

WANUYITNAMU

CLES WINTER REPORT 2023







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Keepers Of The Seasons, LLC

Message From **The Owners**

Darcy Fisher and Jenny Fisher



Dear Colleagues:

Winter (wanuyitnamu) brings back a lot of childhood memories. There was a lot of time spent out in the cold, usually on a frozen lake or pond skating for hours. The winter days are vivid memories, almost a checklist for the perfect day: *campfire, hot chocolate, hot dogs, 'boxes' of Bar-B-Q and Rip-I Chips (Old Dutch), Ice cold Pepsi and Root Beer.*

Most of my winter memories and stories are full of good times, events that I can link good feelings to. The events/memories are attached to fun, learning how to work, and/or developing the skills needed to be a good man/dad. I'm not too sure exactly when our days (probably weekends) in the snow started – however I know they were close to Christmas. Before, we even got to skate, sled, roast hot dogs, or drink perfectly chilled Pepsi - our 'free' time was spent dragging Christmas trees through the snow. One pile for 6 footers, one pile for 8 footers and another pile for bigger footers or smaller footers, the last number evades me now.

I wonder if my dad told my mom that he was taking us out to work back in those days? I call it work, for descriptive purposes only, because really it wasn't work, it was a way of life and almost tradition – one could almost say "rites of passage" and importantly, it was time with my dad. Mostly, I refer to these tasks or duties in a fond way because it's a way of life that has seemed to wander away from our homes and our communities. I have been privileged to hear many stories and recollections of Firewood harvesting and Christmas tree cutting. All of which have been shared with a good laugh and usually describe a life lesson, or at least a glimpse into the 'why' of who one is. Usually, a story can't be told without the teller offering a piece of who they are. The way they describe an event, the way their choice of words carries

you through a sentence, or the way their words paint a perfect canvas. These reports and Message from The Owners are our way of sharing our story or painting the perfect canvas, whilst interweaving the teachings of our ancestors and capturing the essence of Ktunaxanintik.

2023 was a great year for CLES, KoS, and Ktunaxanintik to connect and work together in creative ways. We are appreciative of the time spent making new connections and affirming old connections, of being on the land, and for being able to share and teach our knowledge. We look forward to a healthy, happy, and prosperous new year in 2024.

Thank you for those of you that made tracks with us in 2023 and a heartfelt moment of reflection, gratitude, and love for those whose tracks ended in 2023 (dad 'grumpa', grandma 'tupiya', and many others).

Hu suki#qukni. Respectfully,

Darcy Fisher and Jenny Fisher

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Fisher', with a stylized flourish at the end.

DARCY FISHER
Co-owner, KoS

Keepers Of The Seasons, LLC
Executive Summary

CLES Winter 2023

Executive Summary

Keepers Of The Seasons, LLC teaches that “Indigenous Ecological Knowledge is generational knowledge that has served first peoples since time immemorial. It is the scientific knowledge of the land (ʔamak) that connects our stories to our evolutionary and resilient history. Our language (ʔa·kʔukaqwm) is the nomenclature and taxonomy of all our surroundings”. KoS understands the importance of disseminating Indigenous Ecological Knowledge and Teaching Cultural Activities to influence positive change and support community engagement. KoS has been working diligently with the Ktunaxa Nation and its different sectors to preserve ancestral teachings. Additionally, KoS, works by providing awareness for Best Practice Protocols (Cultural Values):

- Protective Measures for Culturally and Spiritually sensitive/ significant Plants
 - ʔa·knumuʔti# (Natural Law/Natural Order)
 - At-risk plants and knowledge
 - Shareable Knowledge
 - Data Collection
- Harvesting Protocol
 - Mitigation of over-harvesting
 - Proper techniques and seasons
- Strategic Engagement with Industry, First Nations, and the Public
 - Community Cultural Values for Ecology, Forestry and Economic Development
 - Cultural Competence and Traditional Teachings

Keepers Of The Seasons, LLC understands the hard work and dedication involved in creating Business relationships that directly Impact the Ktunaxa Nation (KNCS, yaʔit ʔa·knuʔiʔit, yaqan nuykiy, ʔakisq̓nuk, and ʔaq̓am). Furthermore, KoS, understands the Strategic Engagement and Dialogue needed to ensure the best outcomes for:

- Land Stewardship/Guardianship

- Minimizing Destructive Human Impact (Industry)
- Economic Development

Furthermore, KoS, recognizes the many teachers and Knowledge holders that work hard to preserve a way of life and to ensure propagation of Cultural Knowledge and Beliefs. Thus, it is our intention to honor all ancestral teachings and remain being open to learning from other people’s wealth of Knowledge - to have our Shared Knowledge of the land (ʔamak) influence the way we shape the landscape. That we are honoring our ancestral Knowledge and ensuring a resilient legacy that manifests positive change for future generations of Ktunaxanintik and all people.

Taxa.

Darcy Fisher and Jenny Fisher
Keepers Of The Seasons, LLC



CLES Winter 2023

wanuyitnamu - Ceremony



wanuyitnamu

CLES, has strategically embraced the ‘seasonal round’ which has been used by first peoples since time immemorial. By employing this strategy, they have been able to expand teachings beyond ‘one-off’ events and have been able to couple on-the-land with in-house experiences as a series of Cultural/Traditional workshops. Utilizing both on-the-land and in-house events has proven successful in perpetuating Cultural Teachings that may have not been accessible in the past:

- Winter Ceremony
 - Naming
 - Traditional Roles
 - Smudge (Types)
 - Preparation/Process/Protocol
- Traditional Tea Sampling
- Doll-making and Miniature Cradle Boards
- Preserved Foods (Syrups)

Notably on the, December 15th, 2023, event was the teachings shared by Kyle Shottanana. Known through the Ktunaxa Nation as a Traditional Knowledge holder and Councilor of yaqit ʔa-knuqʔiʔit. Kyle was gracious enough to share his knowledge and history of the ‘Jump Dance’. We were privileged with learning his intimate journey through attending jump dances as a child into his acceptance of being a leader in his adult years. Kyle started his presentation speaking about his knowledge of ‘Naming’ as a ceremony and occurrence at the ‘Jump Dances’. Historically, our Indian names were given to us by an elder in the family and were only ‘taken’ out during ceremony. Additionally, it was taught that we may never know the meaning aside from literal translation at first, however, as we age the meaning may reveal itself (meaning) to us through ceremony, spiritual happenings, or rites of passage. Further to these teachings was that the Indian name we are given at birth may no longer suit



us as we age, and we may grow into a more adult version of the name or another name entirely.

As for the modern versions of the ‘Naming’ “ceremony” it was noted that this has evolved from the announcement of names – when a newborn or newly recognized (remembered) member has made it to jump (been away for a long time, attending first dance). This has also evolved from traditional events where someone has been gifted a name, publicly, that is held by a living person who is passing on their name to a new holder. Depending on where one dances or who they know, individuals may request an announcing of their name for the ‘tribe’ to know them by or to be given a name if they were previously unnamed. Either way, it was noted, this is a very spiritual, special, and intimate ceremony that should be appreciated and not taken lightly.

Kyle taught in a compassionate and non-judgmental way. He was open to answering any questions participants had and was welcoming to differing viewpoints. He wasn’t argumentative and approached speakers in a very respectful manner. As a participant one felt appreciated, respected, and overall valued throughout his presentation and dialogue.

Doll Making and Miniature Cradle Boards

Each footprint we leave connects us to the past, grounds us in the present and guides us to the future; we learn to tread lightly and pace ourselves through our earth walk, we learn patience and we embrace change. Our history is rich and beautiful, much like the landscape that is ʔamakʔis Ktunaxa. Our oral history and intergenerational knowledge has guided us since time



immemorial. It is through the teachings of our ancestors that we learn our many roles within our homes, communities, and families. We are rich in many areas of Cultural Knowledge because we have learned to embrace worldly teachings which have allowed us to survive millennia. The waterways as described in our 'Creation' story are part of the way we navigated our vast territory which *"extends south to Missoula, Montana; west to Bonner's Ferry, Idaho; north to the Arrow Lakes area of British Columbia; and east across the Big Bend of the Columbia River to the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains"*. It is through knowing this that we can embrace our interconnectivity and better appreciate Intergenerational and Cultural Teachings that are gifted to us from Knowledge holders at all points of our Territory. KoS, Jenny Fisher and Darcy Fisher, shared both a video presentation and Traditional Doll and Miniature Cradleboard Making. Jenny, who is of Kootenai (Ktunaxa), Salish and Pen'orielle heritage shared her lessons as passed from generations of parents and grandparents. KoS's use of dollmaking making and cradleboard crafting delve into the traditional teachings of parenting and importance of Families First. Often our first teachers are often our families importantly our parents and if we are lucky our grandparents. The roles they play in our development are important and will ultimately shape us in ways that no other individual will. The video created by KoS taught that through intergenerational Teachings and many, many, mothers before us delicate care, well wishes, and best hopes were put into their cradleboards. And much as the day was started with discussion encompassing ceremony it was closed with teachings of equal importance. The dolls that were made and the stories/teachings that were shared connected each of us to the work we are doing and ensuring we put our best hopes into the future of our Guardians and Stewards of the Land. Taxa!



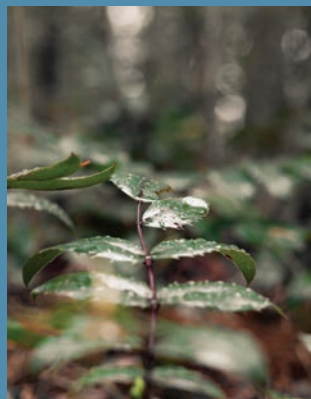
Best Hopes CLES Wanuyitnamu 2023

CLES WINTER 2023

Vision/Mission

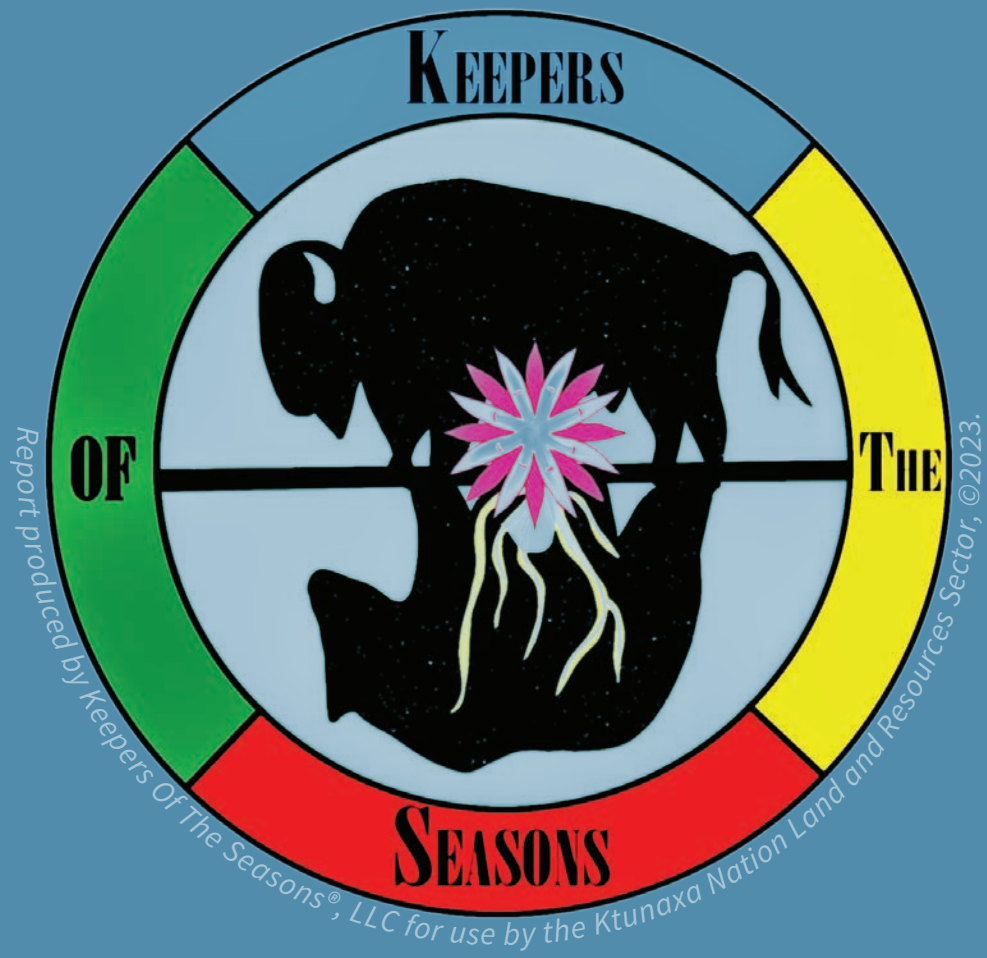
"To impart Traditional Knowledge, Values and Skills that Manifest Positive change and Mitigate Destructive Human Impact on the land through our guiding principles: Gratitude, Reciprocity, Integrity, Protocol, and Humility". ~ KoS

"Strong, healthy citizens and communities, speaking our languages and celebrating who we are and our history in our ancestral homelands, working together, managing our lands and resources, as self-sufficient, self-governing nation". ~ KNC



Best Hopes

- More Ktunaxanintik seizing opportunities to be on the land
- Capacity building for Community and Nation Guardians
 - Finding our voices (*Speaking our truth and sharing our stories*)
- In-house/Indoor Activities to focus on:
 - Medicine Making (Traditional Plant Use)
 - Learning Songs (Language)
 - Food Preservation (Syrups, Medicines)
 - Salves, Soaps, and Body Balms
 - Additional Ceremonial Teachings
- Ktunaxa Involvement For Strategic Land Use and Land Use Designation
- Continued Support For and Respectful Dialogue (With Knowledge Holders)
- Ktunaxa involvement for Habitat: Restoration, Reclamation, Reintroduction and Preservation
- Opportunity for Ceremonial and Cultural Practice within ?amak?is Ktunaxa
- On-the-land hands-on learning and teaching (Eco-immersion) through all seasons. Further Integration of plant use workshops during community engagement sessions
- Recording of historical knowledge: archeological, trail systems, ceremonial
- Increased Youth Engagement
- More breakfast (opportunities to eat, meet, laugh and share) *"It humanizes the staff"*.
- *"Sectors should come together to support each other and learn from each other, on what works"*.



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