

SHORT BIOS

Marlene Rodgers (Director, The Rewilders Film)



Marlene is passionate about telling stories which explore the human experience. After beginning a career as a literary academic, she moved into feature film development, working with Ontario Creates then the OFDC and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. From there, Marlene's love of collaboration and mentorship led her to work extensively as a story editor and screenwriting instructor, while developing her own projects. Marlene's short films include the award-winning *Foxy Lady*, *Wild Cherry*, which premiered at TIFF (Toronto International Film Festival, which transforms the way people see the world through film) and sold internationally, and *Dreams of the Dead*, a short documentary exploring memory and grief. Additionally, she co-wrote the screenplay *Skin to Skin*, short-listed for the Sundance Writers Lab. Most recently, Marlene has worked as a documentary writer on the acclaimed Amazon series *In Cold Water: The Shelter Bay Mystery*, and with Trish Neufeld as co-writer on *Dancing With Mom*, which won a Leo Award for Screenwriting.

Kyle Gunther (Producer / Executive Producer, The Rewilders Film)



Kyle spent twenty-five years working within the international humanitarian development sector, spanning four continents and encompassing nineteen countries. Throughout this career, he successfully managed large-scale program budgets, developed staffing solutions, and oversaw the technical implementation of various programs. In 2019, he made a transition into the Canadian film industry, where he has worked in a variety of roles on feature documentaries and television series for notable broadcasters, including Knowledge Network and Amazon. His deep passion and enthusiastic commitment to conservation, combined with his wealth of international development knowledge and production experience, have been instrumental in formulating valuable partnerships that have ultimately brought *The Rewilders* to life on screen.

Trevor McDonald, Master of Ceremonies



Trevor McDonald is Executive Director of the Downtown Chilliwack Business Improvement Association. Trevor has lived in Chilliwack since 1977 and has been a longtime community supporter and advocate for local business. His passion and commitment to the long-term success of our community were acknowledged being awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship, the Stan Rogers Legacy Award from the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce and most recently, the King Charles Coronation Medal for his service to the community.

Eryne Croquet, Panel Discussion Moderator Eryne Croquet, M.Sc., P.Ag., P.Geo., is a Chilliwack, BC-based environmental professional working as a senior agrologist and geoscientist with Statlu Environmental Consulting Ltd. She specializes in soil science, practical geomorphology, hydrology, and terrain stability hazard assessments. Key details about her career and background include:



- **Professional Expertise:** She holds certifications as a Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo) and Professional Agrologist (P.Ag).
- **Environmental Work:** Croquet focuses on soil lead roles, including work on the Hope Slough restoration project (Shxwlistexw te Sqwá:la Shxweli).
- **Education & Community:** She has been involved with the BC Envirothon, teaching the soils component to high school students, and served as the President of the Fraser Valley Branch of the British Columbia Institute of Agrologists (2020–2021).
- **Interests:** She is an avid outdoorsperson who incorporates field work in BC's diverse landscapes into her profession and enjoys commuting by e-bike.

Panel Members:

Elia Marie Lockhart (Máthexw'iyé / Axwíl Sihá:li) is a councillor with Sqwá First Nation, a member of the Pelólxw Tribe through her mother, and connected to Matsqui First Nation through her father. She is co-owner of Alongside Research and Consulting, where she partners with Stó:lō communities to strengthen sharing of local knowledge, youth wellness, and land-based learning while supporting pre-existing intergenerational knowledge transfer systems.



Elia co-facilitates the **S'í:wes te S'ólh Téméxw (Teachings of Our Land) Summer Course** created for Stó:lō youth and the **S'ólh Téméxw Guardians Cultural Training Program**, and supports land and water stewardship initiatives across Stó:lō Nations. She has over sixteen years of experience working with young people and previously served for nearly ten years as a Cultural Education Presenter in the Chilliwack School District.

Deeply connected to her culture and language, Elia is passionate about helping young people build strong relationships with **S'ólh Téméxw (Our Land, Our World)** and their **sxexó:mes (Gifts from the Creator)**.

Roxanna Kooistra, Environment Manager, Cheam First Nation



Roxanna Kooistra is the Environmental Manager for Xwchíyò:m (Cheam) First Nation, where she leads land and water stewardship work in support of the Pelólxw Tribe's environmental priorities. Her leadership has focused on the restoration and protection of Sqwá:la (Hope Slough), including water-quality monitoring, pollution response, habitat restoration, and long-term planning for one of the region's culturally and ecologically significant salmon-bearing waterways. Her work reflects a strong commitment to Indigenous-led stewardship and to restoring the health of lands and waters that

have sustained Pelólxw communities for generations.

In addition to leading the Hope Slough work, Roxanna has supported the Gill Bar restoration initiative, helped advance Fraser River side-channel conservation efforts, and is contributing to the long-term vision for a Pelólxw Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area. She brings a practical and collaborative approach shaped by experience in community engagement, conservation advocacy, and visual storytelling, with a focus on building partnerships that support lasting ecological and cultural restoration.

Jason Lum, Three-Term Councilor in Chilliwack



Jason Lum is a four-term City Councillor in Chilliwack and a dedicated advocate for the Fraser Valley. Known for his practical, results-driven leadership, he has championed key issues including housing, healthcare, infrastructure, and disaster resilience.

Elected by his peers across British Columbia, Jason has served three terms on the Executive of the Lower Mainland Local Government Association, including two terms as President. He also served as Chair of the Fraser Valley Regional District, leading a 23-member Board of Directors, and is the longest consecutively serving Chair in the region's history.

Before entering public office, Jason served as President of the Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce and contributed to several local charitable and non-profit organizations. He is also an entrepreneur and co-owner of Little Cedar Organics, a certified organic farm. Jason was recognized as one of the University of the Fraser Valley's "Top 40" alumni, highlighting his leadership and impact in the community.

A lifelong resident of Chilliwack, Jason lives in Yarrow with his wife, Sheila, and their son, Cedar.

Steve Clegg, Land Stewardship Manager, S.A.Y. Lands Office



Living a life of diversity, Steve Clegg can be found river rafting, mountaineering, caving, or rescuing others from these activities as a volunteer with Chilliwack Search and Rescue. During business hours, he is the Land Stewardship Manager for the S.A.Y. Lands Office (Sq'ewqéyl, Athelets and Yeqwyeqwi:ws First Nations) advancing land use policy, environmental compliance, species at risk recovery, community education, and habitat restoration projects. Steve draws on a broad background in business, arboriculture, environmental consulting, nonprofits, and a decade of service in municipal government to help inspire community-based incremental change.

Dr. Eddie Gardner, PhD (UFV), Sqwá First Nation Elder



Eddie Gardner (T'ít'elem Spáth) is a member of Sqwá First Nation. For over 10 years, Eddie was President of the Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance devoted to ensuring their habitats are restored, preserved and protected, and that collaborative efforts result in avoiding this keystone species from going extinct. He was a Sqwá First Nation councilor for four and a half years.

He coordinated the establishment of a Sqwá Medicine Garden where a variety of trees, flowers, medicinal plants, and berry bushes grow. Pollinators: bees, hummingbirds, and butterflies frequent the garden in the summer to the delight of people. This remarkable ecosystem will continue to evolve as a carbon sink, adding beauty, and inspiration for all to value.

Eddie points out how miraculous and uplifting transformations are happening in Pelólxw and Ts'elwéyeqw territories rewilding fish and wildlife habitats that are the results of intergenerational and cross-cultural collaborative work. Eddie strongly believes it is necessary to weave western science with Indigenous, kinship worldviews to benefit the next seven generations.