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First Nations Leadership Council

INFORMATION BULLETIN

June 2007 First Nations Summit Meeting Postponed

Following discussions with Provincial Emergency Program officials and the RCMP, a joint decision was made with officials of the Nisga'a Lisims Government to postpone the June 2007 First Nations Summit meeting.

A state of emergency has been declared for Terrace. Roads and railways in and out of the town are closed due to floods or washouts. These closures have started to have an impact on supplies, such as fuel, in the Terrace area.

The First Nations Summit office spent several days assessing the impact of the flood risks and highway closures in the Skeena/Nass area on the First Nations Summit meeting originally scheduled for next week. Consideration was also given to those First Nations in other areas of BC (such as those in the Fraser Basin), who are also facing flood emergencies in their communities.

Further information will be provided as it becomes available.

Leadership Council

On March 17, 2005, the Regional Chief of the BC Assembly of First Nations, the Task Group of the First Nations Summit, and the political executive of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs signed the *Leadership Accord*.

The purpose of the Accord is to: affirm mutual respect; formalize a cooperative working relationship 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 BC; and focus on a range of issues and initiatives of common interest or concern among First Nations in BC, including consultation and accommodation, national processes, and social and

economic program and service issues.

Work under the Leadership Accord is guided by the following principles:

- The Parties recognize and respect each other's respective mandate;
- The Parties will be mindful that they each represent a diversity of perspectives on issues relating to Aboriginal title, rights and interests;
- The Parties commit to work to advance the interests of First Nations in political level discussions amongst themselves and with governments;
- The Parties will represent their respective memberships in any discussions that directly involve government and industry.

Through the Accord, the Parties commit to engage in an ongoing process of dialogue through regular leadership meetings to achieve the purposes of this Accord and, where possible, develop common understandings, strategies and/or positions on identified issues of mutual concern or priority. The Parties also agree to establish working groups on identified issues of concern or priority to advance those issues politically.

The relationship established through the *Leadership Accord* remains strong. Although some successes have been achieved (New Relationship, Transformative Change Accord, New Relationship Trust, others), much remains to be done. The mandate of the First Nations Leadership Council is determined only through the mandates of each of its participating organizations – the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and Union of BC Indian Chiefs – as established via resolution of their respective memberships.

The First Nations Leadership Council is a political process, not a new

organization. Its purpose is to generate political power through cooperation and collaboration between the existing provincial First Nations organizations.

The staff of the three participating FNLC organizations are responsible for following up on resolutions passed at their respective Chiefs' assemblies, and work together on issues where all three organizations have a mandate.

The BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs are committed to maintaining unity on matters of common concern to benefit all BC First Nations, as well as to respecting the autonomy of each organization in achieving progress on issues specific to their respective memberships.

National Day of Action – Solidarity for Aboriginal Justice

The Assembly of First Nations has passed a resolution calling for a National Day of Action on First Nations issues for June 29, 2007. The First Nations Leadership Council is planning a march and rally, beginning at 12:00pm at the Vancouver Art Gallery to Library Square (300 West Georgia Street).

The National Day of Action is a time for First Nations and Canadians to stand together in the spirit of unity to demand the Federal Government to deal honourably with First Nations Title and Rights and to call for an end to First Nations poverty.

For more information go to:
www.ubcic.bc.ca/NDOA.htm
email NDOA@ubcic.bc.ca

Federal Engagement

On May 26, the FNLC met with Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Jim Prentice and Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Michael de Jong. A commitment has been made to develop a tripartite "new relationship" document that will set out firm commitments and action items in key

areas, including the resolution of claims.

New Relationship

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.

Other working groups achieving progress under the New Relationship include the Resolutions Strategy Side Table; Culture and Heritage Working Group; Telling Our Stories Committee; Ecosystem Stewardship Planning Working Group; and the Gaming Revenue-Sharing Committee.

For three days out of each month, the FNLC meets with provincial officials to set direction, review progress and have high-level discussion on progress under the New Relationship and other matters of common concern.

Fisheries

A key item in the BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan is the establishment of a BC First Nations Fisheries Council. The FNLC was been mandated, through resolution, to hold a province-wide meeting, open to all BC First Nations, to develop the First Nations Fisheries Council concept. This BC First Nations Fisheries Council Forum was held on May 29-30, hosted by Musqueam Nation at the Crown St. Gym. Delegates to the Forum developed a "BC First Nations Fisheries Council Concept Paper" and have recommended that it be adopted by resolution of the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC in June.

Justice Forum

A BC First Nations Justice Forum took place on May 14-16, 2007, at the Coast Plaza Hotel and Suites in Vancouver, BC.

These discussions resulted in a draft BC First Nations Justice Action Plan which was subsequently shared with

all BC First Nations for their review and comment. The revised Action Plan will be considered for approval at June assemblies of the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC. A key action item is the formation of a BC First Nations Justice Council to lead the implementation of the Action Plan. This concept will also be considered for approval at upcoming BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC meetings.

Health

The new First Nations Health Council will be sending out a comprehensive information package to all BC First Nations this month, including an information bulletin, copy of the BC First Nations Health Forum Report and a copy of the new Tripartite Health Plan.

Energy

On April 2-4, 2007, the FNLC and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council co-hosted a province-wide First Nations Energy Summit at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver.

During the Summit, First Nations delegates developed a BC First Nations Energy Action Plan to address energy sector issues. This Action Plan was faxed to all BC First Nations, with an invitation for further feedback. All feedback has been incorporated, and a final version of the Action Plan will be presented at upcoming BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC assemblies, and will be considered for approval via resolution.

An interim Energy Working Group (composed of one FNLC member and one member appointed by each of the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC) will be responsible for implementing the Action Plan and developing the concept of a BC First Nations Energy Council.

Early Childhood Development

A group of individuals and organizations with an interest in Early Childhood Development (including the FNLC, First Nations Education Steering Committee, First Nations Schools Association, Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreements, First Nations Health Council, BC

Aboriginal Child Care Society and others) has been meeting to discuss ways to improve coordination and collaboration amongst themselves, to improve the lives of BC First Nations children. The group has produced a Memorandum of Understanding that will be considered for approval at upcoming BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC assemblies. It also plans to develop a draft BC First Nations Early Childhood Development Action Plan for consideration.

Art Contest

The FNLC and the Provincial Health Officer are hosting an art contest for the cover design and inside pages of the next Report on Health and well-being of Aboriginal People in British Columbia due for release in November 2007. This contest is open to all Aboriginal students who are attending school in British Columbia. The winner of the contest will receive \$500 and an additional \$500 for the school that they are attending.

Technical requirements:

- Maximum size: 11x17
- Art work can be submitted in traditional or digital form
 - Traditional: Artwork can be on any surface with any medium. Use a fixative if you use chalk, pencil or pastel to avoid smudge or distortion.
 - Digital: All digital art must be submitted in high resolution (300 pixels per inch). The final digital file formats should be submitted in EPS, TIFF, JPEG (high resolution) or Photoshop (psd).

Deadline for submission: July 31, 2007. Please direct submissions or to of the BCAFN, FNS or UBCIC.

FNLC Meeting Notes

At the recommendation of First Nations, this section of the information bulletin is to describe FNLC discussion and meetings.

- FNLC to strike a working group to engage with BC in renewing the Crown Land Allocation Framework

- FNLC aquaculture committee to engage with BC on a response to key, recently released reports on aquaculture in BC
- Working group to be struck on a renewal of the provincial Wildlife Act
- First Nations Forestry Council to engage with BC on non-timber forest resources
- FNLC working with key partners to develop a Housing and Infrastructure Memorandum of Understanding and Action Plan
- FNLC to work with BC and other key partners to develop a BC First Nations Public Service Action Plan Framework
- FNLC to work with BC and other key partners to develop a BC Aboriginal Apprenticeship Strategy
- FNLC met with Attorney General Wally Oppal to discuss limitation periods
- FNLC is currently developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Representative for Children and Youth
- FNLC has developed a template Declaration / Protocol to sign with First Nations organizations to improve coordination and collaboration on all matters
- FNLC participating in Cabinet Committee on Climate Change
- FNLC and BC have worked to develop a new youth internship program

Calendar of Events

- **June 26-27:** UBCIC Chiefs Council (Westbank)
- **June 28:** BCAFN Assembly (Vernon)
- **June 29:** National Day of Action (Vancouver)

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 British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.