

The Coast Salish Nation is the trans-boundary indigenous and aboriginal group that stretches from north of Powell River through all of Puget Sound and down the Washington Coast. Approximately 550,000 square miles and 600 million acres of the Coast Salish region were represented by over 50 tribes and bands. In February 2008, elders, chiefs, and representatives from more than 50 tribes and first nations formally adopted a mission and action agenda at the 3rd Coast Salish Gathering with a goal of developing policy and support sound science for the restoration and protection of coastal ecosystems of the Salish Sea.

The Director of the Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council, Jon Waterhouse brought the Coast Salish Gathering Leaders the experience of conducting water-quality studies during a canoe voyage that was successfully demonstrated during a 1,200--long canoe trip down the Yukon River in summer 2007. "The Yukon River Healing Journey was developed to check the pulse of the river and it was up to our team to find a way," said Director Waterhouse. Yukon River's Biologist, Bryan Maracle and Schuster developed to the concept of "marrying culture and science," by dropping a water quality probe on the side of a canoe along the Yukon River. The Healing Journey started from Moosehide, Yukon Territory, Canada and landing in St Marys, Alaska, a 1700 mile paddle.

The Healing Journey and the Washington Tribal Journey shares a common purpose of blending culture and science through water quality testing and testimony from indigenous communities along the waters system of environmental changes and issues.

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To learn more about the project visit <http://usgs.gov/coastsalish> and www.tribaljourneys.com

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