

Graduate Internship Opportunity

SUMMER 2026

Project Title

Literature Review of Indigenous-led Cumulative Effects (CE): Approaches and Best Management Practices for the Saanich Inlet

Organization

Pauquachin First Nation, Saanich Inlet Forum

About the Opportunity – Sustainability Scholars Program Info

These 250-hour internships are offered in partnership with community organizations and provide UVic graduate students from any discipline with opportunities to gain applied sustainability research experience. Scholars work under the guidance of a partner mentor and contribute to projects with real community impact.

The 2026 pay rate is approximately \$34.72/hour. To apply, visit the [Sustainability Scholars Program website](#) and review the application guide to confirm eligibility and required materials. Applications close at 11:59 pm PT on Sunday, February 1, 2026. Questions? Contact Laurel Currie: sustainability-scholars@uvic.ca.

Project Background

The Saanich Inlet Forum (Forum) is a collaboration between Malahat, Tsartlip, Tseycum, and Pauquachin First Nations (Partner Nations) and the Province of British Columbia. A key objective of the Forum is to develop a shared approach for a Saanich Inlet cumulative effects assessment that values and acknowledges the integration of ecological values with cultural and human wellbeing (everything is interconnected).

The Forum is applying for two Sustainability Scholars, to be mentored by Pauquachin and Malahat First Nations in developing foundational information from which to assess cumulative impacts to the Saanich Inlet, and by extension to the First Nations' Treaty and Aboriginal Rights.

This internship offers a graduate student the opportunity to engage with Indigenous-led environmental governance and applied research that directly supports planning and stewardship decision-making.

Project Description

The Sustainability Scholar will conduct applied research to support Indigenous-led cumulative effects (CE) assessment work for the Saanich Inlet. Working under the mentorship of

Pauquachin First Nation, the Scholar will review and synthesize Indigenous-led cumulative effects frameworks, governance models, and best practices from the literature. The Scholar will produce a structured methods summary, annotated bibliography, and practical guidance to support the Saanich Inlet Forum in developing a cumulative effects assessment approach grounded in Indigenous knowledge systems and relevant to the cultural and geographic context of the Saanich Inlet. This role is well suited to a graduate student interested in Indigenous governance, applied environmental research, and policy-relevant sustainability work.

Project Scope

Key responsibilities include:

- Conduct applied research on Indigenous-led cumulative effects approaches and frameworks
- Summarize and assess key literature and methodologies relevant to the Saanich Inlet
- Identify priority best practices using criteria-based analysis
- Develop annotated summaries and a final methods guidance report
- Collaborate with project mentors to ensure alignment with Indigenous-led priorities

This work will inform and guide the Saanich Inlet Forum in defining its approach to CE analyses. The CE analyses will in turn inform planning and stewardship actions in and around the Saanich Inlet and inform development and infrastructure decisions in and around the Saanich Inlet.

Deliverables

1. Structured Spreadsheet or Table of reading summaries:
 - a. Aiming for summaries of Indigenous-led Cumulative Effect standards and projects, Indigenous governance examples, and place-based cumulative effect assessment frameworks.
 - b. Includes author, year, Nation or region, knowledge system integration approaches, CE approaches, governance contexts (overlapping jurisdictions), strengths, limitations, applicability to Saanich Inlet.
 - c. Determine and add a criteria-based analysis of each paper, to rank the top 10-15 papers for review in Saanich Inlet.
2. Annotated Bibliography
 - a. 150-200 word annotation of top ranking 10-15 core papers, summarizing approaches, how Indigenous knowledge was integrated into the CE analysis, and potential applicability in Coast Salish contexts.
3. Final summary report of Indigenous-led CE Methods Summaries from literature review, and a practical summary of best practices for Indigenous-led cumulative effect projects.

Time Commitment + Timeline

- The project will take approximately 250 hours between May 1 and August 15, 2026.

SUSTAINABILITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

- All deliverables must be completed by August 15.
- A detailed schedule and timeline will be developed with the Scholar at the outset of the project.

Required / Preferred Skills and Experience

- Excellent research and writing skills
- Familiarity with research methodologies and survey techniques
- Strong analytical skills
- Ability to work independently

Additional Information

Experience with Indigenous communities, and local Coast Salish communities an asset. Indigenous candidates preferred. No specialized requirements, all items can be completed remotely via a laptop or desktop and basic software.