

Nuxalk First Nation

"You have been gifted this journey through our lands and we would like to share our gifts with you, so that you may appreciate and respect the treasures that our territory has to offer you, and understand the ways in which these gifts shape our way of life."



The Sun Mask is our national symbol. It connects us to our past through the ancestors and the Four Carpenters, and represents the four territories of the Nuxalkmc that came together in Q'umk'uts. *Nuxalk Nation collection.*

Qalxalulhmtulhap

We Welcome You with an Open Heart

Four hereditary Nuxalk chiefs. Left to Right: Chief Sixilaaxayc (Noel Pootlass), Chief Anulhkw'iklmayc (Aaron Hans), Chief Qwatsi (David Clellamin), and Chief Nanus (Mike Tallio).

Michael Wigle Photography.



"Aalhk'w'ntam, the Creator, created our first ancestors in the upper world, or heaven. He gifted them each with a spirit and breath and they came alive. He gave them names, technologies, and teachings to bring to the earth. He said, "Look to the walls of my House." Hanging on the walls were bird and animal cloaks (e.g. Raven, Eagle, Grizzly, Killerwhale).

The ancestors wrapped these cloaks around themselves and transformed into the animal or bird before they descended to earth on the eyelashes of the sun, the sunbeams that hold up heaven.

Each ancestor settled into their own estate, sectioning off land given to them by the Creator for generations yet to come. Women, through the first marriages, brought about citizenship.

Our Nation was born."

Nuxalk Ancestral Territory: A Living Gift

Just like our first ancestors, you are a guest who has descended from the mountains to the valley floor. With open hearts and minds, we welcome you into Nuxalk Ancestral Territory. We ask that you follow our laws and respect this beautiful place. Way!



BCVT photo

Today, we are strengthening our culture by upholding our Ancestral system of governance through the Potlatching system, and reviving our traditional cultural economy through practices such as carving and cedar weaving.

The Clellamin and Pootlass families. *Peter Solhjell collection.*



BCVT photo

Nuxalk Nation today



BCVT photo

Our Nation is taking steps to protect and care for the territory beyond reserve boundaries. We are gaining pride and confidence to fulfill the destiny of the Nuxalk for generations to come.

The Elders built Acwsalcta, our school, as a place where we can teach our way. Our Elders are taking education back into their own hands, teaching young people and providing them with tools to survive and thrive as both Nuxalkmc and members of the global, modern world.



Qama, 1923. *Canadian Museum of History, Harlan Smith Collection, 58607*

Before European contact, there were thousands of Nuxalkmc, living in towns and villages throughout our territory. Qama, Mrs. Joshua Moody, was a high-ranking woman from the village Snutl'lhlah, here in the Atnarko Valley. Qama was one of the few survivors of the smallpox epidemic of 1862-64. Through her marriage to Chief Joshua Moody, her children were able to bring together a number of families and lineages to rebuild our Nation, reuniting us like the first women in the beginning and allowing us to share our responsibilities as stewards of the land. Her descendants welcome you today.



Village of Q'umk'uts', 1897. *Canadian Museum of History, Iver Fougner Collection, 46918*

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