



**THE SCETL' BASKET
INFORMATION NEWSLETTER**

Dear community members,

In August 2007 a unique birch bark storage container was recovered from the Billy family campsite at six mile fishing rapids. Because of the fragile nature of the item, it was removed intact and excavated in temperature-controlled labs at Simon Fraser University in 2007-2008. Preliminary analysis of the material recovered was also undertaken during 2007-2008. In August 2008 an overview of the project, a summary of the preliminary results and a discussion of the analysis in progress was presented as a poster at the 2008 Xaxli'p Days by Nora Billy (Xaxli'p First Nation) and Suzanne Villeneuve (Archaeology, Simon Fraser University). This poster included discussion of the excavations, ethnographic research, the stone tools and botanical remains, DNA analysis, plans for other analyses (including entomology and chemical analysis), artwork, conservation and display.

Since the presentation of this poster in 2008, radiocarbon dating results have been obtained from Beta Analytic Labs Inc. in Florida, more botanical results have been obtained by archaeobotanists at Simon Fraser University, cleaning and conservation of the basket was undertaken with the assistance of Fraser Spafford Ricci Art and Archival Conservation Inc. in Vancouver, and preliminary drafts of art work have been prepared by Eric Carlson at the University of Montana. DNA, chemical and entomological analyses are on-going at Simon Fraser University.

In June 2009, the basket was returned to Xaxli'p First Nation accompanied by a report from Fraser-Spafford Ricci Art and Archival Conservation Inc., with an explanation of recommendations concerning short and long term conservation of this artifact. The basket is currently in the care of Nora Billy at the Xaxli'p Band Office and is protected by a case constructed of non-acidic materials (mainly chloroplast and polyethylene) designed by the conservationists for short-term storage. However, the goal is to display this artifact in the Xaxli'p Community Hall along with some of the artifacts recovered from the excavations and interpretive artwork by Eric Carlson (University of Montana).

The initial phase of work is therefore nearing completion. An initial overview report on all of this work and results up-to-date is in progress and will be provided to Xaxli'p First Nation for presentation at a community meeting in the future. We hope the results of our archaeological investigations of this unique artifact will benefit the understanding of the historic and prehistoric food storage practices at these important fishing locations.

To assist with the completion of this project, we ask community members to take a moment to review and comment on the artwork that we have been developing to help illustrate the story of the basket in its surroundings. Please visit the website created to assist with discussion surrounding this interpretive artwork at: <http://scetlbasket.yolasite.com/>
Comments can be sent by email to: suzanne_villeneuve@sfu.ca

Sincerely,
Suzanne Villeneuve, MA
RA, Department of Archaeology