



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

Newsletter

B C A s s e m b l y o f F i r s t N a t i o n s

Message from Regional Chief Terry Teegee

Chiefs, Hereditary Chiefs, Grand Chiefs, Elders,
Youths, First Nation members and honoured guests,

Since the summer, the BC Assembly of First Nations has been extremely busy. From September 18th to 20th we held our Annual General Meeting at the Musqueam Community Centre on xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Territory. We gathered to discuss some very important issues, including the BC legislation on the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (which has now passed!), Children and Families and First Nations Languages, the BCAFN Economic Development Strategy, and a number of other issues. A list of [resolutions](#) can be found on the BCAFN website.

Since our AGM, the federal Liberals won a minority government. I would like to congratulate the many First Nations candidates who ran during the election, and particularly Jody Wilson-Raybould whose integrity and perseverance were rewarded with re-election. We pledge to work with this government to ensure First Nations' inherent Title, Rights and Treaty Rights are upheld and supported. We will continue to press for implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* in federal legislation. We will call on the government to fulfill the Canada Human Rights Tribunal rulings and fully implement the *Bill C-92: An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families*. Further, we will work in partnership to address issues such as the climate emergency, economic development, safe and secure communities, healing and progress on health, education and justice. We must continue to be guided by the *Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action*, as well as the *National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice*. Finally, we challenge all the federal political parties to work with First Nations leaders as they endeavor to improve the livelihoods of First Nations in all aspects.

On the provincial front, we are extremely pleased that on November 26th, the *Bill 41: Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* was passed. It is the first legislation of its kind in Canada. This represents a significant step towards reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and British Columbians. Provincial laws will be modified or designed to align with the minimum standards articulated in the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Supporting self-determination and self-government, the legislation will enable the province to recognize additional forms of Indigenous governments and will also provide more predictability for industry and communities around resource development projects.

Please take a look at the rest of this newsletter for more detailed discussion on some of the BC Assembly of First Nations' current initiatives. Mussi Cho!



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Federal election candidates speak at the BCAFN Annual General Meeting September 18.

Economic Development

Our provincial Economic Development work has been advancing the:

- Development of the “Black Books,” a resource for First Nations leaders, Economic Development Corporations, and entrepreneurs for business development. Regional sessions related to the implementation of this tool will begin in the coming months.
- Drafting of four policy papers to date, on the following topics: cannabis, Free, Prior and Informed Consent, tourism, and trade. We expect to release these papers shortly and will be developing a dissemination strategy for them in order to ensure their usability.
- Planning another Business Forum to be held this winter in Prince George, which will include sessions on the implementation on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in relation to business activities.

BCAFN held one of its Business Forums October 18, 2019 which highlighted achievements made thus far in our sustainable economic development work. Speakers and panelists spoke to the international opportunities that exist through International Trade.

Work remains underway and will remain ongoing throughout this year and into 2020/21 following the Provincial government’s commitment to support the work and First Nations in BC in their endeavors to pursue their economic development goals. We continue to work in partnership with the Provincial government to map out a strategic future with respect to the outcomes and deliverables expected.



Wayne D. Garnons-Williams, BC, LLB, MPA, LLM (2021), Chair, International Intertribal Trade and Investment Organization, Senior Lawyer and Principal Director, Garwill Law Professional Corporation speaking on Boosting cross-border trade between Indigenous peoples and the Jay Treaty at the Business Forum in Vancouver.

BCAFN- BCBC Champions Table

One key aspect of the Economic Development work of BCAFN is the Champions Table. There are 11 First Nation leaders and 11 CEOs at the Table and it is guided by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the BCAFN and BC Business Council (BCBC) in 2017. The MOU establishes the relationship and defines the goal of this work to: "Recognize and Accelerate the Opportunities and Economic Reconciliation between First Nations and the Business Community in British Columbia."

Areas of work stemming from the Champions Table include the Indigenous Intern Leadership Program, a partnership between BCBC, BCAFN, and Vancouver Island University. This program matches Indigenous graduates with internships at prominent BC businesses. It is administered through Vancouver Island University but is open to students from any post-secondary institution in BC.

The Champions Table also initiated a pilot project at the invitation of the Tsilhqot'in Nation, and the context they exist in as a result of their court decision. In March 2019, the Champions Table went up to Tsilhqot'in territory to discuss economic development opportunities on the community's terms. There has been ongoing conversations and establishing conditions for success through Spring and Summer 2019, with a potential fit found for a nature based solutions project that will meet the needs of Tsilhqot'in and recognize the role that natural ecosystems play in mitigating climate change. The outcome of this pilot program will be an economic development strategy for the Tsilhqot'in Nation that includes a shared decision-making model. It is hoped that this model can then be used by other businesses and First Nations when conducting economic development activities on First Nations territories.

[Register](#) for the upcoming BC First Nations Business Forum being held on Lheidli T'enneh territory/Prince George on Feb. 6.



Regional Chief Terry Teegee opening BC FN Business Forum October 18, 2019



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

BC First Nations Business Forum

Thursday February 6, 2020

Uda Dune Baiyoh/Hall of Our Ancestors, Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC



BC First Nations Cannabis Forum held March 27, 2019 in Vancouver

Non-Medical Cannabis Legalization and Regulation


As Co-Chair of the AFN Chiefs Committee on Cannabis (CCC) we have been actively engaged and working on this as a priority item. The CCC held its inaugural meeting in September during the AFN National Cannabis Summit. Since then, the CCC has pursued an aggressive meeting agenda and is seeking to engage various networks and perspectives, including those representing legal, health, social, and economic development related interests and concerns. The CCC is currently building out a work plan aimed at developing potential legislative amendments to recognize First Nation jurisdiction over cannabis and provide for revenue sharing, advocating for First Nations control over activities in their communities, and addressing public safety in the the gray market. The CCC will meet

with key federal Ministers shortly to discuss these matters. Chief Harvey McLeod serves as BCAFN's representative on the CCC.


The BCAFN participates in the BC-First Nations Leadership Council Working Group on Cannabis and is represented by Chief Harvey McLeod. The First Nations Leadership Council work on this Working Group is informed by the BC First Nations Cannabis Framework and Action Plan that was endorsed via Resolution at BCAFN's AGM in September 2019. The BCAFN continues to prioritize conversations on jurisdiction and revenue sharing, and elevate them to the political level, while engaging in valuable concrete policy development surrounding economic development capacity such as Indigenous product sourcing, farm-to-gate sales, direct delivery, and access to capital.

Shared Territories and Overlaps


The Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), First Nations Summit (FNS), and BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), working together as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), are planning to convene a three-day province-wide All Chiefs' Forum on March 11-13, 2020 for First Nation leaders to come together for a solutions-oriented, strategic dialogue on [Shared Territories and Overlaps](#). At recent meetings of the FNS, UBCIC and BCAFN, First Nations leaders have passed a number of resolutions that mandate the organizations to explore constructive approaches to addressing boundary, overlap and shared territory issues. This dialogue will build upon existing principles and recommendations that came from All Chiefs' Forums in 2008 and 2014, as well as the May 2019 UBCIC Symposium: Implementing our Title and Rights - Upholding Self-Determination through Nation-to-Nation, Consent-Based Negotiations and Agreement-Making by providing an opportunity to discuss, evaluate, and recommend options for the resolution of boundary, overlaps and shared territory issues. Preparatory discussions will also be held during [Our Gathering](#) being held January 21-23, 2020 and upcoming [Special Chiefs Assemblies](#).



**BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF
FIRST NATIONS**
1004 Landloor Rd,
Prince George, BC
V2K 3S3
Ph: 778-945-9010
Fax: 778-945-9916



**FIRST
NATIONS
SUMMIT**
1200-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2
Ph: 604-926-9903
Fax: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 866-990-9929



**UNION OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA
INDIAN CHIEFS**
401 - 312 Main Street
Vancouver, BC
V6A 2T2
Ph: 604-684-0231
Fax: 604-684-5726

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

NOTICE TO BC FIRST NATIONS

**SAVE THE DATE: Shared Territories
and Overlaps Forum**

March 11-13th, 2020

The objective of this meeting is to come together for a solutions-oriented, strategic dialogue on shared territories and overlaps to continue the dialogue and build on work started in March 2014. This work is mandated by resolutions passed by the Chiefs at each of the First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs and BC Assembly of First Nations assemblies.

LOCATION: X'məθk'wəy'm (Musqueam), Skwəw 7mesh (Squamish) and Selix lweł'a?Sel.X lwiłuth (Tsleil-Waututh) Territories - Vancouver, BC (Venue TBD)

WHO: For BC Chiefs, hereditary/traditional leadership, and technicians/experts

A travel subsidy will be made available for one Chief, one hereditary/traditional leader, and one technician/expert per First Nation.

For more information please contact:

- Deb Hanuse, First Nations Summit at dehanuse@fns.bc.ca
- Andrea Glickman, Union of BC Indian Chiefs at andrea@ubcic.bc.ca
- Jaime Sanchez, BC Assembly of First Nations at jaime.sanchez@bcfn.ca

Additional information will be forthcoming, including confirmation of location.



Vancouver Climate Change Protest October 28, 2019

Climate Emergency

In the face of a rapidly changing global climate, BCAFN is continuing to advocate for Indigenous Nations in BC to be recognized and positioned as key leaders in addressing the global climate emergency. The BCAFN believes that the recognition of our inherent Rights, Title and Treaty Rights is key to successfully implementing the urgent and transformative actions required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to inevitable environmental, social and cultural impacts. This must include recognizing and making our Indigenous knowledge and responsibilities central to our joint efforts to address climate change.

The BCAFN, with our partners at the FNLC, advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous Nations when designing and developing climate change legislation, policies, plans, both at the federal and provincial levels. For example, we have just established a staff-level BC–FNLC working group to engage in dialogue, exchange information, develop recommendations, provide strategic advice and review progress on provincial climate change actions. To inform this work, we will develop a First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action plan that is informed by Indigenous Nations through forums, surveys, etc.

Many Indigenous Nations in BC are leading climate actions and the BCAFN holds up its hands in gratitude to these leaders. A strategy goal is to share the many inspiring success stories with others and provide mutual support amongst the strong leadership already being demonstrated.

Go to [Climate Emergency](#) on the BCAFN website to view updates and news on the climate emergency.

Justice

As the justice portfolio co-lead I actively work and engage with governments and other agencies to advocate for a strong and robust First Nations Policing Program for our communities. Urging for more supports to address justice-related issues, including (but not limited to), over-incarceration, access to justice issues, in-custody incidents, and racism within justice institutes. Also, we have been working with the First Nations Justice Council to develop an Indigenous Justice Strategy which prioritizes:

- reconciliation with Indigenous peoples,
- decrease over-representation of Indigenous peoples in the justice system,
- improve the experience of Indigenous peoples within the justice system,
- address violence against Indigenous peoples – especially woman and girls,
- improve access to justice and justice services for Indigenous Peoples,
- design justice services that provide culturally relevant, flexible and user-focused processes.

SAVE the DATE

Friday January 24, 2020



BCAFN Women in Leadership Dialogue Session

Westin Wall Centre, xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) Richmond, BC

We envision this Dialogue Session as a day where First Nations Chiefs, councilors, matriarchs, and business and community leaders from across British Columbia who identify as women and gender-diverse can come together to support one another and gain strength to thrive in the political, business, family, and community contexts we live and engage in. This work will build on the 2017 Women's Declaration that was borne out of our first two Dialogue Sessions and was supported by the BC AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly.

Registration details available soon. Go to bcafn.ca or follow BCAFN on Facebook for updates.

Women in Leadership Dialogue Session

On January 24, 2020 the BC Assembly of First Nations will be holding our 3rd Women in Leadership Dialogue Session at the Westin Wall Centre, Richmond in the territory of the Musqueam people. We envision this Dialogue Session as a day where First Nations Chiefs, councilors, matriarchs, and business and community leaders from across British Columbia who identify as women and gender-diverse can come together to support one another and gain strength to thrive in the political, business, family, and community contexts we engage in. Various components of the day will feature key speakers, dialogue and sharing, and workshops on political leadership, community economic and capacity development, and responding to the 231 Calls for Justice. This work will build on the 2017 Women's Declaration that was borne out of our first two Dialogue Sessions and was supported by the BC AFN Chiefs-in-Assembly. This initiative is supported by BC AFN's Womens Representative Louisa Housty-Jones, a Councillor for Heiltsuk Nation.

[Registration](#) information available on the BCAFN website.

Fisheries

As Co-chair of the AFN National Fisheries Committee, there has been work underway to develop a secretariat regarding the implementation of Supreme Court of Canada decisions as they relate to our fishing rights. On October 1 and 2, there was a National Fisheries Committee Meeting in Listiguj, QC. Outcomes from this meeting include:

- Acknowledgement of the 10th Anniversary of the Marshall Decision.
- Discussion regarding the eastern lobster fishery.
- Discussion and implementation of AFN resolutions related to the support of implementing Treaty and Aboriginal Rights and establishment of a Secretariat.
- Further discussion regarding a National Fisheries Forum in 2020.

See First Nations Leadership Council [press release](#) - FNLC Calls for Immediate State of Emergency on Fraser River Salmon Fisheries on BCAFN website.

Language and Culture

At the BCAFN Annual General Meeting in September, Chiefs and leaders were presented with a draft discussion paper on provincial Indigenous languages legislation. Through resolution, the further development and engagement of ideas presented in the discussion paper was supported. BCAFN was mandated to work with the First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs, First Peoples Cultural Council, and First Nations Education Steering Committee to establish a working group and engage First Nations leadership, communities, and language revitalization experts on how this initiative can best support the work communities are doing and want to do to revitalize their languages.

SAVE the DATE

March 4 & 5th, 2020



BCAFN 16th Annual Special Chiefs Assembly

Vancouver Island Conference Centre
101 Gordon St., Snuneymuxw Territory, Nanaimo, BC

Registration information will be available soon. Go to bcafn.ca or follow BCAFN on Facebook for updates.

Regional Chief Terry Teegee addressing the BC Legislative Session on October 24th for Bill 41 - 2019 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.





SEASON'S GREETINGS

BC Assembly of First Nations

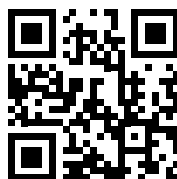
BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

Head Office:

(250)962-1603 • 1-877-621-1603 • fax (250)962-9552
1004 Landooz Road, Prince George, BC, V2K 5S3

Vancouver Office:

(778)945-9911 • 1-833-381-7622 • fax (778)945-9916
1020 - 1200 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6P 6G5



Upcoming Events

JANUARY 2020

[Our Gathering](#)

Vancouver, BC January 21-23

[Women in Leadership Dialogue Session](#)

Richmond, BC January 24

[BC Natural Resource](#)

Prince George, BC January 28-30

FEBRUARY

[BCAFN Business Forum](#)

Prince George, BC February 6

MARCH

[BCAFN 16th Special Chiefs Assembly](#)

Nanaimo, BC March 4 & 5

[FNLC Shared Territories and Overlaps Forum](#)

Vancouver, BC March 11 -13

Contact BCAFN

Regional Chief Terry Teegee

regionalchief@bcfn.ca

Special Advisor to the Regional Chief

Jaime Sanchez jaime.sanchez@bcfn.ca

Chief of Staff

Vanessa West vanessa.west@bcfn.ca

Executive Assistant

Victoria Austin victoria.austin@bcfn.ca

Senior Policy Advisor

Maureen Buchan

maureen.buchan@bcfn.ca

Policy Advisor

Sarah Froese sarah.froese@bcfn.ca

Special Advisor

Policy and Government Relations

Emmy Beaton emmy.beaton@bcfn.ca

Economic Development Policy Analyst

Derek Hansom derek.hansom@bcfn.ca

Economic Development Policy Analyst

Maggie Mills margaret.mills@bcfn.ca

Finance Manager

Melanie Lyons melanie.lyons@bcfn.ca

Communications Officer

Annette Schroeter

annette.schroeter@bcfn.ca

Regional Climate Change Coordinator

Patricia Rojas patricia.rojas@bcfn.ca

Carbon Specialist

Michelle Connolly

michelle.connolly@bcfn.ca

Administrative Support Worker

Samantha Seymour

samantha.seymour@bcfn.ca

Administrative Project Support

Joanna Prince joanna.prince@bcfn.ca