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First Nations Leadership Council

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Feedback and inquiries on these monthly bulletins are welcome; contact information is provided in the column to the left.

Fisheries

The FNLC will be holding a Fisheries Forum on October 4-6, 2006 (Squamish Nation Recreation Centre).

The Forum will focus on developing unity amongst First Nations on fisheries issues, and developing a common vision for the fishery. The outcome will be a First Nations strategy for the fishery.

An agenda for the Fisheries Forum will be distributed to all First Nations this week.

Energy

The Energy Summit (originally scheduled for October 22-25) has been postponed. We will work to reschedule the Energy Summit for early April 2007 in Prince George.

The first two days of the Forum, joint with governments, will focus on information-sharing and discussion on various energy sectors, opportunities, and challenges. The final two days of the Forum will be for First Nations to develop an approach to energy issues in BC.

New Relationship

The FNLC and the provincial government have been engaged in a series of meetings to achieve progress under the New Relationship. Agenda items through the fall include: approaches to consultation and accommodation; revenue-sharing models; denial/recognition strategy; land use planning; culture and heritage sites; communications; and others.

First Nations Forestry Council

The FNLC is in the process of creating a province-wide First Nations Forestry Council (FNFC) that will assist First Nations on forestry-related issues at the local, regional, provincial, national and international level. Some examples of their role include: to ensure that First Nations in BC are included in the FNLC position paper on the Canada-US softwood lumber agreement; to perform an analysis of the Forest and Range Opportunities agreements; and to institute community access to federal and provincial mountain pine beetle emergency relief funds.

This fall there will be regional meetings by the interim FNFC Board to receive input from First Nations their vision for the FNFC.

Thereafter, an elected board will be put in place and staff will be hired. Higgins International, a First Nations owned and operated job recruitment company, has been hired to seek a chief executive officer/executive director and a finance director. Note: the Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group will be an active committee under the FNFC.

Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group

Funding update: Earlier this month, the Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group made progress on acquiring funds, signing a transfer agreement for \$8.4 million. The majority of these funds will be made available to First Nations that are impacted by the MPB epidemic. Program development is currently underway with plans to make funds available sometime this fall.

New federal MPB funds: On May 2, 2006 the federal government announced an additional \$200 million in emergency MPB funding for BC. It is hoped that MPB-impacted First

Nations in BC will have access to a substantial portion of these funds. Federal Cabinet and Treasury Board are expected to review the MPB program priorities this fall with the hope of new funds flowing in the New Year.

Children and Families

Hon. Tom Christensen, former Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, has been appointed the new Minister of Children and Family Development. The new Minister will be working closely with recently appointed Deputy Minister Lesley du Toit and Assistant Deputy Minister Debra Foxcroft on transformation of the Ministry and improving services to, and relationships with, First Nations.

In February 2006, the development of enabling legislation for Aboriginal Authorities was paused to allow for further discussion on: jurisdiction; links to the New Relationship and Transformative Change Accord; and models for the composition of Authorities and regionalization, among others. This in-depth discussion, consultation, and the development of new models is ongoing.

Transformative Change Accord

The *Transformative Change Accord* requires the parties to develop an implementation strategy – focused on the areas of relationships, education, housing and infrastructure, health, and economic opportunities – by December 2006. The FNLC has been working with the provincial government and First Nations organizations to develop a framework for this plan, and identify preliminary action areas and activities for the next 1-2 years. This framework will also provide a foundation for further discussions with First Nations, resulting eventually in a comprehensive 10-year implementation strategy.

Health

British Columbia will be hosting a national Aboriginal health summit on November 28, 2006. The FNLC is working with the provincial government on the planning and preparation for this event. This summit fulfills commitments to the Aboriginal health blueprint made at the First Ministers Meeting in November 2005.

Technology

The Knowledge Network documentary "From Cedar to Silicon" is being released later this month. The documentary describes how several BC First Nations are using technology as a tool to improve life in their communities. A copy will be sent to each community sometime in October and we encourage communities to organize gatherings to view the documentary. In addition to the one hour production, four 15 minute specialized vignettes will be included. Be sure to pay special attention to the Planning for Technology vignette which gives lots of advice and tips on how to develop your Community Technology Plan. Check out the First Nations Technology Council (FNTC) website http://fntc.info/tools_and_resources for a template and guide to complete your Technology Plan, or contact the FNTC at 1-866-990-9939 if you're interested in working on your Plan.

Industry certified training for A+/Network+ community technical support technicians will begin October 9. For the initial three weeks of the program, students will be in residence at the Namgis Nation. FNTC is expecting 15 students to take this program, which is being delivered in a "blended/distributed model" – after the first three weeks, students will study over the internet, attending regularly scheduled classes where they will interact with their instructor and with each other.

New Relationship Trust

The New Relationship Trust has been holding a series of regional

consultation sessions to assist in developing the Trust strategic plan. Most of these sessions were held in August and early September; the following will take place in the coming weeks (all sessions run from 9am-3pm):

- **Cranbrook:** September 22 (St. Eugene Mission Resort)
- **Atlin:** September 26 (Atlin Inn)

For further information, please visit www.newrelationshiptrust.ca, or telephone 1-877-922-3338.

National Women's Month

October is National Women's Month, with Aboriginal women as this year's focus. The FNLC and BC are planning a ceremony (to be held in mid-October) to honour exceptional achievements of Aboriginal women in the categories of: Language, Culture and the Arts; Family and Community; Education; Health, Sports and Science; Public Service, Business and Entrepreneurship. Call letters have been sent to all BC First Nations requesting nominations. Please contact us if you did not receive this call letter.

Other Notes

- The FNLC-Province of BC New Relationship Progress Report will be mailed to all First Nations this month.
- The new Forest & Range Opportunities (FRO) framework was provided to BC First Nations in June. Please contact us if your First Nation did not receive a copy.

Calendar of Events

- **September 20-22:** UBCIC AGA (Vancouver)
- **September 27-29:** FNS Meeting (Kamloops)
- **October 4-6:** First Nations Fisheries Forum (Vancouver)
- **November 23-24:** UBCIC Chiefs' Council Meeting (Vancouver)
- **November 27-28:** BCAFN Meeting (Vancouver)
- **November 29-30, December 1:** FNS Meeting (Vancouver)