



Re: K'ómoks

First Nation Treaty

Why We are Holding This Event

PURPOSE OF THE EVENT

Gilakas'la and thank you for gathering with us today. We wanted to take a moment to explain why we are hosting this event. The K'ómoks Treaty is moving quickly toward provincial legislation and eventual ratification. At the same time, there are still significant and unresolved issues between our Nations, particularly around **Core Territory, shared territory, and how those areas will be governed and managed.**

Despite repeated efforts, we have not been able to meaningfully work through these issues with K'ómoks First Nation or with the Crown. This gathering is about creating that space before decisions are finalized. Our intention today is not to oppose treaty-making. We support modern treaties, but those treaties must reflect the full reality of overlapping territories and Indigenous legal orders.

What we want to do is share and ground this discussion in our own laws and teachings as Liǵwíldaǵw and Kwakwaka'wakw people. That includes:

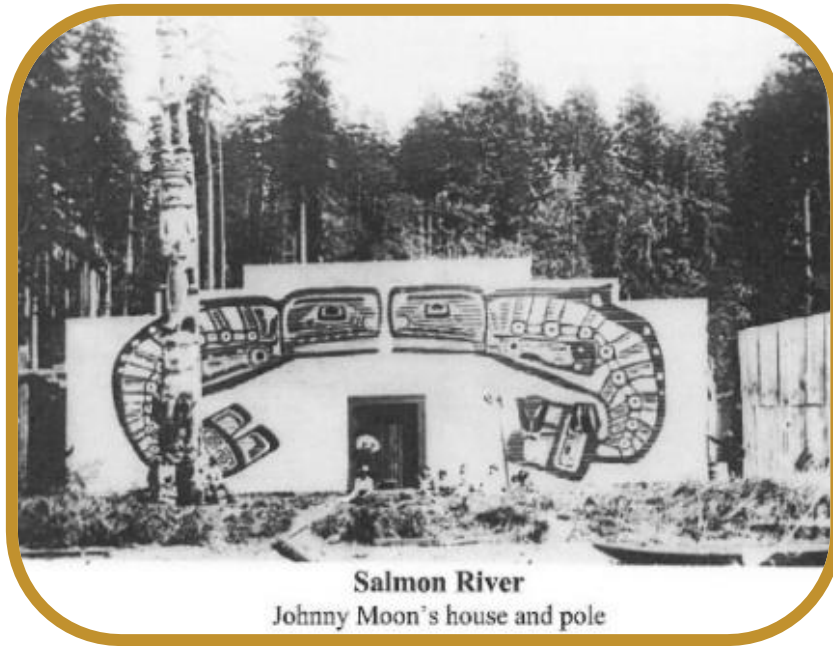
- **How our ancestors established and defended territory**
- **How relationships with neighbouring Nations were managed and**
- **What protocols governed access to lands, waters, and resources**

These laws are not historical; they are living systems that continue to guide our responsibilities today and, in our view, they must form the foundation of how shared areas are addressed in modern treaties. We are hosting this event because those perspectives have not been meaningfully incorporated into the current treaty process and we believe there is an urgent need for government and First Nations leadership to understand these realities before the treaty becomes law.

Ultimately, this is about ensuring there is a path forward — one that reflects our laws, respects our territories, and avoids conflict in the future.



The current draft Treaty does not include provisions to address overlapping territories or shared areas with neighbouring Nations. It does not establish protocols for how lands, waters, and resources will be accessed or managed in those areas. It provides no opportunity for Wei Wai Kum to exercise exclusive decision-making within our Core Territory, including over lands, waters, and resources, that our ancestors governed and protected under our own laws. It also does not reflect Liǵwíldaǵw and Kwakwaka'wakw laws and governance systems that have long governed these relationships.



The current draft of the K'ómoks Treaty raises serious concerns. **It claims close to 80% of our territory and contains many and massive infringements of our rights and title.** K'ómoks leadership has consistently refused to meet with us to work out the issues between us. Provincial negotiators have failed to meet their commitment to engage in deep consultation and accommodation negotiations with us despite recognizing our Strength of Claim.

We are left with few choices other than going to court. This is our attempt to bring people together to explain Liǵwíldaǵw and Kwakwaka'wakw law and how our ancestors recognized territories and resolved disputes. We are hopeful this will provide understanding and a path forward.



THIS IS THE MOST SERIOUS THREAT WE HAVE FACED SINCE COLONIZATION

If the K'ómoks Treaty is ratified by the provincial Legislature this spring and then by Canada, it will grant K'ómoks First Nation constitutionally protected rights to **nearly 80% of the territory our ancestors secured and protected under Indigenous law**. This would significantly undermine our ability to protect our territory, resources, rights, and heritage passed down through generations.



- K'ómoks will have constitutionally recognized “traditional territory” and Wei Wai Kum will have no recognized Core Territory.
- We will have no ability to negotiate exclusive fishing areas, even in our *loxiwe* (clam gardens).
- K'ómoks is already trying to block our wind farm project. They will have an enhanced ability to block all our projects and developments in the future.
- K'ómoks will have the ability to select treaty land in the future in our Core Territory without our consent.
- K'ómoks will be given fee simple ownership of the Salmon River Reserve that was allocated to our ancestors in 1878. Our Members, who are descended from our traditional villages in Salmon River, will lose their ability to access the gravesites, Bighouse sites, and sacred sites of our ancestors, and maintain ongoing cultural and familial connections to those places.
- There will be no mechanism to resolve disputes under Liǵwǵłdaǵw laws or protocols.
- There will be no recognition of our Hereditary Chiefs, nor their territories, rights, responsibilities, names, dowries, or stewardship responsibilities. These Chieftainships, rights and responsibilities have been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years.



THE SOLUTION

All we are requesting are practical and reasonable amendments to the K'ómoks Treaty, including:

1

Leaving Salmon River
as a Reserve

2

Recognition of
Wei Wai Kum's
Core Territory

3

Requiring binding
protocols in the
Treaty, which we are
willing to reciprocate
in our eventual Treaty

We remain committed to working with K'ómoks First Nation and the Crown to find a path forward that reflects our respective laws, respects overlapping territories, and avoids conflict in the future.

Ǵilakas'la

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Wei Wai Kum

Wei Wai Kum Territory Showing K'ómoks Overlap of Almost 80%

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Wei Wai Kum Territory |  Liǵwíldaxw Indian Reserves |  Homayno IPCA |  Campbell River Watershed |
|  K'ómoks Treaty Boundary |  Salmon River IR#1 |  Maʔcēnoʔ SFMA |  Salmon River Watershed |
| |  K'ómoks Indian Reserves | | |

