

October 26, 2016

SMÍEƦ and XÁ,EL,S

A SENCOTEN Creation Story from Fulford Harbour, as told by John Elliot on Sept. 21, 2016

SMÍEƦ was a young man who lived in WĒNÁ,NEĆ (Fulford Harbour) with his grandparents. One day he was walking along the beach when he was bothered by a sea monster. His grandparents told him to leave it alone but he thought he knew better. He started sharpening arrowheads with the sharp edges of a mussel shell. He was planning to kill the monster.

As he worked on the arrowheads, a man came to him and asked him what he was doing. SMÍEƦ explained what he was planning to do. The man said a word in SENCOTEN that is not easily translated into English – he asked to see the arrowheads with authority. When SMÍEƦ handed them to him, the man suspended them in mid-air between them. It was then that SMÍEƦ understood this was not a man. It was XÁ,EL,S, the Creator.

XÁ,EL,S told SMÍEƦ, “You are only to take life when you need to. From this day you will be the one who is hunted, then you will know how it feels. I will make these mussel shells your ears. You will be the deer that will feed our people.”

As John Elliot told this story, he had that this is why hunters prefer not to speak the name SMÍEƦ when they hunt, in case the deer realizes they know his human name.