**Commissioner Ronald E. Ignace**

Stsmél̓qen, Ronald E. Ignace, is a member of the Secwepemc Nation in Interior British Columbia. He was the elected chief of the Skeetchestn Indian Band for more than 30 years since the early 1980s. He also served as Chairman of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council and president of its cultural society, where he initiated a broad program of research and reclamation on Secwepemc language and culture, including an innovative university partnership with Simon Fraser University (SFU).

He holds a B.A. and M.A. in Sociology from the University of British Columbia, and completed his PhD in Anthropology at SFU in 2008, with a dissertation on Secwepemc oral history. He has (co-)written numerous articles and book chapters on Secwepemc history, ethnobotany, language and culture, including the epic Secwepemc People, Land and Laws: Yerí7 re stsq̓ey̓s-kucw, a journey through 10,000 years of Secwepemc history.

From 2003-2005, he chaired the Ministerial Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, and from 2016-2021, co-chaired the Assembly of First Nations’ Chiefs Committee on Languages, where he played an instrumental role in the development of Bill C-91, the Indigenous Languages Act.

Raised by his great-grandparents Sulyen and Edward Eneas, and despite being taken to Kamloops Indian Residential School for several years in his childhood, Ron is a fluent speaker of Secwepemctsin and has more than sixty years of practical experience in Secwepemc traditional skills on the land. With his wife Marianne Ignace, he was awarded the Governor General‘s Award for Innovation in 2019, for their decades of collaborative research involving Indigenous people and communities.