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## First Nations Leadership Council

### INFORMATION BULLETIN

#### Leadership Accord

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 First Nations Leadership Council does not have its own staff members – the staff of the three participating organizations are responsible for following up on resolutions passed at the assemblies of the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and work together on issues for which 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 autonomy of each organization in achieving progress on issues specific to their respective memberships.

#### New Relationship

There are five key priorities under the New Relationship: Legislation, Policy and a Cultural Shift in

Government; Consultation and Accommodation; Ecosystem Stewardship Planning (Land Use Planning); Shared Decision-Making; and Revenue and Benefit Sharing.

Short-term deliverables targeted by the FNLC include: A recognition mechanism; improvements to the Environmental Assessment Process; Heritage Conservation Act review and amendment; Education Forum; Ecosystem Stewardship Planning Protocol; and a Gaming Revenue-Sharing Agreement.

For three days out of each month, the FNLC meets with provincial officials to set direction, review progress and have high-level discussion on these five priorities. Technical work is mainly achieved through joint working groups.

### **Transformative Change Accord**

Work continues between the FNLC and the province to develop a draft implementation strategy for the Transformative Change Accord. The health plan has been released, and the other sections will soon be ready to distribute to First Nations for comment and advice.

It is hoped that Canada will fulfill its commitments under the Transformative Change Accord, and engage with the FNLC and BC to develop the 10-year plan to improve the quality of life for First Nations in BC – including reconciling title and rights and building a new relationship based on recognition.

### **Fisheries**

A Joint First Nations-Federal Government Fisheries Forum was held on March 5-6, 2007. The purpose of the Forum was to present the BC First Nations Fisheries Action Plan – which was developed and endorsed by BC First Nations – to governments.

A key item in the Action Plan is the establishment of a BC First Nations Fisheries Council. The FNLC has been mandated, through resolution, to hold one or more province-wide

meetings, open to all BC First Nations, to develop the First Nations Fisheries Council concept. A draft framework for this new Council is to be presented to First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs assemblies in June. If you have any ideas for the First Nations Fisheries Council, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **Energy Summit**

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

This Summit provided a forum for dialogue with government and industry on renewable and nonrenewable energy issues and opportunities. Guest speakers included environmentalist and climate change expert Dr. David Suzuki, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Richard Neufeld, and United States Consul General Lewis Lukens.

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 will be incorporated, and a final version of the Action Plan will be presented at upcoming First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs assemblies, and will be considered for approval via resolution. Please contact us if you did not receive a copy of the BC First Nations Energy Action Plan.

### **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 any questions to any of the BCAFN, FNS or UBCIC.

### **Health**

On November 27, 2006, the FNLC, Government of Canada and Province of British Columbia signed a First Nations Health Plan Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and the FNLC and BC released a BC First Nations Health Plan. These two agreements are designed to close the gaps in health outcomes that exist between First Nations and other British Columbians. For copies of the MoU and Health Plan, please visit [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca); [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca); [www.ubcic.bc.ca](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca).

A province-wide First Nations Health Forum was held on April 11-12 in Vancouver to discuss these two important agreements. The FNLC, BC and Canada received excellent advice from the health professionals and First Nations on the implementation of the agreements, and on a communications strategy with First Nations communities.

During the First Nations Health Forum, two important announcements were made. First, Premier Gordon Campbell announced the transfer of \$9.5 million to the FNLC to begin the work

of implementing the 29 action items in the First Nations Health Plan. This funding is for year one of the 10-year plan. The FNLC will work with the BC First Nations Health Council and staff to develop a budget for this year one funding, and will share information at upcoming assemblies.

Second, the appointment of Dr. Evan Adams as the Aboriginal Provincial Health Officer was announced. Dr. Adams will work with both the province and the FNLC to implement the First Nations Health Plan and the First Nations Health Plan MoU. We look forward to working closely with Dr. Adams and welcome his appointment.

Based on the advice provided to us at the First Nations Health Forum, the FNLC and the First Nations Health Council will work to finalize the tripartite First Nations Health Plan committed to in the MoU, and will develop detailed workplans for each of the action items. We will also develop a communications strategy to ensure that all BC First Nations communities are involved in this important work.

### Justice Forum

At the BC Regional Chiefs' Special Assembly In October 2005, the Chiefs in Assembly passed resolution 13/2005, which addressed concerns about the relationship between the administration of justice in BC, the legitimate aspirations of First Nations Peoples towards greater self-government, and the overall well being of First Nation communities. The BC Chiefs in Assembly requested that the Provincial Ministry of Attorney General, Federal Department of Justice and Corrections Canada and other appropriate government agencies sponsor a Provincial Aboriginal Justice Forum.

The Forum goals include:

1. Bringing together key stakeholders from Aboriginal, Criminal Justice and Government organizations to facilitate discussions on key policy and legislation reform

- initiatives that impact BC First Nations Peoples;
2. A report with options and recommendations to improve the relationship between BC First Nations and the criminal justice system. This report will provide direction for the development of a strategy for justice reform and governance structures that recognize the inherent right to self-government and administration over issues impacting First Nations Peoples across BC; and
3. Establishing stronger linkages between BC Aboriginal Justice Services and Programs within our communities and government.

The BC First Nations Justice Forum will take place on May 14-16, 2007, at the Coast Plaza Hotel and Suites located at 1763 Comox St. in Vancouver, BC. Registration is now underway and is open to all who wish to participate. For more information on the forum go to [www.vigold.ca/justice](http://www.vigold.ca/justice), or contact the BCAFN office at 604-922-7733.

### FNLC Meeting Notes

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

- A joint FNLC-BC Recognition Working Group is meeting regularly to produce a draft consultation and accommodation framework, among other recognition-related tasks.
- A joint FNLC-BC Legislative Murals Working Group has been formed to follow up on the Throne Speech commitment to replace the artwork in the rotunda of the Legislature.
- A joint FNLC-BC Working Group has been struck to engage in discussions on ecosystem stewardship planning / land use

planning with the provincial government

- A joint FNLC-BC working group on the *Heritage Conservation Act* has been struck to make recommendations on amendments to the legislation
- Two video pilot projects have been produced to improve public awareness about First Nations and the New Relationship
- FNLC working with BC to develop and introduce a new internship program for First Nations youth in the spring
- A comprehensive study on the status of First Nations and Aboriginal housing in BC is being conducted to assist in developing the Transformative Change Accord implementation strategy.

### Calendar of Events

- **May 14-16:** First Nations Justice Forum (Coast Plaza Hotel, Vancouver)
- **June 12-14:** First Nations Summit Meeting (New Aiyansh)

*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.*