

Teresa Ryan

Short Bio

Word Count: 98

Dr. Teresa Ryan (Sm'heyetsk) is a Tsimshian scientist, educator, and fisheries ecologist whose work integrates Indigenous knowledge and Western science to support forest and watershed stewardship. She is a lecturer at UBC's Faculty of Forestry & Environmental Stewardship **and serves as First Nations Liaison for the Mother Tree Project and Program**, helping to shape its values, partnerships, and research. Dr. Ryan is the visionary behind the [Salmon Forest Project](#), which highlights the interdependence of salmon, forests, and Indigenous cultures. Known for her deep relational approach, she is a respected advisor and speaker who fosters dialogue across disciplines, communities, and knowledge systems.

Long Bio

Word Count: 263

Dr. Teresa Ryan (Sm'heyetsk) is a Tsimshian scientist, Indigenous knowledge practitioner, and fisheries/aquatic ecologist whose work bridges Indigenous knowledge systems and Western science to advance forest and watershed stewardship. A lecturer in the Faculty of Forestry & Environmental Stewardship at the University of British Columbia, she teaches courses on complex adaptive systems, ecological sustainability, and Indigenous forest and fisheries stewardship.

Dr. Ryan serves as **First Nations Liaison to the Mother Tree Project and Program**, where her expertise is central to guiding the project's values, partnerships, and research directions. Dr. Suzanne Simard depends on her insight to ensure the work remains culturally grounded, and aligned with Indigenous values and protocols.

She played a key role in launching the **Mother Tree Project**, one of the world's largest forestry experiments, and is the visionary behind the [Salmon Forest Project](#), which explores the ecological and cultural relationships between salmon, forests, and Indigenous Peoples.

Dr. Ryan holds a PhD in Resource Management and Environmental Studies from UBC, a Master's in Resource Management from Central Washington University, and a BSc in Fisheries and Aquatic Ecology. She has served as a national advisor on species-at-risk

legislation, Indigenous knowledge policy, and ecological restoration strategies. Known for her powerful storytelling and deep relational approach to knowledge, she brings clarity to complex systems and fosters meaningful dialogue.

A highly sought-after speaker, Dr. Ryan regularly presents across Canada and the U.S.—from scientific conferences to Indigenous gatherings and international forums.

Teresa is a cedar basket weaver, learning Tsimshian cedar weaving from her Mother *Bilhaam ne’ex* Loa Ryan. Together they have taught several classes in traditional weaving styles.

Selected Appearances:

- [American Fisheries Society – Honolulu: Indigenous Fisheries Stewardship \(2024\)](#)
- [Bioneers – Unravelling the Secrets of Salmon: An Indigenous Exploration of Forest Ecology and Nature’s Intelligence](#)
- [Meadowlark Nature Festival Keynote Presentation \(2023\)](#)
- [TEDx Berkeley: Aboriginal Legacy of Nature’s Connections \(2018\)](#)
- [Bioneers: Uprising Keynote & Panels \(2017\)](#)

Selected Media Coverage:

- [CBC What on Earth with Teresa Ryan](#)
- [Yes Magazine -The Trees are Speaking](#)
- [CBC Vancouver Evening News – The Salmon Forest Project with Teresa Ryan](#)
- [Why wood from B.C. forests is burning to fuel U.K. energy needs – The Fifth Estate](#)
- [BC Documentary on Forest-Salmon Ecosystem Nominated for Global Award](#)
- [BC Botanical Gardens: Salmonberry Stories with Teresa Ryan](#)
- [Globe and Mail – The destruction of the last old growth forests has to stop. We must protect the mother trees](#)

Selected Expert Reviews:

Environment and Climate Change Canada & U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Health of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Report – Chinook Salmon Indicator (Draft Update, 2024)

Reviewed a 36-page draft authored by Bethany Welsh, Sarah Bartnik, and Calista Lu. This transboundary initiative—under the Statement of Cooperation for the Health of the Salish Sea (signed in 2000)—represents a long-standing collaboration between Canada and the U.S. to monitor and report on ecosystem health.

Review period: March 10–May 9, 2025

[View report information](#)

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM)

Biodiversity and Climate Change Assessment: Review of Draft Chapters

Provided expert review for NASEM's draft chapters for its upcoming biodiversity and climate change assessment.

Review period: March 11–April 4, 2025

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Knopf Canada / Penguin Random House

Finding the Mother Tree by Dr. Suzanne Simard (2021) and forthcoming sequel When the Forest Breathes (expected 2026)

Served as Indigenous knowledge reviewer and science advisor for the manuscript drafts. Contributions included reviewing for cultural accuracy, scientific rigor, and relational framing of forest systems.

Review period: 2020 (for Finding the Mother Tree); 2024–2025 (for sequel)