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**First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC)**

**INFORMATION BULLETIN**

**Federal Election**

The October 14 election allows the voices of over 800,000 First Nation citizens across Canada to be heard given the slim margin of victory in over 50 ridings in the last general election. To that end, the Assembly of First Nations National Chief Phil Fontaine has launched “Vote '08, Change Can't Wait!”, a First Nations political participation and public awareness campaign to encourage voting among First Nations voters and to increase the profile of Aboriginal issues in this election. This initiative is also aimed at soliciting a clear and robust Aboriginal platform from each political party.

The First Nation vote can make a particular difference in the following BC ridings: Esquimalt–Juan de Fuca; Kamloops–Thompson–Cariboo; Nanaimo–Alberni; North Vancouver; Pitt Meadows–Maple Ridge–Mission; Skeena–Bulkley Valley; West Vancouver–Sunshine Coast–Sea to Sky.

**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 to implement 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 (the province recently announced it will be cancelling the fall session).

Comprehensive reports on the joint Recognition Working Group were made at September Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) and First Nations Summit (FNS) assemblies.

**BC First Nations Mining Summit**

The Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, Kaska Tribal Council, Taku River Tlingit First Nation, the UBCIC, the FNS and the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) will co-host a mining summit open to all BC First Nations.

**When:** October 7–9, 2008

**Where:** Prince George Civic Centre

A draft action plan and background paper has been prepared and is available to First Nations delegates in advance of the Summit. The intended outcome of the forum is a First Nations Mining Action Plan that will set a list of principles and goals for sustainable mining development in British Columbia and actions to implement them in a timely manner.

For registration and more information visit [www.bcfnms.ca](http://www.bcfnms.ca)

Contact Paul Blom, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (250–562–6279), Chris Lewis, BCAFN (604 922–7733), or email [info@bcfnms.ca](mailto:info@bcfnms.ca).

**BC First Nations Forestry Council**

**Premier's Roundtable on Forestry:**

The First Nations Forestry Council (FNFC) produced six detailed papers for Premier Campbell's Forestry Roundtable, which were jointly submitted with the FNLC in September. The topics of these papers were: forestry tenure; revenue sharing; land privatization; access to mountain pine beetle emergency funds; bioenergy participation and partnerships; and carbon credit opportunities.

The central message of each of these papers is that reconciling First Nations title and rights is the key to establishing stability for sustainable forestry planning and development. The papers take a proactive approach in recommending interim actions that would advance reconciliation and allow the forestry industry to be rejuvenated in the province, including:

- Provide better and more commercially viable tenure based on specific land areas;
- Dramatically improve revenue sharing;
- Halt privatization until aboriginal title and rights are resolved
- Release immediate funding to address the mountain pine beetle impacts on First Nations communities;
- Full First Nations participation in bioenergy projects – planning and implementation;
- Full First Nations participation in any carbon credit systems, with forest preservation included for credits.

The papers can be viewed at [www.fnforestrycouncil.ca](http://www.fnforestrycouncil.ca). To ensure our positions are placed on the public record, a news release and background paper summarizing the key points was sent to the media. They can also be viewed on our website.

**Federal Election:** The FNFC is seeking to ensure that the mountain pine beetle funding issues are on the political parties' radars in BC during this election. We have already had some success and the Liberals have already raised this issue prominently (see a Globe and Mail story online at <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20080915.BCELECTBEETLE15//TPStory/National>)

To strengthen its message, the FNFC has circulated a First Nations petition calling on the government to live up to its funding commitments and to set up a high-level tripartite panel to deal with the crisis facing BC First Nations as a result of the

MPB epidemic. Please contact our office if you would like to sign on to this petition.

The FNFC has also submitted the following preamble and question for consideration by the TV consortium that is managing the Oct.1 and 2 leaders' televised debates:

*"Given that the outcome of this election could well come down to the votes in BC, and that the 250,000 aboriginal people in the province are paying particular attention to this campaign, my question for the Leaders in the televised debate is this:*

*"In the last election campaign the Liberals promised \$1 billion to address the mountain pine beetle crisis in BC and the Conservatives matched this promise. Under an agreement with the BC Government, First Nations were to get \$200 million of this funding to address the crisis that the beetle has created for 103 First Nations communities whose forest environment had been destroyed.*

*"However, the current Conservative government has allocated only \$200 million, not all of which has been spent. Nothing was included in the last federal budget. No money has been transferred to the BC Government to allow it to share funding with First Nations.*

*"What would each leader do to address the mountain pine beetle damage in BC, and in particular the destruction of the environment, jobs and culture and the threat of obliteration by forest fires that is being experienced by these 103 First Nations communities, which represent half of all the province's First Nations?"*

Unfortunately, the FNFC does not have any control over the question selection process. Nor do the parties, which is a shame as the Liberals and NDP have to date both been supportive of FNFC efforts and positions on this issue.

### **Strategic and Operational**

**planning:** The FNFC has begun the implementation of the adopted First Nations Forest and Land Stewardship Action plan by working towards setting priority activities and initiatives. The FNFC has begun its Strategic Planning sessions to identify how FNFC should be moving forward in the next couple of years while the staff at FNFC has begun initial Technical Advisory Council meetings. We are planning to create a detailed Service Plan document that will outline the priority activities of FNFC in the coming months.

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

The First Nations Fisheries Council's September Communiqué is available on the Fisheries Council website at [www.fnfisheriescouncil.ca](http://www.fnfisheriescouncil.ca). The website also includes a Master Calendar of First Nations fisheries meetings, a bulletin board which outlines current initiatives of interest, and a News section which tracks recent items of interest in the media. Certain information on the website is restricted to First Nations access only, and you can obtain a user id and password if you are involved in fisheries with a BC First Nation.

The report of the fall community sessions held by the Fisheries Council around B.C. is now available, and will be followed shortly by recommendations related to future organizational development. The Council will be working with communities through the fall to refine the recommendations which will be reviewed at a Fisheries Assembly in February 2008.

There are a number of important meetings happening this fall both at the regional and B.C.-wide levels. DFO will be conducting fall engagement sessions with First Nations from October to December 2008. The subject of these consultations will include: climate change, the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative including discussion about defined salmon shares (quota), the proposed Recreational Fisheries Vision, and

Species at Risk new proposed species.

First Nations at the local, regional, provincial and national level are standing together on key fisheries issues in the current federal election.

Some key issues the Fisheries Council has been addressing with the national political parties include:

- Meet the Government of Canada's obligation to protect Section 35(1) access to fish;
- Address the economic crisis in First Nations communities;
- Drop Bill C 32 (the new Fisheries Act) and engage with First Nations on a replacement;
- Commit to Phase II of Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative for salmon access;
- Increase funding for the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy;
- Move forward on Integrated Management with First Nations;
- Enforce the Aboriginal Procurement Strategy in DFO Pacific; and
- Appoint a Special Advisor to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans on B.C. First Nations issues.

If you have any questions for the Council please contact the Fisheries Council Executive Director Brenda McCorquodale at [fishcouncil@bcfn.ca](mailto:fishcouncil@bcfn.ca).

## Health

**Governance:** Building on resolutions passed at the UBCIC and the FNS Assemblies, the Health Council Interim Governance Subcommittee will be holding regional governance caucuses in the following cities on the following dates:

- **Interior:** October 14–15, 2008 (Kamloops)
- **North:** October 22–23, 2008 (Prince George) and October 27–28, 2008 (Terrace)
- **Fraser:** November 04–05, 2008 (Chilliwack)

- **Vancouver Coastal:** November 12–13, 2008 (Vancouver)
- **Vancouver Island:** November 17–18, 2008 (Nanaimo)

The dual purpose of the governance caucuses is to determine what the specific needs are in each community in the arenas of health and governance and to decide on five (5) regional representatives who will serve alongside the three governance co-chairs (Grand Chief Doug Kelly, Grand Chief Ed John, and Chief Wayne Christian). For further information on the governance caucuses please contact Derek Thompson at 604.926.9903, or [dthompson@fnhc.ca](mailto:dthompson@fnhc.ca)

**Health Directors Forum:** On September 30th–October 1<sup>st</sup>, the First Nations Health Council (FNHC) is hosting the First Annual BC First Nations Health Directors Forum in Vancouver. The purpose of the forum is to provide health directors the opportunity to strategize, network and contribute to the creation of a Health Directors Association. A Health Directors Association is one of four governance pillars contained in the tripartite health plan.

**Provincial Youth Suicide Prevention Planning Conference:** This conference will be held in Vancouver on October 24–26, 2008. During this planning conference, BC First Nations youth will develop curriculum for the upcoming regional spring break camps on youth suicide prevention to be held throughout BC. The Planning Conference will bring together Youth and Elder representatives from each region along with representatives from each regional Health Authority, and Aboriginal MCFD regional reps. For more information please contact Jody Olsson at [jolsson@fnhc.ca](mailto:jolsson@fnhc.ca)

**Sports and Recreation Five Pillars:** At the NAIG leadership gathering held August 2, 2008, the Aboriginal Sports and Recreation Association (ASRA) in partnership with the FNHC, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

(BCAAFC), Cowichan 2008 North American Indigenous Games, Métis Nation BC (MNBC) and the UNBC National Collaborating Centre gained endorsement of a five pillar approach to sports and recreation. The five pillar approach is:

- #1 – Active Communities
- #2 – Leaders and Capacity
- #3 – Excellence
- #4 – System Development
- #5 – Sustainability

The five pillars were developed based on the *BC Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Declaration* developed in at the 2008 Gathering our Voices conference. The FNHC looks forward to moving this important partnership forward.

**Pilot Project with Interior Health Authority:** FNHC and Interior Health have partnered to launch a community development pilot project. A community developer has been hired to work with all First Nations within Interior Health service area. The role of the community developer will be to assist First Nations in the development of community health plans and work plans, and also to plan, collaborate and communicate with the FNHC.

## Children & Families

On July 21 – 23, 2008, the Indigenous Child at the Centre II – BC First Nations Chiefs' Forum was held at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre. The primary purpose of the Forum was to continue the work arising from the first Indigenous Child at the Centre Forum, held on January 23 – 25, 2008. This second Forum provided the opportunity for First Nations leaders and key technical partners to embark on positive and solution-oriented dialogue concerning the health, safety and well-being of our children, youth, families and communities.

One outcome of the Forum is a "One Heart, One Mind Statement of Solidarity and Cooperation" in which it was affirmed that as Indigenous People, bound by One Heart and One Mind, we affirm our commitment, our unity, and our moral, spiritual, traditional, and

political accountability to work together in a Nation-to-Nation and community-driven process to secure the individual and collective survival, dignity and well-being of our children. The Statement will be available at the upcoming meetings of the UBCIC, FNS and BCAFN for those that were unable to attend the Forum and wish to sign and support the Statement of Solidarity and Cooperation. This Statement was adopted by resolution of the UBCIC and FNS in September 2008.

Through this Statement, Chiefs provided qualified support for the Indigenous Child at the Centre Action Plan, subject to the opportunity for further community input through engagement at the UBCIC, FNS and BCAFN meetings. The Action Plan is currently being revised to include all feedback provided at the Forum; a revised version will be provided to all First Nations for further comment in the coming weeks.

The Statement also supported in-principle the establishment of an Interim First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council that will take primary responsibility: to amend the Action Plan to reflect further input; to develop a workplan to advance and implement the Action Plan; and to develop a Terms of Reference for a permanent First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council. Membership on the interim Council was determined through Regional Caucus sessions during the Forum. To date, the members of the Interim Council are: Chief Betty Patrick, Bev Clifton-Percival, Sandra Jack, Chief Wayne Christian, Chief Robert Pasco, Chief Judy Wilson, Chief Leah George-Wilson, Kathy Bedard Sparrow, Chief Maureen Chapman, and Chief Willie Charlie. The Chiefs of Vancouver Island determined that they not be appointing members at this time, while they focused on resolving internal matters. The Terms of Reference for this interim First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council will be considered for resolution of support at the

November FNS and UBCIC assemblies.

All relevant Forum materials (including the draft Action Plan, forum transcripts, and other information) have been posted to the following website:  
<http://www.informationbc.ca/child2/>.

### 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 technical committee representing all parties to the MoU has been formed, and is responsible for overseeing the development of interlinked on and off reserve housing strategies in support of First Nations individuals and families. The political Parties to the MoU will 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. Based on the findings of this engagement, the FNLC, other Aboriginal organizations, and the Province of BC are working to develop the 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. *A draft discussion paper is being prepared for consideration of First Nations leaders and housing experts at a province-wide Housing Forum in January 2009.*

### Economic Development

Two province-wide Forums and a series of regional sessions have been held with respect to a BC First Nations Economic Development Action Plan. Many other First

Nations organizations, economic development experts, and non-First Nations partners participated in the development of this Plan.

A draft was provided to all First Nations in the summer of 2008, and feedback solicited until the end of August. This Plan was approved by resolution of the UBCIC and FNS in September 2008, and work will now begin to develop options and secure support for the Plan's implementation.

### BC First Nations Energy Working Group

In 2007 First Nations gathered at the Chief Joe Mathias Hall to develop the First Nations Energy Action Plan. One of the action items in this plan was to appoint a team of First Nations leaders to engage with the Crown and industry. The following people were appointed:

- **Arnie Bellis:** Vice President, Council of the Haida Nation (appointed by the FNS)
- **Chief Nelson Leon:** Chief of Adams Lake (appointed by the UBCIC)
- **Chief Roland Willson:** Chief of West Moberly (appointed by the BCAFN)
- **Dave Porter:** Chief negotiator of Kaska Dene Council (appointed by the FNLC)

Throughout the summer, a series of meetings with senior representatives from the BC government took place, including the:

- Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines, and Petroleum Resources;
- Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation; and
- Head of the BC Climate Action Secretariat (Premier's Office)

Based on these discussions, a collaborative work plan has been developed that includes a number of action items mutual to both the BC First Nations Energy Action Plan and the BC Energy Plan. In addition to these items, the Interim Energy

Council and the Province have agreed to work together to jointly engage with the federal government regarding financial support for the Council and its activities, and to jointly engage with industry associations to discuss their support of the First Nations Energy Council.

Over the coming months, a series of regional meetings are proposed that will involve the Interim Energy Council and senior representation from the BC government. Our goal is to receive feedback from the First Nations on the First Nations Energy Action Plan (2007) and provide information on energy related matters.

### Technology

The First Nations Technology Council, formerly a Committee of the First Nations Summit, is now a Society. The Society continues to implement the original mandate to ensure that:

- All communities have broadband connectivity and related technologies to support community initiatives;
- All communities have qualified, affordable, and available technical support;
- All community members have the technical skills needed to use technology to improve their lives; and,
- FNTC develops an integrated information management strategy that can be shared by communities so that they have better information for planning, decision making and accountability.

FNTC is looking for Board members who share the vision that all communities will become FIT (Fully Integrated Technologies) Communities – where technology and information management are used to better deliver and integrate programs and services. FNTC is in the process of developing a package that will define criteria to ensure regional representation on a Board that has the skills to implement a mandate foundational to

supporting communities moving ahead. FNTC is looking for members who have financial, legal or negotiating, and communications skills, and who will represent all 203 communities by working with other First Nations organizations and the Leadership Council.

A formal call for new members will be distributed within the next few weeks but, if you're interested in joining the Board, contact Chair Norm Leech

([normleech@yahoo.com](mailto:normleech@yahoo.com)) or Coordinator Sue Hanley ([suehanley@fntc.info](mailto:suehanley@fntc.info)).

### The First Nations Leadership Council

The FNLC is a political working relationship between the political executives of the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC:

- BCAFN Regional Chief A-in-chut, Shawn Atleo;
- FNS Task Group Grand Chief Edward John, Grand Chief Doug Kelly, Dan Smith
- UBCIC 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.

### Measuring Up Accessibility and Inclusion Fund

Measuring Up is a 2010 Legacies Now program supported by the Province of British Columbia that enables community groups and municipalities to access funding to support them in meeting their accessibility and inclusion objectives. The funds can be used to complete community assessments and/or to implement projects that have emerged from the assessment process.

For more information about Measuring Up, please contact [measuringup@2010LegaciesNow.com](mailto:measuringup@2010LegaciesNow.com) or 778-327-5123. To access the Measuring Up Fund Guidelines and Application Form, visit the Measuring Up website at [www.2010legaciesnow.com/measuring\\_up/](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/measuring_up/). The deadline for applications is 5 PM on Friday, October 10, 2008.

### Calendar of Events

- **October 7–9:** BC First Nations Mining Summit (Prince George)
- **October–November:** First Nations Health Governance Sessions (various dates and locations)
- **November 19–21:** UBCIC Chiefs Council. **November 19** dedicated to C-31 issues. (Kamloops)
- **November 26–28:** FNS Meeting (North Vancouver)