

Spirit of the Sxwo'le Coalition (SOS Coalition) Bylaws

August 31, 2020



[Hetiluk/Frank Hillaire and Squiqui/August Martin \(1914\)](#)

(Additional research needed: Hetiluk is on the SEXSOXELWET family tree,
said to come from the lineage of COLOLEMKEN)

The Salmon People are worth saving.
We are all Salmon People Indigenous to Mother Earth.
Salmon People know no boundaries.

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Spirit of the Sxwo'le Coalition (SOS Coalition)
Bylaws

ARTICLE I. COALITION NAME

The name of this network is the Spirit of the Sxwo'le Coalition (SOS Coalition). The traditional definition of the *Spirit of the Sxwo'le*: Sxwo'le refers to the willow ring in the reef net (a Straits Salish fishing method); the *Spirit of the Sxwo'le* refers to how we work in peace, unity, balance and sustainability to restore the natural social, political, economic, familial-type system of our ancestors.

SUMMARY

The Spirit of the Sxwo'le Coalition is a transboundary (US and Canada) society of individuals and organizations, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, committed to upholding the rights of Indigenous peoples and Nature in the ancestral homelands of the Salish Sea. The Coalition supports an emerging group of Indigenous inherent rights holders who are working to establish parallel education and legislative systems based on the natural laws, inherent rights, kinship values, and knowledge democracy.

The SOS Bylaws and Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) are living documents; all coalition leaders are invited to review, add their expertise, knowledge and desires for their participation.

ARTICLE II. VISION, MISSION, & VALUES

1. Vision Statement

Establish a Coast Salish Tribal Heritage Field Institute, an Indigenous-led 13 moon, mountain to sea, reef-to-reef, K-PhD program; rebuild and restore seven longhouses in the San Juan Islands and seven longhouses in the Gulf Islands; grounding ourselves in the natural laws, inherent rights, and cultural kinship values of our saltwater salmon people.

2. Mission Statement

We work together to ensure a thriving Indigenous culture and environment through the restoration of Houses of Healing Houses of Learning Longhouses to revive and improve public health and quality of life for All People and Nature.

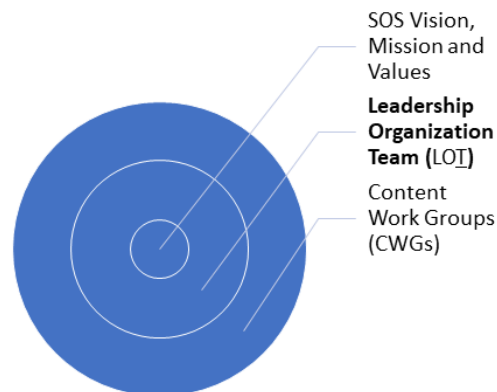
3. Values

The SOS Coalition values the autonomy of each member and their respective organizations. These values support the work of SOS Coalition, as well as community healing:

- A. [Treaty rights as defined by the U.S. Constitution](#), and First Nations rights as

- protected by the Canadian government;
- B. The process of [Truth and Reconciliation](#) as an instrument of healing; [\(document of support\)](#);
 - C. Rights supported by the [United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People \(UNDRIP\)](#);
 - D. Global initiatives that strive to “transform conversations that matter into actions that make a difference” [Humanity Rising, 2020](#);
 - E. [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#);
 - F. Diverse communities of practice, expertise, and perspectives that are committed to actions that support knowledge democracy and prevent the genocide of knowledge systems;
 - G. People who have lived here since time immemorial, the survivors of the Great Flood are now survivors of the industrial flood of Western economy and technology;
 - H. Integration of Indigenous and Western ways of knowing to address climate change, and public health crises for renewal and increased resilience for seventh generation sustainability
 - I. **Collaborative** vision, perspectives and commitment of the LOI and CWGs as defined in the [Memorandum of Agreement](#);
 - J. Seventh generation sustainability ensures that natural resources and culture will be practiced and thrive in the future;
 - K. The [rights of Nature](#);
 - L. The Coalition will honor our respected Elders’ concerns about institutional and individual practice of exploitation, cultural appropriation, and intellectual property rights violations.
 - M. Coalition members will respect one another’s ownership of intellectual, creative property, and research; integrity shall be shown in that such properties are not exploited, appropriated, or propagated.
 - N. The Coalition values reciprocity and equity.

ARTICLE III. COALITION STRUCTURE



ARTICLE IV. MEMBERSHIP

SOS Coalition leadership is derived from action-oriented community based organizations and individuals that make up the:

1. Leadership Organization Team (LOI) and
2. Content Work Group (CWG)

Members are action-oriented community based organizations or individuals that are committed to producing tangible deliverables focused on specific issue areas identified by the coalition for the collective work. CWGs focus on collaborative initiatives to address priority issues.

Membership and is open to all who are committed to the SOS Coalition mission, vision and values including:

- Indigenous-led engagement, empowerment, funding and solutions
- Indigenous and Western ways of knowing and being; knowledge democracy
- Stewardship of the Salish Sea
- Relationships based in:
 - [Natural laws, inherent rights, and cultural kin-based systems](#) of the saltwater salmon people who thrived in this region before colonization;
 - Reciprocity (mutual exchange) and respect;
 - A [Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\)](#) that upholds cultural safety for the sharing of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups.
- SOS Coalition affirms the sacred grounds for working together
- Membership is not legally binding
- Members will address conflicts in a respectful, inclusive manner
- Memberships are long term to ensure the sustainability of SOS Coalition projects, programs, and on-going research.

Members shall have a broad understanding of Coast Salish tribal sovereignty as well as special expertise in one or more areas including:

- Tribal history
- Indigenous governance
- Cultural values
- Traditional ecological systems
- Since Time Immemorial or First Nation Curriculum
- Language
- Indigenous Public Health

1. [Leadership Organization Team](#) (LOI)

The LOI remains committed for the life of the coalition to ensure continuity, and provides guidance and oversight for SOS Coalition Content Work Group (CWG)



activities. **LOI re-establishes Indigenous governance**

The **(proposed)** founding LOI includes: (awaiting agreement of engagement, terms or edits from all parties);

- A. Indigenous Resurgence on the Salish Sea Team, a transboundary team comprised of the
 - NWIC,
 - [WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council Society](#), a unified, legal governing body comprised of three WSÁNEĆ First Nations: Tsartlip, Tseycum, and Tsawout (Canada);
 - [Whiteswan Environmental \(WE\)](#), a Native-led nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization; [WWU](#), [UVic](#)
- B. [Institute for Multidisciplinary Ecological Research in the Salish Sea \(IMERSS\)](#) and [Inclusive Design Research Center \(IDRC\)](#), an international team collaborating through design, technology, media, and science (Canada & UK)

One individual or organization of the LOI will serve as the Coalition Coordinator
The Coalition Coordinator serves as the core of the organization, and works with members to ensure workflow and communication.

A. Definition of LOI

Traditional definition of LOI refers to the natural laws, inherent rights, and cultural kinship values of our saltwater salmon people. LOI is a Straits Salish word that signifies kinship structure, [natural laws and kin-based systems](#) which existed before colonization. ***(WE need to review this definition with a respected elder leadership team)***

2. Content Work Groups (CWG)

These groups are further defined in the [Memorandum of Agreement](#), including specific projects and goals. In order to achieve the vision and mission, and uphold the values of the SOS Coalition, Content Work Groups will practice open communication and transparency to respectfully avoid duplication of efforts, unintended competition (such as for grants), or any other conflict. In this way, CWGs work together to leverage equity.

3. Membership Responsibilities:

A. LOI Responsibilities

- a. The LOI shall have a minimum of five and no more than 9 members. The leadership team shall be 100% Indigenous-led, with a preference for Straits Salish representation;
- b. A member of each organization will be delegated to serve as a point of contact to collaborate with the Coalition Coordinator;
- c. One seat on the LOI will be reserved for a representative identified as

- the Coalition Coordinator;
- d. The Coalition Coordinator will ensure the CWGs align with the vision, mission and values of the SOS Coalition, and report progress to the LOI;
- e. The LOI will approve, deny, or ask for additional information about the CWG proposal, and outcomes shall be in writing;
- f. The LOI may call for the formation or dissolution of a CWG.
- g. In order to ensure cultural safety and integrity of the Coalition, the LOI will approve new members who agree to sign the SOS Coalition MoA;
- h. Voting is a responsibility of the LOI, see Voting Process, below.

B. CWG Responsibilities

- a. Each CWG will communicate with Coalition Coordinator;
- b. CWGs will self-organize to plan, identify resources, generate budgets, and present these in writing to the Coalition Coordinator;
- c. Each CWG will vote on (sub) topics concerning their work projects and report outcomes to the LOI Coalition Coordinator;
- d. Criteria for evaluation of CWG proposals will include clear alignment with SOS Coalition goals, capacity, budget;
- e. At their discretion, members of the CWG may invite participation from other representatives or outside experts, who must sign on to the MoA to ensure the integrity of the Coalition.

C. Coalition Coordinator Responsibilities

The Coalition Coordinator is a member of the LOI who will:

- a. Schedule meetings, manage logistics, ensure agendas are prepared for meetings, set up phone or Zoom logistics for meetings;
- b. Facilitate and delegate Coalition activities:
 - o Coordinate internal communications and record keeping;
 - o Support shared evaluation with data collection, analysis, and reporting;
 - o Support communication of SOS Coalition goals and achievements to stakeholders.
- c. Encourage and support on-going involvement of SOS Coalition members.

4. Terms for membership

Terms for memberships shall be developed and approved by the LOI.

5. Requirements of Members

- A. Agree to the Bylaws and sign the Memorandum of Agreement;

- B. Participate in a CWG;
- C. Participate in scheduled meetings/calls;
- D. Be action-oriented in seeking and securing resources to support the activities of CWG/s with which the organization is involved;
- E. Learn the strategy: [Plan, Study, Implement and Act \(PDSA\)](#) to facilitate working together through the same process;
- F. Ensure the integrity and cultural safety of the Coalition;
- G. Inform the Coalition Coordinator if membership termination is desired.

6. Approval of New Members

New members can be nominated by other members and will be approved by the LOT.

7. Voting Process

- A. A. The LOT will vote on such matters as:
 - New membership
 - New Content Work Groups
 - Other issues, concerns, topics as needed
- B. B. A quorum of SOS Coalition members shall be two-thirds; presence of the majority of members and/or assigned proxy shall be considered a quorum;
- C. C. Voting will be submitted via email or text, for documentation
- D. D. If a vote is not received in the time requested, it is considered a vote in favor of the motion;
- E. F. As a general rule, the LOT will seek consensus on all matters.

8. Elections

A call for LOT nominations to fill open positions will be made to members annually, or whenever the LOT has fewer than 5 seats filled.

- A. Bios of nominated individuals will be circulated to the LOT;
- B. The LOT will have one week to review materials and submit their votes;
- C. When voting, members will be asked to consider geographic diversity and a balance of representation from all areas of the region;
- D. If elected, new members will sign the MoA;
- E. New members will join one or more CWGs.

9. Meetings

SOS Coalition will hold in-person or on-line meetings at least quarterly and as allowed. It is anticipated that the Coalition meetings will be open and fluid.

Meeting purposes include:

- A. Facilitate information and resource sharing

- B. Provide training opportunities
- C. Follow the commonly held strategy of: [Plan, Study, Implement and Act \(PDSA\)](#)
- D. Communication will be made accessible to members across the region using various tools such as email, Zoom-meetings, conference calls, e-newsletters, webinars, and webpage updates.

ARTICLE V. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

1. Member Dues

There are no dues for the SOS Coalition.

Members are encouraged to donate and/or assist in fundraising.

2. Grant Funding

- A. The LOI and CWG will apply for funds to support the SOS Coalition. All Coalition members will endeavor to maintain open communication and transparency with fundraising activities.
- B. The Coalition Coordinator should be notified of funding initiatives related to shared efforts, proposals, and other activity; the intention is to respectfully avoid duplication of efforts, unintended competition for a grant, or conflicts of any type.
- C. Members are encouraged to work together to leverage equity.

ARTICLE VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. Conflict of Interest

All SOS Coalition members are asked to disclose any real or potential conflicts to ensure integrity. Coalition members may bring in witnesses who are relative to an issue of concern. Members of the LOI or CWG can recuse themselves from any vote in which they have a conflicting interest. The minutes of the meeting must reflect any reported conflict of interest and be transparent to the Coalition.

ARTICLE VII. BOOKS AND RECORDS

The SOS Coalition shall keep records of budgets and minutes of the activities and meetings, and make these available to all members.

ARTICLE VIII. BYLAW AMENDMENTS

- 1. The LOI shall have the authority to make, alter, amend, or repeal the bylaws of the

coalition, except as prohibited by law, by a majority vote of a quorum of members present or represented by proxy.

2. SOS Coalition members may formally submit a request to change the SOS Coalition bylaws to the LOI at any time.
3. Once a request to change the bylaws has been submitted, the proposal will be shared with all members and a vote taken within a month, with the decision confirmed within two weeks.

MoA Ammendments?