

Exchange Between Russian and British Columbia Indigenous People – 2002



Xaxli'p's Art Adolph and Silva's Herb Hammond explain mapping to Russian Indigenous leaders.

In late June of 2002, six indigenous leaders from Siberia and the Russian Far East spent two days with the Xaxli'p First Nation and Silva's Herb Hammond in Lillooet to learn about the ecosystem-based and traditional use mapping prepared for Xaxli'p traditional territory.

Xaxli'p has prepared extensive traditional use mapping of their territory. SFF worked with Xaxli'p to prepare an ecosystem-based plan that protects and maintains biodiversity and identifies places where Xaxli'p can develop economic activities. This project represents the first time that traditional use information and western scientific analysis have been combined, giving Xaxli'p a powerful set of information for their ongoing discussions with government and industry.

Indigenous groups in Russia are beginning to plan how to regain control of their traditional lands and establish viable economic opportunities that are consistent with their traditional values.

Xaxli'p were generous hosts for the Russian guests, providing salmon feasts and traditional singing and dancing.

The visit between the Russian indigenous people and Xaxli'p was organized by Pacific Environment of Berkeley, California. Pacific Environment also provided simultaneous translation services.

SFF and Xaxli'p have published their methodology of combining traditional use and ecosystem-based information on an international web site hosted by Both Ends Foundation based in the Netherlands. The article is entitled Protecting Native Lands at www.bothends.org/encycl/cases/.