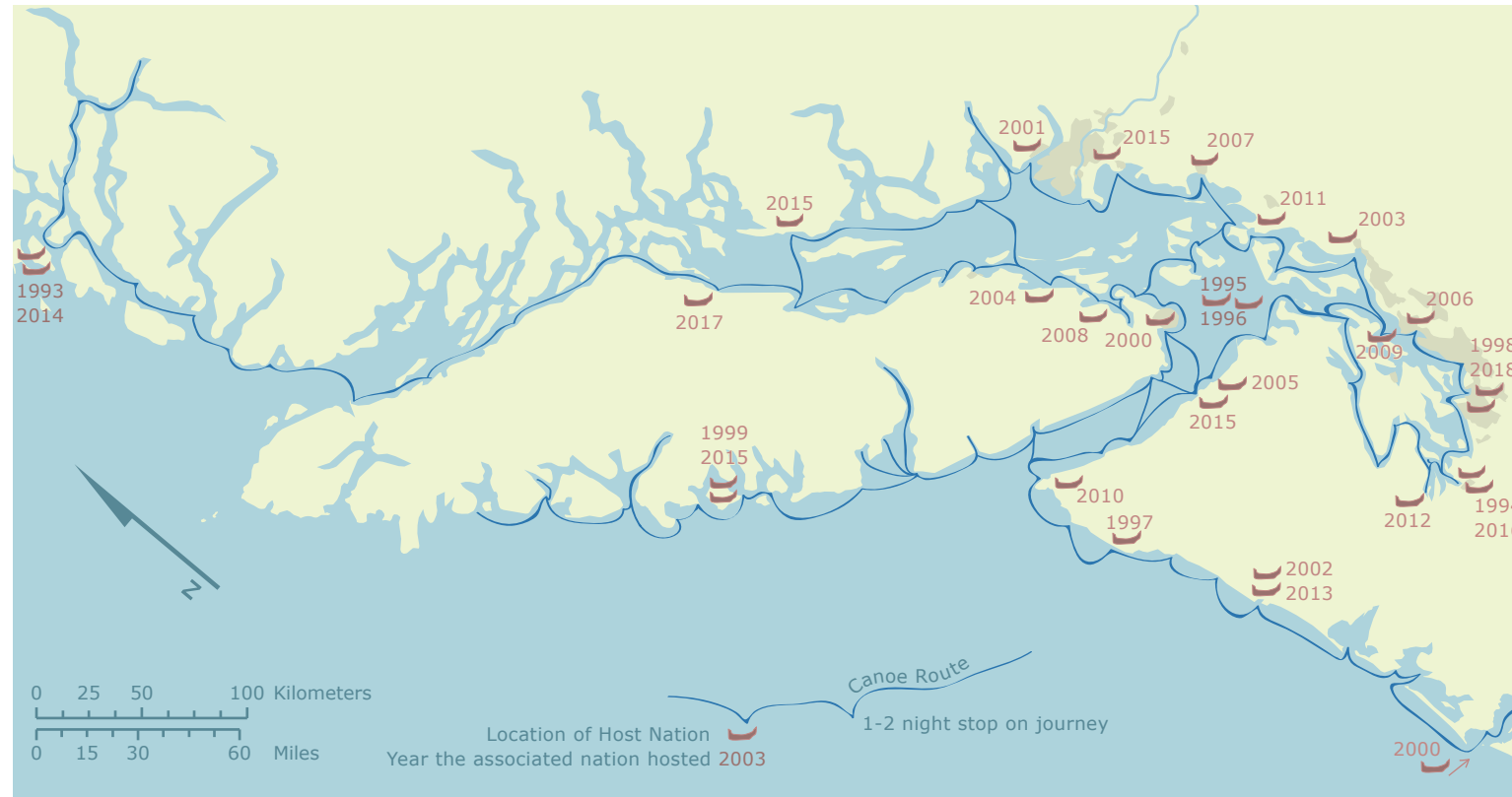


Coast Salish Tribal Canoe Journeys: Fostering Connection, Revitalizing Culture



- 1993:** Paddle to Bella Bella, BC Host: *Heiltsuk*
- 1994:** Youth Paddle to Olympia, WA
- 1995:** Full Circle Youth Paddle
- 1996:** Full Circle Youth Paddle
- 1997:** Paddle to La Push, WA Host: *Quileute*
- 1998:** Paddle to Puyallup, WA Host: *Puyallup*
- 1999:** Paddle to Ahousaht, BC Host: *Ahousaht*
- 2000:** Paddle to Songhees, BC Host: *Songhees/Songish/Lekwungen*
- 2000:** Paddle to Pendleton, OR Host: *Umatilla*
- 2001:** Paddle to Squamish, BC Host: *Squamish*
- 2002:** Paddle to Taholah, WA Host: *Quinault*
- 2003:** Paddle to Tulalip, WA Host: *Tulalip*
- 2004:** Paddle to Chemainus, BC Host: *Stz'uminus*
- 2005:** Paddle to Port Angeles, WA Host: *Lower Elwha Klallam*
- 2006:** Paddle to Muckleshoot, WA Host: *Muckleshoot*

- 2007:** Paddle to Lummi, WA Host: *Lummi*
- 2008:** Paddle to Quw'utsun, BC Host: *Cowichan*
- 2009:** Paddle to Suquamish, WA Host: *Suquamish*
- 2010:** Paddle to Neah Bay, WA Host: *Makah*
- 2011:** Paddle to La Conner, WA Host: *Swinomish*
- 2012:** Paddle to Kamilche, WA Host: *Squaxin Island*
- 2013:** Paddle to Taholah, WA Host: *Quinault*
- 2014:** Paddle to Bella Bella, BC Host: *Heiltsuk*
- 2015:** Paddle to Powell River, BC Host: *Tla'amin (Formerly Sliammon)*
- 2015:** Paddle to Elwha, WA Host: *Lower Elwha Klallam*
- 2015:** Paddle to Surrey, BC Host: *Semiahmoo*
- 2016:** Paddle to Olympia, WA Host: *Nisqually*
- 2017:** Paddle to Campbell River, BC Hosts: *We Wai Kai; Wei Wai Kum*
- 2018:** Paddle to Puyallup, WA Host: *Puyallup*

The map on the left shows the routes of modern tribal canoe journeys. Canoes and their adjacent year label refer to the host of that year's journey. A different indigenous nation hosts canoe families from across the Salish Sea every year. Points where the canoe route (dark blue) meet the shore signify 1-2 night stops on the paddlers' journeys. The route adjusts based on participation and final destination so not all stops are made every year.

Every participant has their own story of where the modern iteration of this tradition started. Many point to the Paddle to Seattle in 1989—spearheaded by Quileute Tribal Leader Emmet Oliver who used Washington State Centennial funds to build four cedar canoes. The Heiltsuk trace it back to Frank Brown skippering a canoe from Bella Bella, BC to Expo '86 in Vancouver. While still others say it all really began in La Push, WA during a cultural revitalization project in the late 1970s. As the modern iteration of

this tradition continues to grow, more stories of personal beginning will be added to the mix.

Today, journeys involve 100 boats or more with people coming from as far away as the Arctic Circle and New Zealand—though not by canoe. Host nations expect to spend about \$1 million to feed and provide the necessary facilities for a week long celebration with thousands of visitors that finishes the annual journey.

Historically, canoes were the primary mode of transportation in this coastal ecosystem. In summer months communities travelled by water to trade, visit family and gather resources. Familial and economic connections across Coast Salish tribes and nations built strong ties between distant villages. And this combined with a commitment to sharing meant that paying a visit to family relations often involved spending time gathering food from their territory.

Canoe travel, both today and

historically, fosters connection between indigenous groups as well as between people and the water. Moving with the tides and currents teaches paddlers an embodied truth about the world around them. It offers an opportunity for family to be together and for younger generations to learn stories directly from their elders about the places they are passing through.

Modern journeys offer another type of connection as well: that of indigenous people and members of the occupying governments (the US and Canada). Canoe journeys have created a platform for Coast Salish people to gain visibility outside of indigenous networks and in 2010, thanks to indigenous organizing efforts including these canoe journeys, both colonial governments official recognized the name 'Salish Sea,' taking one small step towards reunifying this inland waterbody.

For more information search "Tribal Canoe Journeys" on YouTube.

Are Your Colonized Eyes Lost?

Can't figure out what part of the world the map on the left shows? Both maps show the Salish Sea, they are just oriented differently.

The map to the right, shows North facing up, the major cities in the area, and the US-Canada border while the other map does not. This contrast intentionally highlights how indigenous histories are often erased by the colonial governments that claim their territories. Additionally, western cartographic traditions privilege ideas of fixed space and immutable borders while Coast

Salish frameworks emphasize connection and the dynamic nature of place.

For the map on the left, the position of the land and the ocean to reflect localized ocean currents in the Salish Sea which generally flow in from and out to the Pacific. This also reflects the localized view where canoe travel encourages place names to be based on a view from the water.

Additionally, the border is excluded because the Coast Salish people lived here before the border divided their land, and will likely be here after it is gone.

Sources: "The Canoe Journeys ~ A Niqually Perspective." Washington Rural Heritage; NaturalEarthData.com; Intertribal Canoe Society and American Friends Service Committee. Tribal Journeys Handbook and Study Guide, Cedar Media, 2011; Norman, Emma S. Governing Transboundary Waters: Canada, the United States, and Indigenous Communities, Routledge, 2015, pp. 133–146; "Sacred Journeys - Preview." Youtube, Sacred Journeys, 3 Dec.2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDD6jMn6Agw; Thom, Brian. "The Paradox of Boundaries in Coast Salish Territories." Cultural Geographies, vol. 16, no. 2, 2009, pp. 179-205;

