

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



TLA-O-QUI-AHT
FIRST NATION

**TLA-O-QUI-AHT FIRST NATION AND PROVINCE OF BC CELEBRATE
OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF TINWIS IN TOFINO**

Historic Tla-o-qui-aht beach formally recognized under its traditional name as part of ongoing Indigenous place name restorations across British Columbia



Tofino, BC — October 15, 2025 — The łaʔuukwíʔath ɥawíih (Hereditary Chiefs of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation) are proud to announce the official recognition of *tinwis* (pronounced *ti-nu-wis*) as the name of the historic beach in Tofino, briefly known as MacKenzie Beach.

Located on the west side of the Esowista Peninsula, *tinwis*—which means "calm beach" in the Tla-o-qui-aht language—has been a gathering place for generations of Tla-o-qui-aht people. The name reflects the Nation's deep cultural, geographical, and spiritual connection to the site.

The BC Geographical Names Office adopted *tinwis* on May 15, 2025, following a proposal and extensive consultation led by the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation. The Nation chose to share this significant milestone with the Tla-o-qui-aht community first, making the announcement during the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to community members and Tofino residents. This fall's broader public announcement marks the completion of updates to provincial and federal records, local signage, and tourism materials, ensuring *tinwis* is reflected consistently across public platforms and maps.

"We're in a place called *tinwis*—that means calm waters," says Saya Masso, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation's Manager of Lands and Resources. "To us, it's always been a place of refuge. When a place has a name in our language, it often tells you what it was used for, or what it provides to our people."

The renaming was supported by partners including the District of Tofino, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Tourism Tofino, Indigenous Tourism BC, and Destination BC.

"To see the name MacKenzie Beach no longer used—and to formally put the traditional place name *tinwis* on the map—means the world to me," adds Masso. "It's a significant step toward reconciliation and elevating our language back into its rightful place on these lands."

The official recognition of *tinwis* forms part of a growing provincial effort to restore Indigenous place names across British Columbia—an act of cultural revitalization and reconciliation that honours the original stewards of these lands.

"Language is so important to us," says Masso. "Residential schools caused a deep loss of language and understanding. It's not enough to learn the words—you have to live them. Place names like *tinwis* help us live our language again."

The name *tinwis* will continue to appear on all official maps, wayfinding, and interpretive materials, reinforcing the Tla-o-qui-aht Nation's enduring presence and cultural legacy on the lands and waters of the west coast.

Background on the Name

- *tinwis* has been the Tla-o-qui-aht name for the beach for generations
- The colonial name "MacKenzie Beach" was imposed during the early settlement period
- The name means "calm beach" in the Tla-o-qui-aht language
- Official recognition date: May 15, 2025
- Coordinates: 49.1319, -125.9027
- View the official listing: [BCGNIS – tinwis](#)
- [Watch video](#) | [Download photos](#)

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About Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation

Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation is a self-governing Indigenous Nation on the west coast of Vancouver Island, based in Tofino, British Columbia. With over 1,200 members and more than 100 staff, the Nation delivers a wide range of services and initiatives across lands, culture, economic development, health, education, and governance. Guided by the hereditary leadership of its Ha'wiih (Hereditary Chiefs) and rooted in the principle *Hishuk-nish-tsa-waak* ("Everything Is One"), Tla-o-qui-aht is dedicated to restoring and revitalizing its traditional values, knowledge, language, and laws. The Nation's vision is to "respectfully live, work and celebrate together in a healthy, collaborative community," and its mission is to "restore and promote our traditional values and provide enhanced services to improve the quality of life for all." Today, Tla-o-qui-aht continues to strengthen its administration, governance, and partnerships to foster sustainable growth, cultural resurgence, and well-being for current and future generations.