



BRITISH COLUMBIA  
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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# Newsletter

BC Assembly of First Nations

Fall 2021



Regional Chief Terry Teegee speaking at the BCAFN Annual General Meeting 2021 (September)

## Message from Regional Chief Terry Teegee

**Chiefs, Leaders, Knowledge Holders, Elders, Youths, and community members,**

*Hadih,*

The past few months have once again hammered home the historically challenging times we are living through. We are all dealing with at least four overlapping crises: the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, homelessness, and the overdose epidemic. The BC Assembly of First Nations has been working hard to address these issues and hold settler governments to account for resources and services for our membership.

COVID-19 continues to mutate into variants and threaten our communities. Unfortunately, many of our community members remain hesitant to get vaccinated, which we know is the most effective way to protect our most vulnerable – especially Elders and youth. For that reason, the BCAFN has been pushing pro-vaccination messaging across broadcast and social media over the last few months. I provided access to my own vaccination appointment in one

advertisement. In another, our Knowledge Keeper Dr. Gwen Point shared her reasons for getting vaccinated. We hope our community members realize that vaccinations are safe and are essential to keeping our people safe.

It seems that as soon as the last of this summer's forest fires was finally extinguished, our territories were inundated with water from atmospheric rivers streaming out of the Pacific Ocean. As a result, dozens of our communities have been cut off from supplies or flooded out. Once again, the province has been uncommunicative and slow in mobilizing resources to help. I have been working with the First Nations Leadership Council and the First Nations Emergency Services Society to rectify this situation.

Our citizens and communities are also disproportionately impacted by the parallel homelessness and the overdose crises. Decades of underfunding for housing and infrastructure in our communities continue to force our people into urban centres, where lack of affordable housing often pushes them onto the street.

In addition, trauma from our shared experience of colonialism has caused many to seek refuge in illicit substances, which are becoming more and more deadly. We have been fighting to stop the City of Prince George from bulldozing a tent city, which would drive residents further away from the services they need to find a way out of their tragic circumstances. Together with the First Nations Justice Council, we won against a court injunction, and BC Housing has stepped in to fund temporary shelter for many of the tent city residents. The First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council also continues to work on providing more and better shelter options on and off-reserve.

Our work continues on these interrelated crises, and in my other portfolios, including economic development, climate, fisheries and gender equality. I hope you find the updates in this newsletter informative and even inspiring – I know I am consistently inspired by the dedication of our board and staff to fight for our Nations.

Mussi Cho



Address by Minister Murray Rankin, Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation at the BC AFN Annual General Meeting, September 2021



## Non-medical Cannabis Legalization and Regulation

### National Advocacy

Regional Chief Terry Teegee is the holder of the portfolio for Cannabis nationally. On the National level, the Federal Cannabis Act review was slated to begin in October, 2021 of this year, and was intended to last approximately 18 months (a review occurs every three years). The FNLC will be involved in the Cannabis Act review process, though the details of what the review process will look like are not yet available. The FNLC will work to ensure that BC First Nations are included and heard in the review process. The FNLC Cannabis Working Group held a virtual engagement session with First Nations in early August of this year to seek feedback on changes First Nations in BC would like to see made to the legislation. A submission will be prepared for the legislative review, and the recommendations will be brought forward to the AFN Chiefs Committee on Cannabis.

### BC-FNLC Cannabis Working Group

At this table, key priorities remain jurisdiction, cannabis revenues, and targeted economic supports for First Nations cannabis businesses. BC has indicated a willingness to advance the conversation on jurisdiction more fulsomely. The FNLC has had the opportunity to recently meet with Minister

Farnworth to discuss issues related to BC First Nations cannabis jurisdiction. Productive discussion was had with the Minister on revenue and taxation, and the need for the benefits of recognized cannabis jurisdiction to be expanded to First Nations territory and not only reserve land. These topics were also discussed more fulsomely among First Nations in FNLC-hosted engagement sessions held in August and November of this year.

These engagement sessions are being held in support of the development of a BC First Nations Cannabis Strategy, which was mandated by resolutions passed at the BCAFN, FNS, and UBCIC Chiefs meetings. As an overview of the engagement sessions, our August 10th session helped us set necessary context for the fall sessions, and allowed the FNLC to seek input on potential federal and provincial legislative changes. The November 17th session focused on the topics of cannabis economic development and BC First Nations experience in the cannabis market. The November 19th session sought input on the topics of health and safety, BC First Nations experiences with cannabis jurisdiction, and provided an overview of the potential for a BC First Nations Cannabis Institution. An upcoming



British Columbia  
Assembly of First Nations

## BC First Nations Cannabis Strategy Engagement

*Cannabis Economic Development and  
Taxation and Revenue Sharing*

**January 13, 2022**

**1:00 - 4:00 PM**

Online via Zoom

For more information go to [bcafn.events.ca](https://bcafn.events.ca)

session slated for mid-January, 2022 will give us the opportunity to present possible cannabis taxation and revenue sharing models to BC First Nations.

The dialogue at these sessions will contribute toward the development of a BC First Nations Cannabis Strategy. Once the first draft of the Strategy has been developed it will be presented for feedback on January 26th, 2022, before the final version is drafted for consideration.

The BCAFN and FNS has continued with the development of the BC indigenous Cannabis Initiative, a tripartite initiative under the federal Strategic Partnership Initiative funding program, to help address gaps in access to resources, information, and capital for First Nations cannabis business in BC. The partners are currently in the procurement phase of the project, with a presentation to request multi-year funding through the program to take place in Winter 2022.

The FNLC is also continuing to work with the BC Cannabis Secretariat on other initiatives, including an Indigenous-led Cannabis Market Access research project. The FNLC also continues to advocate for First Nations interests with respect to the Indigenous Shelf Space program, Direct-Delivery, and Farm Gate.

### **BCAFN Cannabis Toolkit**

The BCAFN has completed the Cannabis Toolkit. The Cannabis Toolkit is composed of four parts. First, a discussion paper on First Nations Stories of Economic Development and Cannabis explores a number of case studies from First Nations people and Nations and provides a high-level view of the landscape. Next, an in depth-legal memo introduces a more nuanced understanding of the legal and economic challenges and opportunities First Nations are faced with. Finally, two draft template pieces are put forward for discussion and as a potential jumping off point for Nations who are exploring how they may wish to regulate, make agreements, or make laws with respect to cannabis in their territories. If you are interested in obtaining a copy, please feel free to contact me at: [derek.odgers@bcafn.ca](mailto:derek.odgers@bcafn.ca)

The opportunity to continue the dialogue, collaborate, and gain strength through the sharing of our stories and expertise is an exciting one, as First Nations press to participate in and occupy the emergent cannabis sector. We look forward to supporting First Nations as they determine their path forward on cannabis governance and economic development.



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## **BC First Nations Cannabis Strategy Engagement**

*Report Back*

**January 26, 2022**

**10:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

Online via Zoom

For more information go to [bcafn.events.ca](https://bcafn.events.ca)

## Women's Representative Update

Greetings! My name is Louisa Housty-Jones. I come from the Heiltsuk Nation where I also serve on Council. I am passionate about the wellness and leadership of women, and I am honoured to have been re-elected into this role at BCAFN's AGM in September 2021. I'm grateful for the collaborative opportunities here in the region, as well as within the AFN Women's Council.

This fall, I've been focusing on how to build upon the work of my first term, including the annual Women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People's Dialogue sessions and regional engagement on implementing the Calls for Justice.

Key goals involve ongoing advocacy for the implementation of the Calls for Justice at the federal and provincial levels. A recent initiative in support of this included participating in the international campaign known as the 16 Days of Advocacy Against Gender Based Violence. For this campaign BCAFN featured key messages and resources via social media, and hosted a letter writing campaign to federal Ministers urging immediate action on the Calls for Justice.

I am also focused on carrying forward the recommendations that have arisen from the 2020 and 2021 Dialogue Sessions. Initial steps include exploring collaborative relationships with other women's and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people's representatives and organizations to support this work in a good way.

I am also excited to share that BCAFN has the opportunity to initiate an 18 month project supported by Women and Gender Equality Canada that involves 3 key initiatives:

- 1) Developing a Strategic Action Plan for Women, 2S, and LGBTQQIA+ Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion,
- 2) Developing First Nations Specific Gender Based Analysis plus resources for First Nations, and,
- 3) Continuing the review of BCAFN governance documents to help promote an organization that is free from discrimination, violence, and bullying.

I hope this strategic action plan can strengthen and formalize BCAFN's advocacy in this area, including the recent recommendations from the Dialogue

Sessions and What we Heard report; and will help empower the role of the Women's Representative going forward.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to share about some work in my own community to address and prevent violence. The Haítzaqv Joint Leadership has resolved to address sexualized violence as a priority issue. All measures, strategies, and resources are to be committed to addressing the impacts of sexual violence in our community. This is because the Haítzaqv community deserves safety. We commit to breaking the cycle of sexual abuse and assault, in our community. We commit to a trauma informed and victim/survivor centred community approach. To support this work, the Haítzaqv Joint Leadership is currently developing an app that community members can use to access information and resources, and support holistic prevention and responses to violence.

Haítzaqv people are matriarchal and have always been guided by the wisdom and values of our Wúmaqs. We reinforce this work in many ways, including through the Haítzaqv Women's Declaration. This Declaration has been ratified by Haítzaqv Joint Leadership, which is made up of hereditary and elected leadership, and upheld as a model for protecting and nurturing women and girls in our community. Whether it's grassroots support for people experiencing family violence or uplifting women, girls, and 2 Spirit individuals into the heart of Haítzaqv governance, this work is a demonstrated priority for our people.

I draw from my community experience in all of my work as the BCAFN Women's Representative and vice versa. Thank you for the opportunity to serve in this role, and to connect with so many incredible advocates.



## 2021 Women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People's Dialogue Sessions

The 2021 Dialogue sessions were held virtually on April 13, 14, 15, and 22, 2021 and revolved around the themes of gender identity, allyship, self-care, wellness, and reclaiming our distinct roles and responsibilities. BCAFN has prepared a summary report of the *2021 Dialogue Sessions: Nourishing Hope and Belonging*. Our intention with this report is to share more broadly the perspectives and immense wisdom that our knowledge keepers, cultural support individuals, panelists, facilitators, session leaders, graphic recorders, and participants shared during the Dialogue Sessions, and outline how BCAFN intends to carry forward the dialogue with action in several key areas.

## Women, 2S, and LGBTQQIA+ Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan

BCAFN has begun initial work to develop a Strategic Action Plan for Women, 2S, and LGBTQQIA+ Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as mandate by BCAFN resolution 11/2020 Support for Indigenous, Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People Declaration and Strategy.

This Strategic Action Plan will serve as a key accountability mechanism, providing a pathway for the implementation of the mandate and recommendations under the 2020 Indigenous Women and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People's Declaration, BCAFN Resolution 11/2020 items a-i, the National Action Plan on MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+ "What we Heard" report, and the 2021 Dialogue Session report "Nourishing Hope and Belonging".

The first draft of the strategy will be prepared based on the numerous recommendations that BCAFN has received through the above-noted initiatives. BCAFN will also undertake preliminary work to develop the collaborations and partnerships that may be necessary for the implementation of the actions outlined under the strategy. Following this, BCAFN will host several engagement sessions to receive feedback on the draft strategy. A final draft will be prepared based on this input and presented to BCAFN's Board, the Chiefs-in-Assembly, and those gathered at subsequent Dialogue Sessions for dialogue and endorsement.

As mandated in resolution 11/2020 BCAFN has secured funding for this initiative, which is supported by Women and Gender Equality Canada.

## Regional Engagement on the Development of the Regional MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+ National Action Plan

The 2021 Dialogue sessions were held virtually on April In May and June 2021 the BCAFN and the AFN Women's Council co-hosted a series of virtual engagement sessions on the development of the National Action Plan on MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+. A "What we Heard" report based on these sessions and the written, audio, and video submissions that were received has been prepared. The final "What we Heard" report highlights 5 priority areas for action that received the most input and will inform BCAFN's advocacy: Human and Indigenous Rights and Governmental Obligations; Culture; Health and Wellness; Health and Wellness Service Providers; and Police Services. This report will be integrated into the AFN Women's Council's contribution to the National Action Plan, "Breathing Life into the Calls for Justice". It also serves as a foundation for BCAFN's advocacy at the provincial and federal levels.



## International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

**November 25th** and Day 1 of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The BCAFN Board of Directors, Knowledge Keepers, representatives, and staff call upon all individuals, sectors, and governments in Canada to play a role in ending violence against Indigenous women, girls, 2-Spirit, and gender-diverse people.

#16daysofActivism2021 #EndGBV #genderbasedviolence #MMIWG2S  
#16DaysOfActivismAgainstGenderBasedViolence

## BCAFN Youth Update

Justen and Taylor, alongside BCAFN staff, received funding from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation based on a proposal submission which seeks to continue to enhance BCAFN's engagement with First Nations youth across BC. In this proposal, Justen and Taylor identified that they would like to host a BCAFN Youth Podcast to interview emerging youth leaders and entrepreneurs and share this content with their peers. The topics covered will be based on the priorities identified by First Nations Youth at the 2021 BCAFN Youth Forum which included 2SLGBTQQIA+, Climate Change, Mental Health, Economic Development, Education and Advocacy. We encourage everyone to tune into the youth podcasts as they are released at [www.youth.bcafn.ca/podcast](http://www.youth.bcafn.ca/podcast).

Taylor and Justen have also committed to developing a handbook for future BCAFN Youth Representatives to support them into their new roles with a goal of providing a 'how-to' manual and applicable resources that assists the new representatives in their leadership. Justen and Taylor will be working with BCAFN staff to engage with former BCAFN Youth Representatives and with their National Youth Council peers to learn what best resources and advice could help guide the content of this handbook.

In addition to the regular AFN National Youth Council (NYC) meetings and BCAFN Board of Director Meetings, Justen and Taylor have both regularly attended the Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective meetings which promotes relationship-building between the Province of BC and Indigenous youth. Taylor and Justen have also been working with the BC Coalition to end Youth Homelessness which includes participating in a Working Group that is developing a Youth Homelessness Action Plan (Action Plan) as mandated by BCAFN [Resolution 17/2020](#). The BC Coalition to end Youth Homelessness has just concluded a youth survey and the data gleaned from that survey will help inform the Action Plan in 2022.

## Taylor's Report

It's been an exciting year for BCAFN's Female Youth Representative, Taylor Behn-Tsakoza who was appointed to the AFN NYC Co-Chair Executive. In addition to this work, Taylor has sat on the State of Youth Report Youth Advisory Committee for the Youth Secretariat, Canadian Heritage and assisted with drafting the 2021 Report. Additionally, she is part of the Indigenous Youth Working Group on COVID-19 vaccine uptake for the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch where she helped develop an online campaign to increase vaccinations amongst Indigenous Youth. Taylor also recently met with the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation to discuss Phase 2 Engagement on their Consultative Draft Action Plan for DRIPA. Taylor has also been working with the First Nations Leadership Council to help plan their First Nations Youth and Climate Engagement Session which took place in early July. This engagement session which had approximately 35 youth attend from around BC helped inform the BC First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan.

## Justen's Report

Justen has been working on an Indigenous Youth-led project which aimed to educate Canadians on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which was funded by the Department of Justice Canada. The final project will be available to watch on the [BCAFN Youth Website](#). Justen has also been working with Decolonize Water which is a group that has been exploring moving towards declaring sacred bodies of water in Canada as having legal rights, which is a movement that has been embraced by the Innu Council of Ekuanitshit and the Minganie Regional County Municipality in Quebec which declared the Muteshekau Shipu (Magpie River) as a legal person. This movement has gained traction around the world and Justen is excited to continue to work with Decolonize Water to further the movement within a more local context.

## Homelessness

Homelessness continues to be a serious crisis for First Nations in British Columbia. Municipalities across BC continue to take retributive action against the de-housed through aggressive decampment strategies. Such strategies including the development of punitive anti-homeless municipal bylaws and costly legal injunctions to remove encampments which have most notably targeted encampment residents in Crab Park in Vancouver and in the Lower Patricia encampments in Prince George.

Regional Chief Teegee has been actively opposing the actions of the City of Prince George in targeting de-housed individuals (80% of whom are Indigenous in the city). Regional Chief Teegee presented to the City Council at the end of August and brought Professor Joseph Hermer from the University of Toronto to testify that the City of Prince George's proposed Safe Streets Bylaw was further targeting the city's First Nations population. BCAFN also brought the First Nations Justice Council on board to provide legal representation for the Lower Patricia Encampment residents while supporting their case against the City of Prince George who attempted to displace residents in the Lower Patricia encampments. Ultimately, the judge ruled that without adequate shelter elsewhere, the City of Prince George had no right to remove tents of unhoused people which has set a legal precedence for future injunctions brought forth by municipalities.

Following from last year's [Resolution 08/2020](#), BCAFN has been working to develop a regional strategy to tackle the homelessness crisis which includes seeking adequate funding to gather the appropriate distinctions-based data to help inform the intersectional issues and systems that contribute to high rates of homelessness among First Nations in BC. This strategy will be informed by input with Indigenous service providers and relevant stakeholders as well as in collaboration with the Assembly of First Nations. Through this process, BCAFN will work to identify comprehensive, multi-partner, short, medium, and long-term solutions, as well as an advocacy plan with engagements with First Nations on a draft strategy planned in early 2022.

## Indigenous Languages

In alignment with BCAFN Resolution 11/2019: Support for Co-Developing Provincial Indigenous Languages Legislation BCAFN collaborated with regional partners on the development of a proposal to support the establishment of a working group, which would explore options for supporting First Nations languages in BC, including provincial languages legislation. Given the ongoing evolution of the draft DRIPA Action Plan, this proposal was paused. BCAFN is now working with UBCIC, FNS, and FNEC at a technical level to discuss how work on First Nations languages might be coordinated and advanced within a DRIPA framework going forward.

## Shared Territories and Overlaps

On November 24-25, the FNLC hosted a virtual dialogue to discuss strategies for addressing shared territories and overlaps situations. This dialogue built upon discussions from the previous forum in March 2020, which was interrupted due to COVID-19. In preparation for this forum the FNLC convened two focus groups on July 29 and August 5, 2021 to seek guidance and input on the agenda and content for the November forum. These focus groups involved a small, but diverse sample of First Nations leadership and subject matter experts.

The 2021 Forum was open to First Nations Chiefs, hereditary/traditional leadership, and technicians/experts. The dialogue revolved around:

- Incorporating Indigenous laws and protocols within a shared territories and overlaps context,
- Resolving disputes and shared decision making,
- Strategies for supporting capacity, including consideration the potential role for a First Nations institution to support First Nations with regard to this work,
- Exploring pathways forward.

A summary of the proceedings and a final report are currently being prepared, and will be shared with BC Chiefs.



## Climate Emergency

Following the mandates as directed by the Chiefs-in-Assembly ([Resolution 04/2019](#) and [Resolution 05/2021](#)), during the last quarter, the BCAFN Climate Change Portfolio has continued advocating that First Nations' constitutional and inherent rights are upheld throughout all the components and stages of the climate response in Canada and BC. In early August, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) made clear that we are not on a path to keep global warming to 1.5oC and in fact, we have already locked in 1.1 oC of warming.

We are already witnessing the results—unprecedented changes in the climate system and more frequent and more severe catastrophic weather events in BC over the last five months (a record deadly heat dome, the longest and most destructive wildfire season, and just recently, intense atmospheric river storms). These weather-related events, exacerbated by climate change, have together caused extraordinary amount of economic and human damage, including to many First Nations. These make clear how important it is to invest in planning for climate change adaptation, while also addressing carbon pollution.

Last month we also witnessed COP26, the United Nations' main climate summit, which took place in Glasgow. There was an underwhelming sense that worldwide, politicians failed to reach a meaningful agreement to "save 1.5oC", despite several announcements. At the same time, Indigenous Peoples were not given the space and proper role in the proceedings. This is a problem at every COP. Nevertheless, we did have First Nation representatives attend from British Columbia and we are learning from their experiences now. BCAFN also continued a number of projects and activities, including:

- Continuing with our [BCAFN Climate Action Webinar](#) series. In August we hosted a webinar on [Climate Data](#) which presented available portals, platforms and tools that First Nations communities can utilize to access climate data and information to support their climate response. We also hosted a follow-up training session on December 2nd to introduce First Nations on the use of the Climate Data portal and

discuss the intersection of Indigenous Knowledge and western climate data. Our next training session will be on the use of the Climate Atlas portal planned for early 2022;

- In July, the BCAFN Climate Change and Water portfolios joined efforts to prepare and deliver a monthly [Climate Change & Water Newsletter](#) to keep First Nations informed about relevant information related to the environment, water and climate change;
- Continuing to advocate for meaningful support to First Nations right-holders to transition away from the use of diesel fuel and to be fully included in policy-making and the opportunities arising from the transition to the use of low carbon energy. As part of this effort, the FNLC with the First Nations Energy and Mining Council have launched the [Indigenous Clean Energy Opportunities Initiative](#). This is being collaboratively delivered with the Province of BC through the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation;
- We also continue to liaise with our regional partners, the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) and the First Nations Summit (FNS), and our national counterpart, the Assembly of First Nations and the AFN's Regional Climate Change Coordinators network, on various government climate change-related initiatives. This work includes advocating for the urgent transition away from the production and use of fossil fuels in our economy, while effectively adapting to the impacts of climate change;
- Continuing to develop the First Nations Climate Strategy and Action Plan (the Strategy) with our partners at the UBCIC and FNS. After receiving input from a youth specific engagement session, we completed the second draft of the Strategy in August 2021 and distributed copies for review to all First Nations in BC. After taking into consideration the unprecedented and devastating wildfire season, the Strategy development timeline was extended until February 2022 to ensure that First Nations in BC are provided with adequate time to review the draft documents. To help gather feedback on the second draft, we hosted two more engagement sessions in November and December.



## Water

BCAFN continues to work at the regional and national level to advocate for First Nations water rights. Nationally, BCAFN is working with the AFN on continued engagement with First Nations on developing a long-term national Safe Drinking Water and Wastewater Strategy and receive input on federal legislation that is co-developed by First Nations that will ultimately replace the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act. Continued regional engagements will be planned for early 2022.

In Canada's recent [Speech from the Throne](#) released November 2021, there was a renewed commitment to developing a Canada Water Agency (CWA) to work towards protecting water across Canada. While the scope of the proposed CWA remains unknown, Canada has indicated a goal to improve collaborative freshwater management while committing to identifying the scope of the CWA in collaboration with Indigenous peoples. BCAFN remains committed to advocating for this work to be co-developed meaningfully with First Nations. A [resolution](#) was passed at the BCAFN Special Chiefs Assembly in March 2021 which supports BCAFN promoting a dialogue with First Nations to discuss the potential opportunities for First Nations in envisioning a potential Agency. Funding was approved by Environment and Climate Change Canada and engagements with First Nations will be underway in Winter 2022. Additionally, BCAFN will also be conducting a formal review and response to Environment and Climate Change Canada's Discussion Paper titled, "[Toward the Creation of a Canada Water Agency](#)".

At the regional level, BCAFN, in partnership with the Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the First Nations Summit, together as the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) have received a mandate from leadership to review the FNLC First Nations Water

Rights Strategy which was developed in 2013 and amend it to reflect provincial legislation that has since been enacted such as the Water Sustainability Act and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) which will help inform updated goals and actions within the strategy. This work will begin in the new year with engagements planned for Spring 2022.

In 2020, the Province committed to developing a Watershed Security Fund which was advocated for by the Chiefs-in-Assembly through [BCAFN Resolution 21\(e\)/2019](#). The FNLC organizations have a collective commitment to advocating for First Nations co-development of BC's proposed Watershed Security Fund and their additional commitment to developing a BC Watershed Security Strategy. In recognition of climate emergency that BC continues to face with unprecedented wildfires, heat domes, and floods, the FNLC continues to call on the Province to prioritize their commitment towards developing a Watershed Security Fund which would support First Nations stewardship towards watershed security that will help enable communities to both mitigate and adapt to BC's rapidly changing climate by committing \$75 million towards a sustainable long-term fund that prioritizes First Nations watershed protection and management initiatives.

The BCAFN Environmental portfolios have teamed up to distribute a monthly BCAFN Climate Change and Water monthly Newsletter. This newsletter will feature updates, community-led projects, and share funding opportunities for environmental community-based initiatives. If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter or have a community environmental initiative you would like featured in the newsletter, please email [sophia.iliopulos@bcafn.ca](mailto:sophia.iliopulos@bcafn.ca) or [patricia.rojas@bcafn.ca](mailto:patricia.rojas@bcafn.ca) for more information.

## Emergency and Disasters

For much of the year the province of British Columbia has been in a state of emergency with the COVID-19 pandemic, wildfires and flooding. In addition, this year we saw unprecedented weather events including a heat dome that covered much of the province twice over the summer and then a tornado hit the UBC area in Vancouver.

Crisis have continued with the COVID-19 pandemic and despite vaccinations there is much uncertainty as waves of coronavirus variants quickly spread around the globe. Experts work quickly to determine the rate of infection, severity of illness and effectiveness of vaccines.

BCAFN has created and paid for television advertising on major Canadian networks encouraging First Nations in BC to get the COVID-19 vaccine. They can also be watched on YouTube on the BCAFN channel.

BCAFN has also been distributing two weekly bulletins. The COVID-19 Pandemic bulletin is sent out every Friday and features news, information and resources for First Nations audiences.

A Wildfire Bulletin was sent out every week since July and also featured news, information and resources for First Nations. With the flooding in November this bulletin has morphed into the Emergency & Disasters bulletin. Contact Annette Schroeter, [annette.schroeter@bcfn.ca](mailto:annette.schroeter@bcfn.ca) if you would like to subscribe to these bulletins.

The Virtual BC First Nations Emergency Management Forum was held for two days in October to discuss national and regional emergency management strategies. The forum was focused on legislation, policy development, emergency management concerns, lessons learned, training and development, policy issues, and government to government relations. Attendees were given the opportunity to hear, first-hand, the latest on issues that impact their nations' and agencies' programs. Recordings of the forum can be watched on the [BCAFN website](#).

## COVID - 19 Vaccines Public Service Announcements



BCAFN Regional Chief Terry Teegee speaks about the importance of getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Protect our Elders, children and immune compromised family and community members. [Watch on YouTube](#)



BCAFN Knowledge Keeper Dr. Gwendolyn Point speaks about COVID-19 and the importance of getting the vaccine. [Watch on YouTube](#)



The COVID-19 vaccine is safe, and is the best way to protect our communities from the virus. [Watch on YouTube](#)



## BCAFN Board of Directors

### Chief Harvey McLeod

Upper Nicola

### Chief Rosanne Casimir

Tk'emlups Te Secwepemc

### Chief Jerry Jack

Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation

### Chief Elaine Moore

Gitwinksihlkw

### Chief Lynda Price

Ulkatcho First Nation

## BCAFN Representatives

### Knowledge Keepers

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Gwawaenuk First Nation

Dr. Gwendolyn Point

Sto:Lo Nation

### Women's Representative

Louisa Housty Jones

Heiltsuk Nation

### Youth Male Representative

Justen Peters

Okanagan Indian Band

### Youth Female Representative

Taylor Behn-Tsakoza,

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Administrative Project Support

Joanna Prince [joanna.prince@bcafn.ca](mailto:joanna.prince@bcafn.ca)

## Upcoming Events

### BCAFN Offices Closed

December 18 - January 3, 2022

Happy Holidays!

### BC First Nations Cannabis Strategy Engagement - Taxation and Revenue Sharing

January 13, 2022

Online via Zoom

1:00 - 4:00 PM

### BC First Nations Cannabis Strategy Engagement - Report Back

January 26, 2022

Online via Zoom

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

### BCAFN Special Chiefs Assembly 2022

Online via Zoom

March 9 & 10, 2022

Information for all (upcoming and past) BCAFN events can be found [here](#)

## BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

### Head Office:

(250) 962-1603 • 1-877-621-1603 • fax (250) 962-9552

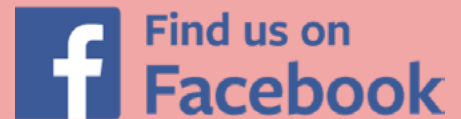
1004 Landooz Road, Prince George, BC, V2K 5S3

### Vancouver Office:

(778) 945-9911 • 1-833-381-7622 • fax (778) 945-9916

1020 - 1200 West 73rd Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6P 6G5

The BCAFN offices will be closed over the holidays from December 18 to January 3, 2022. Call our Administrative Support worker, Samantha Seymour, at 778-281-2224 and she will be able to assist with enquiries.



BCAFN websites at

[bcafn.ca](https://bcafn.ca)

[events.bcafn.ca](https://events.bcafn.ca)

[youth.bcafn.ca](https://youth.bcafn.ca)

Check them out!

May your days be  
**Merry & Bright**

Happiness, health and wellness

for you and your family

during the Holiday Season and

the New Year from Regional Chief Terry Teegee,

BCAFN Staff, Board of Directors and Representatives!

