



# Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks Report 2021

wanačas hiłhuuʔis | hiłsyakłis ʔunaacuł | ʔaʔukmin | hiisawista





# Table of Contents

- **Letter from the Director of Lands**
- **Financial Snapshot**
  - Credits
  - Debits
- **Tribal Parks Guardians**
  - Big Tree Trail improvements
  - Other Guardian Initiatives
  - New Tribal Parks Guardians
- **Partnerships**
  - Reddfish Restoration Society
  - Coastal Restoration Society
  - Tofino Salmonid Enhancement Society
- **Tribal Parks Allies – 2018-2021**
  - Participation
  - Revenue





## Letter from the Director of Lands

Thank you for reading the 2021 Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks Annual Report. As we cautiously move beyond the worst years of COVID-19, the hard work of our community members and Allies is starting to show. While remembering and honouring the families amongst us who lost relatives or suffered in isolation, it is also a time to celebrate the re-emergence of our community lives and reap the rewards of building back better. In 2020 and 2021, Tla-o-qui-aht turned inwards, enduring a scary, hard time as we struggled to protect our elders who have so much more to teach us. But throughout these past two years Tribal Parks has enjoyed some thrilling achievements as well.

Participation in Tribal Parks Allies has doubled and doubled again since 2019. At the time of writing this, we have 98 businesses doing the hard work of learning to live well together in right relationship. Our Allies were able to enjoy a bumper tourism season in spite of Covid restrictions in 2021, and we raised a staggering \$277,260.37 in donations and Ecosystem Service Fees from our Allies. With support from Tourism Vancouver Island, Tourism Tofino, The Province of BC, and The District of Tofino, our Guardians are well underway with an overhaul and extension of the Big Tree Trail in wanačas hiḥuuʔis Tribal Park. We're continuing to guide the disrupted Tranquil River back to its native channels and heal riparian habitat in ḥiṣyakḥis ʔunaacuḥ Tribal Park in partnership with Reddfish Restoration (formerly CWFS), and continuing to remove enormous amounts of ghostfishing gear, derelict vessels, and other anthropogenic marine debris from Tla-o-qui-aht waters with the Coastal Restoration Society.

To put this year's work in perspective, this report looks back at the growth of our program over the past 4 years and also peeks ahead at some of the future partnerships and plans Tribal Parks is working towards. We have signed an MOU with an unprecedented coalition of community stakeholders to fund infrastructure projects in the region that will mitigate the worst aspects of under-regulated tourism and protect the aspects of local culture and ecology that make Tofino a global destination. Tribal Parks is working hard to build strong relationships with the Tourism Industry and with individual resorts and businesses through our Tribal Parks Allies program. This is our resource for aligning Tourism with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action and BC's new 5-year *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Action Plan*.

Thank you for reading on and for being a part of this movement which is strengthening the earth, water, air, and fire that comprise the spirit of the haḥuuḥi of the ʔaʔuukwiath ḥawiiḥ.

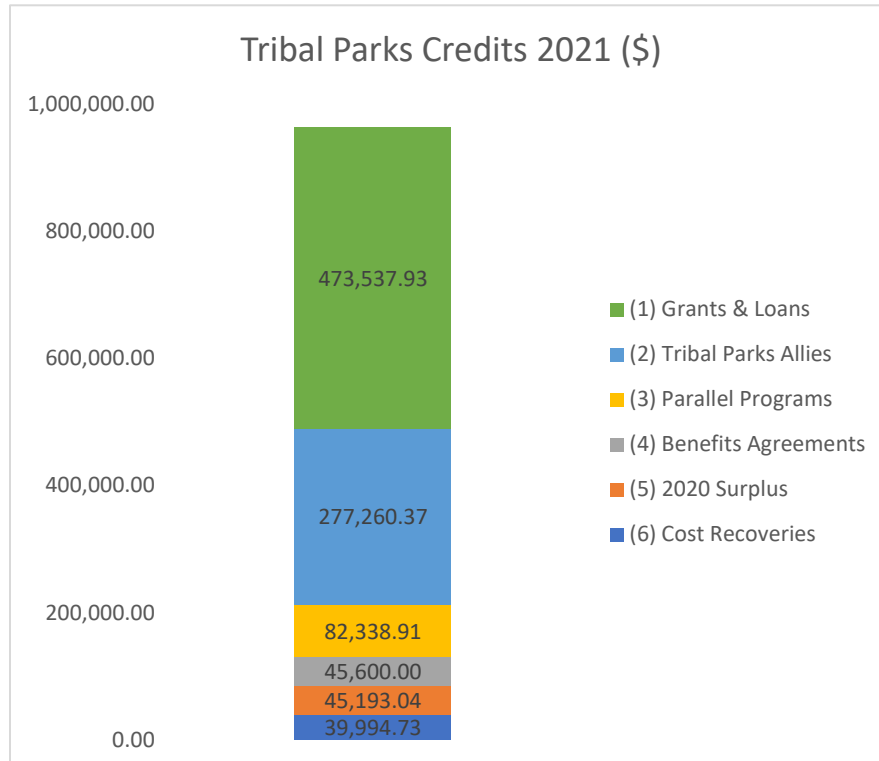
*Saya m. Masso*

Saya Masso, Director of Lands



## Financial Snapshot: \$963,924.28 - \$501,210.47 = \$462,714.51 surplus

In 2021, Tribal Parks accounted a total credit of \$963,924.28 and debit of \$501,210.47, resulting in a **surplus of \$462,714.51 at the end of the 2021 fiscal year**. Thanks to grant support from the Province of BC and Tourism Vancouver Island, **we were able to allocate 100% of Tribal Parks Ally revenue to funding 2022 programs!** This has been a goal for several years and will enable our organization to promise our Guardians job security. It is our goal to compile 100% of each year's operational expenses in the previous fiscal year.



**Credits:** The largest components of Tribal Parks credits in 2021 were from Tribal Parks Allies ESF contributions and donations and from Grants and Loans Tribal Parks received in 2020 and 2021.

**(1) Grants & Loans:** A total of **\$473,537.93** grant and loan dollars were contributed to Tribal Parks this year. Most significantly, this is due to our success applying for funding from the *Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP)*. Through CERIP, we were awarded \$445,000 from the Province of BC. These revenues are funding an extension project for the Big Tree Trail at wanačas hiḥuuʔis from 2021-2023.

*Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development*

*Fund Loan:* A loan of \$78,940.71 was awarded in 2019 to fund the acquisition of a Tribal Parks Marine vessel and purchase some Tribal Parks Allies marketing materials. The balance of that loan at our year-end was \$28,397.93.

*Tourism Regional Development Fund (TRDF):* **\*\*This grant is not reported as revenue in 2021\*\***. Tourism Vancouver Island approved a \$99,964 budget too fund Guardians' revitalization of the existing Big Tree Trail boardwalk and a contract to replace the aging dock and gangway at the trailhead. The approved amount is claims-based and will be reported in our 2022 Annual Report as a cost recovery.

These CERIP and TRDF grants were awarded to Tribal Parks in part because we were able to demonstrate that, thanks to our growing Tribal Parks Allies program, a sustainable revenue stream will be in place by the time these funds are exhausted to continue funding the Tribal Parks Guardian positions they helped create. Thank you to Tourism Vancouver Island and the Province of BC for believing in our commitment to developing and improving tourism-facing Infrastructure for our Allies and their clients to enjoy!

**(2) Tribal Parks Allies:** The combined contributions of our 98 Allies and of 51 private donors totalled **\$277,260.37** in 2021.

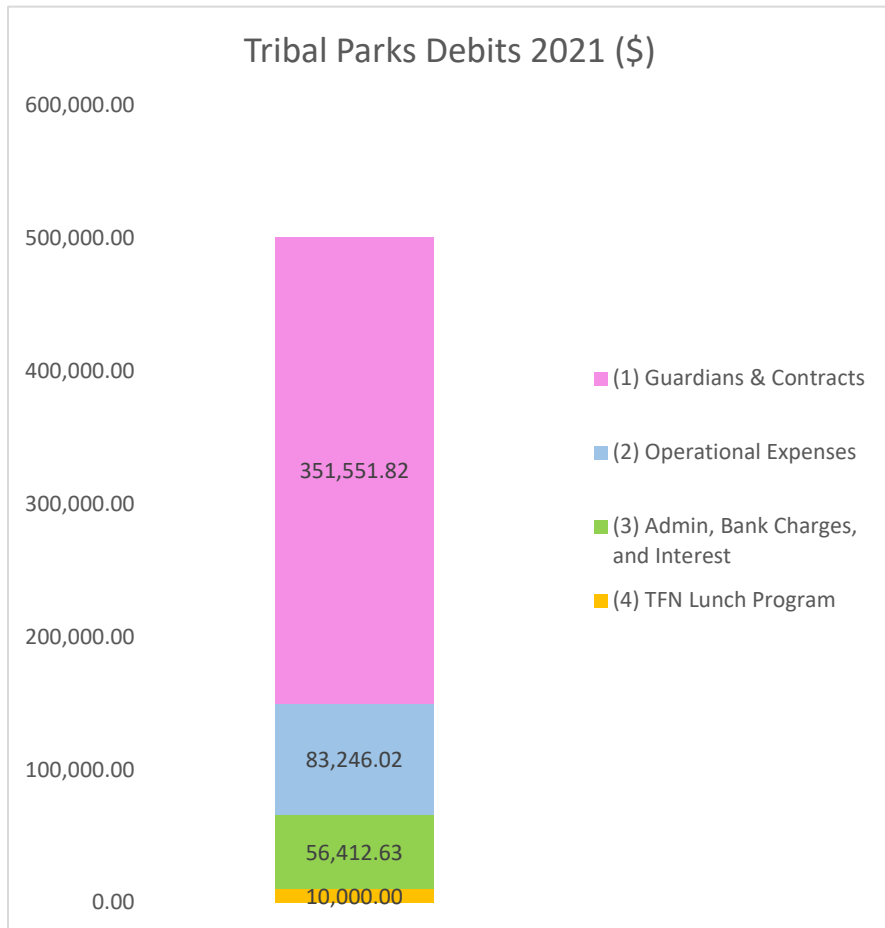
**(3) Parallel Programs:** These are funding sources which fund specific programs and services outside of general Tribal Parks operations which are carried out by Tribal Parks Guardians. Totalling **\$82,338.91**, contributors to this category include the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council and the First Nations Health Authority for our Nation's tap water quality

monitoring program, Nature United for Tla-o-qui-aht Land Visioning, Parks Canada for consultation and services, and funding for the Ipaya Hatchery and our community garden.

**(4) Benefits Agreements:** Tla-o-qui-aht generated **\$45,600** in revenue from benefits agreements in 2021.

**(5) 2020 Surplus:** This category is the account balance at the beginning of the 2021 fiscal year. It totalled **\$45,193.04** on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

**(6) Cost Recoveries:** This category, totalling **\$39,994.73** is comprised of operational costs recuperated from project partners. The Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council, Parks Canada, Redfish Restoration Society (CWFS), Coastal Restoration Society, and Surfrider Pacific Rim, and Tofino Sea Kayaking (t-shirt sales) contributed to this category.



## Debits:

Tribal Parks expenses amounted to a total of **\$501,210.47** in 2021.

**(1) Guardians & Contracts:** The majority of Tribal Parks costs have always been wages and contracts. This year this category amounted to **\$351,551.82**.

*Guardians:* Tribal Parks Guardians' combined salaries, EI/ CPP, WCB, pension, travel and benefits cost **\$212,977.29**.

*Contracts:* 2021 Contracts combined cost a total of **\$138,574.53**. These contracts included our Tribal Parks Allies Liaison contract, rebuilding the Big Tree Trail dock and gangway, funding the Tofino Salmonid Enhancement Society's operations, hosting the Čiinuuł Experiential Learning Series, media contracts, elder consultations, and other minor contracts.

**(2) Operational Expenses:** This category totals **\$83,246.02**, and combines equipment & furniture, fuel, insurance, maintenance & repairs, materials & supplies, and rent.

**(3) Admin, Bank Charges, & Interest:** These combined categories cost a combined total of **\$56,412.63**.

**(4) Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation Lunch Program:** Every year we make a **\$10,000** contribution to the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation's lunch program.



## Tribal Parks Guardians

In 2021 our Guardians were able to turn their attention back to caring for the haḥuuli after a year and a half of focusing on keeping our communities safe during peak waves of the pandemic. With funding from the Province of BC, Tourism Vancouver Island, and Tourism Tofino (as well as a donated composting toilet from the District of Tofino), our independent efforts were devoted almost entirely to the extension and revitalization of the Big Tree Trail at wanačas hiḥuuʔis. For most of its history, the Big Tree Trail has been maintained by volunteers and a skeleton crew of Guardians on a shoestring budget. The trail is a major destination for visitors to the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks – hosting tens of thousands of guests and creating a popular tour offering for our Allies and dozens of other operators.

Our Allies have been asking for repairs, safer moorage, and a quality toilet for years on the trail. The trees and undergrowth have been suffering from heavy foot traffic over their roots, and the single spur trail causes bottlenecks as travellers double back and have to step off the trail to let others pass. This year we started a three-year, two-part project to *refurbish* and improve the existing trail – installing a composting toilet, replacing the dock and gangway, and replacing worn, poorly constructed, or rotten sections of boardwalk – and *extend* it, adding viewing platforms at popular giant trees and viewpoints and a 2km extension to the trail making it into a roughly 3km one-way loop that mitigates the temptation or need to step off the boardwalk. This is part of a big dream for the Tribal Parks Guardians, who have witnessed the wear and tear on the ancient forest in recent years.



*Erosion at base of a popular wanačas hiḥuuʔis giant. Photos by Maria H. from 2011 (left) and 2021 (centre). Guardians improving boardwalk at base of giant to protect roots and hikers in early 2022 (right).*



## Big Tree Trail Improvements:

- The Guardians made significant repairs to the existing 1km trail throughout 2021.
- Approximately 350 meters of new trail has been added as an extension of the original trail.
- A composting toilet has been installed at the trailhead and is fully operational.
- Boardwalks have been constructed around the base of popular giants along the trail, protect the shallow roots of ancient cedar, hemlock, and spruce.

## Other Guardian Initiatives:

*ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ access road monitoring:* Beginning in the winter of 2021, Guardians began making weekly tours of the ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ (Kennedy Lake) access roads, initiating a preventative action program to mitigate the impact of recreational use of the area in the summer months.

*Wickaninnish Elementary School Forest Restoration:* Guardians have been taking excess mulch from the ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ Campground construction site at Tin Wis and depositing it at the Wickaninnish Elementary School to protect the roots of the small forest at the corner of 4<sup>th</sup> st. and Gibson.

*Junior Guardian Beach Monitoring Program:* In early 2021, the Tla-o-qui-aht Junior Guardians were responsible for monitoring the beach in front of Esowista village and asking visitors to respect the closure of that area to the public as a precautionary covid-19 measure. Thank you to everyone who respected those closures and helped our community stay safe.



## New Tribal Parks Guardians:

In 2021 we welcomed two new full-time Tribal Parks Guardians to our team! Leandra Charlie and Riley Caputo joined ranks with the other Guardians, Terry Dorward, Jeff Frank, Joe Elley, and Tommy George Jr.

These new full-time positions were created thanks to the support of the Province of BC and Tourism Vancouver Island, and will be sustained with the support of the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks Allies.

## Partnerships:

### Reddfish Restoration Society: (Formerly Central Westcoast Forest Society)

*ʔaʔukmin (Kennedy Lake Flats) Clean Up:* Guardians, Reddfish personnel, and volunteers cleaned up 8,570 kgs of garbage and multiple abandoned vehicles from ʔaʔukmin access roads in two 2021 cleanup events. Thank you to everyone who came out and lent a hand!

*Hĩsyaqłĩs (Tranquil) River Restoration:* Guardians supported Reddfish restoration ecologists in another year of installing and maintaining major structural interventions engineered to accelerate the natural regeneration of Hĩsyaqłĩs river. Logging in these riparian areas has caused major erosion of the natural barriers which once held the river to its native course. Heavy erosion each year degrades salmon habitat and prevents natural regeneration. By installing large wood structures and planting native species along river banks the river is being restored to a healthy and functional ecosystem. The following tables and figures prepared by Reddfish Restoration illustrate some of the work we are doing as partners:

Table 1 Riparian restoration works in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 fiscal years on Tranquil Creek

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Polygons	C5, C9, F0, F2, F3, F4, F5	C3, C4, C5, F0, F6, F7
Total Riparian area restored	19.4 ha	20.1 ha
Total Riparian area brushed	18 ha	37.9 ha
Total Riparian area planted	19.4 ha	20.1 ha
Total conifers planted	11,166	10,032
Total tree monitoring plots established	21	21

Table 2 In-stream restoration works in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 fiscal years on Tranquil Creek

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Bar-top large wood structures constructed	8	8
Bar-top large wood structures maintained		2
Large wood structures in main stem constructed	1	1
Large wood structures in side-channel constructed	7	
Large wood structures in side-channel maintained		4
Live gravel bar staking area	85 m <sup>2</sup>	1,784 m <sup>2</sup>
Willow/dogwood stakes installed	~1,400	6,070
Willow/dogwood stakes harvested/stored for future installation	4,098	
Live gravel bar alder planting area	0.24 ha	100 m <sup>2</sup>
Red alder seedlings planted	~30,0000	1,000
Alder polygons monitored	28	28
Broom plants removed from Rankin barge grid		200

*Signage:* Reddfish Restoration secured funding for some collaborative signage which was erected along the side of Highway 4 in 2021.





Salmonberry brushing before (left) and after (right) to remove competition for planted seedling. At Hilsyaq̓̓is with Reddfish.

**Coastal Restoration Society:** Over the course of Clayoquot Sound’s short colonial history, an enormous legacy of marine debris, derelict vessels, ghost fishing gear, and abandoned aquaculture sites has washed up against the beaches and inland waters of the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks. Coastal Restoration Society has led an enormous campaign to remove these many forms of marine debris over the past 5 years. The Tla-o-qui-aht Guardians are proud to participate in these legacy projects, working to leave these lands and waters in better condition for the next generation to care for. The following table summarizes some of the work the Tribal Parks Guardians have done in collaboration with CRS since 2018:

*Coastal Restoration Society & Tribal Parks Guardians partnership project outcomes (2018-2022)*

Year	Debris removed from salmon corridors (lbs)	Derelict Vessels Removed	Ghost Gear Removed (lbs)
2018	150,000	17	---
2019	200,000	8	---
2020	300,000	12	75,000
2021	150,000	5	65,000
2022 (to date)	TBD	12	TBD

Other CRS initiatives include European Green Crab industrial targeted trapping, abandoned aquaculture site remediation, and eelgrass and near-shore habitat restoration. This spring, Tribal Parks Guardians removed 9 derelict vessels from Opitsaht beach with CRS as part of their coast-wide Clean Coast Clean Waters Campaign. Thank you CRS for your monumental work!



Before (left) and during (right) CRS’s Opitsaht beach clean in collaboration with the Tribal Parks Guardians. Photos by Olam Films



**Tofino Salmonid Enhancement Society:** Each year, Tribal Parks sponsors and supports the TSES's work. This year was a good year for salmon in the Tribal Parks. Our Guardians and the TSES team counted the third highest freshwater survival of salmon in the last 12 years. Here are some statistics from TSES in 2021:

*A junior Guardian helps collect eggs for the TSES hatchery last fall*

*Fry releases spring of 2021:*

Species	Location	Quantity of Fry Released
Coho	Cypre	68,000
Chum	Hiłsyaqłis (Tranquil)*	35,000
Coho	Kootowis	40,000

*\*These chum eggs from hiłsyaqłis were released into four streams in wanačas hiłhuu?is tribal park*

*Smolt Trap Operation on Mackenzie Creek:*

Species	Total number counted over 80-day period
Coho smolts	1,669
Cutthroat Trout	53
Sculpin	208

*Eggs collected in the fall of 2021:*

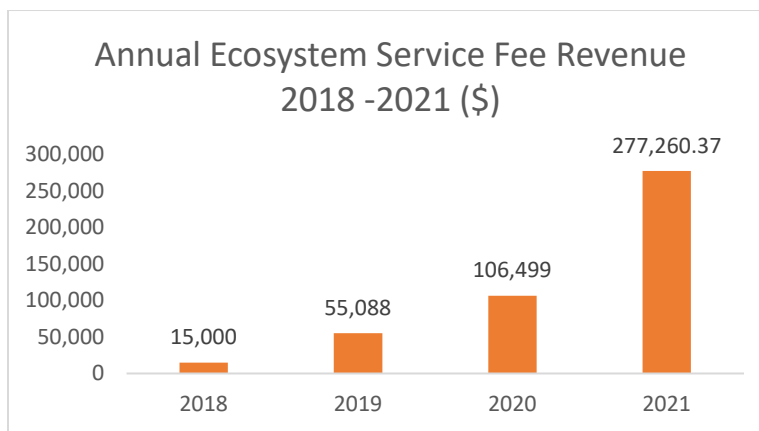
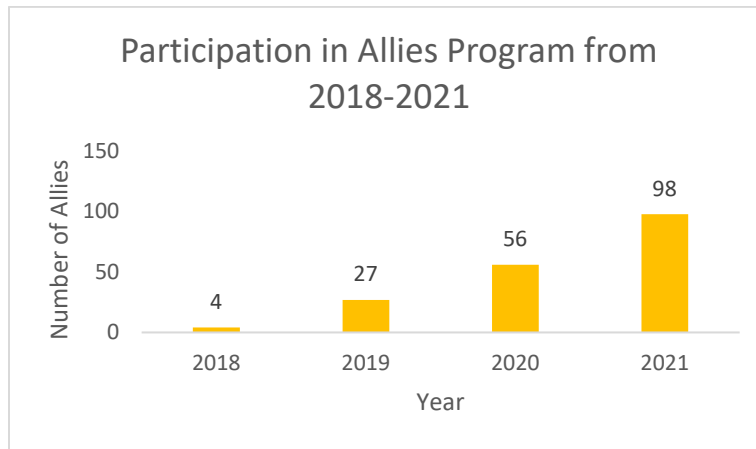
Species	Location	Quantity
Chinook	Hiłsyaqłis (Tranquil)	12,000
Chum	Hiłsyaqłis (Tranquil)	30,000
Coho	Kootowis	37,000
Coho	Cypre	75,000



## Tribal Parks Allies 2018-2021

Since we launched this program in 2018, business owners and the tourism industry have truly embraced our Tribal Parks Allies initiative. We recognized 4 Allies at our November 2018 launch and raised \$15,000 for our Guardians Stewardship program. Participation has grown 2450% since then and revenue is up 1848%. Tofino businesses have sent a clear message that they are ready to work with us. Together, we are doing the heavy lifting to strengthen a culture that respects Indigenous Rights as defined in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and implements the Truth & Reconciliation Commission's calls to action for businesses and the corporate sector. It's going to be a long journey – these are the tools we currently have to get towards that target.

There are currently 98 registered Tribal Parks Allies. Since 2018, our Allies have raised a total of \$453,847.37. These funds have helped create culturally appropriate, secure livelihoods for Tla-o-qui-aht members and added enormous stability to the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks Department's stewardship programs.



The Tribal Parks stewardship program is a critical institution for the sustainable stewardship of southern Clayoquot Sound and greater BC. The Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks are home to Vancouver Island's largest remaining intact old-growth coastal temperate rainforests. These forests and the sensitive coastal eelgrass and estuarine ecosystems which comprise the majority of the Tla-o-qui-aht Tribal Parks are an enormous carbon sink which has not yet been properly quantified. While tourism is responsible for an enormous amount of greenhouse gas emissions (mostly through the travels visitors take to reach this destination), our Allies are supporting a major sequestration resource by supporting our Indigenous Stewardship program. We hope to be able to quantify these services in the near future to demonstrate clearly the value of protecting the haḥuuli of the ʔaḥuukwiath ḥawiih for all time. The rich life source that comprises the spirit of the haḥuuli is a gift from our ʔaḥuukwiath ancestors, and it is our responsibility to care for it and let it grow stronger as the future ancestors of the generations to come.



