl’áleqem to Sto:lo tradition?

SM: Well, they’re there. Especially as younger people, we’re just learning about them. I know when we did the Atlas—originally, I was sitting on the editorial board and we weren’t even going to have a plate with the Stl’álaqem in there. But it was in my discussions with late Rosalin George and Elizabeth Hurline, when I started talking about other things we could incorporate in there rather than just the place names,
cause that’s all I was working with the elders on placing some of the place names. And we wanted more traditional things in there as well. So they we’re trying to think of other things. Then I mentioned Stl’álaqem to them, and they said yeah, they got pretty, what do you call it—strong, strong position about it. Saying yeah, we need to let the younger people know about the Stl’álaqem, because Stl’álaqem is out there, and the fact that a lot of our people still go away into the forest to put away their sacred objects, or to go out and take care of themselves, do different ceremonies with the water, and with the forest, you know, and go out there picking berries, and hunting...

....So it’s all part of our belief system. And that’s what they said, it’s real. ....Just like the stories, the sxwoxwiyam stories, some of them seem to be funny. I remember the late Peter Dennis Peters telling me some of the sxwoxwiyam stories, and I remember he was laughing. There was one story, he was talking about frog and beaver, like a life story [unclear]. And I asked him to tell it in Halkomelem and then tell it in English. So he told it. And he was telling it in Halkomelem and he was just laughing away, laughing. You couldn’t understand a word back then, right. Then he told it in English and I started laughing too, cause it seemed like a funny story, so we’re both laughing, then all of a sudden he gets really serious. He says, you know Sonny, he says, some of these stories may seem like they’re funny, he said, but they’re real, they’re true, they really happened, they’re true stories. So that was an important message to me.

And same with talking with the various elders who’ve also shared sxwoxwiyam. Agnes Kelly, you remember her saying the same thing, that these are true stories, they really happened. And Rosalin as well, Elizabeth, Tilly, that’s what they all say, it really happened. So that’s why I like to refer to them as sxwoxwiyam. From our perspective, they are sxwoxwiyam. They’re not myths, they’re not legends, they’re not fairy tales; cause again, from Western society’s perspective, all of a sudden categorized as something that’s not real to them.

...Stl’álaqem, where do they live? Mostly in the water. Mostly in places away from society in general, like away from our villages. Like that one lives in the water, or lives in the pool, at 5 Mile Creek, there’s that one, there’s one that lives in Seabird Island, right behind your baseball field there. There’s some that live in the river, the main river, just above Cheam, between Cheam and Popkum, just around there. Almost right in front of Popkum, but in the main channel. There’s the ones that live in Cultus Lake. Some that just, like for glowing red eyes, that seem to be, like I’ve seen them in Shxw’owhámél, I’ve heard people in Sta’a:i:les talk about them, and also they’re supposed to live in an area next to the, or along the railroad tracks, adjacent to the river at Cheam.
PK: Are there the same number of Stl’álaqem today as in the past?

SM: There’s probably more Stl’álaqem out there than we know of. Again, because of the assimilation policies, the residential schools experience, smallpox epidemics, there’s probably lots of Stl’álaqem out there that we don’t know about...

PK: What about the disappearance of any Stl’álaqem? Do you know any stories?

SM: Disappearance of them?

PK: Due to the disturbances of their habitat or environment?

SM: I’m not sure whether they disappeared or not. I can see developments around where they’re at... —it would be a good question to ask the elders—but for some reason I feel that they’re still there, even though the development might have an impact...

PK: What about the effects of air and water pollution on Stl’álaqem? Would air or water pollution affect Stl’álaqem?

SM: It’d probably affect the importance of them. Like, the same time we have our obligations to shxweli to protect our resources, and then, the existence of Stl’álaqem seem to be there to help protect our resources as well. So if we don’t take care of our resources, then that’ll have an effect on Stl’álaqem, whether the need or the importance of them. So we lose our resources, we lose our healthy water, we lose the fresh air, lose the different animals, plants and animals and fish that reside in our area, and of course, that will have an impact on Stl’álaqem as well. Because seems to me, that they’re existence is there to help us take care of the resources.

...So when we talk about Stl’álaqem, we can’t really talk about them by themselves. [Unclear] relationship that we have with them, relationship to resources, the relationship that we, or how we view our own interactions with other people... It’s not something that can just be cut and dry. Western society can’t just look at it and oh, okay well let’s just leave that Stl’álaqem side along, there’s more to it.

PK: How do you expect additional air and water pollution to affect Stl’álaqem?

SM: Well, like I said, it’ll have an effect—like it might not have a direct effect on the Stl’álaqem itself, but it’ll have an effect on the resources that we and Stl’álaqem jointly kind of protect. So it will have an effect on the reason, or the being for Stl’álaqem. As
far as I'm concerned, the Stl'álaqem that the elders had told us about are still out there, are still there. And yeah. Even though there's a lot of pollution, they're still there. I guess where it'll come in is if the shxweli part is affected, if the existence of those beings, those plants or animals, or fish, if they're jeopardized, then in turn it creates like a domino effect, and it cuts off...

PK: Do [you] need that relationship in order to be considered Sto:lo?

SM: Oh yeah. Totally. All of those things. That's what uniquely sets us apart and makes us Sto:lo. If we just take all of those beliefs, all of those strong cultural traditions and just set them aside, push them aside, you just forget about being Sto:lo. Then our unique relationship is gone, right?... That's what makes up our relationship to the land, provides a foundation for that and we build upon that, it's all those different teachings, Halq'emeylem teachings like sxwoxwiyám, sxwó:yxwey, shxweli, mimestíyexw, all those things. It's very important for us to build upon that. Take seriously those responsibilities, we're responsible for them. We take care of them, but they take care of us, too.

Water Babies

PK: What are water babies?

SM: Little people that inhabit our water, and they have interaction with them that helps us develop certain traditions. There was an interaction with them that allowed the sxwó:yxwey tradition to come about. There may be others that I'm not aware of, but I'm definitely sure that there are people, like some live in the pool at Five Mile Creek. There's some there at Qw'elóqw. Some at—I'm not sure what the Halq'emeylem name is for [unclear – ‘Chilliwack’?] Landing. Some at Chilliwack Lake. Think there might be some up near Sts’a’i:les [Chehalis], and near Katzie, I think down around the mouth of the river as well. But those are just the places that I'm aware of, there's probably other places as well. But they inhabit the water and we need to take care of them. And that's one of the teachings that come out of the story about the origins of the sxwó:yxwey, is that we can't even spit in the water. Cause the spit could end up on the skin of those water babies and get them sick. And if they get sick, we lose that connection with them. That's basically what water babies are, I don't know what the Halq'emeylem word is for them.

PK: What's important about water babies in relation to strong traditions and culture?
SM: Well, the most important thing is sxwó:yxwey. Sxwó:yxwey is the thing that came from the water babies, so that’s what makes it, that’s what makes them important. It’s not like we can just—we can’t just take the sxwó:yxwey and say okay, well we got what we wanted from water babies, now we don’t have to worry about them. It’s not like that, right. Those places become sacred, like they are sacred as far as we’re concerned. Like Kawkawa Lake, or Kuhl-koh-wa, it’s important, that’s a sacred place because that’s where the water babies live. The cave that they constructed, that’s important, another place where they came out. Even the pool where they dug their tunnel from and brought the mask to the young boy and young girl, the brother and sister, they’re from [unclear]. So that place is a sacred place as well. It’s a place that has to be taken care of, and those water babies have to be taken care of as well.

...The name Sqwiqwui’ala, means stingy container, it the original name of the Coquihalla. The story there is, this is from the lady [name] Douglas, is that there’s a fishing rock there, at the mouth, it’s on the Coquihalla River, but [unclear] Creek, where it comes in there. There’s a fishing rock and the local people used to go spearing salmon off of that rock. But sometimes the water babies would come out, and they would grab the salmon, and pull the salmon off the fisherman’s spear, and not allow them to take the salmon. Right, so that’s why that place was called Sqwiqwui’ala, ‘stingy, stingy container’. To me then, the water babies are protecting the resources as well. And I think, with all the different protocols we have to follow when we go out, you know, like hunters have different rules that they have to follow, for instance, like not eating, or what they bathe in, or what they do before they go out, and when there’s all kinds of different rules. Same with fishermen. We all have our own rules and protocols before we go out, go fishing. Same with basket makers. It’s all those rules and protocols that we have that are kind of like policies to us, ways about ensuring that those things are protected.

PK: You already mentioned where water babies live. Are there the same number of water babies as in the past?

SM: I’m not sure. Like, when I go to that place where the water washed out and filled in the pool, I like to think that they’re still there, and I can’t see them. It was better when I couldn’t see the bottom, to me, then I felt that they were there, but now I can see the bottom, because it filled it all in, so it’s not very deep there anymore, that used to be a deep pool, so to me, then it seems like they have to move someplace.

...as far as I’m concerned, they’re out there, they’re might be places that have water babies that we’re not aware of. There may be other places where they’ve been washed out too.... Wherever we’ve build dykes and roads that have an impact on any of
the streams or that, [unclear] places where water babies were, and they might have had to move. That’s the sense I get...

PK: What about additional water and air pollution on the effects of water babies?

SM: I’m sure it’ll have an impact... again it seems to me that there are places that we need to protect, resources. Cause see they’re also taking care of too, in the ceremonies that we hold, twice a year to feed our ancestors. There also has to be a plate for the water babies. And a plate that’s for the miméstíyexw, but the miméstíyexw ones aren’t burned, it’s a plate and it’s all raw food, it can’t be food that’s cooked. It’s usually put on a plate and put at the edge of the forest, and that’s how the miméstíyexw is fed.

PK: Do you have any other concerns about the effect of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions, and practices?

SM: Yeah, look at all of these different things like all the particulate matter, and nitrogen oxides and organic compounds, ammonia, carbon monoxides, sulphur oxide, all of those things. Those things are being dumped into our forests, where we have the miméstíyexw, eventually making its way to the water, and the water holding the water babies, the water holding the different fishes that have shxweli or connections to. That has really an adverse impact on us if we start losing any of those things within the environment.

PK: SE2 tells us... that it will not affect the Sto:lo, all these emissions. What would you say to that?

SM: No. I’ll just have to disagree with them. It will have an effect... What kind of studies do they have to say that it’s not? I’m quite certain that it’s going to have an effect. Anything that’s dumped into the forest, it’s going to have an effect on the smallest little things, right? Everything relies on each other. That’s what that whole teaching of shxweli is...

it’s not just the connection to sturgeon and that’s all I’m ever worried about, it’s like, I’m connected to other members of my family who have stories about the bear, I’m connected to other members of my family who have stories about the connection to the beaver, and so on. And each of those animals is also connected to by shxweli to other things. So shxweli, even though it’s our connection, like when Rosalin explains it, my understanding connected to ancestors, connected to rocks, to the trees, to the grass, and the ground. Everything that’s out there then, is connected. And so no matter how minute or how small it is, all these different smaller little things that might be impacted in the
forest, like the smaller plant, or the smaller fish, those are connected as well to everything else that’s here. Those are the things that might be forgotten, there might be studies that might look at sturgeon and say oh well, don’t worry about sturgeon, but then again, what about all the other little things that are going to be connected in the forests and in the streams. The impact of that, all that stuff we have on that. That shxweli is the connection to that too... Those things have a shxweli too... Everything has a shxweli and everything is connected to it.
4.2.13 Grand Chief Clarence Pennier

Interviewee: Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, Scowlitz
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: December 16, 2003

Sxwo:yxwey

PK: I’d like to begin By asking, how important is our Sxwo:yxwey tradition to you?

CP: I would say Sxwo:yxwey is very important to me as an individual, to my family, and to the family that belongs to it. And, you know, in thinking about the importance of the Sxwo:yxwey, we really can’t say a great deal about it to the general public. Understanding that it goes back to the beginnings of time, and we learn all of this through our sxwoxwiyám...

But you know when we learn about our history and learn about Xexá:ls the Transform coming into our territories to make the world right; prior to that our people used to be able to transform back and forth between animals and to people and, when he came along to make things right his people were there and made sure that he was giving lessons and also making sure that people were going to benefit, like the cedar.....transformed what’s important, the animals, the deer, the mountain goats, and the...Part of the Tel Swayel, which is the stories about where we emerged from,

Part of the story, you know, emerges up in the Hope area, when the Sxwo:yxwey was first brought in, you know, because of sickness [and it was meant] to help people heal, so in that sense, it becomes important in terms of the water, that’s where it originated. Clean water of course. And the exercise, of course, happens outside, and we’re required to have clean air to do that... That’s about, you know, the extent of probably what I would say, because it was important, and... we’re taught that it’s one of the things that shouldn’t be brought into the public view, or into the public area through writing and pictures and whatnot.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water? If you could emphasize that for me just a little bit more; if the water was polluted, or the air was polluted.
CP: Part of the teachings is that, you know, to exercise these particular... or to use the gift that people are able to get that have to be able to go into the water. Water is for cleansing and for purification purpose ceremonies. You know, it has to be done in a, when the water is clean, so it's probably the best way I can try to explain it, I guess. You know, in terms of the air, of course, clean air is important not only for the ceremonies, but for people that have these gifts.

PK: How would additional pollution affect Sxwo:yxwey?

CP: Well, if we were to have additional pollution in the air and in the water, of course, the particulate matter in the air is going to affect the trees that are important for us, is one way to answer. I really shouldn't say how, but let's just let it be known that it will have an impact; as I was explaining earlier, the whole issue of having clean water is just important.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect the clean air and clean water for Sxwo:yxwey?

CP: I think part of your statement a little earlier was that there are, you know, we know that there are problems with some of our water and some of the air quality already. The thing is that we shouldn't be polluting it any more than it is, we should be trying to make sure that we are going to somehow get cleaner water and cleaner air. It's a matter of survival for people... that it's important to our ceremonies...

PK: Is there anything else that I could ask you regarding Sxwo:yxwey and its relation to air and water, that I haven't mentioned?

CP: No, but I think it has to be made clear to the National Energy Board and to Sumas Energy 2, and to the general public, that it's difficult for us to try to explain everything about our culture and our heritage. Somehow we have to make sure that the message gets to them that clean air and clean water are important to some of our traditions that are you know. I am trying to say that we can't really say too much about the ceremonies and put it in writing for the public, otherwise something could happen to us too...

PK: Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions, or practices?
CP: No, I don’t have any other, I mean, I said it through the answering some of the other questions, that the effects of air pollution and contaminated water would, you know, would have an impact on our culture and traditions.

**Sxwoxwiyam**

PK: From this list, is there anything else that you’d like to make comments on from the fishing and hunting and gathering or shxweli, sxwoxwiyám. You know before we turned the tape on you mentioned some notes about the sxwoxwiyám..

CP: I was just mentioning that, you know, when we learn about our history, we learn about the sxwoxwiyám, which is the stories that are handed down, right, from generation to generation and that talks about our how we come to be into our world, as we would say, and how we’re all interrelated with the plants, and the animals, and the rocks, and the trees, and the air and the water. So it’s all interrelated, and you know, it’s talking about the shxweli and the spirit of everything because we’re transformed into different animals and resources and we have transformer sites there to remind us if we’re not careful in what we do then, you know, that’s why people were transformed into rock formations, to leave a message for us. And you know, the whole issue...water babies, and how it’s important because of the water, it relates to water babies. We have to have clean water.

*And like I said, we’re all interrelated so the impact from polluted air and polluted water has an impact on everything. Whole ecosystems, the animals, plant life, and the whole issue of fishing and gathering and hunting, it’s all related to that. If we’re going to pollute the land and the water we’re eventually going to lose the uses of those valuable resources, whether it be plants for medicines, plants for food, fish for food, animals for food, because we’ve heard about incidences in the past where fish that were being hung to dry in the canyon, you know, people see the lesions that are on the fish, I guess, and other things where sometimes there is a glow in the dark type of thing where it’s a chemical they come through as they make their way up the river. So those are all reasons why we have to maintain, or try to get cleaner air and cleaner water....Because we eat it... We eat a lot of it.*
4.2.14 Cooper Pennier

Interviewee: Cooper Pennier, Chehalis
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date of Interview: January 20, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you?

CP: How important is this to you? We have to buy it now. We just had some for lunch. It’s been going on for all my life, we really enjoy wind dry fish. Now they’ve got so much spices and pepper, it’s not the same as it used to be. I noticed I got some that had too much pepper on it. Probably to keep the bees off the fish. Never tastes the same as it used to. A lot of it is done too late, fisheries stop them when they’re ready to wind dry, and they do it too late, there’s flies around.

PK: How important is that to you?

CP: I don’t wind dry myself, but I notice people are doing it less and less, making the wind dry. I used to wind dry every year, but now I buy it, and pay more and more. I’m seventy-four on January 26, this year and I’ve relied on wind dry for as long as I can remember my mother getting wind dry from different sources. She used to get it, wind dry is a delicacy for us.

PK: How important is Dry Rack and Wind Dry Fishery to Sto:lo culture?

CP: Wind Dry and Dry Rack is important, and we’re trying to keep the fishing going, but there are too many doing it now. There’s a lot of outsiders are ruining it for the Sto:lo. I go up there and there are people from Alberta, even Americans come up here, I guess it’s for the money.

PK: How is Wind Dry and Dry Rack Fishery connected to air?

CP: Wind Dry and Dry Rack Fishery has got to have the wind. It’s got to have good wind for up to ten days to qualify to put away for the winter.

PK: How is Wind Dry and Dry Rack Fishery connected to water?
CP: You gotta have its close to the river, and the water. See the fish come up and they're already getting ruined from the pollution. I notice some fish I get have beads on them, I don't know what it is, maybe mercury or something in the water. It's ruining a lot of fish.

PK: How important is clean air to Dry Rack and Wind Dry Fishery practices?

CP: It’s got to be very important. If the air is not clean, it’s not going to be healthy fish to eat. And, it’s wind dried, wind dries the fish, not the sun.

PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by air and water pollution?

CP: Sure, those are the main parts of Dry Racks, to have clean air and clean water. It’s got to be clean otherwise you end up with disease. There's too much disease coming from the water now. So many ways, we have asthma from poor air. Poor air takes us down, a lot of us, I have lung problems now, heart problems from poor air catches up to you after breathing it for so long.

PK: How would additional pollution of air affect practice and teachings of Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery?

CP: I don’t know about that. It’s got to affect you in quite a few ways that would happen. It would affect Dry Rack from the mills all over the place. Not only that, this last summers forest fires affect wind drying. That fire killed a lot of game and fish. I don’t know, pretty soon fish won’t be able to come up here. They’re already getting lost, they’re heading north on account of pollution and warm water. The water is getting warmer and they’re not going to come up.

The Sumas Energy 2 will be devastating to what’s already out there. As an example, they dumped a septic tank full into the river. We saw that, they put a tube into the river and started dumping. That’ll have polluted the river.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery from affects of water and air pollution?

CP: They have to build a better system for bathroom use. The don’t have proper camping equipment. They aren’t looking after the camp sight properly. I know, I've
been there, I’ve seen beer bottles and cans laying around, and that’s not doing them any good. It’s getting as bad as the city. The Dry Rack, there’s far too many of them.

**PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery by affects of water and air pollution?**

CP: That air, we’re making our own problems. The Sto:lo themselves are doing wrong sometime. You can’t be having a big plant like that and all their air in our country, it’s already bad enough. I know they’ve done studies and Abbotsford and Chilliwack have the highest polluted air going already without having that plant there. It’s hard to breath. I’ve got heart trouble, I have to have good air.

**PK: Do you have any concerns about the effects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?**

CP: No, we’ve got three cultural things going on already. They go through a hundred cords of wood a year or more. That causes a lot of air pollution. It’s good to keep the tradition, but, they go over-board on all that stuff, I know. It’s the life they want, it’s our tradition, some go too far on drugs and alcohol, they figure that’s going to stop them. Some of them go too far with taking dope, smoking dope. They figure it will help them out, it probably do for a while, but they go back on it anyway. I know, I don’t go up there anymore, since my mom passed away. I can’t hack it anymore.

**Fishing/Hunting/Gathering**

**PK: How important is the Gathering and Hunting tradition to you?**

CP: Very important, hunting is very important. I’ve done quite a bit of hunting before I retired. Since retirement, I never did go out hunting again. I’m just lucky I have people who come and give me some food. It’s comes from a long ways from here now. There’s no more game around like there used to be. One time you could live off hunting and fishing here. Now you can’t, there’s so many restrictions on now. We can’t even go hunt ducks, “oh, that’s a fishing ground.” Fisheries run it now, I used to get many ducks for myself and deer, never have a chance because there’s no more game around here like there used to be here, probably from all the pollution. I never see grouse around, pheasants, I don’t see pheasants no more. They’re hanging around McDonald’s in Mission, running across the road. I guess there’s no more clean environment out there for them. It’s all that pollution. At one time you could get good duck, you can’t get that anymore.
PK: How important is the Gathering Hunting tradition to Sto:lo culture?

CP: Again, there’s gun restrictions and all that. I guess it’s good for the law abiding citizens. You’ve got to have this certificate to get a permit to go hunting. It’s really important.

There’s quite a few guys who still do it. But, they’ve got to go way up Prince George or somewhere to get their game, there’s no more game around here, probably because of this pollution?

PK: How important are those plants and animals to our culture? Would we still be Sto:lo without hunting and gathering?

CP: I don’t know. There’s so many people who have to live off the reserve, like yourself, because of this gathering. There’s no more good reserves like they used to have. It’s over-crowded.

You know, out of over a thousand, there’s over one hundred outsiders living on this reserve now. I know there’s over one hundred white people living on Sto:lo reserves, there’s too many. They’re all taking over our housing. They’ve got the best houses because they have the money. A lot of our people are on welfare and can’t even afford to buy anything. Some of them haven’t even got television or anything. No jobs, no education, there’s a lot of people who cannot even read or write so they’ve got to live on welfare.

There’s white people moving in taking over our reserves. There’s even white chiefs living on reserve now.

PK: How is the Gathering and Hunting tradition connected to air and water?

CP: Oh, I guess they’ve got to have clean air and water to have game around, because a lot of this water, you can’t even swim down Harrison Bay now, you’ll get bites or the itch because the water is so polluted.

All them houses down the Bay, they still go to the bathroom in the water, it goes into the water. They should have better restrictions on that, like the trailer court, at Tapadera, they make them vacuum all the bathrooms down there. They made them build a plant there so as not to have to go down to the water. They’re smart them guys.
Them old buildings like Harrison Bay and the Sasquatch, it still goes down the river. All the houses down Lake Erroch, all their bathrooms are sucked into the Harrison River. Same as Harrison Lake, they've got tow boats, they just dump their bathrooms into the lake, and how many hundred boats up there. all coming down the lake. There should be restrictions, and more restrictions.

These trains too. They just dump their stuff along side of the tracks. They flush their toilets on the side of the track. They don't take is somewhere, I know I've gone on a boat with forty people and about ten people went to the bathroom and they just flushed into the lake. That's not doing our water any good. They've got to have more restrictions on that.

I've seen women on the boat, she was rich, she changed her baby and threw the diaper out in the middle of the lake. Instead of putting it away, she threw it out into the water, there's a lot of that.

Well, all that, the animals get a hold of that pollution. It's all pollution what they throw in the water.

I've shot a deer with bad lungs and had to leave it. The lungs were just deteriorated, I shot a deer years ago, now, it's probably worse.

**PK: Can Gathering and Hunting practices be affected by air and water pollution?**

**CP:** Really, it could be affected, hunting and that, wherever you go you've got to have clean air and clean water. Like I was saying, everybody's throwing beer cans into the water. I bet you any money there's tons of beer cans and bottles in Harrison Lake.

They used to have a lot of these logging camps up Harrison Lake. They used to have a lot of outside bathrooms and all that's going into the air. There was no running water. They would cover one hole and dig an new one. That's a lot of pollution when you have one-hundred and fifty guys in one camp. They're using the bathrooms all the time.

I got hepatitis from that one time myself, from a bad bathroom. I got really bad yellow jaundice. The doctor told me it was from an outside toilet. Now you just push a button and wash your hands with hot water, it's good for us. It's a little late for some people.

Hunters go out in camps, they've got these modern cabins.
PK: How would additional air pollution impact Hunting, Fishing and Gathering practices and teachings of Sto:lo people?

CP: Additional? What do you mean additional?

PK: As an example, as you mentioned mills and other pollutions that come into our air and water systems. Additional pollution, I mean possibly SE2 could be built and pollute our air and water ways.

CP: I notice every town they have thousands of different building. There could be more bad air. I know in California they wouldn’t even let you have a wood stove because it causes too much pollution. In some cities they won’t let you bury your relatives if they die. They’ve got to have cremation, but that still causes pollution. There’s no more land for it I guess, for cemeteries. We’re running out of land.

The reserves are over crowded. We’re running out of land ourselves, we’re gonna have no more cemeteries because the water is cutting in there. I don’t know what they’re going to do.

PK: How would that impact our Hunting and Fishing traditions if it was more pollution?

CP: Oh, it would be really devastating. The game will just take off away from the pollution. They’ll go up the mountains more. They would have to take off, they’re more sensitive to pollution. The just keep moving away from us. The ones who can’t go out and get their game they just go buy food in the store. Buy meat in the store.

Now they have Mad Cow disease. The animals are affected. I heard some animals in the Winnipeg area have T.B.. As soon as animals get that, there’s no cure for them.

Deer are affecting people in Winnipeg. They’re shipping people from there (Winnipeg) to here, and that’s polluting our hunting. They’re shipping them down here. Environmentalists don’t want to shoot them, so they get shipped somewhere else. That’s what they’re doing.

PK: If I can add one more angle in relation to air and water pollution in relation to us as Sto:lo pollution, how would that impact us, could we continue our teachings?
CP: No, it would be devastating. We've got no facilities. We have no hospitals for that. Hospitals are plugged tight now. People have got diseases, the emergency wards are putting them in the hallways, there's nothing they could do, just fill the hospitals.

We've got a doctor on our reserve now, he comes for a couple of hours a week. What's he going to do with us, a thousand people up here. He's over worked and your gone. He could diagnose you the wrong medicine.

There's a lot of people up here with asthma, that's from poor air. They never check these houses. They supposed to drain the insulation out of this building and put new one in, they never did, because the band's got no money to do it. If you have to do it yourself it's going to cost you two thousand bucks. You can't do it.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Gathering and Hunting from water and air pollution.

CP: No, I don't know what they'll do about that. The Band is trying their best by putting chlorine in our water. They're looking after our water for us; they've got health nurses.

They haven't changed the water lines here. I bet you this water line we got is all full of rust, and we're drinking that water.

PK: So in terms of the Sumas Energy 2 and this Traditional Use Study and you had a choice, what would you say to SE2?

CP: I'd really try to squeeze them out of there. The mills are already doing enough now and all the mining we've go around here. They shouldn't have it so close to us. I don't know why they have to do it in the valley here. A lot of native reserves will be affected.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Gathering and Hunting practices?

CP: It's better to be controlled. Like I said, there's people here who are greedy. They're ruining our hunting system. Some get ten to twelve elk a year when they should just get what they need. They're using it for financial gain now. They sell they're meat now, they're selling they're fish. They spoiled them now and they can't stop it.

People used to give you a fish in the family, now you have to buy it off your own relatives. People are greedy. Money talks. Well I still got family that still bring me
stuff like fish and all that, and I appreciate it, and it should be carried on like that. If anybody needed help they would help you. But now, a lot of them want money before they make a move.

All these smokehouses, they’re money hungry too. One year they came around to collect money because they were out of money to help them out because they were out of grub up there. I know about five years ago. Now they’re coming back. The kids are learning I guess, about the smokehouse, teaching them some things, some things they never knew before.

I heard they all got asthma, plugged noses from pollution. They only have two bathrooms up there. They should have more. Their water line froze, broken toilets. They’re using outhouse toilets and that’s not right. Here they’ve got a small house and they have seven babies in there. That’s over-crowding.

All that air is important all right. I’m lucky to live this long, seventy-four years. I’ve had lung troubles before, but I overcame that. Now I have diabetes, that’s probably from the air and the food I eat. Not eating properly.

But, you can’t bill the devil.

**PK: Do you have any other concerns about the affects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions, and practices?**

CP: They’ve got to watch the control on the rivers all right. They’re digging the rivers out and they should leave it alone. See how many tons of gravel they’ve taken out of the river. I don’t know if it’s helping the farmers but, it’s not helping the fish.

The fish are getting lost because they’re digging too much out. The fish are getting lost. It should be natural. All the machinery in the river digging, the fish can’t find their way back because it’s changed so much. That’s why we’re losing our fish.

I’ve eaten the fish that never had any taste. I ate Chum that tastes so flat. I used to eat a pound of fish, now I can’t eat that much. Same with the ducks, they don’t taste the same. There’s no more good game anymore.

The government is spoiling things. They’ve got poor people living in the streets. They don’t want to work under minimum rate. They shouldn’t be. The ones crippled or broken families need help. But, forty percent of the guys, there’s nothing wrong with
them, and they’re on the welfare. They drink their money up or drugging their money up.

I know cause I see it with my eyes.

Me, I logged for over fifty years. While waiting for UI once, I got fifty bucks, that’s all and I had to pay it back. Now I see these guys, they won’t even go to work.

I see homelessness

PK: Regarding the SE2, if there was something you could say to them and the National Energy Board, what would you say to them?

CP: I’d say butt out of our lives, get out of our territory. If SE2 wants to build, tell them to go somewhere else. I don’t know if they are getting cheap land. They shouldn’t pollute our land anymore. It’s bad enough as it is. That shouldn’t be allowed. I’m against that myself. If they sign out of there that would be better for us, maybe we’d live longer. OUR air is bad enough. I’d like them to move out of there. The government should get on there case a little harder. I’d like them out of there.

PK: Thank you very much for your time.
4.2.15 Gwen Point

Interviewee: Gwen Point, Skowkale
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date: December 18, 2003

PK: I wonder how you want to go about this interview, because we have eight sets of questions that are fairly similar to one another, we have wind dry, dry rack, sxwô:yxwey, syúwél, fishing, hunting and gathering together, shxweli, sxwôxwiyám, stl'áleqem, and water babies. If there are any one set or two sets of questions that you might want to discuss, I'd like to leave that open.

GP: I think I’d rather start at the beginning and try to work through them. I want to preface and I would ask you to record keep I guess because I will probably give an answer that will apply to all of them and starting that, it would be our understanding of the elements and our people view, we’re just a part of the environment. Very important to understand, we’re a part of the environment and likely have a responsibility to ourselves, to our families, to our community, we have a responsibility to the environment. It doesn’t just stop with the person. It’s every man, women and child that’s responsible to the environment as well. I think it’s very difficult for non-Native people to appreciate that. But, that to me is the hallmark for First Nations to bring that understanding. It might be why SE2 is even in at our back door and our front door. And, I hope we can close the doors.

The mere fact that they have to ask, that is a teaching in itself. I understand that if you have to ask that’s not a question. If it was the right thing to do, they wouldn’t have to go these ends. But, the mere fact that they have ask it’s a question? And the answer is plain and simple. It’s ‘no’.

Sometimes you have to explain a little bit more to these people or to the larger public. And, I hope they’ll do it, if it’s that important, they will let every man, woman and child know in that corridor, the impact of SE2. If its’ that important, they need to take the time to let every man, woman and child. And, I’ll say this, the bottom line is we’re charged with seven generations, we have insure those ones in seven generations are going to enjoy what we enjoy today. Can we say that with confidence if SE2 goes in? I don’t think so. It’s not a question, the answer is no.
Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery tradition to you?

GP: The Dry Rack Fishery is something that I have grown up with, and that I have enjoyed, it’s apart of my diet and it’s apart of who I am as a Sto:lo. I’m personally not a fisher person because I don’t have the time. It’s our understanding that each person has their own gift or their own work they have to do. We still utilize that in my community. So while I’m not a fisher person, I do work for other families in return for that salmon, wind dry, smoked and the dry rack fishery and the fresh fish. So, how important it is, it’s apart of me, and apart of who I am and apart of my children. We understand that the food is not just food for the body, nourishment, but it’s food for the spirit. It’s food for the whole being. It’s not just nourishment for your body, it’s spiritual nourishment, because that part of who you are as a person. Xwilmuukw means a person. So, it’s very important and I’ve grown up with it, and my children have grown up with it, and now my grandchildren are growing up with it.

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery to Sto:lo culture?

GP: The same answer, is that it is who we are as a people. Sto:lo means river. We are river people. The Sto:lo are river people and we’ve relied on that for thousands of years, not one generations, not two generations but thousands of years. And I know from my grandfather’s time, while growing up, he was concerned then. He told me that he’s concerned, because then you could walk on the backs of the salmon. That was the expression. And, I heard that expression many times since then.

I’ve seen pictures when the river was filled with salmon. Well it scares me even today that a limited resource, that precious resource. What is SE2 going to do with that?

PK: When I look at the fact sheet and the map, Dave Schaepe mentions where water and air contamination may happen in Sumas and on the Fraser.

GP: Water travels and water moves, plus pollutants move as well. Plus the fish that are impacted are going to move as well. And, who’s going to eat that salmon? And, how long is it going to take before the water isn’t there anymore as a result. What does it do to the water? Does it heat it up? What is it going to do?
PK: How is Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery connected to air?

GP: The Dry Rack Fishery and the Wind Dry Fishery need the air. There’s only one or two places that we have and it’s a small corridor in Yale. Where does the wind come from? It comes from the valley. So, the wind dries the fish and preserves it. So the quality of the air, we’re already struggling in the valley because the mountains catch the darn pollutants from Vancouver already.

And they tell us the quality of air in the Fraser Valley is worse than Vancouver because the ocean blows air/wind this way and captures it in the mountain. Well, the canyon is a small corridor that gets the winds more so because of the pockets of air, the way it’s pulled through. That’s the whole process of wind drying. It’s mother nature’s way of providing us with our wind drying salmon. What is it going to do if its’ polluted more so?

PK: How is Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery connected to water?

GP: Well you need the water. And when you are doing the wind dry, you don’t take it home, not like the canning, where you take the salmon home and you clean it and jar it, or you clean the fish and smoke it. Your using the water right on sight. So, they clean the salmon right on sight and hang them on racks in the canyon. The water is being utilized right on site to do the wind dry fishery.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to dry rack fishery and wind dry fishery?

GP: You’re not going to have wind dry salmon, it would not exist if you didn’t have clean water and clean air. It’s not even a question. That whole food, that whole area would be gone if we did not have clean air, and clean water. If it’s not there, we would not have the salmon; it would be gone.

I only wish other people would have access to this information. I would challenge them to talk to every man woman and child who are Sto:lo and non-Sto:lo as well. How many of them know?

PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by air pollution?

GP: Yes. If the air is not right, the air is what is wind drying the fish. Air preserves the salmon, the wind dry and the dry rack.
PK: Can Dry Rack and Wind Dry Fishery be affected by water pollution?

GP: Same, those two questions are the same. If the salmon is in the water and it’s polluted, that’s the first step. For the most part the water is polluted. We don’t get the salmon the same quality of salmon as we used to get. So what is SE2 going to do to the fishery? You take it to the next step, you’re not even going to be able to wind dry if the air and water is polluted.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air affect the practice and teachings of Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery?

GP: Whole families, when I say we have Cedar people, I’m a cedar person, I have a hard time finding cedar today. My children are cedar people. There are whole families of salmon people and there are whole families of sturgeon people. By the mere fact that the whole family goes up to do the wind drying, the dry rack, whole families from the elders down to the children and the teaching of community, the teaching of when you’re doing work like that, all of that will be lost if that’s gone, it will be gone because of pollution.

The ripple effect like throwing a stone in the water, the ripples go out. Pollution affects the family, then it affects the community, then it affects the nation. Because you’re lifting out the very food that our people rely on and have relied on for thousands of years.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery by affects of water or air pollution?

GP: My suggestion is far too long, Fisheries and Oceans, the government of the day, the local government, be it on all levels, First Nations have to be involved on all levels. Not at the eleventh hour, at every level First Nations have to be part of the decisions that are made. Far too often decisions are being made without First Nations involvement. So, I appreciate the time that is being taken to do this study. But, let it be known it’s not just in isolation, that it be taken seriously. All I know is that the decisions being made are informed decisions, not selected.

Traditionally a leader was merely a spokesperson, there was no such thing as a chief. A leader was a spokesperson. The real leader in our community was a woman. We’re a matrilineal society. The head of a household was the woman. Why? Because then years ago, it was the men who did the hunting and fishing and protecting the community. They could be killed. We had a oral tradition, that knowledge was passed
down through the women, where to hunt, where to fish; we took care of the resources that way. The women knew when and where to harvest cedar, fish, everybody was taken care of in that respect.

With that in mind, man wasn’t better than woman, woman wasn’t better than man. Everybody was taken care of. No one individual capitalized. No one woman benefited. Everyone benefited. To me, that’s what’s wrong with today’s society, it’s individualism as opposed to community. When if you were in a position of leadership, you had the interest of all the people in mind, not yourself.

I remember my grandmother’s words. I told her when I realized I was old enough, I said how come here in Chehalis if you need land you go build, you take what you need, but in other communities when I started growing up and seeing things in my mind people owned land. I remember my grandmothers words, she said who do they think they are, God? Because to begin to claim things like that your putting yourself above because you’re apart of.

So, for anyone in leadership, if anyone individual benefits I see this as being very wrong. Very wrong. When a few people benefit you’ve got a whole nation of people, and I’m saying nation because this is Sto:lo Territory that they’re going to impact directly, including the non-Native people. I know seven generations from now this is going to impact, the impact it could have is not right.

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery practices in relation to air and water and Sto:lo traditions?

GP: I think the only comment that I would finish up with and again it would apply to all of it is maintaining balance. And just like people, we need one another, however today’s society, value is put on some people. Not everybody’s interest are at heart, and the same with this. The wind and the air are elements. We have the four directions, we have the four races of people and you have the four elements, and wind and air, fire and water. Everything is interconnected. And you cannot survive if those are not in balance. We’re already struggling as a people because we’re imbalanced. First Nations people are just now beginning to stand up is the expression I can use. Because for too long, our language and our culture was taken away, why?

People need to look at that. Why? It was to weaken the people. We weren’t suppose to be here. If you look at the doggone history since contact, we weren’t suppose to be here. They never expected First Nation’s people to survive. And in George Manual’s words,
the mere fact that we survive, we celebrate the mere fact that we survive. We knew we could only go to our history, our oral traditions, our people knew, the spiritual people knew, and there’s prophecies about it; how our people would struggle, but we also knew we would stand up and take our rightful place and it would be the fifth generation. Well we’re the fifth generation, anyone over thirty. So, this is all part of that.

Why did we survive? It’s probably to share our understanding, and it is. Because First Nations have an ability to connect with the past and the future, but, it’s supposed to be shared with all people. We come from the color red, the color red. From the east, that’s where the First Nations come from. From the west come the black people. All races there gift is understanding for everything they’ve been through. And that’s supposed to be shared with all people. From the south come the Asian people, the color yellow, from the north the white people, there gift is the gift of travel, but we’re suppose to come together with a true respect, a true understanding, that’s how this earth as we know it, will know peace.

I take that one step forward, and it’s about balance and that knowledge being shared, that’s why I’m willing to share this. But, until people can come together with true respect and true understanding, that’s the only day this earth will know it will know peace. And, it’s the fourth time and it’ll be the last time. So the teaching indirectly is supposed to be shared. But how many people are willing to listen. That’s the test.

So, they talk about SE2, that’s a test. Are the people going to listen? Are they going to move forward in self interest?

PK: Do you have any concerns of the affects of air and water pollution on Sto:lo culture, traditions and practices?

GP: Do you want to ask that at the end, because I think it does apply to all of them?

Sxwo:yxwey

PK: Sxwo:yxwey. How important is the sxwo:yxwey tradition to you?

GP: It’s very important. This part of our ceremonies has just come back to our family in my generation, because we couldn’t practice our ceremonies here, it was against the law. They punished our elders, our spiritual leaders, many of them died as a result of it. In 1951 that law was lifted, but you could bet after residential school and after the laws you could bet our people were afraid. They were afraid, I know that fear, I lived
that fear, I felt that fear. I can say that my mother knew what that was. She witnessed her own mother being beaten because she was a spiritual and in the end, she beat me because I’m like my grandmother, sxwo:yxwey is just one part of our ceremonies. It’s just now come back.

Where did it come from? It [sxwo:yxwey] came from the water. And it’s those that particular ceremony celebrates birth, all the main parts of your life, the four main parts of your life, birth, puberty, where you get your name, marriage and death. The four parts of your life, like the four elements, like the four directions, the four races, four main parts of your life, that’s when sxwo:yxwey is used, its’ a powerful spiritual aspect of who we are as a people, as Stó:lō...this is Stó:lō culture.

PK: How important is sxwo:yxwey to Stó:lō culture?

GP: It’s who we are as a people. Like we have cedar people, like we have sturgeon people. We have people that belong to sxwo:yxwey, they take care of families in our communities. It comes from the spirit. That’s why I know, in my own personal view, is that people are bad. The spirit is good. I want to say that a hundred times. People are bad. The spirit is good. While people control where we live, people can try to impose things like SE2, people can control what other people learn and not learn.

That’s why I challenge to let every man woman and child to know the impact. And if they are right in their mind, the rightful leader will do what’s right by the people. And sxwo:yxwey came from the spirit to stand our people up, to take care of our people and it’s important to who we are.

PK: How is sxwo:yxwey connected to air and water?

GP: Sxwo:yxwey comes from the water. That’s where it came from. There are lots of stories connected to the water. Why did it come from the water? People can go without food for days but you won’t last without water. Water is the essence of people. Our bodies are made up of a majority of water, and water and air are two most important elements. If anything stays in the water it’s not going to survive either. Air is what keeps the balance, that’s who we are as a people. It [sxwo:yxwey] is very much connected to the water, and very much connected to air.

PK: What about clean air and clean water in connection to sxwo:yxwey?

GP: Actually, sxwo:yxwey came as a result of a man that was covered in sores. What does clean mean? And that’s a responsibility we all have. The only way I can parallel
it is, when a child is born, a child is born pure. When you come into this world you come into this world pure, body, mind and spirit. And, we are charged with maintaining that. Every individual who comes into the world comes in for a reason.

If we take care of that individual, that individual grows up, your brought here for a reason. The elders would just ask, why are you here? Who are you? That's the faith that we have as a people, that everything has a place. We're not going to survive without clean air and clean water. Sxwo:ywey is a reminder to us to maintain that balance.

The spirit gives us everything that we need to survive. But we're charged to take care of it. And if we don't take care of it, we're going to lose it. That's the other part of it, the balance, if we don't take care of this we're going to lose it. So it's very important balance, the sxwo:ywey in my view is a reminder, when a child is born, that's how we're suppose to take care of ourselves, maintain that pureness, maintain that cleanliness, maintain the clean air, maintain the clean water quality.

It’s a reminder to the people, when you stand up a person and give them a name or they get married, sxwo:ywey comes out. The sxwo:ywey brushes them off. It’s like another part of their life the couple is starting and they get cleansed in a spiritual sense. It’s a reminder again, that we're supposed to be balanced with water with air, with who we are as a people.

PK: How would additional pollution of the air and the water affect sxwo:ywey?

I don't believe that's a very difficult question because we know that it has a cycle. If the air is polluted, it's going to go into our environment, into who we are, we're going to breath it. And we can only do so much as a people. Everybody has got to do their part. If they can't and we can't do our part, if people don't listen and again, I'm going to go over and over again with the fact that you can say only so much. Somebody's got to listen.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect sxwo:ywey from the affects of air and water pollution?

GP: Again, First Nations need to be involved at every level of decisions that are made that impact our environment. And, I charge the other side, people need to listen, things like SE2 cannot happen. Unless they involve First Nations people, it's not even a question, they wouldn't even have to ask the questions. They would know.
PK: Is there anything else that I should’ve asked you about Sxwo:ywey in relation to air and water?

GP: I think that the most important part of sxwo:ywey is that it comes from the water. Water is a cleanser, water is part of who we are. The fact that sxwo:ywey comes from water, came from water as a medicine to our people is a reminder that our water has to be kept clean. We have a responsibility as a people, not just to ourselves today, not just what we have today, but we have to look forward for our children, our grand children and seven generations from now. I encourage, I challenge, I’ll do whatever it is, to do whatever it is to take the responsibility, to do what’s right. Anybody can do what’s wrong, it takes a great person and a great mind to do what’s right.

Syuwel/Winter Dance

PK: Onto Syuwel/Winter Dance? How important is Syuwel tradition to you?

GP: Syuwel is very important, again, because this is part of our life that was taken away. Our people were told that it [Syuwel] was bad, that they’re the devil, that it [Syuwel] was wrong. And still today many families fear our own ceremonies as a result and this has only come back in my generation. I would be the first one on my grandfather’s side, my father’s side, my mother’s side in four generations, and you can bet that we’ve suffered as a result.

Why? I was told to my face that I was the devil. I listened to the stories of my uncle of how they had to hide away to do this and how they would be arrested in his time. My grandmother told me how they - government and churches - came into our communities and piled our ceremonial regalia in the middle and burned it or how it was all sold at auctions. I’ve got tons of stories on how some of those things came back to the family out of the goodness of a non-native elder. I have traveled to Washington and different places and seen our ceremonial masks in museums. How important is it to us? Very important…very important. It’s who we are.

We were down to a handful of our elders, just a handful, certainly from 1970. Today we can fill a smokehouse, a longhouse, just with our own Sto:lo, so it [Syuwel] is very important.

PK: How is Syuwel connected to air and water?
GP: Again, it falls in line with the other. We use water because it’s a purifier. Part of our training is going to the water and I did that for fifteen years everyday. But, you don’t have to be a dancer, cause my grandfather would tell me and I thought he was crazy. He would say, “you run up and go swimming in the water.” And, that was something everyone was charged with doing cause the water cleanses you body, mind and spirit. Not only do you drink it, but you bath in it. Not like today with warm soapy water, that’s nice we did that too, but, it was going up to the mountain and going in the water everyday, cause your not cleansing just your body, but your mind and your spirit as well. The same thing goes, the water and the air go hand in hand. As like a man and a woman, hand in hand, you can’t have one without the other. And if it’s not clean, we’re not clean. It’s who we are.

PK: Can winter dance ceremonies be affected by air pollution and water pollution?

Yes they can, because if you flip anything around, the opposite of sadness is happiness. The opposite of hate or anger is love and kindness. What are you going to have if the clean air and the clean water we enjoy to a large extent given the pollution of the day, I can still go to the mountain and get cleansed body, mind and spirit. Now, you flip that around and they’re polluted. What are you coming back with? That’s not going to happen. So, where do you go for that, if your water and air is polluted? It affects you and your whole being.

We have our place here in our territory. We’re not going to pack our bags and move.

PK: How would additional pollution of air and water affect Syuwel ceremonies?

GP: In the same way as the water, because water and air go hand in hand. It’s the air that we breath. Just today because of the pollution, many families in our communities have asthma and other related illnesses. What’s going to happen if SE2 comes?

The important part of that is Sto:lo people we live here in our territory. We’re tied to our land. I can’t move anywhere else other than the territory. So we wouldn’t be able to carry on as a people [if SE2 polluted us further, emphasis added], and that’s scarey.

PK: Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Syuwel / Winter Dancing from affects of air and water pollution?
GP: I would again, that’s going an answer that goes across the board. You can apply my answer regarding every man woman and child, Sto:lo and non-Sto:lo has to have this information about SE2. There would be no question.

I believe that the individual that wants to move the SE2 agenda along, the mere fact that the question exists tells me that it’s not right. You wouldn’t have to ask if it was right. We wouldn’t have to do this interview if it was the right thing to do. It’s not a question.

Fishing/Hunting/Gathering

PK: Regarding Hunting, Fishing and Gathering, how important is the hunting and gathering tradition to you?

GP: I grew up with that. I grew up at a time when the hunters came back with a deer, I witnessed first hand how people would gather from all over the reserve and the hunters gave all the people food. I grew up when the hooligans (Swee wa) were still abundant. Again, all people would come form all over the reserve and take what they needed and go home. When the salmon was caught and how it was delivered to the elders first. And, I witnessed that, I grew up with that, and I also grew up when the food patterns changed because of new hunting and fishing regulations didn’t allow our families access anymore. We started to switch over to store bought bread, store bought meat and store bought this and that.

Personally I suffered physically, and my health suffers as a result in this change of diet. All they have to look at, and that would be an interesting study, how many Sto:lo people have had their gallbladders removed as a result of the diet change and I’m one of them. That’s a result of diet change.

I remember growing up and my grandmother would be eating smoked fish and boiled potato for breakfast, because we learned to like the sugar that rotted all our teeth. We thought that was a treat. Now today I’m the one sitting there eating smoked fish and bread, or wind dry fish and bread.

The difference is so are my children. My family would rather eat our traditional foods. I don’t store bought meat. I don’t eat meat as a result. I’m a quasi vegetarian, but you can bet if my nephew brings me heart, liver, or deer meat, I’ll eat that. But, I won’t eat anymore store bought meat.
PK: How important is the gathering hunting and tradition to Sto:lo culture?

GP: Same, more and more of our families because our own people are involved in education our own people are getting involved with health. Sto:lo people are turning back to our traditional ways of diet. All that knowledge is coming back to our communities, because we've seen the devastation of diabetes. We live with diabetes rampant in our communities. We live with generation or two of people where the health authorities pulled the teeth of our kids instead of doing maintenance. Our own people are turning back to traditional foods as well.

PK: How is the hunting and gathering tradition connected to air and water.

GP: Same, if we rely, we know hunting patterns and fishing patterns, we know, they know when to hunt the deer, they know where the deer will be. It’s not even a question. Our hunters were raised with the teachings. There’s a teaching that goes with it as well. One, you don’t take more than you need. Two, you share what you take. There’s immense teaching I grew up hearing about. I'm not a hunter, but I know a good hunter when I see one. They have the teaching.

PK: Can gathering and hunting practices be affected by air and water pollution?

GP: Oh yes, if you don’t have the clean air and clean water they’re not going to survive. We barely survive. A lot of our people now rely on different medication, different sorts because they are trying to survive because our bodies are infected. Well the deer and the animals don’t have that. They could be impacted, they wouldn’t survive.

I don’t know what it is, I just cannot eat store bought meat. I can eat meat that comes from a man that has our teaching, that knowledge, cause it’s not just going out and shooting a deer. There’s a teaching that goes with it. That man has to be right in his heart, and his mind, and how he takes care of the deer, right to when the meat is brought to the people.

I don’t know what stores put into their meats. That’s why I’m a quasi vegetarian.

PK: How would additional pollution affect practices and teachings of Gathering and Hunting?

GP: Well, the hunter is just as important right. The hunter has teachings they have to follow. It’s not about going out and shooting a deer. It includes the water. Air and
water are the same thing, you can’t have one without the other. There’s a teaching about that. So the person, the hunter has to be right body, mind and spirit. But, as well, the practices and teachings of gathering and hunting.

Shxweli

PK: What is Shxweli?

GP: The spirit. For too many years, that is exactly what they took away from our people, was our spirituality. I’ve seen that, not just amongst the Sto:lo but the larger community, but to the world. That’s what the war is about.

What is it? It’s people trying to control people, and that’s why I say people are bad, the spirit is good. Because I know, I can say with confidence, the spirit has given people, it’s given us all that we need. We’re suppose to take what we need, we take too much as a people. First Nations people were not a materialistic people. You take what you need. If everybody did that we would live in a really good world. The spirit is good, people are bad, because people are weak minded. That’s not how we’re suppose to be, but I believe it’s First Nations’ people, we’re suppose to share our understanding to the larger community, and to validate that do have that understanding.

We have more than we need if it was used right.

PK: How can you tell the health of Shxweli?

GP: By just looking a people. I don’t just look at First Nations. I know the difference when a person is body, mind and spirit, you have your body mind and spirit, those make up your emotions. That’s who you are as an individual and as a people.

If one person isn’t right, everybody suffers because we’re all in this circle, First Nations or not. We’re all One. If one person isn’t right it impacts all of us. If a person doesn’t have body, mind and spirit and something that is wrong with your body, that affects your mind and your spirit, something wrong with your body affects your spirit and your mind, something with your spirit affects your body and your mind, so all those three things are interconnected. And, your spirit is part of that, like the water and the air. Everything is interconnected. If one is not right it affects the other two.

PK: Is there a Shxweli of air and water?
Everything in Sto:lo view is alive. So if you put that to air and water, everything is alive. The least smallest thing in the world has a spirit. Every thing in the world is alive, that’s our Sto:lo worldview. That’s why we call the tree our brother. If they could see the spirit on the tree, if they could see, and the people call it energy, if they go outside, ask a First Nations people ask a person that is spiritual, they know. If you knew everything had a spirit, you would treat things different. So, air and water have an energy, a spirit. Again, that’s why we need it. If we don’t take care of that, how can it take care of us?

PK: What affect does air pollution and water pollution have on Shxweli?

GP: The only way that I can express that is are you going to go wash up in dirty water? Are you going to go and eat garbage? If the air and water are polluted, we as Stó:lō are polluted too.

PK: What is the current health of Shxweli in Sto:lo territory?

GP: It’s growing and it’s good. I see, I tell people it doesn’t matter how you pray. But, everybody needs prayer. Why? To take care of their spirit. Whether you pray in a church, whether you pray in a lodge, or the longhouse, whether you pray in the home or go to the mountain, because your prayer connects you to the Creator and purifies that connection. You eat food as nourishment for your body, you talk to somebody, it’s for your mind and your body, prayer is for your spirit. And, so everybody needs prayer. Well, for too long, that was taken away from us as Sto:lo.

More of our people are going back to our ceremonies and traditions. But, I tell people, it doesn’t matter how you pray. We wouldn’t have that war in that other country if people respected one another. It’s about respect. Because prayer is important, how you pray is not important. Connecting to the spirit is important. More and more of our communities are going back to that.

I have seen the difference prayer makes to a family, a person, a nation.

PK: What is the current health of water Shxweli?

GP: Scarey! And air, it’s scarey. I know because I have asthma as a result of the air pollution today. It’s harder and harder to go to a place to cleanse. It’s harder and harder to find.

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PK: Do you know of some types of resources that have a Shxweli more sensitive than other to disturbance?

GP: I think all you have to do is look at the cycle of water and air. And, the air moves the water, and water moves and it goes back into the air and ends up coming back again as water. And, you know if that is interrupted for any reason, what are we getting back?

They say that because we live in a circle, what we send out ends up coming back to you. If it’s a good thing, you send out kindness and respect that comes back to you. You send out hate and anger, that comes back to you? Well what are sending out through our water? If it’s pollution or garbage, that’s what’s going to come back to us. That’s what SE2 is, it’a garbage. And do we need it, it’s my question, do we need this? And the answer is NO, why is SE2 being built?

Sxwoxwiyam

PK: ....Are there any other things I should have asked you about Shxweli before we move onto Sxwoxwiyam?

GP: Oh, there’s lots, lots...Sxwoxwiyam is lots of stories. I know we’re running out of time, it’s 11:05, I’ve got someone else waiting, but Sxwoxwiyam has lots of stories. What are Sxwoxwiyam? They are stories, that is how our elders taught us, and they never ever told us what to do. The elders knew by giving us all the information we needed we would do what was right. Every man, woman and child knows what’s right and what’s wrong. That’s why I say, the fact that they have to ask is tells us it’s not right to do Sumas Energy 2.

Sxwoxwiyam stories about the water, and the air, there are so many of them connected, Sxwo:ywey is one of them. Other ones about water and air, and about the power of water and air, I grew up with that....

PK: Are there any there any stories that you know of in the Sto:lo Sxwoxwiyam about polluting air and water?

GP: Well, there are stories about the flood certainly in our area. When the people, that happened throughout the world, that’s how far back our stories go. Again its about people doing what they are not supposed to do. If you don’t do what your supposed to do, there are countless stories. What are they? They are about responsibility.
Our people didn’t tell others what to do. Every individual had their own mind and heart that they would follow. You’re supposed to follow your heart and mind, that is what Sxwoxwiyam is about. It’s about teaching individuals about responsibility and doing what’s right. I heard story after story and I share them with whoever will listen.

My grandmother never told me what a story meant, it was up to you to figure what it was about and it was up to you to figure it out. That’s what the elders would say. You’re listening when you can understand the stories. And at the end of the day, the stories are about kindness and respect. You would never do anything to hurt anyone else, that’s what those stories are about. You never do anything, you never put yourself above anyone else or ahead of somebody. You never step in front of an elder. The teachings, you do what’s right.

It takes a big person to do what’s right. The elders would just shake their head, and the elder would say that person listens. You don’t even hear it, they never judge you one way or the other.

There’s a fine line, if you have the knowledge, and if you don’t say what it is, then the responsibility stays with you for not doing, for not following through with what’s right.

‘Sxwoxwiyam’ the stories are to teach people. Lessons, and if you never got the lesson, you can’t hear. That’s why my grandmother would say are they deaf? Or they would look at them, oh, there’s a name in our language. Poor didn’t mean you were poor materialistically, it meant the teaching. “Oh, those people are poor.” You just feel sorry for them because they don’t have the teaching.

You are considered a rich person when you carry the teaching. When you do what you are supposed to do responsibly, that’s what Sxwoxwiyam means. People have got to do right by everyone, not just for the individual. People have got to do right (counter at 246) by all people, not just selectively, for the coming generations. That’s responsible.

There were know white people. ‘Xwelmxew’ means person; that separates us from the cedar people, the ones that swim, the ones that fly, the four legged ones, the air we breathe, the water that we use, that separates us, we’re just apart of.

**Stl’aleqem**

PK: What are Stl’aleqem?
GP: There are spiritual beings. I think people call that, when you move up from different levels of spirituality, the larger society calls that ‘enlightenment’. Everything has its' place. Again, you have spiritual people, you have elders, you have plant people, you have salmon people, well these Stl’aleqem have their place as well.

Again, they’re messengers and teachers, just to be used to maintain balance in a good way.

PK: I think because we’re short on time we cut some questions short. What is the relationship between Stl’aleqem and air and water?

GP: Everything has its place. Whether it’s the Winter Dancing, Shxweli, whether is Stl’aleqem, everything has its' place. It's not here for not. Not too many people know about that, or know about them, or even see them, but everything has its' place, and it’s apart of who we are as a people. It’s like getting dressed and leaving your socks off. Right, it’s all apart of who we are.

You cannot survive, people cannot survive, it’s like getting in a car with no wheels. The knowledge of being a complete person of body, mind and spirit. The teaching that goes above the water and air, understanding enlightenment, all of those things makes a better place for our people. It wasn’t meant for one individual, or one family or one community. Everybody is suppose to have this knowledge. Everybody is here for a reason. When I see a baby born, I wonder what is that child bringing us? Maybe that child has cure for cancer. Maybe that child or family has the medicine for liver cancer.

We're given everything that we need. We're never suppose to take more than we need. No one individual is suppose to benefit more than the other. That’s what that is about. That comes to the ones its’ suppose to come to, but it’s suppose to benefit all people. At the end of the day, that’s the lesson.

You have the four races, the four elements, the four directions, the four winds, and there’s four beings in the stages of you life. All of that is meant for all people. Respect and kindness, happiness, every individual is suppose to have that, not just some people. It’s doing right by the people. Enlightenment, prayer and spirituality, it comes to you the way you understand it. But it starts with every individual first.

Then it goes to family and community. SE2 is not going to do that. It can’t, how can it?
Water Babies

PK: Water Babies? What are Water Babies?

GP: Again, they are connected to our spirituality. They are a people in themselves. They reminders of who we are, like we have cedar people, salmon people, you have the water people. Not necessarily water babies, it’s a term you can't translate from our language, Halqemeylem to English.

Water Babies are a people, and they call them babies or children because they are little people, really. They are there for those people who can see them, like the cedar people, like the salmon people, we all have again our own way of taking care of ourselves, that were given to families or people as a strength. What you know isn't for you, it’s meant to be shared, to take care of everybody.

No individual is suppose to harbor a strength in itself. It’s suppose to take care of the people. That’s what were here for, take care of the people, take care of one another, be good to one another. For the most part, that’s what I see everyday. One hundred and fifty percent by some, and those that don't know, my grandmother would say they just don't know. If they only knew, if people only knew, that's all I can say?

PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you?

GP: I would conclude, and may be repetitive, but the people need to understand that all of those things are given to the people by the spirit to help us take care of ourselves. We here for a very short time, and we create our future, we create our future as a people. Other people have impose values and beliefs on us, certainly on the Sto:lo and all other First Nations, they have taken away a lifestyle, but the spirit is giving it back to us.

It’s never there to hurt nobody. It’s there to help us. We cannot exist without clean air and clean water. By virtue of what we know and understand, we’re suppose to take care of that. It’s everybody’s responsibility, every man, woman and child’s responsibility. Until every man, woman and child know the impact that SE2 can have, they got to know right moving that agenda along.

Until every First Nations are involved in every level of government in every community, they’ve got no right making decisions that would impact our culture and
who we are as a people. That’s who we are, that’s who we are. And we’re suppose to take care for the next seven generations.

I can’t see SE2 doing that plan.

PK: Overall, are there any other concerns regarding the overall picture?

GP: *You have your body, your mind and your spirit, SE2 could impact who we are. We rely on the clean water for just our body, for our spirit, and our mind, it cleanses us.*

Are we going to wash up in dirty water, are we going to drink dirty water? What are my grandchildren, great grandchildren and seven generations from now going to do? Sumas Energy 2 has got no business doing that.
4.2.16 Wilfreda Paul, Annie Narte and Catelina Renteria

Interviewee: Wilfreda Paul, Annie Narte, and Catelina Renteria, Skway
Interviewer: Patricia Kelly
Date of Interview: January 29, 2004

Wind Dry/Dry Rack Fishery

PK: How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you? If I can start with you Wilfreda...

WP: Rephrase the question...

PK: As Sto:lo people, we use wind dry fish, how important is that fishery to you?

WP: The important thing about that here, what I see is if this SE2 comes about polluting the air, what happens to the wind dry? It gets contaminated, and it’s no good to us, it’s wasted. Therefore, the water is important to us also, because of the fish. We get the fish from the water and dry it in the wind. I see the map shown here is going to destroy a lot of preservation of the Native people who need this, who live by the fish. I would say no to the Sumas Energy 2 plant.

AN: I’ve been eating wind dry fish since I can remember. My body is so used to wind dry, my body has to have fish, canned fish, frozen fish, wind dry fish once a week. I need it. All my children eat fish, my great grand children eat fish. And, if that gone, they’re taking food right out of our mouth for the generations to come.

PK: How old are you?

AN: I'll be seventy-one in a couple of days.

PK: Wilfreda, how old are you?

WP: I’m sixty-six.

PK: How important is the Wind Dry and Dry Rack Fishery tradition to you?
CR: Like my Mom said, it’s been there every since I was a little kid. We’d go up to the canyon all the time, running away from the fish wardens. Like she said, we had to have it because it’s part of who I am. We needed to trade fish. That is how we fed ourselves. We traded it for money or gas or whatever we needed. It’s been part of me since I have known. My Mom used to tell the council that her grandfather used to catch the train up to the canyon to go Wind Drying and come back with all the salmon all dried. My Mom said she didn’t like to hear about going up because she said you are going to be tired.

Ever since I have known we’ve always gone up to the canyon, we’ve always fished. It’s who we are. It’s part of our spirit, it’s part of our physical being, it’s part of our mental being, it’s all of who we are. And, if that’s gone what’s the use, we’ve got to sustain the fishing for our *Tup Luk* [phonetic spelling meaning ‘Seven Generations’].

**PK: How important is Wind Dry and Dry Rack Fishery to Sto:lo culture?**

AN: It’s the same as down here, if you don’t dry is you buy it. There are a lot of people who dry it to sell at seven dollars a side.

**PK: So, it’s part of our economy.**

WP: They come down from the canyon and go house to house selling Wind Dry Fish. For people who are unable to go up there, they come to us.

**PK: Rephrasing this question for a bit, would Sto:lo culture suffer if we couldn’t Wind Dry our Fish anymore, or we couldn’t eat Wind Dry Fish, could we still say we’re Sto:lo. Overall with ten thousand Sto:lo, how important is it?**

CR: That’s the backbone. We’re called Sto:lo because it’s the river and we all practice the same belief. We use it in ceremonies, burnings, to feed the elders, if you don’t have that thing there in your spirit, because that salmon gave their life to sustain life, if we didn’t have that, then what? It annihilates all our people. It would be very threatening to our way of life. It’s total destruction.

WP: That is our strength and our way of life. It’s our livelihood. Wind Dry Fish is the most important to our people. If you destroy that, it would be destroying that also.

CR: I don’t know what we would do if we couldn’t sell fish or eat fish?
PK: How is Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Dry Fishery connected to air and water?

AN: Well, you get the fish from the water and then you dry it in the air and if it gets water on it again, it spoils the fish. We need the air and water for our livelihood.

PK: How important is clean air and clean water to Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices?

AN: Our Sleegis [Wind Dried Salmon], we have both, we have to have clean air and we have to have clean water.

WP: It’s because of the air that’s why it’s called Wind Dry in the English language. It’s the air that dries the fish. Polluted air and you get polluted fish.

CR: Is that why we’re all crazy? What’s in there, everybody should do a test? Then you can say that all these people that are eating fish that may get contaminated, you do something from right now and compare it later. Is that going to be a good thing for human beings to live on? Contamination is not good.

PK: Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices be affected by air pollution and water pollution?

AN: Water pollution and air pollution, if it’s going into the air, it’s going to go into the water.

WP: Also, the herbs.

AN: It’s going to go into our dirt and our vegetables, our fruit...

PK: How would additional pollution of the air or water affect practice and teachings of Dry Rack and Wind Dry Fishery? If we had polluted air, would you be able to continue the teachings?

AN: No, I don’t think so. If it’s that polluted, maybe our children and great, great grand children will have brain disease and everything.

CR: Okay kids, this is how we destroy things. What is the real motivation for the National Energy Board? Is it so they can make a decision for them to have access to our resources such as the hydro electric power or whatever there is? They’re out
weighing the energy towards life and I don't think that kind of energy is a good teaching. To have energy, we have to have find something in the middle so that we can continue to perpetuate our human life so that we can still survive.

If it’s not just going to affect my grandchildren or Sto:lo people, it’s going to affect everybody. That teaching we’ve been trying to tell the Energy Board from day one, since they came over here how to run affairs around here, to be good the land, to not pollute the air, to not to pollute the water, you take care of the plants and take only what you need. This is too excessive. That’s more than the hell we need. We’re going to have to cut back, only one light in the house. It is, because we depend on the trees for our air and if it’s going to go into the air and water, we’re not going to have any trees, vegetation, animals depend on that, we depend on the animals so that we can coexist with one another. This is not good. This is not a good teaching. This is not what our ancestors told us to do. We only took enough what we needed, and this is way too excessive.

PK: Earlier, you mentioned the Seven Generations...

CR: What are we going to teach our children? Oh yes, destroy the land so we can have power. Now! Then to make a decision for seven generations ahead of us in two weeks? Four weeks? Let’s make this decision in four weeks for seven generations ahead of us, there’s no rush, there’s no rush here folks. You’ve got to think about what this decision is going to do for Seven Generations ahead of us and behind us. The ones that came before us taught us to take only what you need. Pray before you take it, give offerings, you give thanks, and this is the way we treat our mother?

PK: What suggestions might you have to protect the Dry Rack and the Dry Rack Fishery?

CR: I think, take it easy. You are going to have to go back and rethink this. The elders have got to be heard.

Fishing/Hunting/Gathering

PK: How important is the Gathering, Hunting and Fishing tradition to you?

WP: These in our culture, the fish and the hunting are the most important to us, because this is what we eat during our ceremonies and our gatherings, during our longhouse traditions. These are the foods that we eat mainly amongst our people.
AN: It’s about having a gathering. The first thing we have is the fish. I’m a fish man, I can’t eat anything else. When we go to the smokehouse, they don’t want you to eat clams and crab for your first year. They want you to eat hunted food for your first year. No white meat, no tuna. But, I see these, fifteen years ago, it was a lot different, they’re trying to add television in there. That was a no, no before. You just had to sit there and pray, shake your pole, sit down, go for your baths, go to the mountains.

PK: Do we still go to the mountains?

AN: They go bath in ice water. They went the other morning. They still do that. When they take their baths they don’t have enough now, when the water is polluted they can’t go in. They want clean, you can see the bottom of the water, that’s how you can see the rocks. They go where the cleanest water is. They don’t want you going into the river because it looks like it’s mixed with dirt. They go for the creeks that come down from the mountain where the water is really, really clean. Your spirit will get cleansed. Polluting everything is a no, no. You can’t do your dance right, and your spirit wouldn’t get cleansed right.

PK: What about they gathering...?

CR: You need some of the plants for medicine, the Stolmuux, the licorice root for sore throat, the cedar boughs, devil’s club.

AN: If it’s all polluted everything will be gone. The cedar will be gone, our ferns, we use the ferns for the bath, for the first bath. And, then you go find a mountain creek early in the morning, five in the morning, to lift your spirit up. Any way you put it, it’s no good, it’s going to be all gone. There’s no way it’s going to be right for anything living, the plants, the trees, human beings, the water.

PK: I think rather than going question by question, generally, I ask about the fishing, hunting and gathering. Could we continue our culture without being able to hunt, to fish and to gather? Would we be considered Sto:lo without being able to hunt, fishing and gathering?

AN: Maybe we will have to change our food all together. They say it gives you more power when you listen to what they want you to do. Without all this hunting and fishing, I wonder if you are going to have power? See these white people, they’re really scared of your Syuwel, it’s powerful. If you listen to what they say.
We’re scared of Christians, they found out, they said it was a no good religion. But, it isn’t, it could go two ways, bad or good, if you want it, it’s your choice. Like any other religion, if you want to go to church. If you don’t want to follow what you are supposed to do, it’s the same in the smokehouse.

**PK: Would additional pollution hinder the teachings for the generations coming?**

**AN:** If this pollution gets so bad, and everybody starts dying, I’m not going to stay here, I’m going to move some place else where it’s not polluted.

**PK: Would you be able to live your culture, your practices and traditions if you moved?**

**AN:** I heard one dancer say she went to England, and she said Syuwel isn’t there. It’s not over there, it’s just in this valley. It heard her say, if you travel, you can’t do your song over there, it won’t come. That’s what she said. I never traveled to another country and tried my singing. Around here if you want to sing it just comes. I never went to Mexico. That one girl said her song wouldn’t come in England.

**WP:** Another girl said she traveled to Australia, for two years. The same thing that Annie is saying, once she returned and came down on the plane and hit this area, then it came out, and she made her noise. She said she never did that in Australia. It’s just in this area.

**AN:** There’s a girl, she’s married to a Mexican, she was taken at Frank’s place. Every year she has to stay at Frank’s for a week or so to do her song because it’s not over there. That’s what she said. She married way into Mexico.

I said to her, how come you have to come over here? She said there is no Syuwel over there, you can’t do it, Syuwel won’t come. But, when she gets here, she dances and dances and dances. Just over here.

**PK: Is there anything else that I should have asked you regarding the hunting, gathering and fishing in relation to Sto:lo culture and air and water?**

**WP:** I think we’ve covered everything. We need that for survival. But if that’s going to be destroyed, all these guys are going to be getting sick with a new kind of disease. You’ll wonder, gee, do we have to move our kids to a new area. If they start to die, we couldn’t fish. We got no clean water.
Water Babies

PK: What are Water Babies?

AN: I never heard of that.

CR: No, you said that Grampa pulled one up in the net, and that it looked like a mermaid.

AN: Like a mermaid, we put her back in the water, she had long hair but her body was scaly. He put her back in because she got caught on the net.

WP: In Chilliwack Lake, there are a lot of Water Babies.

Shxweli

PK: I want to go back, then and ask Catalina if you can. What is Shxweli?

CR: I heard that it’s a life force.

PK: Regarding that life force, how important would that be to our Sto:lo tradition?

CR: Like everybody has a soul. Your soul is part of who you are. It’s part of your spirit. How the Christians would believe in it would be like that you’re the light, that you carry around the light within your spirit. You have to keep feeding that spirit. Same thing with our Shxweli, you have to take care of your spirit, so that you can either help somebody else or sometime you might need somebody else’s help. People have different gifts, one has the gift to read songs. If your feeling bad about something, you go take stress off, you go take yourself for a bath or go meditate somewhere to take care of it. That’s all, it’s a basic human spirituality. There are parallels with the bible.

I’m thinking that if our religion or belief system is a lot older than Christianity, and the people that came over here to see how we were living, looked at the way we live and wrote it down, and took it upon themselves as their knowledge. We have already been practicing this for generations. If you look at the sacraments in Catholicism they are almost completely the same. You have a sacraments of where you go and confess, or you reconcile of where you done something wrong. You tell an elder or you see someone
younger not doing the right thing then that’s, you tell them, and you’re absolved from that sin.

There’s another stage too, where you go up for you communion and naming. What name do you give to your child, we have the same thing, we throw a big party and same thing with the church. Then there’s confirmation, that you know I confirm you are getting confirmed.

Then you have purification rights in the smokehouse. Young men and women going through adolescence into adulthood, then what comes next Mom? Getting married, or what?

AN: Marriage, yes.

CR: Like you now, your involved in a vocation where you need to support your family. Holy orders protecting our people, such as, ministries who have different offices, they copied our system of government. You have city council and we have tribal council, who had it first?

So, I don’t see what the big question is... It’s such a simple process. But, it’s a long process. The principles are simple. That’s like we’re saying right now, I don’t understand what they don’t understand about having a simple life. Or, why things are interconnected.

We all need each other for one thing, to sustain life. That’s how I think our Shxweli should be protected. It’s fairly simple.

PK: If the Shxweli our life force, what is the current health of Shxweli in Sto:lo territory?

CR: I think it’s degraded, but at the same time it is fairly strong, because look how many generations that are alive right now. People say we’ve lost our language, but, no, we haven’t lost a darn thing. We’re just waking it back up. We still practice oral traditions, we have our witnesses, we have our gatherings for how many generations? Since time immemorial, this cultural tradition has been practiced.
5.0 DISCUSSION: MODELLING THE INTERCONNECTED DIMENSIONS OF STÓ:lō CULTURE

Rather than attempt to summarize or interpret the content of the study interviews, it is the objective here to present in visual form some of the main principles of Stó:lō culture derived from the words of the interviewees. The intention here is to draw together in one image some of the central concepts of Stó:lō culture described by the interviewees that might otherwise go unnoticed, be misunderstood, or remain unrecognized by those unfamiliar to Stó:lō culture. Figure 6 - ‘Four Interconnected Dimensions of Stó:lō Culture’ - was conceived of and constructed in an effort to meet this objective. While an effective visual should stand alone, the complexity of this image, and the principles involved, require some explanation.

5.1 Spherical Geometry – the Basic Form of Stó:lō Culture

One of the key concepts presented here is that Stó:lō culture is highly interconnected at numerous levels and across numerous dimensions, such that it is best modeled by a three-dimensional sphere. The framework of a geometric sphere is shown structurally as an object with a three-way axis (X,Y, Z coordinates) – these axis’ representing three planes connected at a central point. Encompassing this framework is the ‘skin’, so to speak, or surface of the sphere that represents a fourth dimension connected to, containing, and adding form to the X, Y, and Z axis’. This structural framework is depicted in the upper left hand corner of Figure 6.

5.2 Identifying the Dimensions of Stó:lō Culture

Once the basic form of Stó:lō culture is modeled, the four dimensions comprising the spherical framework can be linked to Stó:lō culture and identified:

- X-axis = the dimension of ‘Principles and Teachings’
- Y-axis = the dimension of ‘The Individual’
- Z-axis = the dimension of ‘The Collective’
- ‘Surface’ = the dimension of ‘Time / Intergenerational Relations’

What must be remembered is that each of these axis’ is itself spherical in nature, rather than two dimensional, making graphic representation of this model extremely difficult and abstract. The central image in Figure 6 depicts a conceptual version of the
identified dimensions as ‘exploded’ from the spherical structure. All four dimensions are shown as interconnected spheres, rotating on one visibly shared axis (symbolic of the multiple planes of interconnectedness that actually exist between the spheres). Once identified, each dimension can then be looked at individually as a stand alone sphere.

5.3  **Labeling the Dimensions of Stó:lō Culture**

‘Exploding’ the central image in Figure 6 results in each dimension being artificially separated – like atoms from a molecule – and bisected to create three individual spheres. Each of the three spheres at the bottom of Figure 6, then, represents a cross-section of a corresponding dimension that can be ‘in-filled’ with associated elements of Stó:lō culture bounded by that dimension:

- The dimension of ‘Principles and Teachings’ = Paradigm / World View
- The dimension of ‘The Individual’ = Health
- The dimension of ‘The Collective’ = Identity

More fully,

- Paradigm / World View = Sxwoxwiyam (teachings that define the relationship between nature and culture / people and the environment)
- Health = Shxweli (the life force that binds mind / body / spirit / emotion; connections individuals with all things)
- Identity = Traditions (‘enlivened’ through cultural practices)

Of note, each sphere has a central point indicating where it connects with the shared axis. Lastly, each sphere is also connected to the dimension of ‘Time / Intergenerational Relations’ at the point of the ‘Self’ along a scale extending seven generations past and future. In this regard, the Halq’emeylem term ‘Tómiyeqw’ defines the interconnectedness between the past and future generations, as anchored in the present, a principle central to Stó:lō culture.

5.4  **Stó:lō Cultural – A Finely Balanced and Integrated System**

This schematic represents a number of basic Stó:lō cultural principles describing the relationship between Stó:lō culture and the environment, specifically air and water. The main point that this figure makes is that because of the interconnectedness between these four dimension of Stó:lō culture, impacts on any one dimension affects
each of the other dimensions. For example, any factor impacting shxweli will erode the connections between mind-body-spirit-emotion, causing a decline in health. At this same time, the factor impacts cultural traditions, eroding cultural practices, causing a loss of cultural identity.... erodes cultural teachings (sxwoxwiyam), causing an imbalance in worldview, and upsetting the culture as a whole.

The interconnectedness of these four dimensions of Stó:lō culture amounts to a cultural system that is ‘finely balanced.’ The finely balanced world of the Stó:lō, because of its interconnectedness, is susceptible to being affected at many points along this system of inter-relations with the result of ‘imbalance’. Imbalance amounts to the disintegration of identity, health, worldview and, ultimately, an erosion of Stó:lō culture itself. The following section, returning to the specifics of this study, should be viewed from this finely balanced systems’ approach.
Figure 6 – Four Interconnected Dimensions of Stó:lō Culture.
6.0 CONCLUSIONS: ADDRESSING STUDY OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

6.1 ADDRESSING OBJECTIVE I – to document customs, practices and traditions integral to the distinctive culture of the Stó:lō in relation to air and water (i.e., ‘Aboriginal Traditions’)

6.1.1 Addressing Question 1 - “Are the traditions investigated in this study integral to Stó:lō culture?”

The table below presents findings derived from the interview data addressing the question of the integral nature of the investigated traditions and Stó:lō culture. The primary factor in answering this question is whether or not the survival of Stó:lō culture and identity is dependent upon the continued practice of the tradition in question. An affinitive (i.e., Yes) determination in the table below represents the existence of this type of dependent relationship between the integrity of Stó:lō culture (i.e., the dependent factor) and the integrity of the tradition (i.e., the independent factor).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tradition</th>
<th>Integral to Stó:lō Culture and Identity (at individual and collective levels)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Y)es</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Rack Fishery</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sxwo:yxwey</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shxweli</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stl'aleqem</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Dance</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing/Hunting/Gathering</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Babies</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sxwoxwiyam</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion – Question 1

The findings presented in Table 5, as derived from the interview data, show that each of the eight cultural traditions investigated in this study is integral to the identity and culture of the Stó:lō at both individual and collective levels of measure. Note, however, that these traditions represent only a sample of the complete set of traditions that are potentially integral to the Stó:lō and which may apply to meeting the objectives of this study.

6.2 ADDRESSING OBJECTIVE II – to provide information that will put SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation in a position to assess potential impacts of the SE2 project on those ‘Aboriginal Traditions’

6.2.1 Addressing Question 2 - “Are there links between air, water and the Stó:lō traditions included in this study? If so, what is the nature of the relationship (dependent or independent)?”

The table below presents findings derived from the interview data addressing the question of the links, and the nature of such links (dependent or independent), between the investigated Stó:lō traditions and clean air and water. Dependent variables (e.g., Aboriginal Traditions) respond to changes in associated independent variables (e.g., air/water quality conditions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tradition</th>
<th>‘Dependent’ relationship with clean air</th>
<th>‘Dependent’ relationship with clean water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Y)es</td>
<td>(U)ncertain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Rack Fishery</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sxwo:yxwey</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shxweli</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stl’aleqem</td>
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<td>U</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Dance</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing/Hunting/Gathering</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Babies</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sxwoxwiyam</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Conclusion – Question 2**

The findings presented in Table 6, as derived from the interview data, show that six of the eight investigated traditions - Dry Rack Fishery, Sxwo:yxwey, Shxweli, Winter Dance, Fishing/Hunting/Gathering, and Water Babies - have a dependent relationship with clean air and water. That is, the maintenance of those six traditions that are linked to air and water are dependent (i.e., reliant) upon access to clean air and water; ‘clean’ in its usage within this study describing pure or uncontaminated air (O₂) and water (H₂O).

One form of tradition - Stl’aleqem - was found to be uncertain in the nature of its relationship (as either dependent or independent) with clean air and water. Uncertainty in this case arises from varying responses by the interviewees regarding Stl’aleqem as a tradition and their understanding of it. The state of the information available for use in this study does not permit a conclusive determination regarding Stl’aleqem in answer to Question 2.

One form of tradition - Sxwoxwiyam - was found to have an independent relationship with clear air and water. That is, while this tradition - understood here to be founded in oral narratives and teachings about Stó:lō origins, worldview, and interrelations between nature and culture – is linked to air and water, it is apparently not dependent upon access to clean air and water for its maintenance.

One condition of this conclusion is the understanding that a ‘feedback loop’ exists in certain relationships between the practice of certain cultural traditions and the teachings associated with those traditions. For instance, air quality impacts associated with pollutants and natural patterns of air flow measurably reduce the visibility of key Transformer sites and other culturally important landscape features found throughout the landscape of the Upper Fraser Valley. In other cases, effects on the practice of some cultural traditions may affect the teaching of those practices. Thus, air and/or water pollution may serve to indirectly damage sxwoxwiyam as it directly degrades the integrity of the environment.

**6.2.2 Addressing Question 3 – “Can air or water pollution affect the integrity of the Stó:lō traditions included in this study?”**

This question addresses whether the investigated Stó:lō cultural traditions are at risk to being affected by changes in air and water quality conditions. This measure of risk is a factor of Question 2 and the determination of the dependent or independent nature
of relations between traditions, air, and water. The table below presents the findings derived from the interview data addressing this question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tradition</th>
<th>Integrity of Cultural Practice / Tradition affected by ‘measurable’ air / water pollution</th>
<th>Integrity of Cultural Practice / Tradition affected by ‘perceived’ air / water pollution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Y)es (U)ncertain (N)o</td>
<td>(Y)es (U)ncertain (N)o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry Rack Fishery</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sxwo:yxwey</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shxweli</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stl’aleqem</td>
<td>-- U --</td>
<td>-- U --</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Dance</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing/Hunting/Gathering</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Babies</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
<td>Y -- --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sxwoxwiyam</td>
<td>-- -- N</td>
<td>-- -- N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Conclusion – Question 3*

The findings presented in Table 7, as derived from the interview data, depict the same results as for Table 6 – this is due to the relationship between Questions 2 and 3, as noted above.

Changes in air and/or water quality – including both measurable and perceived pollution - can affect the integrity of six of the eight investigated traditions - Dry Rack Fishery, Sxwo:yxwey, Shxweli, Winter Dance, Fishing / Hunting / Gathering, and Water Babies. It was noted that in relation to each of these traditions, pollution of water and air causes a decline in the integrity of the tradition. Thus, the integrity of these six traditions is found be at risk in the face of worsening air and water quality conditions - measurable, perceived or both.

One form of tradition - Stl’aleqem - was found to be uncertain in the nature of the relationship between its integrity and changes to air and water quality. Uncertainty in this case arises from varying responses by the interviewees regarding Stl’aleqem as a tradition and their understanding of it. The state of the information available for use in this study does not permit a conclusive determination regarding Stl’aleqem in answer to Question 3.
The integrity of one form of tradition - Sxwoxwiyam - was found not to be susceptible to changes in air and water quality conditions. This tradition, as it is understood, is found not to be at risk to air and/or water contamination – measurable, perceived or both, given the recognition of the ‘feedback loop’ between traditional practice and traditional teachings as noted for sxwoxwiyam, above.

Conclusions on the relationship between air, water and Stó:lō culture – Objectives I and II

This study has shown that the Stó:lō maintain a relationship to air and water, specifically, and the environment of Stó:lō Territory, generally, that is:

- culturally specific to the Stó:lō (Xwelmemw), and not shared by the non-Stó:lō / non-Coast Salish (Xwelítem) inhabitants of the area
- founded on a Stó:lō worldview of interconnectedness between the nature and culture, people and the environment, spirit-body-mind-emotion, and cultural teachings, practices, and identity – of which air and water are an integral part
- requires environmental purity (i.e., are dependent upon clean air and water) as integrally linked to the expression and practice of their cultural traditions
- intrinsically different in principle, content, structure, and expression than that of Western philosophy and society
- embedded with Aboriginal rights
- at risk to adverse impacts resulting from air and water pollution

Understanding the reality and extent of the cultural distinctiveness of the Stó:lō is a critical and basic part of this study. This understanding frames the utility of this study in defining potential impacts on Stó:lō culture associated with potential changes to air and water quality.

The traditions that form points of connection between Stó:lō culture and air and water maintain a continuity with respect to Stó:lō history and are deemed integral to the maintenance of Stó:lō culture, cultural practices, and identity.

Six forms Stó:lō traditions integral to Stó:lō culture (out of eight sampled) were shown in this study to have a dependent relationship with clean air and water. Changes to the quality of clean air and water caused by the addition of pollutants into air and water systems (in measurable and/or perceived forms) will adversely affect traditions determined to be integral to Stó:lō culture. The nature of the interconnectedness between Stó:lō culture and the environment (as modeled in Figure 6 - Four Interconnected Dimensions of Stó:lō Culture) links degradation of air and water quality to the degradation of Stó:lō traditions, ultimately affecting the health of the Stó:lō community.
on numerous levels – spiritually, physically, emotionally, and mentally. These effects fall within the realm of Aboriginal rights issues.

The air and water emissions described for the proposed SE2 Power Generation Facility will introduce emissions into the air and water that constitute pollutants to both air and water systems. The addition of foreign matter (i.e., pollutants) to the natural (i.e., ‘clean’) composition of air and water in the area represents a form measurable pollution. The extent of any such measurable pollution can be gauged through evaluative testing of surrounding air and water systems.

The introduction of measurable quantities of pollutants into the air and water systems of the Georgia Basin will result in adverse affects specific to the Stó:lō, apart from their non-Aboriginal neighbors, causing a decline in the integrity of a number of their integral cultural traditions (as identified above).

6.3 ADDRESSING OBJECTIVE III – to make such recommendations as appear appropriate for consideration by SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation.

The Stó:lō community members interviewed for this study unanimously expressed significant concern for the current state of the environment, specifically air and water quality, in Stó:lō Territory. When asked to describe the state of environment as judged from a Stó:lō perspective, numerous interviewees stated that the state of the health (shxweli) of the environment of Stó:lō Territory, is “degraded” or “in a dip”. The health of air and water in the territory were both described in numerous places as particularly bad and declining; “scarey”. These views are supported by the results of the study conducted by MELP-EC-GVRD (2000) documenting the state of the environment in the Fraser Valley / Georgia Basin region.

When asked about possible ways of mitigating what the Stó:lō interviewees perceived to be a declining state of health of the environment - focusing on air and water – one suggestion was consistently stated. Many people responded that it was necessary to “take care of” the environment as it currently exists, and not allow additional air and water pollutants to be released into the environment of Stó:lō Territory. The view expressed by many of the interviewees was that additional pollution of the air and / or water would cause significant negative impacts on their Stó:lō traditions, resulting in the degradation of their Stó:lō culture – ultimately interconnected with their traditional understanding of health and well-being physically, emotionally, spiritually, mentally, and economically.
Within this context, the Stó:lō are again set apart from their non-Stó:lō neighbors with regard to the issue of mobility as a possible form of mitigation (i.e., ’go somewhere less polluted’; ’use a different area for wind-drying salmon’, et.). The nature of the attachment between their cultural identity and the environment of Stó:lō Territory roots Stó:lō people to their territory and contrains their mobility. Movement beyond the territorial boundary (as it extends into the United States) was noted as conflicting with the maintenance of Stó:lō culture and identity. The attributes of the landscape required to exist as ’Stó:lō’, both spiritual and environmental, do not exist beyond their homeland. Movement as any possible form of mitigation strategy is not a viable option and would only cause further adverse impacts to the Stó:lō and their culture. By the very nature of the construction of their identity, the Stó:lō are bound to the environment and environmental issues of S’ólh Téméxw.

While this report must be considered as limited in scope and comprehensiveness, the findings presented above are sufficient to provide a number of recommendations considered integral to the development review process and discussions between SE2, Inc. and Stó:lō Nation. The following recommendations are presented for consideration in assessing the potential impacts of the proposed SE2 Power Generation Facility on the Stó:lō. It is recommended that:

- the cultural framework and multi-dimensional structure (i.e., interconnectedness between nature and culture, etc. – per Figure 6) of Stó:lō culture be recognized;
- the adverse effects of air and water pollution on Stó:lō cultural traditions be acknowledged,
- the relationship between the air and water emissions associated with the proposed SE2 Power Generation Facility and the potential for such emissions to adversely effect and cause cultural degradation to cultural traditions integral to the Stó:lō be considered in the development review process, and;
- further studies are required to accommodate developing additional ‘base-line’ data that would provide added degree of description to the environment, Stó:lō culture, and the relationship between them;
- it is recommended that the findings of this study be included in future discussions between SE2 and Stó:lō Nation that address aboriginal rights and title.

Moreover, the deposition of air and water pollutants in Stó:lō Territory may pose an elevated biological risk to Stó:lō citizens following a traditional diet and using traditional medicines (e.g., wind-dried salmon, medicinal plants, berries). Possible biological health effects associated with the Stó:lō population and related to Stó:lō cultural practices have not been a subject of this study and have not been adequately investigated at this time. Additional studies are required to provide further input at a finer degree of scale in making more specific statements on potential impacts and
defining more specific, potentially applicable mitigation measures pertinent to the Stó:lō.
7.0 REFERENCES

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*Interview* with Albert Louie at his Home at Yakweakwioose.

ADD:
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Schaepe (2003)
Bierwirt (1989)
Poulsen (2003)
Kew (1990)
8.0 APPENDIX I : TERMS OF REFERENCE

SUMAS ENERGY 2, INC. TRADITIONAL USE STUDY
TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background
Sumas Energy 2, Inc. (SE2) is applying to the National Energy Board (NEB) to construct an international power line (the IPL) that would originate in the United States at SE2’s proposed gas-fired power plant in Sumas, Washington and cross the Canadian border near Abbotsford, British Columbia. The IPL would extend approximately 8.5 kilometers from the border northward along an existing linear corridor (herein called the “Right of Way”) consisting of the Canadian Pacific Railway and British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro) right-of-way to BC Hydro’s Clayburn substation in Abbotsford. SE2 has submitted to the NEB that the SE2 project will not have a significant impact on the environment or on health.

SE2 has advised the NEB that it will undertake a Traditional Use Study (TUS) of the Right of Way as part of its application to the NEB. SE2 said the purpose of the TUS would be to identify potential impacts that the Project may have on the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes by aboriginal persons.

The Right of Way is located within the claimed traditional territory of the Stó:lō Nation. It is also near the Sumas First Nation and Matsqui First Nation, both members of the Stó:lō Nation.

SE2 retained Arcas Consulting Archeologists Ltd (Arcas) to undertake and coordinate with relevant First Nation communities the proposed TUS. SE2 indicated to Arcas that, in response to comments by Stó:lō Nation representatives, SE2 was willing to expand the scope of the TUS to include both current and historical use of the lands and resources within the Right of Way.

In follow-up discussions, Stó:lō Nation representatives expressed the view that a TUS concerned only with the Right of Way would be of limited value, and that the Stó:lō Nation would not be interested in participating in such a study. As a result, the Stó:lō Nation asked for a broader study that could be used to consider the potential effects of
the power plant project on the relationship between the Stó:lō people and water and air resources.

The undersigned parties covenant and agree to the following Terms of Reference for a comprehensive SE2 TUS.

1. **Purpose of the TUS**

   a) The TUS will be undertaken in two parts, the purposes of which are to:

   i) gather information regarding customs, practices and traditions integral to the culture of the Stó:lō in relation to air and water, that could be used for further discussions between SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation, to assess the potential impacts of the SE2 project, if any, on the Aboriginal Traditions (as hereinafter defined).

   ii) gather information regarding the traditional uses, past and present, of the Stó:lō within the IPL Right of Way project area that could be used for further discussions between SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation and to assess the potential impacts of the SE2 project, if any, on Stó:lō traditional uses within the Right of Way.

   b) Upon completion, the TUS – in its subsequent parts – will be filed with the NEB. The TUS is to be carried out without prejudice to aboriginal rights or title. Nothing in this study will enlarge, limit or define Aboriginal rights or title. The TUS serves only to provide technical information to Stó:lō Nation and SE2 and does not satisfy all the requirements of consultation between SE2 and Stó:lō Nation.

2. **Objectives of TUS**

   a) The objectives of the TUS are to:

   i) document customs, practices and traditions integral to the distinctive culture of the Sto:lō in relation to air and water (collectively, the “Aboriginal Traditions”)

   ii) provide information that will put SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation in a position to assess potential impacts of the SE2 project on those Aboriginal Traditions, and,

   iii) make such recommendations as appear appropriate for consideration by SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation.
b) To meet the objectives of a TUS for the IPL Right of Way, specifically:
   i) document historical and current traditional land uses and sites (using archaeological work already conducted) in the IPL Right of Way;
   ii) identify and evaluate potential effects that the SE2 project might have “on the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes by aboriginal persons” (Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, Section 2(1)) and on traditional use sites (Guidelines and References for Environmental Assessment, Environmental Assessment Process, 1995, p.13) and.
   iii) make such recommendations as appear appropriate for consideration by SE2 and the Stó:lō Nation.

3. Geographic Scope

   a) For the purpose of the Aboriginal Traditions part of the TUS, the study will consider the traditional lands of the Stó:lō Nation within the airshed and watershed potentially affected by the SE2 project.
   b) For the purpose of the IPL Right of Way part of the TUS, the study will consider the historical and current use of Sumas/Matsqui Prairie in order to come to an understanding of the Right-of-Way corridor for the IPL.

4. Methodology

   a) The TUS will be conducted with reference to the guidelines and terminology of Stó:lō Nation’s Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual (2003);
   
   b) The TUS will collect information from three sources:
      i) documentary review: a review of published and unpublished documents that provide information about (1) historical and current aboriginal land and resource use within the IPL Right of Way area, and (2) the Aboriginal Traditions.
      ii) interviews: of First Nations persons who are knowledgeable about historical and current land use and sites in the Right of Way study area, and of persons who are knowledgeable about the Aboriginal Traditions.
iii) **field visits**: on-site field visits within the TUS study area will be undertaken to the extent necessary to fully identify and inventory traditional land uses and sites in relation to the Aboriginal Traditions, and to consider potential mitigation measures;

c) The TUS will be an objective study, and will follow established and reliable research methods.

d) The TUS will be in a format acceptable to both SE2 and Stó:lō Nation.

e) Whenever possible, interviews will be audio taped and transcribed, and will follow recognized research methods and procedures.

f) The interviews will collect oral information that is in the aboriginal community and usually not available in the public domain.

5. **Information sharing:**

a) Stó:lō Nation will define the scope and substance of information to be treated as proprietary to the community – as defined by the community - and therefore confidential in its use.

b) Information identified by Stó:lō Nation as confidential and not for public audience, but allowable for use in satisfying the objectives of the TUS and conveying information to the NEB and SE2, may be included in a ‘confidential’ version of the TUS report filed with the NEB and SE2 under the assurance of an exemption from any Freedom of Information legislation issued by the NEB and likewise acknowledged by SE2.

c) Information identified by Stó:lō Nation as confidential and not allowable for use in the TUS will be removed from all TUS project files, will not be made accessible, and will not be included in or referenced in the TUS report either directly or indirectly.

d) An application shall be made by Stó:lō Nation to the NEB for the status of confidentiality (i.e., exclusion from any freedom of information requirements) for the TUS reports if they are deemed by Stó:lō Nation to contain confidential information – so that the NEB may receive and review this information exclusive of the public realm and record. SE2 agrees to give reasonable assistance to the Stó:lō Nation in making its application.
e) SE2 will respect all concerns for confidentiality expressed or identified by the Stó:lō Nation, as outlined in this section.

f) Stó:lō Nation, SE2 and Arcas are committed to respecting the integrity of the Stó:lō Nation’s traditional land use and other cultural information, and will work together in a spirit of mutual respect and co-operation to conserve and share information relating to the current and historical use of lands and resources.

g) The Stó:lō Nation retains exclusive ownership and control over all source data, including maps, tapes, notes, transcriptions, and other information, provided or produced by the Stó:lō Nation for the TUS.

h) In working with Arcas, the Stó:lō Nation will provide information, source data, and reports as needed in order to:

i) prepare a report to SE2 that will make efforts to meet regulatory requirements within project timelines, and

ii) respond to any reviews by and information requests from regulatory agencies.

i) Stó:lō Nation agrees to notify Arcas as soon as possible of any material or information which it considers confidential, and of the classification of the confidential material as to be included in the TUS report(s) with restrictions, or excluded from the TUS altogether (as per parts (a) to (c) of this section).

6. **Personnel**

a) The TUS would be carried out by Arcas and Stó:lō Nation Aboriginal Rights and Title Department staff and its member bands/First Nations.

b) The Project Director at Arcas shall be Marianne Berkey. In her absence, Arnoud Stryd will serve as Project Director.

c) The Project Director for Stó:lō Nation will be David Schaepe who will work with Arcas in the planning and implementation of the TUS. In his absence, Albert McHalsie will serve as Project Director.

d) Stó:lō Nation may appoint a committee to provide guidance and overall direction to the study.

7. **Schedule**
a) The TUS will start as soon as reasonably possible following both parties (Stó:lō Nation and SE2) agreeing on the Terms of Reference for the study.

b) Priority will be given to the IPL Right of Way part of the study, with the intention of: producing a draft report on the results of the IPL Right of Way part of the study for submission to Stó:lō Nation and SE2 for review by November 15, 2003, and for filing with the NEB that part of the study relating to the IPL Right of Way by December 1, 2003.

c) It is intended that a draft report on the results of the Aboriginal Traditions part of the study will be submitted to Stó:lō Nation and SE2 for review by January 15, 2004; and for filing with the NEB that part of the study relating to Aboriginal Traditions, air and water by January 31, 2004.

8. **Implementation**

The implementation of these terms of reference is contingent upon agreement between SE2 and Stó:lō Nation on a TUS study budget.

9. **Deliverables**

a) A draft and final report on the results of the Right of Way part of the study (to Stó:lō Nation and associated bands, and SE2).

b) A draft and final report on the results of the Aboriginal Traditions part of the study (to same parties as (a) above).

c) Field notes, maps, interview tapes and other material as agreed upon above (to Stó:lō Nation Department Archives within the Aboriginal Rights and Title Department).
9.0 **APPENDIX II: SE2 TUS PHASE II INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

Page 1 of ___

Interviewee(s)        Date:

Interviewer(s):

Tape No:          Side(s):          Counter Reading _______ - _______

**Interview Prompts:**

- explain honoraria / payment process – mailing address:

- introduce self, interviewee date
- describe project
- confidentiality / treatment of sensitive information / public use of
- offer copy of transcript (copy requested: Y____ N___)

Consent to Release the information provided in this interview and recorded on tape, on the project data form and/or map(s) for use in this study and for public disclosure is granted by:

Interviewee(s) Signature:      Date:
I) Wind Dry / Dry Rack:

1) How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery tradition to you?
2) How important is the Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery to Stó:lō culture?
3) How is Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery connected to air?
4) How is Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery connected to water?
5) How important is clean air to Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices?
6) How important is clean water to Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices?
7) Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by air pollution? How?
8) Can Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practice be affected by water pollution? How?
9) How would additional pollution of the air affect practice and teachings of Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery?
10) Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery by effects of water and air pollution?
11) Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Dry Rack Fishery and Wind Drying Fishery practices in relation to air and water and Stó:lō traditions?
12) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō culture, traditions and practices?

II) Sxwó:yxwey:

1) How important is the Sxwó:yxwey tradition to you?
2) How important is the Sxwó:yxwey to Stó:lō culture?
3) How is Sxwó:yxwey connected to air?
4) How is Sxwó:yxwey connected to water?
5) How important is clean air to Sxwó:yxwey?
6) How important is clean water to Sxwó:yxwey?
7) Can Sxwó:yxwey be effected by air pollution? How?
8) Can Sxwó:yxwey be effected by water pollution? How?
9) How would additional pollution of the air effect Sxwó:yxwey?
10) Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Sxwó:yxwey effects of water and air pollution?
11) Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Sxwó:yxwey in relation to air and water?
12) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō culture, traditions and practices?
III) 'Syúwél / Winter Dance:
1) How important is the Winter Dance tradition to you?
2) How important is the Winter Dance to Stó:lō culture?
3) How is the Winter Dance connected to air?
4) How is the Winter Dance ceremony connected to water?
5) How important is clean air to the Winter Dance ceremony?
6) How important is clean water to the Winter Dance ceremony?
7) Can Winter Dance ceremonies be effected by air pollution? How?
8) Can Winter Dance ceremonies be effected by water pollution? How?
9) How would additional pollution of the air affect Winter Dance ceremonies?
10) Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Winter Dance ceremonies from effects of water and air pollution?
11) Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Winter Dance ceremonies in relation to air and water?
12) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō culture, traditions and practices?

IV) Fishing / Hunting / Gathering:
1) How important is the Gathering and Hunting tradition to you?
2) How important is the Gathering and Hunting tradition to Stó:lō culture?
3) How is the Gathering and Hunting tradition connected to air?
4) How is the Gathering and Hunting tradition connected to water?
5) How important is clean air to the Gathering and Hunting tradition?
6) How important is clean water to the Gathering and Hunting practices?
7) Can Gathering and Hunting practices be affected by air pollution? How?
8) Can Gathering and Hunting practices be affected by water pollution? How?
9) How would additional pollution of the air affect practices and teachings of Gathering and Hunting?
10) Do you have any suggestions on how to protect Gathering and Hunting by effects of water and air pollution?
11) Is there anything else that I should have asked you about Gathering and Hunting practices in relation to air and water and Stó:lō traditions?
12) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō culture, traditions and practices?
V) Shxweli:
1) What is Shxweli?
2) What is its' place in Stó:lō Tradition?
3) How can you tell the health of Shxweli?
4) Is there a Shxweli of air?
5) Is there a Shxweli of water?
6) What effect does air pollution have on Shxweli?
7) What effect does water pollution have on Shxweli?
8) What is the current health of air Shxweli in Stó:lō territory?
9) What is the current health of water Shxweli in Stó:lō territory?
10) How would additional air/water pollution effect Shxweli?
11) Do you know of some types of resources that have a Shxweli more sensitive than others to disturbance?
12) Is there any thing else that I should have asked you about Shxweli in relation to air and water?
13) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō traditions and practices?

VI) Sxwōxwiyám:
1) Are there any Sxwōxwiyám that explains the relation between the Stó:lō and air and water?
2) What are Tel Swayel?
3) How important are Tel Swayel to the Stó:lō?
4) Are there any teachings that you know of in the Stó:lō Sxwōxwiyám about polluting air and water?
5) Is there any thing else that I should have asked you about Winter Dance ceremonies in relation to air and water?
6) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō culture, traditions and practices?

VII) Stl’áleqem:
1) What are Stl’áleqem?
2) What is important about Stl’áleqem in Stó:lō tradition?
3) Are Stl’áleqem required to maintain Stó:lō traditions?
4) Where do Stl’áleqem live?
5) Are there the same numbers of Stl’áleqem today as in the past?
6) If not, what happened to them? Why are there fewer now?
7) Do you know of any stories about the disappearance of Stl’áleqem due to disturbance of their environment/habitat in relation to air and water?
8) Can you explain effects of air and water pollution on Stl’áleqem?
9) How do you expect additional water and air pollution to effect Stl’áleqem?
10) Is there any thing else that I should have asked you about Stl’áleqem in relation to air and water?
11) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō culture, traditions and practices?

VIII) Water Babies:
1) What are Water Babies?
2) What is important about Water Babies in Stó:lō tradition?
3) Are Water Babies required to maintain Stó:lō traditions?
4) Where do Water Babies live?
5) Are there the same numbers of Water Babies as in the past?
6) If not, what happened to them? Why are there fewer now?
7) Do you know of any stories about the disappearance of Water Babies due to disturbance of their environment/habitat in relation to air and water?
8) Can you explain effects of air and water pollution on Water Babies?
9) How do you expect additional water and air pollution to effect Water Babies?
10) Is there any thing else that I should have asked you about Water Babies in relation to air and water?
11) Do you have any other concerns about the effects of air or water pollution on Stó:lō culture, traditions and practices?