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## First Nations Leadership Council

### INFORMATION BULLETIN

#### Recognition Legislation

A joint FNLC-BC Recognition Working Group is tasked with the main deliverables from the New Relationship document – producing principles & mechanisms for: recognition & Honour of the Crown, consultation/accommodation, shared decision-making, revenue & benefit sharing, and other matters. This group is currently focused on recognition legislation as the first priority.

The Province has appointed Geoff Plant to lead the BC negotiating team. There have been two meetings since April to discuss the FNLC's recognition legislation proposal. This is an opportunity for the Provincial government to provide real, on-the-ground results of the New Relationship across the province. The FNLC has expressed its expectation that recognition legislation will be announced in the upcoming Fall or Spring session.

#### Forestry

The First Nations Leadership Council and the First Nations Forestry Council hosted a BC First Nations Forestry Forum on March 11-13, 2008. The outcome of the Forum is a draft "BC First Nations Forestry Action Plan" that will serve to guide the activities of the First Nations Forestry Council in the coming years. The First Nations Forestry Council is encouraging First Nations and their forestry professionals to provide us with further input into the draft Action Plan until May 16, 2008. After this time, it will go for resolution of the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC. To obtain a copy of the draft Action Plan, and/or a copy of the transcript of the First Nations Forestry Forum, please contact:

[admin@fnforestrycouncil.ca](mailto:admin@fnforestrycouncil.ca).

In January 2008, Premier Campbell announced the creation of a Forestry Roundtable which will hold discussions around the province and develop recommendations to improve forestry in British Columbia.

Dave Porter and Chief Lynda Price have been appointed to this Roundtable, which is chaired by Minister Coleman and includes members from government, labour, academia, and other groups.

The FNFC, FNLC and Province of BC are planning a small trade mission to China in July, to build relationships with new markets for First Nations forestry products.

#### Indigenous Child-at-the-Centre Forum

On Jan. 23-25<sup>th</sup>, the FNLC hosted a three day Indigenous Child-at-the-Centre Forum in Vancouver, which brought together Chiefs, leaders and political and technical partners to develop a First Nations Indigenous Child at the Centre Action Plan. This forum was an opportunity for First Nations leaders and key political and technical partners to determine what is needed to ensure First Nations can fully exercise self-determination in relation to children and families and to develop a draft Action Plan that sets out a vision, principles, key topics and actions items. As well, the "Walking Together to Keep the Child at the Centre" Declaration of Commitment was developed and supported at the forum.

A follow-up forum will be planned for Fall 2008.

#### New Relationship

In the New Relationship, commitments were made to a new government-to-government relationship based on respect, recognition and accommodation of aboriginal title and rights and to reconciliation of Aboriginal and Crown titles and jurisdictions. The New Relationship acknowledges that aboriginal title includes the inherent right for the *community* to make decisions as to the use of the land.

On September 20, 2007 the FNLC and the Province of BC issued a Joint Statement on the New Relationship highlighting that the

Province and FNLC are undertaking work to develop frameworks and tools to assist the Province and BC First Nations to implement the New Relationship. The FNLC and Province respect First Nations autonomy and recognize that First Nations are the holders of Aboriginal Title and Rights. The purpose of the New Relationship is to bring about policy changes and set a course forward that will be of benefit to all First Nations.

The New Relationship must not be used as an excuse not to engage with First Nations directly and the policy level discussions are not intended to impede upon or displace First Nations negotiations with the Crown. In fact, these community-level government-to-government negotiations provide valuable insights and guidance to broader discussions.

Each First Nation has the right to a government-to-government relationship with the Crown, and the authority to enter into negotiations and agreements to suit the unique circumstances of the community.

For more information go to:  
[www.ubcic.bc.ca/News\\_Releases/UBICNews09210701.htm](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/News_Releases/UBICNews09210701.htm)

### **BC First Nations Fisheries Council**

The BC First Nations Fisheries Council has recently been appointed by the First Nations Leadership Council to lead the implementation of this *Action Plan*. The interim members of the BC First Nations Council are Grand Chief Doug Kelly (Tseem Th'ewali) (Stó:lô Tribal Council) – Chairman, Michelle Corfield (Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council), Percy Starr (Kitsoo Nation), Howie Wright, M.Sc., R.P.Bio., (Gitxsan Nation/Okanagan Nation Alliance Fisheries Department), Chief Allan Claxton (Tsawout First Nations) and Chief Thomas Alexis (Tl'azt'en Nation). The appointments to the Fisheries Council were approved by resolution at the BCAFN Regional Chiefs Assembly, the First Nations Summit and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs.

The First Nations Fisheries Council will be hosting a series of regional engagement sessions across the province in June to discuss options for a permanent organizational structure and a 08/09 work plan. Specific information on meeting dates and locations will be forthcoming.

The Council has been meeting with a variety of First Nations fisheries organizations, DFO, and other partners on key relationship-building initiatives and in preparation for the 2008 season.

### **BC First Nations Energy Working Group**

In April 2006 First Nations gathered at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre to develop an action plan on energy. This action plan was developed by nearly 200 First Nations in attendance and was ratified through resolutions at the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, First Nations Summit, and BC Assembly of First Nations assemblies.

Representatives on the First Nations Energy Working Group are as follows: Chief Roland Willson - West Moberly First Nations, Chief Nelson Leon - Adams Lake Indian Band, Vice President Arnie Bellis - Council of the Haida Nation and Dave Porter, First Nations Leadership Council.

Progress to date:

- 1) A 5-year budget proposal has been prepared and provided to the federal and provincial governments to create a First Nations Energy Council. This structure and mandate of this Council will be brought to the Chiefs in BC to seek their input and feedback.
- 2) A research proposal has been prepared.
- 3) A background paper on carbon credits has been prepared for all the First Nations communities in BC.
- 4) A presentation was made by the FNLC to the BC Cabinet Committee on Climate Change.
- 5) Regular meetings are scheduled with the BC government climate action secretariat to discuss First Nations rights to carbon credits.

- 6) Inaugural meeting of the First Nations Energy Working Group in Ft. St. John on February 20-21, 2008.

### **Housing and Infrastructure**

The FNLC, Province of BC and the Government of Canada have developed a Housing and Infrastructure Memorandum of Understanding to improve coordination and collaboration, and commit the parties to develop complementary on- and off-reserve housing and infrastructure action plans.

The province hosted a series of regional engagement sessions on off-reserve Aboriginal housing across the province and a final report will soon be released. Based on its findings, the FNLC and other key partners will work with the Province of BC to develop its off-reserve Aboriginal housing plan.

The off-reserve Aboriginal housing plan will be coordinated with an on-reserve housing and infrastructure action plan that will be collaboratively developed between First Nations and the federal government in the coming months.

### **Technology**

The First Nations Information Technology Society (FNITS), the common services organization set up to provide support for technology and information management has been registered. Members of the Founding Board are Keith Matthew, Chief Judy Wilson, Chief Bill Cranmer, Chief Darren Blaney, Katherine Teneese, Norm Leech, Chief Shawn Atleo, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and Grand Chief Ed John. The FNTC Portfolio Leaders recently met to discuss the relationship of FNTC and FNITS (see [www.fntc.info](http://www.fntc.info) for the planning session report). At their first meeting, the new Board will confirm an organizational structure and develop a governance structure.

The mandate of the FNTC, to get the road (industrial grade connectivity) built to support the delivery of programs and services in and out of communities, is getting closer to

being built as a result of the work of the FIT -Fully Integrated Technologies Partners - a working group made up of FNTC -including a number of First Nations organizations, BC and Canada. FNTC will continue to work to ensure that all 203 First Nations have this essential service and related support.

Considerable work is being done on information management issues as witnessed by some of the sessions at our February Conference that ranged from policy issues, to IM systems, to hands on Records Management. FNTC has signed an MOU with the Integrated Land Management Bureau to work together to make BC's land and resource information more accessible and to increase awareness of the 'e-tools that are already available to access this information.

FNTC has also signed an MOU with Strategic Solutions Consortium (SSC) (see [www.strategicsolutionsconsortium.com](http://www.strategicsolutionsconsortium.com)). Stay tuned for details of how FNTC will work with SSC to provide access to the wealth of free learning materials that are available.

### **Frank Paul Inquiry**

The Inquiry into the death of Frank Paul is scheduled to end in May 2008. During this month, the Inquiry will enter into its fourth and final phase. The fourth phase of the inquiry will examine and report on numerous policy related issues.

The Inquiry Commissioner has been charged with examining the rules, policies and procedures of the Vancouver police board and of the Vancouver Police Department, and British Columbia Ambulance Service, respecting their employees interaction with persons who are incapacitated by alcohol or drug use, including directions for the handling, detention, transportation and release of individuals who, as a result of alcohol or drug use, are incapacitated, violent, unable to care for themselves, self-destructive or unconscious. He will

also examine the rules, policies and procedures of the BC Coroners Service, the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner and the Criminal Justice Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General related to the role and response of each of those offices where an individual dies in circumstances similar to the circumstances of Frank Paul's death.

It is anticipated that the Inquiry commissioner will recommend changes considered necessary to the rules, policies and procedures referred to of these different public safety institutions. These recommendations will be included in the Commissioner's report which is expected to be released sometime in the Summer of 2008.

The Commissioner's report will not be the final report however, as the Province of BC has indicated that they will be appealing a ruling made by the Commissioner in which he stated that Prosecutors involved in the Frank Paul case should be compelled to submit evidence as to why they decided not to pursue criminal charges with respect to the death of Frank Paul. There has been no date set for this appeal and, as a result, the Commissioner will not be able to issue his final report until a ruling is made with respect to this issue.

Updates on the Frank Paul inquiry can be found at the website [www.frankpaulinquiry.ca](http://www.frankpaulinquiry.ca).

### **BC First Nations Mining Summit**

The Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, Kaska Tribal Council, Taku River Tlingit First Nation, and BC Assembly of First Nations are co-hosting a mining summit open to all BC First Nations (co-hosting resolutions to be considered at upcoming UBCIC and FNS assemblies).

**When:** October 7-9, 2008

**Where:** Prince George Civic Centre

**Why:** 1) High mineral prices are fuelling intensive exploration activities across our traditional territories; 2) currently there are

about two dozen mine applications in the provincial environmental review process, 3) these pose opportunities to First Nations to engage to develop new approaches to mining engagement, and 4) together we can collectively address the mining sector in a way that takes care of our rights and interests.

- *Day 1 will be open to government and industry presentations, followed by in-camera First Nations strategic planning on days 2 & 3.*
- *Consider sharing your Nation's land and resource management polices and principles for distribution and consideration at this event.*
- *Planned outcome of the Summit is a BC First Nations Mining Action Plan (draft discussion paper to be prepared and distributed in advance).*
- *An agenda and registration information is pending. Watch for further developments at [www.bcfnms.ca](http://www.bcfnms.ca)*

For more information, contact Paul Blom, Natural Resources Director, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council at 250-562-6279 or email [info@bcfnms.ca](mailto:info@bcfnms.ca) or Chris Lewis at BC Assembly of First Nations 604 922-7733.

### **Peace and Dignity Runs**

Peace and Dignity Journeys occur every four years and start with Indigenous runners on opposite ends of the continents (Chickaloon, Alaska and Tierra del Fuego, Argentina). They run for six months through hundreds of Indigenous communities where they participate in their respective spiritual practices and traditions; spark dialogue on the issue of peace and dignity for Indigenous Peoples.

How to get involved: Peace and Dignity Journeys is a volunteer run, grassroots organization. It is composed of an Elders Council and volunteers from many nations that reflect a balanced mix of youth, elders, women, and men. This work

cannot be done without your help. Please consider getting involved in the following ways: volunteer and help organize with a hosting organization located in your region.

- participate as a runner for the full distance or a portion of the run
- support the runners when they are in your town
- organize a tributary run / attend an event / fundraiser and or welcoming or planning session.
- make a financial contribution or in-kind gift.

Please contact us if you are interested in participating.

Tel: 602-254-5230

Email:

[info@peaceanddignityjourneys.com](mailto:info@peaceanddignityjourneys.com)

Cell: Jose Malvido: 1-415-377-2502

### **BC Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Declaration**

At the Gathering our Voices: 2008 Provincial Aboriginal Youth Conference a BC Aboriginal Youth and Sport and Recreation Declaration was made.

#### ***We Declare that:***

We, the Aboriginal youth of British Columbia are committed to improving the health and lives of all Aboriginal people through Aboriginal and mainstream sports, recreation, and traditional physical activities within our communities.

We, as Aboriginal people, hold dignity, survival, and well being as the foundation of our culture and we have the inherent right to live healthy and active lives.

We are a strong, healthy, and resilient people that are connected to our lands and culture through the teachings and wisdom of our elders.

#### ***We will:***

Improve the health of our People, reduce the number of suicides amongst our youth, and strengthen our families and communities through increased sports, recreation, and physical activity.

Counter the inequality that exists in our society in the areas of health, violence, addictions, racism, and poverty by increasing our health and

strength through sports, recreation, and physical activity. Play our traditional Aboriginal sports and recreational activities and nurture our mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Create more opportunities for our youth to participate in healthy and fun activities.

#### ***Call to Action:***

We call on the Federal and Provincial Governments to work with the Aboriginal youth of British Columbia to implement the spirit of this declaration.

We call on our First Nation Governments to lead the way in building a healthier future for Aboriginal youth by making sports, recreation, and physical activity a priority.

We call on all governments and Aboriginal organizations to work together to support and implement the spirit of this Declaration.

We call on ourselves, the Aboriginal youth of BC, to implement this Declaration, to strengthen our Nations, and to create a healthier future for our People.

#### ***Economic Development***

In February 2008, a province-wide First Nations Economic Development Forum was held to review and provide feedback into a draft BC First Nations Economic Development Action Plan. This feedback has now been incorporated, and a new draft is under review by a working group composed of representatives of First Nations, the FNLC, Government of Canada, and Government of BC. It will then be considered by First Nations for approval by resolution. To obtain a copy of this draft Action Plan for further feedback, please contact one of our offices.

#### ***FNLC News Releases***

On April 17, the FNLC released a joint press statement denouncing Canada's position at a meeting of the Organization of American States Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Canada has declared that it will no longer actively participate in negotiations on the Draft American Declaration on the

Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In doing so, Canada has continued its offensive campaign against the rights of Indigenous people in Canada and around the world by maintaining its rejection of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

#### ***Calendar of Events***

- **May 29:** National Day of Action
- **June 3-5:** UBCIC Chiefs' Council, Vernon, BC
- **June 11-13:** First Nations Summit Meeting
- **October 7-9:** BC First Nations Mining Summit

#### ***The First Nations Leadership Council***

The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs:

- BC Assembly of First Nations Regional Chief A-in-chut, Shawn Atleo;
- First Nations Summit Task Group members Grand Chief Edward John, Chief Judith Sayers, Dave Porter;
- Union of BC Indian Chiefs President Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Vice-President Chief Robert Shintah; Chief Lynda Price

The Council works together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in BC and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.

On March 17, 2005, the Regional Chief of the BCAFN, the Task Group of the FNS, and the political executive of the UBCIC signed the *Leadership Accord*.

For further details on the Accord, please visit [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca)