



*NOOAITCH INDIAN BAND:*

**226** Population

**104** Living On Reserve (# of households)

**21** Living On another Reserve

**101** Off Reserve

Website: <https://www.nooaitchindianband.com/>

2954 Shackelly Road Merritt, BC V1k 1N9

Phone: 250 378 6141

### **Governance**

Marcel Shackelly -Chief

Sharon Bond—Council

Olivia Buck— Council

Andrew Dixel—Council

Esther Shackelly—Council



The Nooaitch Indian Band Lands are located within the Thompson-Nicola region of the southern Interior. The main Nooaitch I.R. #10 encompasses 903.1 hectares, and is located along the Nicola River corridor, beginning approximately 23 kilometers west of Merritt, adjacent to the Merritt-Spence's Bridge Highway #8. The second Nooaitch Reserve, #9 Grass is 790.3 hectares, and is located northeast of IR #10 between the Nicola River Valley and Guichon Creek.

Nooaitch lands are situated along the eastern edge of the Spius Creek Volcanic Formation, with andesitic rock being common throughout. The Thompson-Okanagan region has rolling topography with extensive river and creek systems. Lakes are to the northeast of the Nooaitch IR. The elevation of the Nooaitch lands range from 500 meters at the Nicola River, to approximately 1000 meters on IR #10.

The closest urban center is Merritt with a population of approximately 7,000. Merritt provides the main commercial area for the Nooaitch community. Nooaitch community members are currently

dependent on Merritt for most of the shopping, health, employment, social service and education needs. At present, there are no commercial enterprises operating on Nooaitch reserve lands.

From an aesthetic perspective, much of the Nooaitch reserve land is in relatively pristine condition and the river, steep slopes and well treed areas should be considered of high value. Preserving the aesthetic value while promoting development will be a critical balancing act for the Nooaitch Land Manager and the community in general.

There are no amenities offered within the community therefore travel is required to nearest city of Merritt for any personal needs. In the event of a sudden highway closure east of the turn off into Nooaitch, services would have to be rerouted through Highway #1, which could lead to lengthy delays in emergency response. Landslides are common along the highway in either direction.

### **Mission Statement**

The Nooaitch Band Council is the steward of their reserve lands and traditional territory. They will manage these lands while respecting traditional culture and values, in sustainable, environmentally responsible and economically viable manner for present and future generations.

### **Vision Statement**

The Nooaitch Band council is committed to ensuring their administration provides efficient, cost effective, quality service to membership and businesses. Nooaitch Band will ensure the administration is fair, accountable and transparent.

### **Community History**

“While Teit divided the Nlaka’pamuxw territory into Upper and Lower divisions, the tribe had a cohesive structure that was made clear to Indian Reserve Commissioner Sproat in 1879 (Sproat 1879). Originally, the Nooaitch Indian band was integrated and considered a part of the Lower Nicola Indian Band tribes (ibid). The Nlaka’pamuxwand their neighbors shared many resources. Tribal boundaries were well-understood (York 1993, BC DOE 1966) but important gathering areas like the Stein Valley were used by a number of groups. Salmon, an important resource, was believed to have been the impetus for many intertribal relations between the Nlaka’pamuxwand their neighbors, particularly the Lytton, Fraser and Lillooet bands (Cannon 1992).

Obsidian were obtained in trade with other neighbouring tribes (Carlson 1994), signifying a wide trade network that likely extended back to prehistoric times (Galm 1994). Nicola Lake was a site of social gatherings (Coop 2006). These intertribal relationships, knowledge, and ties to the land are often preserved in oral tradition and mythology (Hanna 1995; Sterling 1997).

The Upper and Lower Thompson shared a common identity and language and shared kinship ties. The Lower Thompson was more likely to have contact with the Northwest Coast groups, while the Upper Thompson interacted with their neighbours, the Secwepemc and Okanagan (ibid). The Lakes and Lillooet also made up the Interior Salish group (Wickwire 1978). The traditional territory of the Nlaka'pamuxw People extended into the Similkameen, Nicola Valley, and to the Fraser from Foster's Bar to Spuzzum (Wade 1907). The hunting territory of the Nlaka'pamuxweven extended into the United States (ibid). Interaction with the Upper Stolo was made difficult by the difficulties of foot travel over steep terrain between the Coast and the Interior (Duff 1952b). The Tait were the closest Stolo neighbors, though their fishing grounds were likely well defined from those of the Lower Thompson (ibid). Sawmill Creek was their uppermost village, seven miles from Spuzzum (Laforet 1998)."

## **The People**

The Nooaitch People are a part of the foundation of our Nations. The People are the citizens of Nations that share language, creation stories, community history and family relationships. They form self-defined and self-governed communities and together they hold collective memories. When individuals gather themselves as communities, they are making intentional, political statements about their past, present and the possibilities of their future.

## **Background**

On IR#10 there is the main Band Office and Community Hall at the south end of the reserve. There is an area of industrial land north of the Band Office, formerly occupied by Eagle Nest Homes. Recently a Scw'exmx Community Health Services Society Satellite trailer Office was placed close to the Band office to provide on-reserve health services. The old Anglican Church is located on Lot 55 south of the Band Office.

**Goals:**

- 1) Equal treatment of membership
- 2) Efficiency
- 3) Cost effective
- 4) Quality service to the membership
- 5) Quality service to the membership business
- 6) Accountability
- 7) Transparency

**Objectives:**

- 1) Create stability and job security
  - 2) HR Manual Developed including:
  - 3) Performance Review,
  - 4) Job Descriptions
  - 5) Succession Planning
  - 6) Assessment of Future Job Needs
  - 7) HR Policy
  - 8) Ensure appropriate staff training
- Assessment for future job needs

“First Nations Leaders must work with Children, Families, and Communities to tackle the unacceptable social and economic circumstances of our People, including the loss of our Language. If we provide our Children with Opportunities for success today, It will reap dividends in our Communities in the future.”

(Grand Chief Edward John)