



**Union of
British Columbia
Indian Chiefs**

Vancouver Office:
500 - 342 Water Street,
Vancouver, BC V6B 1B6
Tel: 604-684-0231, Fax: 604-684-5726
Toll Free: 1-800-793-9701
www.ubcic.bc.ca



**FIRST
NATIONS
SUMMIT**

1200 - 100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2
Tel: 604-926-9903, Fax: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 1-866-990-9939
www.fns.bc.ca



British Columbia
Assembly of
First Nations

507 - 100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2
Tel: 604-922-7733, Fax: 604-922-7433
www.bcafn.ca

Residential Schools

On June 11, 2008, at 8am Pacific time, the Prime Minister will issue an apology for the residential school system on behalf of the Government of Canada. The FNLC is working with the First Nations Health Council and the Indian Residential Schools Survivors Society to organize a series of gatherings across the province to view the apology. One of these viewings will take place at the Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver, to coincide with the First Nations Summit meeting. Please monitor our websites for further information.

Children & Families

On January 23rd – 25th, 2008 the Political Executives of the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the BC Assembly of First Nations (the First Nations Leadership Council) convened a First Nations Chiefs' Indigenous Child at the Centre Forum. The primary purpose of the Forum was to continue political dialogue concerning the health, safety and well-being of our children, youth, families and communities. Central to this dialogue was the direction from the Chiefs to move towards the establishment of a common vision, goals and principles that would provide choices and focus for our activities.

Since the January Forum, we have been collectively challenged by the breadth and scope of this issue, particularly recent developments concerning Enabling Legislation. Members of the FNLC continue to respond to the fall-out of Minister Christensen's decision to not present the draft Legislation for consideration by the Provincial Legislature. Solution-oriented dialogue is being pursued in earnest to ensure we remain united and that our focus remains clearly on the needs of our children. We cannot allow ourselves to embark on a negative cycle of debate and discourse that will only

serve to divide us at the local, regional and provincial levels.

With this in mind, the FNLC is planning the second Indigenous Child at the Centre Forum to be held July 21-23, 2008 at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre. Prior to this gathering a draft Action Plan will be sent to all Chiefs in British Columbia with a request for value-added responses to be provided by June 30, 2008. Your comments will serve to strengthen the draft Action Plan. It is our hope that we will be able to finalize the Action Plan at the July Forum and establish the Terms of Reference for the Indigenous Caucus that was agreed to at the January Forum.

National Day of Action

On May 29, First Nations and Canadians stood together on the National Day of Action in the spirit of unity to demand the Federal Government and the Government of British Columbia work with First Nations to recognize our inherent rights to our children and to invest in our children's future.

BC First Nations held a number of successful rallies around the Province to raise awareness about the shameful conditions which afflict our communities, these included: a rally at MP Chuck Strahl's constituency office in Chilliwack, a rally at Campbell River, a rally at Keremeos, a rally at Merritt, a gathering at Gustafson Lake, a rally at the Legislature in Victoria and a march and rally in Vancouver.

Recognition Legislation

A joint FNLC-BC Recognition Working Group is tasked with a number of 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 a priority.

The Province has appointed Geoff Plant to lead the BC negotiating team. There have been 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.

Housing and Infrastructure

On May 21, 2008, the FNLC, Province of BC and the Government of Canada signed a Housing Memorandum of Understanding to improve coordination and collaboration, and commit the parties to develop complementary on- and off-reserve housing and infrastructure action plans.

A committee representing all parties to the MoU will be formed within three months to collaboratively develop a plan for interlinked on and off reserve housing strategies in support of First Nations individuals and families. The Government of Canada, Province of B.C. and FNLC will then meet annually to discuss progress in implementing the MoU.

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.

The FNLC is hoping to secure support to hold a province-wide housing and infrastructure forum to receive direction and advice on the implementation of the MoU.

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 revised draft available to all BC First Nations and organizations with an interest and expertise in economic development. We encourage you to comment on this draft, which will be revised again before being considered for approval by resolution in the fall. Please contact one of our offices for a copy of the draft Action Plan.

Frank Paul Inquiry

The Frank Paul inquiry, which began in November, 2007, wrapped up in early May, 2008. It is anticipated that the Commissioner's report, which will include his findings and recommendations, should be completed and released on May 31, 2008. However, this report will not be considered final as the Crown Prosecutors that dealt with the Frank Paul case have yet to give evidence or testify. The Criminal Justice Branch is appealing a decision made by the Commissioner compelling the prosecutors to testify at the Inquiry as to their involvement with this case. The Criminal Justice Branch believes that no Crown prosecutor should have to testify at this inquiry, as it would have a "chilling effect" on the administration of justice. The appeal of this decision was heard in BC Supreme Court on May 26-28, 2008. Until a decision is handed down, with respect to this appeal, the Commissioner will be unable to complete his report.

Updates on the Frank Paul inquiry can be found at the website www.frankpaulinquiry.ca.

Health

The First Nations Health Council held its second annual "Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey" forum on May 21-22nd. At the forum, the First Nations Interim Health Governance Committee, lead by co-chairs Chief Wayne Christian

(UBCIC), Grand Chief Doug Kelly (BCAFN), and Grand Chief Ed John (FNS), updated communities on health governance discussions that have been occurring at the tripartite table. The Interim Health Governance Committee proposed the establishment of 5 regional health governance caucuses to ensure representation from First Nations communities. To establish these caucuses, feedback was collected through a health governance survey. The results of this survey will inform the first round of health governance talks with communities which will take place later this summer. In total 312 people participated in this year's forum.

The Tripartite First Nations Health Plan was signed June 11, 2007 by the provincial, federal and First Nations governments. A new website with up to date information on the health plan implementation activities will go live July 1st at www.fnhc.ca.

BC First Nations Fisheries Council

The Fisheries Council has had a number of meetings and discussions with First Nations communities and groups, governments, and other interested parties. The Council has hired an Executive Director, Brenda McCorquodale, who can be reached at fishcouncil@bcfn.ca, 604-922-7733 or 778-835-2496.

The three initial priorities for the Council are: 1) engaging with First Nations with respect to organizational development options for the future of the Fisheries Council, 2) short term work plan priorities for the Council, and 3) addressing important advocacy issues for First Nations. Some of the specific work the Council has been involved in includes: meeting with DFO on the protection of First Nations' FSC access; supporting a First Nations working group which is developing responses to the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative; meeting with DFO with respect to C-32; participation in the development of a high level results-based management framework for salmon and watershed sustainability

initiatives in B.C.; and facilitating communications among First Nations on important fisheries issues.

The Fisheries Council is holding **important community meetings in June 2008** to encourage First Nations to provide feedback into organizational development options and workplanning for the Fisheries Council. Leadership or technical staff involved in fisheries should plan to attend. These meetings will take place from 10:00am – 2:00pm in the following locations:

- June 16 – Prince George, Native Friendship Centre
- June 18 – Port Hardy, Kwakiutl Band Hall
- June 23 – Kamloops, Comfort Inn
- June 24 – Abbotsford, Sumas Hall
- June 25 – Prince Rupert, location t.b.a.
- Nanaimo & Terrace dates and locations to be confirmed.

The Council is launching its website, www.FNFisheriesCouncil.ca in early June. The website provides resource information, calendars of important fisheries dates, and First Nations analysis and perspectives on important fisheries issues.

The First Nations Fisheries Council has initiated a bi-weekly conference call for regional aggregate First Nations Fisheries organizations. If your organization would like to be included on the list which receives information related to the calls, please contact Brenda McCorquodale at the numbers listed above.

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.

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 policies 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*

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

Traditional Knowledge / Intellectual Property

Increasingly, First Nations are being faced with requests from government, educational institutions and others with regard to their traditional knowledge. Traditional knowledge has much to offer these processes, but sharing this information must be done in a way that protects the intellectual property rights of the First Nation. The FNLC is developing a discussion paper and "toolkit" designed to assist First Nations in protecting their intellectual property rights.

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, Kathryn 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 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). Stay tuned for details of how FNTC will work with SSC to provide access to the wealth of free learning materials that are available.

The First Nations Leadership Council

The FNLC 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 FNLC, through the *Leadership Accord*, 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.

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.

Calendar of Events

- **June 3-5:** UBCIC Chiefs' Council (Vernon)
- **June 11:** Residential schools apology gatherings (various locations)
- **June 11-13:** First Nations Summit Meeting (North Vancouver)
- **June 27:** BCAFN Meeting (Victoria)
- **July 21-23:** Indigenous Child at the Centre Forum II (North Vancouver)
- **October 7-9:** BC First Nations Mining Summit (Prince George)