




Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw
Government

Annual
Report

2021/2022



*S'ólh téméxw te íkw'elò. Xólhmet te
mekw'stám ít kwelát.
This is our land. We have to take
care of everything that belongs to us.*

A Stó:lō Guiding Principle

SXG Leadership

Shxwetélemel-elhót, Chief Maureen Chapman

Sq'ewá:lxw/Skawahlook

Lax-Wea, Chief Angie Bailey

Áthelets/Aitchelitz

Weli'leq, Chief Derek Epp

Ch'iyáqtel/Tzeachten

Mae'xe, Chief Alice Thompson


Leq'á:mel/Lakahahmen

Xwemxwe'meleq', Chief Mark Point

Sq'ewqéyl/Skowkale

Siyémches, Chief Terry Horne

Yeqwyeqwí:ws/Yakweakwioose

A photograph of a waterfall cascading over mossy rocks in a dense forest. The water is white and frothy as it falls. The surrounding area is covered in lush green ferns and moss. The text is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

“Do we have to wait for a treaty before we begin governing ourselves? No. This is the assertion model. We don’t get authority from the treaty or the Canadian government. We get our authority from our people. “

Xwelíqweltel, Grand Chief Steven Point

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Message From President



Éy Swáyel dear community members,

We are sovereign people. We have never ceded our territory nor extinguished any of our rights. Our Aboriginal rights have always existed, not because Canadian governments are finally beginning to recognize them, but because they are inherent. We have always had the right to govern ourselves, to make our own laws, to make decisions about how our land is used, and to honour our language.

Our work on this journey to nationhood has always been about exercising these rights. That is why we created our Shxwelméxwelh /Constitution with your input over the last several years. That is why we asked our communities to vote on this guiding document which provides the foundation for our Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government. This is why the leaders of our six communities stepped forward in 2021 to take the lead on our negotiations and commit to taking on the mantle of a governing body.

Our vision, based on the Stó:lō Declaration of 1975 and the Stó:lō Treaty vision of 1922, dates even farther back to the hundreds who gathered in New Westminster in 1872 to address the “land question.” Our vision is to provide for our future generations through governance, self-reliance, community well-being and culture.

We are taking our rightful place and asserting our identity as the Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government. We know that our members will thrive when we are once again governing ourselves and acting as the stewards of our lands and resources.

In unity,

Shxwetélemel-elhót
Chief Maureen Chapman
President, Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw
Government



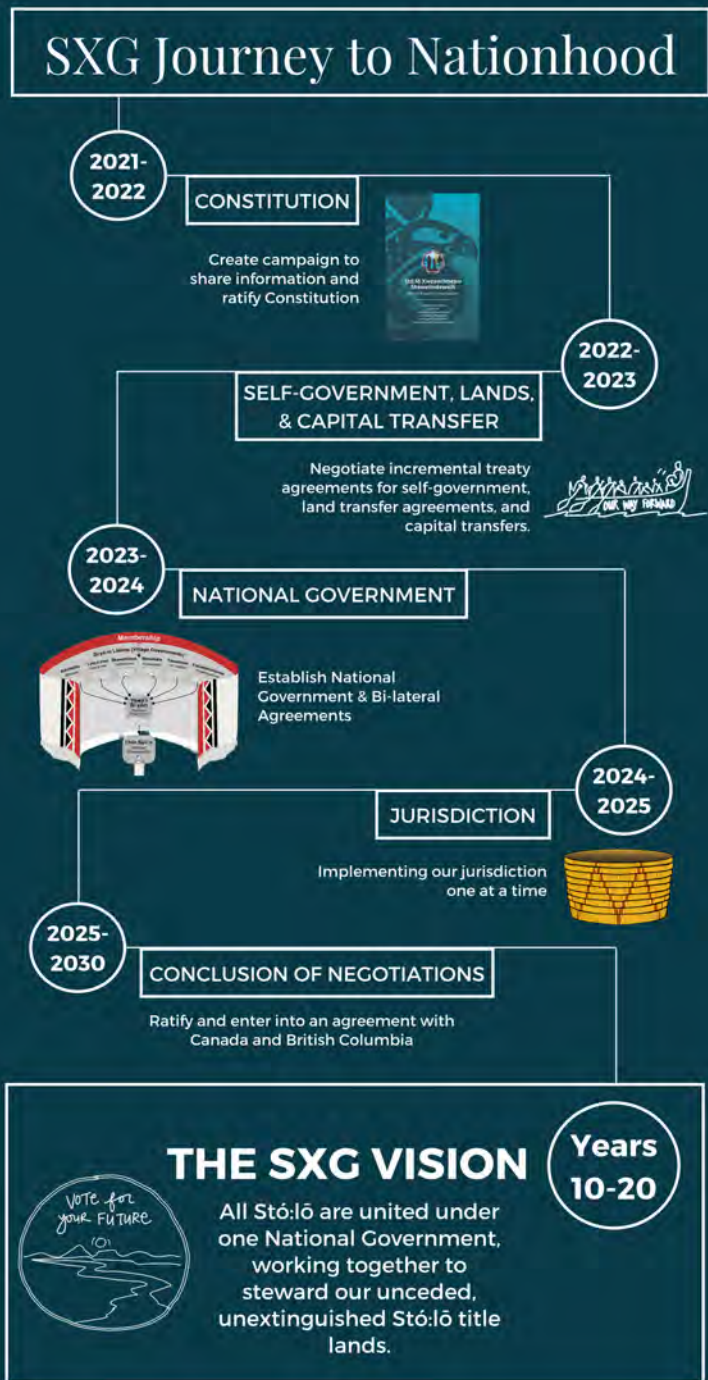
Introduction

There is much to be thankful for – the breath of life, good health and healing, and our Creator watching over and guiding our work for our communities. Although we have experienced another year of uncertainty due to the lingering COVID-19 virus, a heatwave in June/July and then a flood in November, our communities are resilient. Our communities and all of the Stó:lō First Nations were instrumental in helping members and others through each of these challenges.

Through it all, our leadership have remained committed to our Journey to Nationhood. In 2021/2022, one of our most important steps forward involved having two more communities approve our Shxwelméxwelh, a document that provides guiding principles for how our six communities will work together in our future Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Nation. We also turned our focus to ensuring that we seek an early transfer of a percentage of the lands offered to us in the Land and Capital Transfer proposal (signed in 2017).

In fall 2021, our leaders stepped forward to take the lead on our negotiations and each Chief or their appointee is now a negotiator who participates in all discussions at our Main Table with the federal and provincial government negotiators. We also restructured our internal organization and took steps to create an independent entity, with all our staff employed by the Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government (SXG) rather than the Stó:lō Service Agency. We continue to add staff to our team and take on more roles in-house.





Timeline

Our communities continue to move forward on the path to self-government and treaty with a renewed focus on lands and cash.

“We are Stó:lō and Xwexwílmexw, the people of the river and the land that holds our ancestors.”

Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Shxwelméxwelh

We Have Always Governed

“People take off their Indian Act hat and it is quite dynamic and amazing to be a part of. And then they put on their inherent rights blanket — their robe of power.”

Satsan Herb George at Light the Fire with Grand Chief Point, April 2022

Assertion Model

Our Stó:lō communities have never lost their right to self-government. Our inherent right to self-government existed before contact (1846) and has been recognized in the Canadian Constitution as well as in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) and provincial and federal laws related to UNDRIP. Our laws prior to contact were traditional and customary laws. They were not written in the way that laws are written today.

The six leaders of our Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government have agreed that we are reasserting our right to self-government and we are not waiting for treaty to implement this right. This Journey to Nationhood is part of continued strategic planning work that the Chiefs have undertaken in the past two years.

Shxwelméxwelh / Constitution

Even after 150 years living under the oppression of the Indian Act, our communities are not deterred and we are continuing our Journey to Nationhood.

We first took our Shxwelméxwelh/Constitution to a vote in November 2020 and heard an overwhelming “Yes” from our community members. More than 80 percent of voters in 4 of 6 communities approved this document, which outlines our future government structure. But the result was not as clear as it seemed, because our leaders set a goal requiring 51 percent of all eligible voters to participate in the vote.

In 2020 both Áthelets and Yeqwyeqwí:ws met this 50 percent plus one threshold and in 2021 Leq’á:mel and Sq’ewá:lxw also approved the Shxwelméxwelh/Constitution via their own community-based processes. We will continue to work with Sq’ewqéyl and Ch’iyáqtel to address their community questions and concerns.

Ourselves – Our Achievements

“Our relationship to the land is that we come from Mother Earth and we return to Mother Earth. Our Aboriginal title, rights and interests will never be for sale; we can not and will never sell our ancestors.”

Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Shxwelméxwelh

Incremental Treaty Agreements

An Incremental Treaty Agreement is an interim agreement reached by the parties before treaty negotiations are complete. In 2021/2022, land and capital transfers became the focus of our work.

Draft Treaty Land Transfer Agreement

Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw are pursuing early transfers of land. Sections of the Treaty Lands in each of the three tribal areas (Leq'á:mel, Tít and Ts'elxwéyeqw) amounting to 20 percent of our proposed Treaty Lands were included in a proposal submitted to BC in November 2018 and are under negotiations. Our government has received information about all the encumbrances and legal interests in these parcels and we are entering into discussions about these topics (everything from roads and utilities to land use permits).

We aim to have this land transfer within two years which will provide SXG control over some of our Treaty Lands in advance of Treaty Ratification. The parcels were chosen due to easy access to existing infrastructure, existing economic potential, and support for our residential and cultural needs.

Draft Self-Government Agreement

The purpose of the Incremental Self-Government Agreement is to provide a foundation for the continuing exercise of the Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw inherent right of self-determination and self-governance. This will be achieved by transforming our relationship with current governments and establishing an ongoing Government-to-Government relationship, as symbolized by the S'ólh Lets'emó:t Swóqw'elh (blanket).

We are developing structures and processes for collaboration that are based on ólhet (respect) with a commitment from all parties to work in partnership and in the spirit of lets'emó:t (our one thought) for as long as the sun shines and the waters flow.

We aim to have our Self Government Agreement concluded and ratified by March 2023.

S'ólh Lets'emó:t – Our One Thought

“The Stó:lō Xwexwilmexw are continuing the work of our ancestors to solve issues around how our land came to be taken from us. Although there are many paths to reconciliation, we believe that a nation-to-nation, government-to-government agreement, or treaty, is the clearest way to enshrine our rights.”

Xwelíqweltel, Grand Chief Steven Point

S'ólh Lets'emó:t is the name for our treaty. S'ólh means “ours” and Lets'emó:t means “one thought.” This approach uses the visual idea of the rock and the tree as a guiding principle. Xélxeylamós is the transformation rock and is the fixed or core part of S'ólh Lets'emó:t. This section will encompass our principles and key commitments. Xpá:yelhp is the red cedar tree that grows from the rock and is the living part of the treaty. This will grow and evolve as our relationship with Canada and BC changes in a new government-to-government relationship.

Our work on this agreement takes place in the context of the federal government's announcement released in 2019, about their revised treaty negotiation policy called, Recognition and Reconciliation of Rights Policy for Treaty Negotiations in British Columbia. This policy finally falls in line with the following principles that our negotiators have been demanding since talks between our nations began:

- Stó:lō Aboriginal rights and title will not be extinguished and will never be extinguished by any agreements
- None of our rights are frozen and any agreements reached between parties can evolve over time
- Any agreements entered into in the treaty process are not full and final settlements.
- Past loans for negotiating treaty are forgiven and future funding will be grants and non-repayable

Our continued commitment to these policies in our work with Canada and the BC Treaty Process led to many of these revisions to the federal policy.

Shared Territory Discussions

“We are all Stó:lō. There is a win-win way of looking at this. These are our shared territories, not overlaps and we can figure this out together.”

Siyémches, Chief Terry Horne, SXG Political Advisor

The SXG communities have always been committed to negotiating an agreement that will benefit all Stó:lō, whether or not they are in the treaty process. S’ólh Téméxw belongs to all Stó:lō, and the SXG leadership want to work in a cooperative and open way.

We are all families and neighbours and we believe we can work together in a mutually-beneficial way without involving Canada and British Columbia. SXG leadership are open to a wide range of possibilities for these relationships and are also encouraging other Stó:lō communities to consider re-joining the Treaty work in the future.



Sélseltel

Spindle Whorl = Culture and Heritage. It represents the way we absorb culture.



Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government – Who We Are

“We are also people of the xwelmxwáwtxw (longhouse) guided by our s’í:wes (teachings).”

Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Shxwelméxwelh

The Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Treaty Association was formed in April 2007 to negotiate a treaty for Stó:lō communities. At the Main Table meeting in October 2021, leaders officially notified Canada and the Province that moving forward we would be called the Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government (SXG).

Our governing body consists of the following inter-related bodies:

1. Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Community Members
2. Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Community Leadership
3. The SXG Board of Directors / Treaty Negotiators
4. SXG Side Tables
5. Treaty Operations

“Our Si:yá:m (respected leaders) have the obligation to protect and fairly govern the Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw (Stó:lō People) and S’ólh Téméxw (Our Land) according to this Shxwelméxwelh (Constitution).”

Siyémches, Chief Terry Horne, SXG Political Advisor

SXG Leadership

As of March 31, 2022

Áthelets/Aitchelitz

Chief Angie Bailey – *Lax-Wea*
Councillor Gordon George –
Chelapa
Councillor Leona Sam

Governance system: Hereditary

Leq’á:mel/Lakahahmen

Chief Alice Thompson – *Mae’xe*
Councillor Barb Leggat
Councillor Camielle Laslo – *Sts’ó:wuselwet*
Councillor Darrel McKamey – *Nak’aman*
Councillor Dawn Styran – *Swí:wat*
Councillor Phil Sherwood
Councillor Sandy McDonald

Governance system: Election every 4 years. Next election March 2024.

Ch’iyáqtel/Tzeachten

Chief Derek Epp – *Weli’leq*
Councillor Sandra Bonner-Pederson –
Í:lhót
Councillor Tony Malloway – *Yexweylem*
Councillor Loren Muth
Councillor Melvin Williams Jr. –
Kwelikwitum

Governance system: Elections every three years. Next election: March 2023.

Sq’ewá:lxw/Skawahlook

Chief Maureen Chapman –
Shxwetélemel-elhót
Councillor Debra Schneider –
Tá:leyelhot
Councillor Jenn Carmen

Governance system: Hereditary

Sq’ewqéyl/Skowkale

Chief Mark Point – *Xwemxwe’melq’*
Councillor Willy Hall – *Ts’qwelatse* (Hall Family)
Councillor Teresa Galis – *Shoy:etelwet* (Sepass Family)
Councillor Darcy Paul – *Th’etsimeltel* (Point Family)
Councillor Tiffany Silver – *Soliyeliye* (Archie Family)

Governance system: Election for Chief and family reps appointed every four years. Next election: March 2025.

Yeqwyeqwí:ws/Yakweakwioose

Chief Terry Horne – *Siyémches*
Councillor Nikki LaRock – *Qwe’tó:llhmelhet*
Councillor Jason Malloway – *Th’eláchiyatel*
Councillor Jazmine Horne – *O:lisiyah* (Youth)
Hereditary Chief Elaine Malloway – *O:lisiyah*
Elder Mary Malloway – *Qwetóseltelwet*

Governance system: Hereditary

“Our Si:yá:m (respected leaders) have always and shall continue to make decisions guided by our s’í:wes (teachings) and in consideration of our tómíeqw (seven generations past and future).”

Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Shxwelméxwelh

SXG Board of Directors 21/22



Shxwetélemel-elhót
Chief Maureen Chapman

Sq’ewá:lxw/Skawahlook

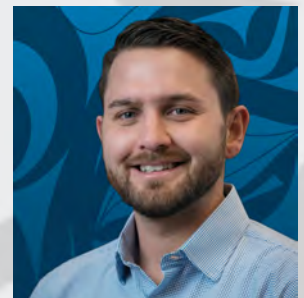
President



Chief Angie Bailey
Lax-Wea

Áthelets/Aitchelitz

Vice-President



Chief Derek Epp
Weli’leq

Ch’iyáqtel/Tzeachten

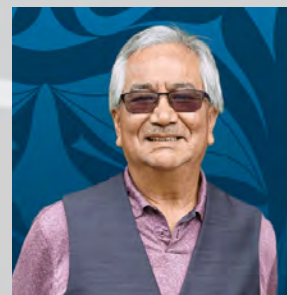
Secretary-Treasurer



Chief Alice Thompson
Mae’xe

Leq’á:mel/Lakahahmen

Director



Chief Mark Point
Xwemxwe’mleq’

Sq’ewqéyl/Skowkale

Director



Chief Terry Horne
Siyémches

**Yeqwyeqwí:ws/
Yakweakwioose**

Director



“As Stó:lō we are born with the inherent right of self-determination and self-government, Aboriginal rights, title and interests.”

Stó:lō Xwexwilmexw Shxwelméxwelh

Treaty Negotiations

The Treaty Negotiators are the Chiefs of the six communities with Chief Maureen Chapman named as Chief Negotiator and Chief Angie Bailey named as her alternate. The Chiefs are working to negotiate a treaty and incremental agreements that represents our current and future needs. The team also includes Political Advisor Chief Terry Horne, Legal Advisor Cody Hall, Legal Counsel Grand Chief Steven Point, Cultural Advisor Sonny McHalsie and Technical Advisor David Schaepe.

In 2021/2022, their key activities included:

- Work towards completing an Incremental Treaty Self Government Agreement
- Substantive work and agreement on structure and technical aspects of Incremental Treaty Agreements relating to lands.

Stó:lō Xwexwilmexw Government Side Tables

The Side Tables provide input and recommendations to the SXG on treaty mandates such as: Governance, Children and Families, Fisheries, Land and Fiscal matters.



Treaty Operations

The Treaty Operations team underwent a shift as we continue to move towards forming a government and creating a related government service structure, in contrast to operating as a non-profit organization. A core group of staff are now working with the SXG as their full employer and we have taken on our own payroll, human resources and more.

Treaty Operations and Negotiations Support

Under the direction of the Chief Executive Officer for Treaty Operations, staff assist in meeting the objectives of the treaty table and SXG's internal mandates. Many aspects of SXG Operations have been supported by staff of the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre (SRRMC) and supplemented by the professional services of consultants as needed, although the SXG is striving to transition all functions to internal employees. SRRMC Staff include experts and technicians with expertise in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and database management, cultural heritage and history, genealogy, library and archives management, research, land use and environmental planning, negotiation, outreach, and finance and administration.

Core activities

- Treaty Related Measures project identification, planning and proposal submission
- Support for the review and development of revamped SXG Treaty working document with a focus on Rights and Title recognition and including principles of the United Nations Declaration and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as the Calls to Action
- Research and support for submission of a proposal for an Incremental Treaty Agreement with British Columbia, which will provide an early transfer of a portion of the Treaty Lands
- Non-SXG First Nations Engagement to specifically address the SXG Treaty Land interests; forestry and referrals on potential Treaty Lands; and the shift to a rights and title recognition-based treaty

Communications and Outreach

This team is responsible for developing and implementing strategies for effectively sharing treaty-related information with, and gathering feedback from the SXG membership.

Core Activities

- Development and distribution of easy to understand, visual and multimedia representations of treaty materials including video, podcasts, print materials and social media posts
- Organization of large and interactive community engagement sessions, one-on-one sessions, kitchen table gatherings, family dinners, and webinars
- Constitution Community Engagement campaign and community driven vote processes
- Increased engagement towards youth
- Supporting the Culture Committee

Treaty Operations staff in 2021/2022:

Dr. Dave Schaepe – SXTA Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Christine Jones – Director of Operations

Josephine Kelly – Executive Assistant

Emily Kelly – Outreach and Communications Supervisor

Jamie Delowsky – Office Manager

Nancy Wasikowski – Acting Office Manager

Kathleen Wallace – Administrative Assistant

Tery Kozma – Community Engagement Assistant

Heather Ramsay – Communications Strategist

Theresa Warbus – Multimedia Coordinator

Sharon Desnomie – Multimedia Assistant

Kristina Celli – Researcher

Philip Hannis, Researcher

Tracey Joe – Managing

Supervisor/Administrator

Karen Brady – Land Use Planner

Amber Kostuchenko – Researcher

Lisa Davidson – Researcher/Genealogist

Steven Shurgold – Archivist

Colin Green – GIS Analyst



Striving For Self-Government

We believe in our ability to take control of our own nation and with our Shxwelméxwelh/Constitution approved by a majority of our six communities, we can continue moving out from under the Indian Act. As part of our movement toward rebuilding our nation, all six communities are working together as a government. We are moving through these steps at a reasonable rate to ensure that we will succeed at taking control of jurisdictions and implementing new systems into our Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government work.



SXG leadership wanted to represent the treaty in a visual way and Jared Deck of Ch'íyaqtel used their ideas to create this design. Key symbols include:

- **Sq'émél (Paddle)** = Self Reliance. The paddle holds a salmon and helps to move us forward together. The seven waves in the paddle also represent our Tómiyeqw - seven generations forward and seven generations back.
- **Sélseltel (Spindle Whorl)** = Culture and Heritage. The longhouse and the smoke represent the passing on of knowledge and tradition, the spindle whorl in the middle represents the way we absorb culture.
- **Sí:tel (Basket)** = Everything that belongs to us. The basket holds our knowledge. This symbolizes education, our land, our future generations and our work to look after everything.
- **Swōqw'elh (Blanket)** = Governance. The wolf wears the blanket and steers the canoe forward, but looks back to remember the past. The wolf shares resources with the two bears who symbolize Xexals (culture, teachings, tradition, stories). The eagle at the front also shows the leadership, power and knowledge of our elders and ancestors.

"The laws of the Creator defined our rights and responsibilities. The Creator gave us our Spiritual Beliefs, our language, our culture, and a place on Mother Earth, which provided us with all our needs."

Stó:lō Declaration, 1975





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Stó:lō Xwexwílmexw Government



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21/22 Annual Report

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