

# Kwezúsem Work

The Lílwat Business Group Bi-monthly Newsletter

Issue 1 | May 8, 2025



## A Message from LBG CEO Tsekonámus Rosemary Stager-Wallace

Welcome to the first edition of our new bi-monthly newsletter.

Every other month we'll be sending updates from our Construction Enterprises, Forestry Ventures, and Retail Operations divisions. We will be using this newsletter to introduce you to new staff members and recognize others. This will also be the first place you will hear about our new projects and opportunities.

As we get ready to start construction in June on our largest project to date, Tseqwtsúqum (Chek-choo-koom) at Function Junction, LBG has never been stronger. This project will provide longterm stable workforce housing options and will also re-establish Lílwat7úl presence on our Traditional Territory in Whistler.

In March, I had the honour of speaking at the Pemberton and District Chamber of Commerce's AGM. This was the second time I've addressed the Chamber since becoming CEO of the Business Group in July 2023. Preparing for my speech, I reflected on how much has changed in just 18 months. During this time, LBG has seen significant growth, advanced several major projects, and raised its profile throughout the Sea-to-Sky Corridor. As a result, we've attracted greater interest from potential partners.

With major land development projects in Whistler, Pemberton, and Lílwat at various stages of development, a respected forestry division that incorporates traditional forest management practices, and a profitable retail sector that has recently expanded to include The Hitching Post Motel, LBG is truly living its mission: Taking our rightful place in the economy.

We look forward to keeping you informed through this newsletter and other communications delivered to your inbox.

Kúkwstuw̓ckálap,

Tsekonámus Rosemary Stager-Wallace  
Chief Executive Officer



Business  
Group

# What's Happening at LBG

## News & Events

### Limited Edition Stl'atl'imx Declaration Day T-shirts and Hoodies available at Lílwat Station



Show your Stl'atl'imx Pride on May 10th by wearing a limited edition Stl'atl'imx Declaration Day T-shirt! Modeled above by Rachel Dan (left) and Bernadine Sampson.

The Lílwat Business Group is proud to announce its limited edition Stl'atl'imx Declaration Day apparel. These comfortable, cozy, quality black, urban cut T-shirts and

hoodies feature the entire text of the Declaration of the Lillooet Tribes on the back and our logo and mission statement, Taking Our Rightful Place in the Economy, on the front.

On sale now at Lílwat Station. Get yours before they sell out!

# Kúkwstum'ckálap to PricewaterhouseCoopers

LBG hosts ceremony on April 14 to say thank you for XCS donation



Students at Xełólacw Community School (XCS) will now be working on better computers and monitors from now on thanks to LBG's commitment to community.

Earlier this spring, the Business Group leveraged its relationship with the firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) to secure 70 laptops and 40 portable monitors for XCS. Students and teachers were becoming increasingly frustrated with the old equipments' slow loading times.

LBG CEO *Tsekonámus* Rosemary Stager-Wallace, President *Lhpatq* Maxine Bruce and *Qaqawam* Chris Wells, *Sík Sík*

Joshua Anderson and *Áñwasúlmec* Brett Wallace and Lílwat Nation Education Director, Verna Stager, took part in an uplifting Gifting Ceremony on April 11 at the PwC office in Vancouver. *Qaqawam*, *Sík Sík*, and *Áñwasúlmec* led the ceremony which included dancing by *Lhpatq* and left the PwC team visibly moved.



*Qaqawam, Sík Sík and Lhpatq drumming and dancing as part of the Gifting Ceremony.*

"The donation of these computers and monitors from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) really means a lot. The state of the old computers was frustrating to both our students and our teachers," said Verna Stager, Director

of Education for Lílwat Nation.

"When I looked into replacing what we had, it was going to cost \$250,000.

"The old computers, with their constant

*(Continued on page 4.)*



glitches and long loading times, were  
(PwC Donation continued from page 3.)

affecting our students' educations.  
We are so thankful for this amazing  
donation."

PwC management was presented  
with a framed photo of XCS  
students holding up the letters to  
spell "kúkwstumckálap," thanking  
the accounting firm for the generous  
donation. The gently used hardware  
will make an enormous difference to  
the students and teachers.

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More of Toonasa Luggi's photos from  
this great day on Howe Street.



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## The Hitching Post Motel Has Grand Opening with Land Blessing Ceremony on April 7

LBG's newest business ready for visitors

More than 60 community members  
braved the rain to join Lílwat Business  
Group staff and elected officials to  
celebrate the grand opening of the  
Hitching Post Motel with a land bless-  
ing and luncheon on Monday, April 7.  
The motel, purchased earlier this year  
by LBG, marks the organization's entry  
into the tourism sector.

*Qaqawam* Chris Wells, *Sík Sík* Josh An-  
derson (bottom left), and *Árɪwasúlmecw*  
Brett Wallace opened the afternoon in  
a good way with singing and drumming.

This was followed by speeches from  
the Chiefs, a prayer from Elder Priscilla  
Ritchie, and a land blessing ceremony  
that included smudging the motel.

*Kúkwpi7 Gélpcal* Cultural Chief Ashley  
Joseph and *Kúkwpi7 Skalúlmecw* Dean  
Nelson shared their joy about the new  
acquisition that now makes LBG the  
largest land owner in Mount Currie.

"I'm just happy seeing our people  
operating our motel on our land," said  
*Kúkwpi7 Skalúlmecw*.



Crowd gathering to take part in the  
Land Blessing Ceremony at the Hitching  
Post Motel on April 7.



Spirits were bright as people gathered to witness the Land Blessing at the Hitching Post Motel's Grand Opening day.

*Qaqawam* spoke to the role that the hotel had played in the community and the “shenanigans” the 12-unit motel has hosted over the years, igniting the knowing laughter of many. “We all have stories here,” he said.

LBG Holding’s president, *Lhpatq* Maxine Bruce, expressed great pride in the motel coming under the LBG banner. The longtime president also shared that one of her favourite shenanigans was sneaking in to use the motel’s long decommissioned pool. LBG CEO Tsekonámus Rosemary Stager-Wallace joked that swimming in that pool was probably the reason neither she nor *Lhpatq* had gotten COVID.

The motel will be managed through LBG’s Retail Operations. Retail Operations GM Graham Turner spoke to the opportunity that the motel presented before introducing Manager/Caretaker Melanie Montgomery. The new manager, who previously operated a nine-bedroom B&B in Niagara on the Lake in Ontario, spoke of the incred-



Kúkwpi7 Gélpal shares some memories about the Hitching Post Motel.

ible people she had met during her first month on the job and the great team she has assembled ensure the motel’s success.

“It’s been amazing. People have come up to me to introduce themselves and share their stories,” said Montgomery.

“I have felt so welcomed.”

The new motel manager has introduced a few Indigenous branding elements to the rooms including Salish designed bed throws and local art on the walls. In the coming months

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(Hitching Post continued from page 5.)

more branding elements will be added to the Hitching Post Motel as it prepares for a busy summer season.

Food for the motel opening, which included soup and bannock, was provided by Tsípun Supermarket Catering.

A few more photos from the Hitching Post Motel Grand Opening Ceremony. As you can tell by the drumming and dancing, even the rain couldn't dampen the people's spirits.



## Job Fair brings high school students out

Open House that evening attracts 100+ community members





LBG's Job Fair and Open House on April 1 at T̓síl Learning Centre drew over 150 community members, including more than 50 high school students from Xetólacw Community School.

LBG treated the students to lunch, catered by T̓sípun Supermarket. The students engaged them with LBG Bingo, where they learned about LBG's job opportunities, met our managers and shared their knowledge about our businesses. (Everyone knew where to get a pizza!)

The engagement level was high, with most of the school's Grade 8–Grade 12 students in attendance, filling out their "blackout bingo" card. Completed bingo cards were then entered for a random draw that saw two students walk away with \$100 Retail Operations gift cards, good for purchases at T̓sípun Supermarket and Lílwat Station.

From 4 pm–7 pm, the afternoon event evolved into an Open House for the community to attend. Community members were updated about current LBG projects and opportunities and had met staff from across the organization.

As part of the Open House, three new LBG staff members were brushed off in a ceremony conducted by *Qa-qwam* Chris Wells, *Ánwasúlmec* Brett Wallace and *Sík Sík* Josh Anderson. The new staff members (pictured below, left to right) were Chris Thevarge and Levi Robson who have joined Lílwat Forestry Ventures as Intermediate



**The Open House brought the community together to see what's happening at LBG.**

Forestry Technicians, and Melanie Montgomery who has been hired as the Manager/Caretaker for The Hitching Post Motel.

Open House attendees were provided

with dinner, which included salmon and pizza, and was also catered by T̓sípun Supermarket.

**We are pleased to share these photos by Lílwat7úl photographer Pala Kovacs.**



# Recognizing Our People

## Staff Achievements & Changes

### Spotlight on Denise Leo



Denise Leo has been the Operations Manager for the Lílwat Station Chevron, the anchor business of the Lílwat Retail Operations (LRO) since July 2023. It takes a certain level of determination and persistence to manage one of the busiest gas stations in the Sea-to-Sky region, I am very proud of how far Denise has come in this demanding leadership role.

The gas station has the highest revenue, longest hours, and the most transactions out of all the LRO businesses. Lílwat Station also deals with dangerous goods daily. In addition to running a well-stocked convenience store featuring a food service bar, Lílwat Station also operates a Post Office and food service counter. It's a lot to manage!

—Graham Turner  
GM of Lílwat Retail Operations

### Kudos to Hailey Leblanc



LBG is very pleased to announce that our Senior Human Resources specialist Hailey LeBlanc has moved into the position of Human Resources Manager.

Prior to joining LBG in June of last year, Hailey worked in HR next door at Úllus for Lílwat Nation. The addition of a full-time HR person to the LBG Management Team has been an incredible asset.

Born and raised in the Pemberton Valley, Hailey brings with her a vast amount of knowledge about our area, particularly its strengths and challenges from an employment point of view. A creative, innovative and diligent HR professional, she's the perfect fit for LBG.

We congratulate Hailey on her recent promotion!



# Construction Enterprises, Forestry Ventures, & Retail Operations

## GM Reports



## Building Unity, Structuring Success

Lilwat Construction Enterprises (LCE), a proud member of the Lilwat Business Group, is making great strides in several key projects that will bring long-term benefits to our Nation and surrounding communities.

Exciting progress is being made on the Tseqwtsúqum (Chek-choo-koom) at Function Junction development in Whistler (aerial land view right). Tseqwtsúqum which will feature three mixed commercial-residential buildings and a gas station. With a potential start date of June 2025, this project will create economic opportunities and housing in a high-demand area.

The build is anticipated to take 18 months. Upon completion, LBG will undertake the Pemberton Highways Yard Project. Currently, in the early planning phase, designs are taking shape for this five-building, mixed commercial-residential development that will support local infrastructure and community growth.

Community-driven projects remain at the heart of our work. Engagement has begun for the Community s7ístken (Gathering Place) Project in Lilwat,



Construction of Tseqwtsúqum, on 5.3 acres in Function Junction, is planned to start June 1, 2025.

which will serve as a vital cultural and gathering space.

Meanwhile, our ongoing operations continue to thrive. We are supplying quality aggregates from our pits and mines, producing top-grade concrete through our partnership with Pemberton Concrete, and efficiently managing the Pemberton Transfer Station to support sustainability in the region.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the Master Plan for Main Street, which will guide future development, as well as the revitalization of the Lilwat Marketplace Project. One of our most ambitious undertakings is the NKWÚKWMA Bench Lands development in Pemberton, a multi-phase, 20- to 25-year project that will bring 450 new residential units to the Pemberton

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(LCE Report continued from page 6.)

Valley, creating much-needed housing and long-term economic benefits.

LCE is committed to maximizing opportunities in all our contracts by supporting band member-owned businesses, increasing employment for Nation members, and driving

sustainable profit growth for LCE. These efforts ensure that our projects create lasting economic benefits and strengthen the local workforce.

As we expand our capacity and explore beneficial partnerships, LCE remains solidly committed to growth, innovation, and positive community impact.

We look forward to sharing more updates as we build a stronger future together.

Kúkwstumckálap,

Jason Andrew  
GM of Lílwat Construction Enterprises



## Managing the Nations Forests for the Future

In January, Lílwat Forestry Ventures (LFV) engaged in a collaborative project with the University of British Columbia's Master of Sustainable Forest Management (MSFM) Program. Between January 20–24, 2205, 21 students visited Mount Currie and the Pemberton area to develop a landscape-level forest management plan centred around key themes such as cultural burning and commercial thinning.

Over the past few months, LFV has been leading a data-collection project to assess old-growth areas within the First Nation's traditional territory. The Old Growth Stewardship Data Collection Project will give the Nation a snapshot of the forest to help promote wildfire management, wildlife habitats and the growth of traditional plants.

In addition to these projects, LFV also launched the video 'We Work Together with the Land' in March, created in partnership with the BC Community Forest Association and the Ministry of Forests, to highlight LFV's proactive wildfire risk reduction efforts and emphasize the importance of working together to manage forests with multiple values in mind.



Forestry Ventures uses techniques such as cultural burns to reduce wildfire risks.

In terms of training, LFV has partnered with Stillwater Consulting Ltd. to deliver three fully funded, six-week training programs on Wildfire & Community Resilience. The 12 students enrolled in this program will receive 240 hours of comprehensive training across essential field skills.

Finally, LFV was a finalist for the 2025 BC Cleantech Awards in the Adopter of the Year category. This category recognized a leading organization, company, or group adopting or

championing sustainable practices in their industry. We are all very proud of our team for this milestone! Keeping up with what's happening at Lílwat Forestry Ventures is easy by checking our News page at [lilwatbusiness.ca](http://lilwatbusiness.ca).

Kúkwstumckálap,

Klay Tindall  
GM of Lílwat Forestry Ventures





# Continually Expanding Retail Offerings for the Nation

While big profits are always a welcome goal, at Lilwat Retail Operations (LRO) we are also committed to ensuring that the community has access to essential, high-quality retail services at home. The two primary retail locations of the division—Lilwat Station and Tsípun Supermarket—provide full-time employment for more than 40 community members and contribute positively to the local economy.

As we approach FY2026, current economic instability is a concern, but LRO remains optimistic that more Canadians will choose to spend locally. LBG's retail division is expecting a strong summer, with more people opting for domestic travel. Lilwat Station is strategically and geographically well-positioned to benefit from the rise in regional tourism. The gas station and convenience store plan to expand their hours this summer to accommodate the expected increase in visitors.

Additionally, Tsípun Supermarket will see heightened promotion to visitors needing supplies for their stay. The full-service grocery store, located in the Xetólacw community, is having a strong year, building on the success of last year.



**Retail Operations has stepped into tourism with the purchase of the Hitching Post Motel.**

For the first time since its expansion and relocation more than a decade ago, the store turned a profit. Tsípun's success can be partially attributed to offering popular brands like President's Choice and No Name, which are not available at grocery stores in nearby Pemberton.

In January, LBG acquired the Hitching Post Motel, marking the Business Group's first foray into tourism. The 12-unit motel, now managed by Retail Operations, is ideally located along a main route to various destinations. Due to the growth in rubber-tire tourism, the motel is expected to experience a busy summer.

We are also pleased to announce that an experienced innkeeper has been appointed to manage the Hitching Post Motel. Melanie Montgomery was appointed Motel Manager and Caretaker on March 1, 2025. Prior to joining LRO, Melanie managed a large bed-and-breakfast in Niagara. We look forward to seeing you in the stores!

Kúkwstu'mckálap,

Graham Turner  
GM of Lilwat Retail Operations

**Our next newsletter will be July. To keep up on what's happening at LBG until then, please visit our website and check out Media page, or division News pages at:**

**[www.lilwatbusiness.ca](http://www.lilwatbusiness.ca)**