

BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS



REGIONAL CHIEF'S QUARTERLY REPORT

June 2011

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PART ONE: *BUILDING ON OUR SUCCESS* – IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Our focus at the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN) continues with implementation of the *Building on OUR Success* platform. Our Action Plan is moving forward to empower, connect and support our Nations as we strategize and work together to achieve our goals of self-determination within our individual communities. The four key and interrelated areas of the Action Plan are:

1. **Strong and Appropriate Governance** in order to take advantage of our opportunities in implementing our Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights, and grow our economies by providing stable and sound governance that is transparent and accountable to our Citizens;
2. **Fair Land and Resource Settlements** to ensure our peoples and our governments have access to the resources required to support our societies including both our traditional and modern economies;
3. **Improved Education** to ensure our Citizens are able to make informed decisions about change as well as participate in our growing economies and our governments; and,
4. **Individual Health** to address the colonial health legacies to ensure our Citizens are strong and can actually benefit from and enjoy their title and rights.

Building on our priorities and developing a strategy to move beyond the *Indian Act* and create healthier and stronger communities, we are actively engaging in a number of initiatives and looking for partnerships and support. We are in an exciting period of Nation building or Nation re-building and it has started from the ground up.

1. Strong and Appropriate Governance



“Strong and appropriate governance is necessary if our Nations are to reach our full potential and maximize our opportunities. This is a prerequisite to sustainable and long-term economic development.” *Building on OUR Success*

BCAFN Governance Toolkit: In accordance with our *Building on OUR Success* Action Plan, and our Strong and Appropriate Governance pillar, the BCAFN has been busy finalizing the *BCAFN Governance Toolkit – A Guide to Nation Building* (the “Toolkit”). The Governance Toolkit is a guide to assist our Nations in navigating their way out from under the *Indian Act* at their own pace and based upon their own priorities.

The Toolkit includes a number of parts. The core of the toolkit is a comprehensive **Governance Report** that looks at options for governance reform and considers, subject-by-subject, the powers (jurisdictions) of our Nations. The Report is written from the perspective that the Nation is the building block of governance and that our Nations have the inherent right to govern. It looks at how we are moving in this direction along a continuum of governance options and reforms by providing a snapshot of what our Nations in BC are actually doing.

The Toolkit also includes a **Governance Self-Assessment** in two modules that your Nation can use to evaluate 1) the effectiveness of your institutions of governance, and 2) the effectiveness of your administration. The evaluation is an important exercise that any Nation can undertake to identify what is working well and what not so well, and where the institutional framework may be deficient and where there are gaps, both in terms of the institutions of governance and of the powers of government that may need to be advanced. The third part is **A Guide to Community Engagement** that can assist your Nation to begin or continue discussions with your citizens about the importance of good governance and options for governance reform, including moving beyond the *Indian Act*.

I am pleased to say that the Governance Toolkit is being developed in-house by the BCAFN with the support and contributions of many individuals and organizations. Drafts of the Report were reviewed by peer groups and the self-assessment modules were piloted in a number of our communities and revised extensively following insightful dialogue. It is our intention to continue these pilots and to work with all interested communities who wish to undertake their own self-assessment.

I am looking forward to the launch of our Toolkit at our *Building on OUR Success* Special Chiefs' Assembly – *Strong and Appropriate Governance* and 8th Annual General Meeting on June 22-24, 2011 at the Westin Wall Centre at 3099, Corvette Way in Richmond, BC. We will be launching the Governance Report; the Self-Assessment and community engagement will be released late this year. The Toolkit will be provided in hard copy to all BC First Nations, free of charge, and it will also be available on the BCAFN website (www.bcafn.ca), including most of the primary documents that are referenced in the *Governance Report*.

AFN Spring 2011 National Planning & Dialogue Forum: The AFN Spring 2011 National Planning and Dialogue Forum: *Strengthening Our Nations – Advancing Capacity for First Nation Governments and Economies* was held on March 7-8, 2011 at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver, BC. These planning and dialogue forums offer our Nations an opportunity to come together to share experiences, lessons learned, and hear about innovative practices for the collective purpose of advancing First Nations' jurisdiction and economic development. The focus of the spring national planning and dialogue forum was on transforming the relationship between First Nations and the Crown by moving beyond the *Indian Act*. Plenary sessions covered a range of interesting topics such as citizenship as a catalyst for Nation building, accountability, outreach and service, supporting safe and secure First Nations' communities, and reflections on current processes and implementing First Nations' jurisdiction.

Presentations and information on the panel topics are available at the AFN website (www.afn.ca). Participants identified the need for more information sharing, national agenda setting including action and planning and fiscal relations and focused and sustainable economic planning as areas for future consideration. These topics and others will be included at the 2011 AFN Annual General Assembly in Moncton, New Brunswick this July 12-14, 2011.

National and Regional Exploratory Process on First Nations' Citizenship: On May 9, I had the pleasure of co-chairing the AFN "virtual roundtable" on First Nations' citizenship with the National Chief. This online panel discussion was organized by the AFN National Youth Council and panelists included members of the Youth Council, respected elders and First Nations' leaders.

The virtual roundtable is the first step of AFN's national exploratory process on First Nations' citizenship; an initiative to support our Nations in the sometimes complex but very fundamental conversation about citizenship as a core institution of governance. The virtual roundtable was very successful with great participation including over 600 posts and 526 viewers from different locations across the country. If you were unable to participate in the discussion, the web-chat and discussion are archived and can be viewed on the AFN web-portal on First Nations' citizenship at: <http://firstnationscitizenship.afn.previewsite.ca>.

As another component of the national exploratory process on First Nations' citizenship, AFN is seeking *multi-media submissions* that explore the broad theme "identity, nationhood and change" in a creative way. Submissions can include films, songs, images, sculptures or any other form of artistic expression. I especially encourage youth to participate and for all to make their voices heard. For more information please visit: <http://firstnationscitizenship.afn.previewsite.ca>.

In considering the issue of citizenship, the following four questions have been posed by the National AFN offices for dialogue among our Nations:

1. What does First Nation citizenship mean to you today? How is this different from your grandparents? Will it be different for your grandchildren?
2. What is your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of citizens and their governments?
3. How would you like to see your Nation move forward?
4. What tools are required to make change a reality?

Some further questions, more personal in nature, you may wish to consider during you Nation's deliberations on this issue are:

1. What is most important to you 1) being a Citizen of your Nation 2) being a member of your Band 3) having Indian status? and why?
2. What criteria would you see for becoming a citizen of you Nation? How would this be different, if it is different, from determining membership in your band today?

3. How should we address the issue of dual citizenship and the movement of our citizens between Nations and their respective rights and responsibilities?
4. Can we define our rules for citizenship before we have recognized the need to reconstitute our governing structures beyond the *Indian Act*?

Our inherent right over defining our Nations' own citizenship is an essential part of strong and appropriate governance. The BCAFN will work with BC First Nations in dialogues around citizenship in tandem with the AFN's national exploratory process. We are suggesting developing a BC citizenship paper presenting a BC regional perspective on citizenship leading up to the AFN national First Nation citizenship forum scheduled for November 15-16, 2011 at Enoch River Cree Resort in Alberta. Citizenship will be a key topic at the upcoming BCAFN Special Chiefs' Assembly and 8th AGM on June 22-24, 2011. The BCAFN will be holding community dialogue sessions to explore perspectives, concerns and best practices on citizenship and will follow these dialogue sessions up with a survey of BC First Nations. We will compile these submissions and the results of our dialogue sessions into a BC regional perspective document on citizenship which we can present at the national First Nation citizenship forum in November.

2011 Federal Election and Provincial By-Election: Since the last Quarterly Report both the provincial and federal governments have experienced much political change. Provincially, on May 12, 2011, the BC by-election in Point Grey resulted in Premier Christie Clark being elected to the legislative assembly. As Premier Clark continues to develop her "Families First" agenda and the BCAFN will continue to advocate for the importance of meaningful partnership with First Nations and ensure that the work of the New Relationship is continued in a meaningful way, recognizing our rights and title.

Federally, on March 26, 2011, the Governor General dissolved parliament and a federal election was called for May 2, 2011. During the campaign, the AFN worked hard to ensure that First Nations' issues were not lost and that First Nations had a voice during this campaign. On May 2, 2011, the Conservative Party of Canada gained a majority government and the federal New Democratic Party became the official opposition. When Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced his cabinet on May 18, 2011, he appointed two Aboriginal Cabinet Ministers: Leona Aglukkaq (Health Minister) and Peter Penashue (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada).

Minister John Duncan was re-appointed to the same post, but with a different name: Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. We must ensure that although the name of Minister has changed and eventually the department, the federal government obligations and responsibilities to First Nations remain the same.

With the dissolution of Parliament, a number of bill dealing with our issues, died on the order paper. These were:

- Bill C-249: An Act to ensure that appropriate health care services are provided to First Nations children in a timely manner;
- Bill C-304: An Act to ensure secure, adequate, accessible and affordable housing for Canadians;
- Bill C-503: An Act to amend the Department of Justice Act and make consequential amendments to another Act (aboriginal or treaty rights);
- Bill C-575: First Nations Financial Transparency Act;
- Bill C-580: An Act to amend the Criminal Code, the Firearms Act and the Contraventions Act (long guns);
- Bill C-465: An Act respecting a National Hunting, Trapping and Fishing Heritage Day;
- Bill C-593: An Act respecting a National Strategy for Suicide Prevention;
- Bill C-599: First Nations Education Funding Plan Act;
- Bill S-4: Matrimonial Real Property Act; and
- Bill S-11: Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act.

Parliament reconvened on June 3, 2011. It is our understanding that a number of these previous Bills, including financial transparency will be re-introduced, albeit potentially in a different form, along with legislation around First Nations' elections. More extensive up-dates on proposed legislation will be made available in the next Quarterly Report.

2. Fair Lands and Resources

Strong & Appropriate
Governance


Fair Lands &
Resources


Improved
Education


Individual
Health


“Settlement of the land question remains fundamental to the overall success of our Nations in BC. Without adequate access to land and resources our Nations will never reach our full potential. In addition to sustaining our traditional practices, access to land and access to resources provides our capital – our equity – and therefore our ability to build our economies and support our government.” Building on OUR Success

BC First Nations' Task Force: Further to the All-Chiefs' Assembly (ACA) on November 30 - December 1, 2010, the [BC All Chiefs' Task Force \(ACTF\) Proceedings Report](#) has been released and can be found on our website (www.bcafn.ca) under “First Nations Leadership Council Key Documents & Developments”. The Chiefs-in-Assembly passed three resolutions-in-principle which endorsed the ACTF recommendations, the First Nation Leadership Council Terms of Reference and Accountability Framework, and the Process Document. Both the First Nations

Summit (FNS) and Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) have formally endorsed all three resolutions at their assemblies. These resolutions-in-principle will be put before our Chiefs at the BCAFN AGM on June 24, 2011.

Pursuant to the recommendations made by the ACTF, the First Nation Leadership Council (FNLC) met in May to develop a strategic plan. Part of this strategic plan involves developing a communications plan between the FNLC, with First Nation organizations and sector councils, with First Nation Working Groups and, most importantly, with our First Nation communities. This strategic plan is in the process of being finalized. We will be reporting our progress as it develops.

Heritage Conservation: In 2007, the Joint Working Group on First Nations Heritage Conservation (JWGFNHC) was established by the Provincial Government and the FNLC to address the need for a strategic Action Plan to ensure First Nations' heritage sites are protected. The JWGFNHC has been busy incorporating feedback from the First Nations' Heritage Forum, held in February 2011 in Vancouver, into the final stages of the *First Nations Heritage Conservation Action Plan*. The JWGFNHC has prepared a final *First Nations Heritage Conservation Action Plan* and bring it forward for review and endorsement at the BCAFN, FNS, and UBCIC.

BC Water Act Modernization: As noted in previous Quarterly Reports, the *Water Act* modernization process was introduced by the government of British Columbia in 2009. The Ministry of Environment released a report on engagement in fall 2010, which stated that there was support, overall, for the principles and goals of the modernization process.

In December 2010, the Ministry of Environment solicited input to its *Policy Proposal on BC's New Water Sustainability Act* through an online blog. It is expected that the *Water Sustainability Act* will be introduced in the legislature in 2012.

The First Nations in British Columbia have Aboriginal rights to water and we have maintained that the modernization process does not constitute meaningful consultation or meet the standards set out in the *New Relationship*. Representatives from the FNLC met with then-Minister of Environment Murray Coell in February to express these concerns. In March 2011, the FNLC prepared a joint letter to the Ministry of Environment specifically stating our disappointment that the WAM process is not incorporating input previously collected from BC First Nations and our concern that the process lacks consultation and accommodation with BC First Nations as is required by law.

Following up on this letter, the FNLC met with the new Minister of Environment, Terry Lake, along with MLA John Slater on April 6, 2011. At this meeting, the FNLC proposed entering a high-level Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry to jointly set priorities and structure the activities moving forward including funding for a First Nations' water forum.

Implementing Aboriginal Fishing Cases: On April 26, 2011, I, along with Grand Chiefs' Ed John and Stewart Phillip, and other First Nations' leaders, attended a meeting with the Heiltsuk Nation at the offices of the Coastal First Nations. This meeting involved a discussion around First Nations' fishing rights cases and developing an action plan to ensure that Canada fulfills its legal obligations as set out by the courts. Development of a proposed "Fisheries Secretariat" is currently in the development stage and we look to continue these important discussions.

Recent First Nations' Court Victories: Since my last Quarterly Report, BC First Nations have achieved some important milestones in the courts. The following are a summary of these court victories:

Ahousaht v. Canada (Attorney General), 2011 BCCA 237: Since June 2003, the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations have challenged the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' (DFO) for not adequately accommodating their right to both catch and sell fish in their territories. On May 18, 2011, the BC Court of Appeal ruled in favor of the Nuu-chah-nulth. The ruling applies to five of the 9 First Nations along the West Coast of Vancouver Island and outlines the right to acquire and sell fish along the shores of their traditional territories extending 9 nautical miles to sea. The court ruled that an Aboriginal right existed to catch and sell fish based on the traditional exercise of this right by the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations, but would not comment on the limits of this right, stating only that the right to sell fish in the commercial marketplace "does not extend to a modern industrial fishery or unrestricted rights of commercial scale" and that these rights may be subject to government infringement or restriction if justified.

Canadian Forest Products Inc. v. Sam, 2011 BCSC 676: In 2009, members of the Wet'suwet'en Nation established a roadblock impeding Canadian Forest Products (Canfor) from logging beetle-killed timber within a culturally sensitive part of their traditional territories (Ilk K'il Bin). The roadblock was near Topley, northwest of Prince George. In response, Canfor applied for an injunction against the Wet'suwet'en to end the roadblock. The Wet'suwet'en responded with a counter injunction against Canfor to halt any industrial development. They argued that Canfor's exploration process would destroy a culturally significant area within their territory. On May 25, 2011, the BC Supreme Court granted an injunction which restrains Canfor from engaging in timber harvesting activities within a culturally vital portion of Ilk K'il Bin Territory known as Redtop. Through Kelah, the Wet'suwet'en Chief responsible for the territory, the Wet'suwet'en have continuously – with considerable struggle and sacrifice – occupied, used and relied on Ilk K'il Bin since well before first European contact to this present day. Justice Dillon found that "the relationship to particular lands... defines the social structure of Wet'suwet'en society, that places the land as the foundation of cultural identity, and that determines the structure of governance."

West Moberly First Nations v. British Columbia (Chief Inspector of Mines), 2011 BCCA 247: In September 2009, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources allocated a permit to First Coal Corporation to begin exploration in the territories of the West Moberly

First Nations. The area in dispute is near a critical winter habitat for endangered Burnt Pine caribou. The West Moberly First Nations filed for a judicial review of BC's decision arguing that it infringed upon their right to hunt as per Treaty No. 8 by threatening an already endangered species. In March 2010, the court ruled in favour of West Moberly First Nations by suspending the licence for 90 days in which time BC was to initiate a reasonable, active plan for the protection of the Burnt Pine caribou with the West Moberly First Nations and therefore work towards proper accommodation and consultation. On April 16, 2011, BC appealed the decision after discussions between the parties failed to reach consensus on the degree of protection required for the caribou. First Coal agreed to create a "mitigation and monitoring plan." On May 25, 2011, the court ruled in favour of West Moberly First Nations by maintaining the original decision and stating that proper accommodation and consultation had still not occurred because First Coal and BC had failed to establish a rehabilitation program that would ensure the hunting rights of West Moberly First Nations.

What this experience reminds us of is that it is no longer possible for major industrial development to occur within our territories without our title and rights, including treaty rights, being respected and accommodated. While this is becoming better understood by both industry and government, each and every one of our Nations needs to be in a position to advance their rights, protect their interests and to take advantage of opportunities when they present themselves. Through the FNLC, we are collectively working to support all our Nations in strengthening their capacity and to empower all our peoples to secure fair access to lands and resources.

Treaty Negotiation: While advancements continue to be made in the courts and in other forums, treaty-making under the BC treaty process continues to stagger. Progress is slow or has stopped at many tables; in many cases having been overtaken by other events or opportunities to resolve title and rights issues between the Crown and our peoples. In April, the **Maa-nulth First Nations** treaty came into effect amid much celebration in their communities. I was pleased to be in attendance to witness. The Maa-nulth treaty is the second modern treaty under the BC treaty-making process and the third modern treaty in BC including Nisga'a. The **Yale First Nation** has ratified their Final Agreement and their treaty is in the process of being ratified by BC and Canada.

With the Yale treaty, as with all the other modern treaty arrangements in BC, there were, and in most cases still are, land disputes between neighbouring Nations. In some cases these have been resolved while in others they have not and remain flash-points for future uncertainty and potential conflict. The experience of Yale and others, highlight the very real need for our Nations to address the serious issue of **shared territory/proper title holder** and the respective governance powers of our Nations within shared territory. The FNLC, on the direction of our Nations, continues to look for ways to resolve disputes regarding territorial boundaries and areas of shared decision-making between and among our Nations, in accordance with our customs and traditions. This is a priority for the BCAFN moving forward.

AFN Chiefs' Committee on Claims (Specific Claims and Additions to Reserves): The Chiefs' Committee on Claims (CCoC) continues to address the following initiatives:

- 1) Discussions with respect to claims processing and funding;
- 2) Discussions about the provision of mediation services;
- 3) Engagement with the Specific Claims Tribunal of Canada;
- 4) Confirming a framework for the 5-year review; and,
- 5) Scoping relating to claims excluded by the monetary cap or other provisions of the legislation.

Specific Claims: On June 1, 2011, the Specific Claims Tribunal began accepting applications for the resolution of specific claims. The Specific Claims Tribunal is a result of the "Justice at Last" specific claims action plan passed in Parliament in June 2008. The Tribunal will serve First Nations by providing a process of claims resolution which seeks to ensure impartiality and fairness. It will have the jurisdiction to make binding decisions on claims that have been rejected by the Government of Canada or where negotiations have failed to achieve settlement.

Specific Claims over \$150M: There is still significant work to be done regarding specific claims over \$150M which the Specific Claims Tribunal does not address. The AFN was invited to appear before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in April for a study on specific claims over \$150M; however, this was cancelled due to the federal election. We expect it to be re-scheduled.

Additions to Reserve (ATR): While discussion continues regarding additions to reserve (ATR) policy reform, a draft consolidated Interim ATR Policy has been developed to accommodate a new fourth category of ATR relating to Tribunal decisions. The National Chief continues to work with the federal Minister of Aboriginal Affairs to complete a joint-work plan that will identify the range of other issues to be considered over the next two years relating to effectively completing ATRs.

The AFN held a series of five regional dialogue sessions between January and March 2011 to seek regional input on problems and solutions relating to the completion of ATRs. These dialogue sessions took place in Winnipeg, Edmonton, Regina, Moncton and Toronto. The AFN hopes to hold a dialogue in BC for the 2011-12 fiscal year as well as a series of joint case studies to ensure that all of the issues and concerns of communities working to complete ATRs are reflected in its work. Future updates will be available at the AFN Annual General Assembly in July pending funding announcements by the new government.

3. Improved Education

Strong & Appropriate
Governance

Fair Lands &
Resources

Improved
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Individual
Health

“To make the most of opportunities resulting from fair land and resource settlements and true self-determination we need well educated and well trained citizens.” Building on OUR Success

National Panel on First Nations K-12 Education (AFN Initiative): The AFN is currently developing resources for a national panel on First Nations K-12 Education which will ensure proper inclusion of regional perspectives and help the panel in creating a non-binding joint report to both First Nations and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. The National Panel is expected to participate in eight regional engagement sessions and one national session. This next step for First Nation Education is a priority for the Chiefs Committee on Education who met with the AFN National Executive on March 31-April 1, 2011 and agreed that the status quo represented by the INAC education reform agenda does not adequately reflect the chiefs’ approved policy framework “First Nations control of First Nations education”. Information on developments and future dates will be posted on the AFN website.

AFN Virtual Summit on Indigenous Institutions of Higher Learning: The AFN held a virtual summit on Indigenous institutions of higher learning on March 10, 2011 at the First Nations University of Canada campus in Regina, Saskatchewan. These institutions provide alternative Indigenous options in post-secondary education for First Nations. The virtual summit offered a forum for discussion about the benefits these institutions and what makes them different from mainstream post-secondary institutions, what First Nations students need to help them succeed in their studies, and what administrators need in order to strengthen their role in the post-secondary education system in Canada.

First Nations Education Steering Committee: First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) continues to advocate for significant issues related to First Nations’ education on behalf of First Nations in British Columbia.

INAC’s Announcement of an additional \$30 million for FN K-12 Education in BC: FNESC continues to oppose Canada’s “new approach to supporting First Nations operated schools in BC” and the proposed options that would see Canada’s policy on Own Source Revenue apply to jurisdiction funding agreements.

INAC’s Newly Announced FN Education Performance Management Strategy (EPMS) and Education Information System (EIS): FNESC continues to inquire about this strategy to assume that privacy and personal information is protected and secure.

Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative: In BC, in addition to developing our own institutions of education, our Nations continue to partner with other organizations to advance our education agenda. One of the most exciting education initiatives in Canada involving our peoples is being led by former Prime Minister Paul Martin (the **Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative**). We were honoured and pleased that Mr. Martin accepted our invitation to attend our BCAFN AGM this year. We hope that there will be an opportunity to work together further.

4. Individual Health

Strong & Appropriate
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Improved
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“In order to take advantage of our very real opportunities arising from the settlement of land claims and self-determination we need strong families and healthy citizens.”

Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey Annual Forum: The BC First Nations Health Council continues to explore opportunities for increased BC First Nation control over the delivery of healthcare to our peoples. On May 24-26, 2011, the First Nations Health Council held their fourth annual *Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey Forum*. This conference was attended by 167 BC First Nations Chiefs and proxies. At this meeting, our Nations endorsed entering into a BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance with the governments of Canada and BC. This agreement looks to BC First Nations having increased administrative control and decision-making authority over health care by taking over health service delivery from the federal government. In addition to the Framework Agreement, a “Consensus Paper” was also adopted by the Chiefs which sets out any new healthcare governance arrangement be community driven and Nation-based. While more control over our own healthcare is the objective, caution must always be exercised in moving forward to ensure that the most appropriate administrative structures are established to deliver the highest and best quality of programs and services to our peoples. Health care is complex and the costs are significant. Our Nations recognize this fact and in our negotiations it is always made clear that Canada and BC have primary responsibility for healthcare and to pay for it.

Murdered and Missing Women: Pre-hearings for the Missing Women’s Inquiry concluded last January in Prince George and Vancouver and the evidentiary hearings are scheduled to take place this fall. The Native Women’s Association of Canada was one of ten parties accepted for standing as a full participant. The AFN application for standing was accepted on a limited participant basis alongside the First Nations Summit, the Carrier-Sakani Tribal Council/ Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and Native Courtworkers and Counselling Association of BC. Limited participants will not have an automatic right to cross-examine witnesses but may apply to do so, on an individual basis. Limited participants may also complete final submissions at the conclusion of evidentiary hearings to offer our unique policy advice to advocate for stronger protection of First Nations women.

The Missing Women's Inquiry process must be inclusive and respectful of First Nations' voices and lead to recommendations that will ensure the safety of First Nations' women. The AFN is concerned by the provincial decision to deny funding for victims' families and for social justice and non-profit organizations involved in the hearings. In order for this to be an equitable and respectful process, resources need to be distributed equally between all participants, both government and non-government organizations, to cover legal costs; at present this is not the case. I will continue to advocate for a fair process and for funding for victims' families and not-for-profit organizations. Challenges aside, this **Inquiry** is an opportunity if respectfully conducted to not only increase public awareness of this serious issue but to identify solutions.

National Aboriginal Women's Forum: On June 15-17, 2011, the "Collaboration to End Violence: National Aboriginal Women's Forum" will be held at the Sheraton Wall Centre in Vancouver. The forum is jointly coordinated by the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and the Native Women's Association of Canada. The forum will explore ways to work together to end violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

IndigenACTION: The BCAFN strongly supports the work of IndigenACTION and the overall goal of promoting awareness and creating resources for individual health in our Nations. IndigenACTION was launched at the AFN Annual General Assembly in Winnipeg, July 2010, by National Chief Atleo and AFN Youth Council Co-Chairs Ashley Julian and Joshua Gottfreidson. This initiative seeks to support and promote partnership with existing initiatives and organizations supporting young indigenous athletes through a national strategy to improve the quality of life for indigenous peoples by promoting healthy lifestyles, community togetherness.

Phase one of IndigenACTION includes regional roundtables to begin the dialogue. On April 15, 2011, the BCAFN hosted a province-wide roundtable on healthy living and participation in sports was held in BC. Many of our health and recreation leaders from our communities were in attendance and strategies were developed to promote the objectives of the initiative. I look forward to continuing to work on this positive and dynamic initiative.

On July 10, 2011, in Moncton, IndigenACTION will be hosting a Half-Marathon/ 5km Friendship Walk/Run in support of IndigenACTION. To register go to www.runningroom.com or to go to www.afn.ca to find more information.

PART TWO: OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES

Quality of Life Table: The Quality of Life Table has not met since December, 2010. The next Quality of Life Table meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2011 and at this meeting a draft Terms of Reference for the table will be presented and discussed.

First Nations Youth Council of BC: The First Nations Youth Council of BC has been very busy building their capacity to represent the voice of BC youth through building partnerships and

support networks across the Province. Since the last Quarterly Report, the Youth Council has been granted society status and has established a board of directors that seeks to represent regional and diverse perspectives of the youth.

Gathering Our Voice: On March 21, 2011, I was able to attend the 9th Annual Aboriginal Youth Conference—*Gathering Our Voice* in Prince Rupert which was hosted by the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. I was inspired to hear from youth throughout the Province on their concerns and about the amazing work that they are doing to build a better future for their generation and those to come. Not only are these youth our future leaders, but they are also the leaders of today.

PART THREE: BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS OPERATIONS

Information Sharing / Webpage: The BCAFN webpage is an active source of updated information. We encourage you to view our “Daily News” and “Events Calendar”. The BCAFN site will host of our Governance Toolkit following its launch at the *Building on OUR Success* Special Chiefs’ Assembly – *Strong and Appropriate Governance* and 8th Annual General Meeting, June 22-24, 2011. The Governance Report along with documents referred to in the Report and other resources will be accessible on our site (www.bcafn.ca).

Information will be continuously updated so please visit often. Also our site hosts an individual page for each of our Nations to share information and highlight their successes with others. If you would like to provide any feedback, contribute to the site, or updates to your First Nations profile, please contact angie.derrickson@bcafn.ca with your details.

BCAFN Board of Directors: We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Tony Morgan and Chief Marjorie McRae who will be stepping down from our Board this month. Thank you both for all of the work that you have done for the BCAFN and, in turn, for our Nations. We will miss having you both on the Board of Directors and we thank you for your commitment and leadership.

BCAFN Staff: We would like to welcome Whitney Morrison to the BCAFN staff as our Summer Intern, part of the Aboriginal Youth Internship Program. Whitney will be taking the lead on our citizenship exploratory process and be available to assist the policy staff and the Regional Chief until the end of August. I imagine that we will all be very busy in the next couple of months so it is great to have such an intelligent and capable young woman join our small but amazing team.

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NOTICES

Notice #1:

BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

Special Chiefs' Assembly

Building on OUR Success – Strong and Appropriate Governance

June 22-23, 2011

Westin Wall Centre, Richmond BC

The purpose of this Special Chiefs' Assembly is to officially launch the BCAFN Governance Toolkit: A Guide to Nation Building and to provide a forum for our leadership to discuss its various Parts as well as continue discussions around community engagement. The three Parts of the Toolkit are:

1. The Governance Report (including sections on the history of First Nations' Governance within Canada, options for governance reform, the powers (jurisdictions) of the First Nation and financing First Nations' governance);
2. The Governance Self-Assessment; and
3. A Guide to Community Engagement.

~Reasonable expenses will be paid for BC Chiefs (or Chief's Proxy) to attend~
Details are available on our website www.bcafn.ca

Notice #2:

BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

8th Annual General Meeting (AGM)

June 24, 2011

Westin Wall Centre, Richmond BC

Keynote Speaker: The Right Honourable Paul Martin

Elections will be taking place during the Annual General Meeting for the following positions:

1. Youth Representative (Female), and
2. Women's Council Representative.

Notices of elections and nomination packages are available on our website at www.bcafn.ca

Notice #3:

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

International Indigenous Summit on Energy and Mining
Niagara Falls, Ontario
June 27-29

Notice #4:

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

32nd Annual General Assembly (AGA)

Moncton, New Brunswick

July 12-14, 2011

Hosted by the NB/PEI Region

For more information see www.bcafn.ca or www.afn.ca.

Up to date information can be accessed on our website: www.bcafn.ca.