



# NEW RELATIONSHIPS WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

ANNUAL REPORT ON PROGRESS 2009 - 2010



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

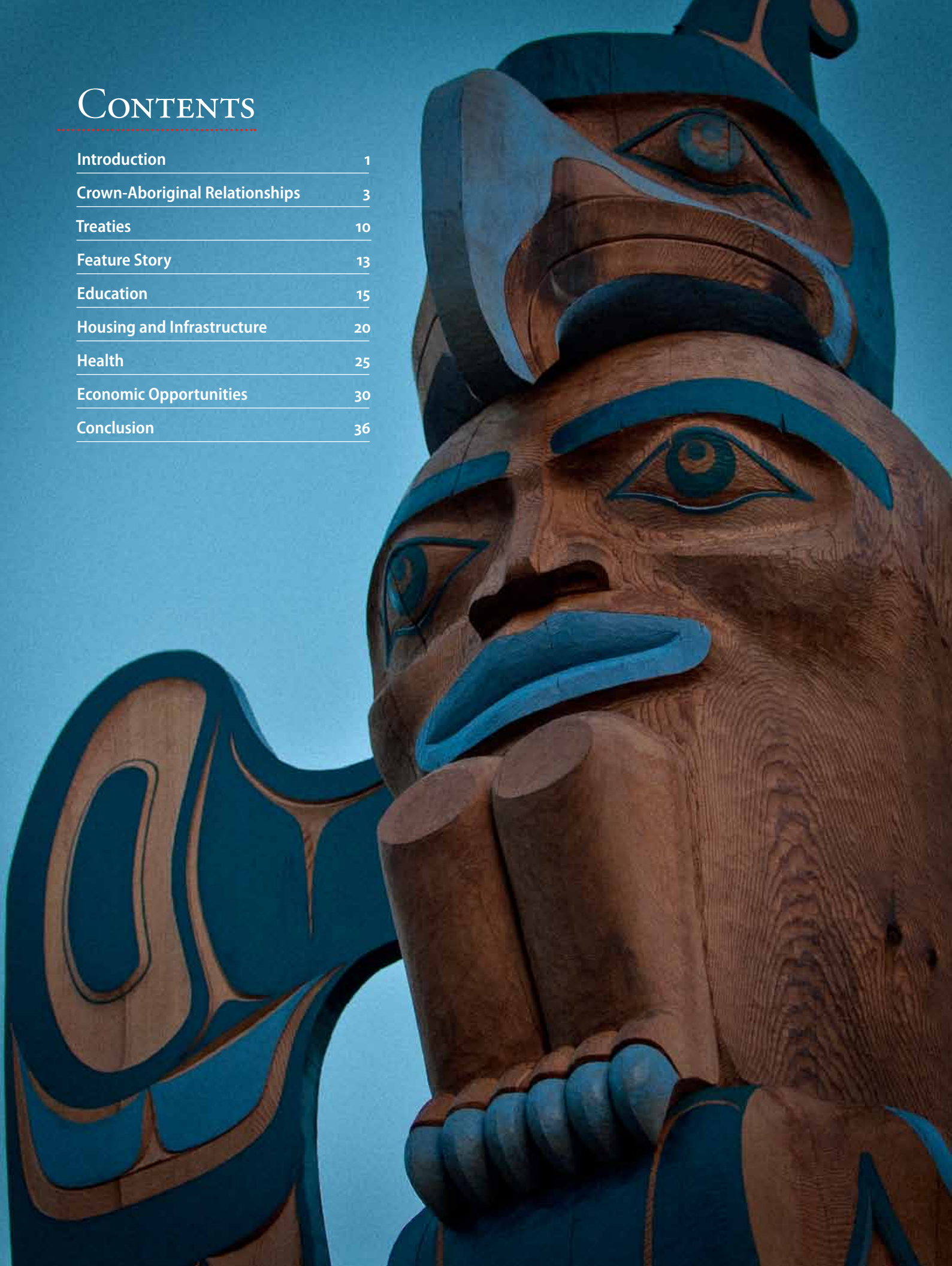
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# INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation is pleased to present the third annual report: *New Relationships with Aboriginal People and Communities in British Columbia*.

This report provides a snapshot of progress made during the 2009/10 fiscal year, from April 2009 to March 2010, including highlights, foundational achievements, strategies for the future, and measures.

Highlights from 2009/10 include the signing of historic Reconciliation Protocols with the Haida Nation and with the Coastal First Nations of the Turning Point Initiative, the signing of the first Strategic Engagement Agreement with Nanwakolas First Nations, the initialling of the Yale First Nation Final Agreement, the Province fulfilling its commitment to restore Salish Sea as an umbrella-name for the waters encompassing Puget Sound, Desolation Sound and Juan de Fuca Strait, the opening of Chief David Spintlum Lodge assisted living complex and St. Bartholomew's Health Centre in Lytton, and the signing of the 49<sup>th</sup> Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

And of course, 2010 will always be remembered as the year in which the Four Host First Nations—Lil'wat, Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh—made history as the first indigenous people ever to be recognized by the International Olympic Committee as official hosts of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games.

It is through such accomplishments that the Province, working in partnership with Aboriginal organizations, leaders and communities, helps to create positive relationships and a strong, sustainable future for all British Columbians. The *New Relationship* vision, the *Transformative Change Accord* and the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord* demonstrate the significant resolve to close the socio-economic gap between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians.

The *New Relationship* is a vision for improved government-to-government relations founded on respect, reconciliation and recognition of First Nations rights and title as cornerstones to strong, forward-looking relationships between the Province and First Nations.

In November 2005, the Province, the federal government, the *BC Assembly of First Nations*, *First Nations Summit*, and *Union of BC Indian Chiefs*, signed the *Transformative Change Accord*. The purpose of the Accord is to close the social and economic gaps between First Nations and other British Columbians, reconcile Aboriginal rights and title with those of the Crown, and establish a new relationship based upon mutual respect and reconciliation. A set of mutually held principles outlined in the *Transformative Change Accord* guides a broad range of actions being undertaken to improve relationships and close the gaps.

In May 2006, the Province and the Métis Nation British Columbia signed the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*. A formalization of the relationship between the Province and the Métis people of British Columbia, the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord* identifies mutual goals, including collaborative efforts, to close the gap in quality of life between Métis people and other British Columbians.

Government maintains a commitment to measure and report progress to ensure we continue to move forward together. *Measuring Outcomes* is the companion report to this document and provides quantitative measures of progress on closing the socio-economic gaps in Crown – Aboriginal relationships, education, housing and infrastructure, health, and economic opportunities.

While challenges exist and much remains to be achieved, it is important to recognize and celebrate the range and sheer number of activities underway. These activities are examples of the tangible commitment to improve outcomes across the province through partnerships between the Province, First Nations, Métis, and other Aboriginal people and organizations.



# CROWN-ABORIGINAL RELATIONSHIPS



Based on the *New Relationship* and the *Transformative Change Accord*, the Province and First Nations are developing government-to-government relationships to make British Columbia a place where everyone can fully participate in a prosperous economy. A place where communities can enjoy the quality of life to which they aspire. Additionally, the Province and Métis Nation B.C., through the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*, are working together on actions to improve the quality of life for Métis people.

The Province, working with individual First Nations and the federal government, is focused on building opportunities that will provide a better future for all British Columbians. Treaties play a critical role by helping First Nations achieve independence, stable governance structures with self-government powers, and economic self-reliance. Economic, cultural, environmental, and social benefits for First Nation communities and people are strengthened by recognition of Aboriginal rights through negotiating and implementing final agreements, framework agreements, protocols, and related agreements and reconciliation efforts.

Significant and meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organizations support achieving positive outcomes. For example, increased levels of self-governance support meaningful involvement in the development and delivery of policies, programs, services and various initiatives that affect the lives of all Aboriginal people, First Nations (status and non-status), Métis and those who live in urban settings.

## 2009/10 Highlights

- The treaty process gained momentum with:
  - \* Implementation of the **Tsawwassen treaty**, British Columbia's first urban treaty, on April 3, 2009. It is the first modern treaty negotiated under the British Columbia Treaty Commission process.
  - \* Ratification of the *Maa-nulth Final Agreement*. When implemented, it will create social and economic opportunities for the *Huu-ay-aht First Nations*, *Uchucklesaht Tribe*, *Yuu-tluth-aht First Nation*, *Ka:'yu:k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations*, and the *Toquaht Nation*, as well as build certainty and encourage investment for British Columbia.
  - \* *Initialling of the Yale Final Agreement*, marking a significant step forward in bringing certainty and economic prosperity to the region.

- The desire for comprehensive and lasting reconciliation was demonstrated by:
  - \* *Signing of the Coastal Reconciliation Protocol with Coastal First Nations of the Turning Point Initiative. This community-based agreement between the Province and Gitga'at First Nation, Heiltsuk Nation, Kitsoo Indian Band, Metlakatla First Nation and Wuikinuxw Nation will increase economic and legal certainty for resource and land use, establish a process for shared decision making and create opportunities for participation in the green economy.*
  - \* *Kunst'aa guu – Kunst'aayah, (which means "the beginning" in Haida), a Reconciliation Protocol signed with the Haida Nation. This unique protocol will create greater certainty in land use decisions through shared decision making, and increased prosperity through responsible economic development on the land base. The Province also committed to restoring the name Haida Gwaii to the Queen Charlotte Islands in recognition of the long history and habitation of the Islands by the Haida Nation.*
  - \* *A final agreement between the Province and BC Hydro and the Tsay Keh Dene First Nation in northern British Columbia over the development of the Williston Reservoir and W.A.C. Bennett Dam. The agreement resolves the longstanding grievances resulting from the creation and operation of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and Williston Reservoir in the Peace River Valley region.*
- Four Host First Nations forged enduring partnerships between Aboriginal people and governments, industry, and all Canadians as hosts of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.
- The Province, McLeod Lake Indian Band, and the Oil and Gas Commission signed a Consultation Amending Agreement, allowing the parties to fully implement their oil and gas Consultation Agreement. The Province provided matching funds to the Northeast Coal Consortium to assist three First Nations (West Moberly First Nations, Saulneau First Nation and McLeod Lake Indian Band) to create coal coordinator positions. The positions are intended to facilitate First Nations engagement, capacity building and timely response to coal referrals in these areas.
- In the February 2010 throne speech, the government of B.C. committed to adopt the name **Salish Sea** as an act of reconciliation honouring the Coast Salish Nations. The Salish Sea encompasses inland waterways stretching from the south end of Puget Sound in Washington State to Desolation Sound at the northern end of the Strait of Georgia in B.C., including the Juan de Fuca Strait.
- The First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC), a Crown corporation with a mandate to revitalize and protect First Nations heritage, language, culture and arts, made progress by:
  - \* *Successfully completing the third year of a three-year pilot of the Language and Culture Immersion Program;*
  - \* *Launching the **First Peoples' Language Map of British Columbia**, an online map of First Nations language regions in B.C.;*
  - \* *Publicly unveiling **original art pieces from four First Nations artists** that were commissioned by the FPHLCC in 2008; and*
  - \* *Developing the **First Nations Language Tutor** which allows communities to build online language lessons, and was a finalist in the 2010 Viatic Awards for "Product of the Year".*
- A thousand young Aboriginal people from across the province witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Province and the Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective that promotes the expression of Aboriginal youth perspectives into government policy and program development on issues important to Aboriginal youth and communities.
- The BC Arts Council Special Project/Unique Opportunities grants and the Arts Partners in Creative Development (APCD) grant program supported Aboriginal arts organizations with extraordinary production costs incurred for 2010 Cultural Olympiad presentations.

- The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts invested \$169,000 in 2010 Cultural Olympiad presentations through the Arts Partners in Creative Development grant program. In 2009-10 recipients of the APCD program included *The Edward Curtis Project*, a theatrical performance written by Métis playwright Marie Clements.
- BC Arts Council, whose Board is 20 per cent Aboriginal artists, continued its partnership with First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council by allocating \$450,000 for delivery of the 2009-10 Aboriginal Arts Development Awards arms-length grants program on behalf of BC Arts Council.
- Ahp-cii-uk, a multi-sectoral partnership of the Province, three First Nations, the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, the federal government, Simon Fraser University, philanthropies, businesses and corporations, is demonstrating promise as a best practice in using the principles of community development to support First Nations on their path toward self-sufficiency.

## Cornerstones to Progress – Accomplishments Since 2005

- 2008: Cowichan Tribes, with the support of other Central Vancouver Island First Nations and the non-Aboriginal community, hosted the North American Indigenous Games in the Cowichan Valley. The Games drew over 15,000 participants and spectators, and included 14 sporting events and the largest ever Tribal Journeys Canoe Regatta. The Cowichan 2008 Spirit Pole tour arrived at the Games for the opening ceremonies after touring the province and remains in the community as a permanent legacy of the Games.
- 2006: Signed the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*, agreeing to work with Métis Nation BC (MNBC) on closing the socio-economic gaps experienced by Métis people. Provided annual operational funding to MNBC for government-to-government dialogue, which is matched by the federal government.
- 2006: *New Relationship Trust Act*. Established the *New Relationship Trust* as a not-for-profit corporation to provide money to assist First Nations to develop their own capacity to participate in the processes and activities envisioned by, and that evolve out of, the New Relationship. The *New Relationship Trust* received \$100 million from the Province for First Nations capacity-building.
- 2006: *Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective* was established with government support to unify the diverse groups of Aboriginal youth in British Columbia to address issues of common concern.
- 2005: The Province provided significant financial resources to support the Four Host First Nations (FHFN) Society to implement their *Protocol with VANOC*, the federal government and other partners, to achieve “unprecedented Aboriginal participation” by ensuring that opportunities to participate in the 2010 Winter Games were extended beyond the FHFN to other First Nations, Inuit and Métis people across Canada. The Protocol marked the first time that indigenous peoples have been recognized as full partners in an Olympic and Paralympic Games by the International Olympic Committee.
- 2005: Signed the *Transformative Change Accord*, committing to work together to close the social and economic gaps between First Nations and other British Columbians.
- 2005: the New Relationship vision statement was created that proposed new processes and structures for the Province and First Nations to work together on decisions regarding the use of land and resources. The vision statement also set out intentions to explore opportunities for revenue-sharing reflecting Aboriginal rights and title interests and assisting First Nations with economic development.

## The Strategy for the Future

The Province will continue working with First Nations to foster the fundamentals of the New Relationship and realize this vision for the future.

Work will continue to advance treaties and create opportunities for First Nations to build social and economic opportunities during negotiations.

The Province will continue to explore opportunities for Reconciliation Agreements with First Nations to foster increased community and economic development and engagement in decision-making. The Integrated Land Management Bureau will focus on the delivery of coordinated consultation on multi-permit projects and strategic negotiations.

Working with First Nations and other partners, the Province will continue to address community priorities and build capacity through individual projects, using an assets-based community development approach. This approach is typically holistic and multi-sectoral and builds a trust relationship among partners. Although relationships take time to build, once established they facilitate business progress and support long lasting benefits.

In 2010, MNBC will be marking the 125th anniversary of the Métis Nation in Canada. Celebrations of Métis culture and heritage are anticipated to take place across the province, all of which will help raise awareness of the Métis in British Columbia. This will be a significant event as Métis make up 30 per cent of British Columbia's Aboriginal population. The ministry will continue to work in partnership with MNBC to achieve the goals of the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*.

The Province will work together with justice partners, Aboriginal communities and other stakeholders to make progress toward goals of improving relationships and understanding, enhancing the effectiveness of the management of Aboriginal offenders by the Corrections Branch, and being responsive to the justice needs identified by Aboriginal communities.

With federal and community partners, the Province will continue to work to improve the quality of life for urban Aboriginal people through alignment with the Prince George and Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Strategies.

## Measuring Success

Measuring and tracking a relationship presents challenges. Success can be measured as more treaties and lasting agreements with First Nations are achieved, and as appreciation, recognition, and respect for Aboriginal cultures grow among all British Columbians. The following methods and indicators are used by the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation to track change over time:

- The number of treaties and agreements that build incremental progress towards reconciliation;
- New provincial policies and initiatives that have been developed collaboratively with First Nations, Métis and Aboriginal organizations;
- Initiatives that develop capacity and governance capabilities for First Nation governments and Aboriginal organizations; and
- An annual survey of British Columbia residents is conducted to assess public awareness of the diversity of First Nations cultures, as well as awareness of Métis as a distinct Aboriginal population in the province. The survey also monitors public perception of contributions First Nations and Métis peoples have made to British Columbia.

**More detailed measures can be found in *specific ministry plans and reports*.**



## FOUR HOST FIRST NATIONS WELCOME THE WORLD



As the first Indigenous hosts of an Olympic Games, the Four Host First Nations – Lil'wat, Musqueam, Squamish and Tseil-Waututh – achieved something historic, unprecedented and amazingly successful.

"This has been an overwhelming experience. A success beyond my wildest dreams," rejoiced Four Host First Nations CEO Tewanee Joseph.

The Four Host First Nations, on whose traditional and shared traditional territories the Games were held, played a key role in bringing the 2010 Winter Games to Vancouver. From winning the bid in Prague, to the torch relay, to Aboriginal content and performances in the opening and closing ceremonies, to the 2010 Aboriginal Pavilion, the Four Host First Nations were integral to the success of the Games.

The 2010 Aboriginal Pavilion showcased Aboriginal art, business, food and music to the world, revealing why Aboriginal culture—First Nations, Inuit, and Métis—is an important part of B.C.'s past, present and future. More than 242-thousand people visited the 2010 Aboriginal Pavilion – up to 22,000 each day – and an estimated 610 Aboriginal performers from across Canada celebrated through dancing, drumming, storytelling and music.

First Nations also benefited economically, with more than 100 Aboriginal-owned companies delivering Olympic contracts worth more than fifty million dollars.

"These results have exceeded all our expectations. Events and activities at the Pavilion have galvanized and captivated the attention of so many people we now consider our friends," said Joseph. "We couldn't have done this without the support of partners such as senior governments and VANOC."



## PROVINCE AND UNIFIED ABORIGINAL YOUTH COLLECTIVE SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

A unique Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that reinforces the importance of Aboriginal youth input into provincial policy and program development on issues that matter to Aboriginal youth and communities has been signed between the Province and the Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective (UAYC). UAYC signatories include the B.C. Assembly of First Nations, the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres-Provincial Aboriginal Youth Council, the Métis Youth of British Columbia-Métis Nation British Columbia, and the Knowledgeable Aboriginal Youth Association.



Stephanie Albiston, Minister of Youth, Métis Nation BC believes that “by working together as an inclusive Aboriginal collective, we have achieved something very special. With this agreement we are promoting and demonstrating a true Aboriginal youth voice while building a positive relationship with the Province based on respect; an agreement and a collective that I believe is the first of its kind.”

Aboriginal youth are recognized as essential participants in the growing partnerships between the Province and Aboriginal people and they have spoken publicly about the value of this new relationship. Ken Watts, youth representative of the BC Assembly of First Nations says “this MOU would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many people. Past Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective youth leaders have laid the foundation for where we are today. The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, Aboriginal organizations, community leaders and Aboriginal youth from across the province have supported us from day one.”

Aboriginal youth, through their representative UAYC organizations, now have a greater ability to provide input on issues that matter to Aboriginal youth and their communities. “Signing this MOU is a critical step to unify, formalize and move forward British Columbia’s commitment, starting at the highest level, to build stronger relationships based on recognition of past injustice and respect for the diversity of our nations,” says Jerilynn Webster, Executive Director, Knowledgeable Aboriginal Youth Association.

The UAYC demonstrates youth leadership in action and works with the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation to facilitate the voice of Aboriginal youth in areas that affect them to create a brighter future for youth from all communities.

## AGREEMENT MEANS FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TSAY KEH DENE FIRST NATION

Members of the Tsay Keh Dene First Nation can look forward to a brighter future thanks to a final settlement agreement signed with the Province and BC Hydro on January 30, 2010. This agreement addresses a difficult period in the province's history where, beginning in the late 1960s, the W.A.C. Bennett Dam and Williston Reservoir project flooded habitation areas, travel routes, hunting and trapping grounds, gathering sites, burial grounds, and other traditional areas.



The final agreement is designed to benefit all members of Tsay Keh Dene – on and off reserve – as most of the funds will be used for member programs and services. With improved economic and social development opportunities, the Tsay Keh Dene First Nation is closer to building a better future for the next generations of its citizens. The Final Agreement includes a one-time payment of \$20.9 million with approximately \$2 million in annual payments for as long as power is produced at the facilities. In addition, the Final Agreement includes a number of sub-agreements and programs to build community capacity, support economic development activities, and secure a stable supply of electricity to the community of Tsay Keh.

According to Dennis Izony, Chief of the Tsay Keh Dene First Nation: "This agreement is the product of many years of hard work and an unwavering commitment by our respective leaders to resolve outstanding matters, especially by our former Chiefs Johnny Pierre and Ella Pierre. We are grateful for what they have accomplished. It is our hope that this Settlement Agreement will lay the groundwork for Tsay Keh and BC Hydro to work toward a meaningful, productive relationship, with a view to the shared use and development of the resources of our territory to our mutual benefit."

# TREATIES

Treaties are formal expressions of reconciliation and positive tools for building capacity and stimulating community economies.

Over the past year there has been growing momentum within the provincial treaty process—Tsawwassen Treaty reached the effective date, Maa-nulth Final Agreement was ratified, and Yale First Nation initialled a Final Agreement.

The negotiation of incremental treaty agreements continued as the Province and First Nations works toward negotiating agreements at the treaty table and creating opportunities for First Nations to build social and economic opportunities.

## **Tsawwassen First Nation Final Agreement Implementation:**

- Signed on April 3, 2009.
- Provides Tsawwassen First Nation (Lower Mainland) with a capital transfer of \$14.8 million over 10 years and approximately 724 hectares of treaty settlement land (290 hectares of former reserve land and 372 hectares of former provincial Crown land).
- Provides responsibilities and rights to Tsawwassen including self-governance over their land, members and resources.
- Defines a range of powers and responsibilities in areas including taxation, land management, and fishing rights that will enable Tsawwassen First Nation to build a self-reliant future.
- First urban treaty in the history of British Columbia and the first modern treaty negotiated under the *BC Treaty Commission process*.

## **Maa-nulth First Nations Final Agreement:**

- Signed by the Province in 2008 and by Canada in 2009.
- The Maa-nulth First Nations are made up of Huu-ay-aht, Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, Yuu-tluth-aht and Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations on the west coast of Vancouver Island.
- Includes a 24,550-hectare land package and a \$73.1 million capital transfer over ten years distributed among the five Maa-nulth First Nations (Vancouver Island).
- Creates opportunities in fishing and forestry that will support economic development.
- Sets out terms of governance, with each of the Maa-nulth First Nations having a constitution providing for a government that is democratically elected by and financially accountable to the Maa-nulth communities.
- Provides for the early release of parcels of treaty land to the Maa-nulth First Nations before treaty implementation.
- Treaty is scheduled to be brought into effect in 2011.

## Yale First Nation Final Agreement – Final Agreement Initialled

- Initialled by the Chief Negotiators of Yale First Nation, British Columbia and Canada on February 5, 2010.
- Provides a capital transfer of \$10.7 million and economic development funding of \$2.2 million.
- Provides approximately 1,966 hectares of provincial Crown land and former Indian Reserve lands to be owned in fee simple. This includes ownership of sub-surface resources on or under Yale First Nation land.
- Provides ownership of all forest resources on Yale First Nation land. As a treaty First Nation, the Yale government may make laws respecting forest resources and practices on their land.
- The parties are working together to ratify the treaty in early 2011.

## The Strategy for the Future

The Province will continue to build on the momentum of recent successes in the treaty process. In concert with First Nations, the Province will continue to use innovative tools, such as incremental treaty agreements, to negotiate agreements that benefit all British Columbians.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation is working toward finalizing other treaties; with In-SHUCK-ch Nation, Sliammon First Nation (Tla'amin) and Yekooche First Nation on track to complete final agreements.

## Measuring Success

Treaties and other agreements help First Nations to become self-determining by providing tools to assist in social and economic development.

While final treaty agreements are the preferred means of reconciling Aboriginal rights and title with the sovereignty of the Crown, other types of agreements can also contribute to reconciliation. For example, **Incremental Treaty Agreements** provide benefits in the short term and serve as building blocks for final treaties.

The Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation monitors the number of treaties and agreements that build incremental progress towards reconciliation as a performance measure to track progress and to set goals for treaty and non-treaty process agreements.

### YALE INITIALS FINAL AGREEMENT

When Chief Negotiators of the Yale First Nation initialled the Yale Final Agreement they took a significant step forward in bringing certainty and economic prosperity to their community.

“The Yale people have been in the Fraser Canyon for more than 9,000 years leading up to this moment,” said Yale First Nation Chief Robert Hope. “This agreement gives us our life, our freedom and confirms our land.”



This agreement is the latest in a series of significant agreements negotiated with First Nations in B.C. It is a celebration of the spirit of the New Relationship and will give Yale First Nation the tools and authority to take control of its future and build a healthy, prosperous and strong community.

The Final Agreement, which contains provisions for self-government, financial and land transfers, will be the foundation upon which Yale members can realize self-government and economic certainty.

“The certainty this agreement brings provides a solid economic foundation upon which to build for future generations of Yale members,” said Yale First Nation Chief Robert Hope.

In addition, this treaty will help close the social and economic gaps between Yale and their non-Aboriginal neighbours.

## TSAWWASSEN TREATY



“Our future is inextricably linked to our past. My name ties me to these lands for thousands of years. It also ties me to many other Coast Salish families through complex interconnections. Today – we are once again self-governing.” –Chief Kim Baird, Tsawwassen First Nation, on April 3, 2009 when the Tsawwassen treaty came into effect.

Since signing the treaty on December 6, 2007, the Tsawwassen First Nation government has made great strides in encouraging economic opportunities, developing social programs and creating legislative frameworks upon which to build its future.

In the fall of 2009, Tsawwassen voters – about 60 per cent of whom are under 25 years of age – cast their ballots to elect their first self-governing Legislative Assembly.

To encourage international investment, the Tsawwassen First Nation recently welcomed a trade mission from China for a tour of the community slated for development. They also signed an MOU with a marine terminals operator, supporting their long-term goal of developing a “sustainable, vibrant community based on an integrated economy, sustainable development practices, and cultural growth”.

Tsawwassen First Nation has also partnered with the provincial and federal governments to access \$9 million through Canada’s Economic Action Plan. This money will be used to launch a major industrial development that will create jobs and provide economic and environmental benefits to the area.

Under the outstanding leadership and vision of Chief Kim Baird, her Council, and community elders, Tsawwassen First Nation is demonstrating to British Columbians and all Canadians how treaties can stimulate investment, create jobs and expand economies to provide a better quality of life for Aboriginal people.

# FEATURE STORY

## HISTORIC RECONCILIATION PROTOCOLS SIGNED WITH COASTAL FIRST NATIONS AND HAIDA NATION



History has been made with the signing of two Reconciliation Protocols—one with Coastal First Nations and the other with Haida Nation.

These Reconciliation Protocols build on the momentum of the New Relationship, creating certainty over the land base and generating economic opportunities for First Nations. As part of the protocol, the Province and the First Nations are breaking new ground with a commitment to develop and share carbon offsets generated within their respective territories.

### **Coastal First Nations Reconciliation Protocol**

The Reconciliation Protocol signed with Coastal First Nations of the Turning Point Initiative—the Gitga’at First Nation, Heiltsuk Nation, Kitasoo Indian Band, Metlakatla First Nation and Wuikinuxv Nation—provides the opportunity for lasting and comprehensive reconciliation between the Coastal First Nations and British Columbia.

Art Sterritt, executive director of the Coastal First Nations, says that the Coastal First Nations “look forward to working with the Province to ensure a true and lasting reconciliation where life’s opportunities for all children in British Columbia are equal. This Reconciliation Protocol provides our communities with the means to build a sustainable economy – one that respects our Aboriginal rights and title, our culture and the environment.”

This agreement means increased economic and legal certainty for resource and land use, shared-decision making and opportunities for Coastal First Nations to participate in the green economy. As well, funding will be provided for construction of a new, larger ferry terminal at Klemtu, worth \$25 million and creating an estimated 150 jobs.

“A new ferry terminal offers multiple benefits to Klemtu. It provides for a more consistent means of transportation service for our community members. Equally as important, it will also open the door for increased and economically-efficient development opportunities,” explains Kitasoo-Xaixais Chief Percy Starr.

## Haida Reconciliation Protocol



The Haida Reconciliation Protocol, *Kunst'aa Guu – Kunst'aayah*, which means the 'Beginning' in Haida, supports ongoing efforts to balance social, cultural, economic activities, sustainable growth with the natural limitations of the land.

The Haida Protocol is unique and is unlike any other agreement negotiated in this province. At the heart of this agreement is shared decision making where powers are provided to a joint management council, bringing Haida Nation and British Columbia together, though each under their own authorities.

Out of respect for the long history and presence of the Haida Nation, the government has also committed to restoring the name "Haida Gwaii" to replace the name "Queen Charlotte Islands".

In the words of Guujaaw, President of the Haida Nation, "Conflict is borne out of difference; getting along might be even more complicated, but we can make this work".

The Coastal First Nations and Haida Nation have demonstrated leadership and vision in working with government toward these historic agreements.

Reconciliation Protocols are an example of the innovative ways the Province and First Nations are working together to pursue recognition and reconciliation based on the needs, circumstances and desires of individual First Nations.



# EDUCATION



Access to quality education and skills training remains one of the key pillars to progress at each stage of a person's development from childhood to adulthood. However, Aboriginal children and youth often face challenges accessing positive learning environments which impact their ability to realise their ambitions as adults. A stimulating, safe and culturally relevant education helps Aboriginal students to thrive.

The Province is working with school districts and Aboriginal communities across B.C. on Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements. Agreements have been signed in more than 75 per cent of all British Columbia school districts as part of efforts to improve Aboriginal achievement levels. These agreements ensure that Aboriginal culture is integrated in public schools, and Aboriginal communities are involved in the design of programs, services, and curriculum delivery for Aboriginal students.

There is also a strong commitment to close the higher learning education gap so that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can participate equally in the social and economic fabric of the province. Working with the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners, strategies are being developed to increase participation rates and improve learning outcomes for Aboriginal learners. Public post-secondary institutions, in collaboration with their communities, are leading the process of putting the Province's Aboriginal post-secondary education strategy actions into practice to help Aboriginal students start, stay and succeed in post-secondary education and training.

## 2009/10 Highlights

- Supported school districts and Aboriginal communities as they created, signed and implemented additional **Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements** around the province, for a total of 49 out of 60 school districts. Three school districts have, or are about to, renew their agreements for the third time.
- As part of government's goal to increase literacy rates and to increase the focus on reading in communities, the Province is partnering with the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the Métis Nation of British Columbia, Invest in Kids, and the Dollywood Foundation of Canada, to expand the home libraries of pre-school Aboriginal children. Approximately 400 First Nations children in 22 communities and 100 Métis children participated in the program.
- Ensured that Aboriginal content, perspectives and pedagogy were appropriately and significantly infused into ministry documents including curriculum, assessment and teacher support/learning resources, e.g., Full Day Kindergarten Program Guide, Literacy Foundations Curriculum document.

- The first tuition payments were made to cover K-12 students living off-reserve enrolled in a band-operated school, and to cover students enrolled in independent certified on-reserve schools. The Province negotiated the terms for reciprocal tuition payments to cover K-12 students living off-reserve enrolled in band-operated schools with the First Nations Education Steering Committee.
- Métis Nation British Columbia implemented the Grade 4 Métis Cross-Curricular Unit in elementary schools in British Columbia. The Unit will reinforce and regenerate Métis identity through the classroom delivery of B.C. curriculum, reflecting authentic Métis culture and history in the contemporary community.
- Ninety-four Aboriginal students received \$256,000 through scholarships and other financial awards. An additional \$500,000 was provided to the Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society endowment for disbursements over the 2009-10 and 2010-11 academic years.
- Aboriginal Service Plans at post-secondary institutions have increased student support services, which are having a positive influence on recruiting, retaining and credentialing Aboriginal students.
- Working with Aboriginal communities across the province, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology is leading the development of an **Aboriginal literacy framework** including a literature review and website on Aboriginal adult, workplace and family literacy, practitioner training tools, adult basic education curriculum modules, and an elders mapping project.
- In December 2009, the Industry Training Authority Aboriginal Advisory Council released an **Aboriginal Trades and Apprenticeship Business Plan**. The Plan, to be implemented over three years, will develop and implement supports that foster success in trades training, and build the capacity of Aboriginal communities and agencies to support Aboriginal apprentices and trades people. The Industry Training Authority also launched an **Aboriginal Initiatives web page**, an on-line resource for current and future apprentices, service agencies and training providers.
- An investment of \$1.6 million in Labour Market Agreement funding will increase trades training opportunities for Aboriginal people. In 2009/10, more than 180 Aboriginal people received training through these projects.
- The unemployed workers from Blue Collar Silviculture received \$300,000 to deliver a seven-week program providing silviculture and life skills for 30 First Nations youth resulting in an 87 per cent graduation rate.
- Through support from the Aboriginal Training for Employment Program, the Métis Service and Employment Centre expanded their Culinary Hospitality Opportunities Program.
- Métis Nation BC, BC Housing and the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society received a WOW Award for Training excellence in recognition of the success of its Essential Skills for Aboriginal Futures BC Housing initiative.
- Gathering spaces were opened at seven post-secondary institutions around the province for the purpose of creating spaces for Aboriginal students to meet, host gatherings, hold cultural activities, celebrations and ceremonies, provide services and supports to Aboriginal students, and also to encourage interaction with Aboriginal elders.
- A \$1.98-million investment by the federal and provincial governments and the **Nicola Valley Institute of Technology** was announced to build a day care and gathering place at the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, allowing more Aboriginal students to further their education and creating about 13 jobs.

- The Province provided \$600,000 to British Columbia's Aboriginal public post-secondary institute, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, to support a mobile trade's classroom pilot project that will benefit Aboriginal people in rural and remote communities.

## Cornerstones to Progress – Accomplishments Since 2005

- 2008: The Industry Training Authority (ITA) released a comprehensive Aboriginal Trades and Apprenticeship Study. The study identified and verified key barriers Aboriginal people face in B.C. to participating in trades training. As a result of the study, the ITA released an Aboriginal Trades and Apprenticeship Business Plan in 2009-10. The Plan outlines how the ITA will address barriers to Aboriginal participation in trades training, and also identifies roles for supporting stakeholders within each action item.
- 2008: Continued to partner with and support the First Nations Education Steering Committee in the ongoing implementation of English 12 First Peoples curriculum and provincial examination for that course. New courses in the pilot stage that reflect Aboriginal knowledge and culture are English 10 and 11 First Peoples (implementation planned for September 2010).
- 2007: Implemented the \$65 million **Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education Strategy** to increase access to post-secondary education. This initiative has included important foundational contributions such as:
  - \* *Eleven public post-secondary institutions developed and implemented **Aboriginal Service Plans** that identify regional education and training needs of learners and are creating programs and services to meet those needs. The initiative enters the final year of the three-year term in January 2010.*
  - \* *Invested \$8.9 million over three years in the Aboriginal Special Projects Fund to support the development and pilot of new programs and courses, cultural education support and transition programs, student recruitment activities, and student support services.*
  - \* *Allocated \$800,000 in 2007/08 for **Aboriginal Transitions Research** to provide evidence that supports learner transitions along the post-secondary education continuum. In 2008/09, an additional \$900,000 was issued for the second phase which will involve piloting of models and the development of provincial frameworks.*
  - \* *2007 to 2010: Invested \$13.5 million over four years to build culturally welcoming **gathering places** that will decrease isolation and increase retention for Aboriginal students by reflecting the character, community and traditions of Aboriginal cultures.*
- 2007: 192 new public post-secondary seats were specifically targeted in 2007/08 (100) and 2008/09 (92) for Aboriginal learners in strategic program areas to increase opportunities for Aboriginal learners to enter the labour market and help British Columbia address labour market shortages.
- 2006: signed the **Education Jurisdiction Framework Agreement**, and the BC First Nation Education Agreement. In 2007, the Province enacted the **First Nations Education Act** which formalized B.C.'s commitment to recognize First Nations' jurisdiction over the education of First Nations children in band schools of participating First Nations.
- 2004: The Province contributed \$10 million to the Irving K. Barber British Columbia Scholarship Society to establish an endowment for student scholarships. In 2008, the **BC Aboriginal Student Award** was created as part of the provincial government's strategy to improve Aboriginal access and achievement by reducing financial barriers to obtaining post-secondary education.

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- Collaborated in the development and implementation of **Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements**. Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements are five year commitments made by Aboriginal communities, school districts, and the Ministry of Education to work together to improve the success and educational experience of Aboriginal students in B.C.

## The Strategy for the Future

Work with education partners to increase:

- The Aboriginal voice in the K-12 school system, through consultation with Aboriginal communities to hear what success looks like for their children.
- Aboriginal student school success through focused leadership, using results to guide informed practice.
- Knowledge of Aboriginal language, culture and history for all students, by authentic infusion through B.C. curriculum and implementation of Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements.

Work with post-secondary education partners to:

- Further work on the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework to improve the success of Aboriginal learners in post-secondary education and training and to guide ministry investment, address education, skills and training gaps and increase labour market success for Aboriginal people in British Columbia.
- Invest almost \$4 million in the new Aboriginal Training for Employment Program to deliver job-related training in essential skills and introductory trades training, coupled with mentoring, coaching and other retention tools through public, private and Aboriginal-controlled training organizations around the province.
- Implement the Aboriginal Business Plan through the Industry Training Authority to focus on awareness building and providing entry level trades training.

## Measuring Success

Evidence of success includes using measures determined through dialogue and collaboration with local Aboriginal communities, maintaining continuous improvement, scores on tests and in courses related to reading, writing and numeracy, and the rate of post-secondary participation. The key indicator of success will be to reduce the discrepancy in high school graduation rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners by 2015.

Local boards of education and Aboriginal community partners continue to work together to develop and implement Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements. These agreements help to define what evidence of success looks like and provide ways to improve educational success for Aboriginal youth.

The **Student Transitions Project** provides data on student transitions from K-12 into post-secondary institutions. The project is a collaborative effort among British Columbia's public post-secondary institutions, education ministries and the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer.

## STRONGSTART BC PROGRAMS BENEFIT ABORIGINAL FAMILIES IN WILLIAMS LAKE

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In collaboration with Desniqi, a local First Nations Service Society in Williams Lake, the Cariboo Chilcotin School District received a Success by Six grant to encourage Aboriginal families to participate in the district's StrongStart BC programs.

Once a month, families from the Secwepemc and Tsilhqot'in First Nation communities gather at the StrongStart BC centre in Williams Lake for supper, crafts, stories and songs. These evening gatherings, including storytellers from the First Nations communities, help families develop a sense of belonging at the centre and encourage them to attend during regular hours of operation.

The centre provides many great opportunities for First Nations children and their families by creating a supportive and stimulating environment where children can develop the early literacy and social skills that are essential to success.

The StrongStart BC program is a free early learning program for preschool-aged children accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Qualified early childhood educators lead activities, including stories, music, and arts, to help children grow linguistically, emotionally and socially, and become comfortable in a school-like setting.

## THIRD ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT FOR MAPLE RIDGE-PITT MEADOWS

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The signing of the third Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement between the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows school district, the Ministry of Education and local Aboriginal communities will result in "more opportunities for student success," said Jan Unwin, school district superintendent.



The agreement, signed on Katzie First Nation traditional territory and carried into the Swan-e-set Longhouse with a wood carving entitled "Spirit of Our Children", is an important tool in improving Aboriginal student achievement.

"Agreements like this help focus the commitment and resources necessary to improve school outcomes for Aboriginal students," said Ms. Unwin.

"Our third enhancement agreement will work to improve literacy and numeracy for over 1,000 Aboriginal students, and initiatives like the My Story Program, will allow all students to expand on their oral language communication and tradition while learning more about Aboriginal culture," said Doug Hoey, principal of Aboriginal education for school district 42.

In 2009-10, the Province committed over \$53 million – approximately \$1000 per Aboriginal student – to support Aboriginal language and culture programs, support service programs and other localized educational programs.

"We are very excited to have our third Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement in place," said Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows board of education chair Ken Clarkson. "Our Aboriginal student population has been increasing over the years, and it is more important than ever that we continue to build on facilitating excellence for all our Aboriginal learners in all grade levels."

By working with Aboriginal communities to develop strategies and curriculum, children have a better chance of developing skills and reaching their full potential.

# HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Housing and infrastructure quality are among the factors linked to the socio-economic disparities faced by Aboriginal people in British Columbia. Other factors include health, education, employment and other social conditions.

A disproportionate number of Aboriginal families and individuals in British Columbia are still in need of housing. Some 22.3 per cent of Aboriginal people living off-reserve live in inadequate housing, or in places that are too expensive and generate financial pressures, compared with 14.2 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population (Statistics Canada 2006).

Actions to support safe and affordable housing and infrastructure for Aboriginal people, including Métis and First Nations, will assist in addressing these disparities. First Nations, the federal government, and the provincial government share common goals of establishing a New Relationship based on mutual respect and recognition for First Nations by improving housing conditions for individuals, families and communities over the next ten years.

The Province is committed to address off-reserve housing needs through the provincial housing strategy, **Housing Matters BC**. Housing programs help build safe, affordable housing for Aboriginal people in greatest need, and also help to break the cycle of homelessness through outreach. **BC Housing** is working with the **Aboriginal Housing Management Association** (AHMA) to achieve a common goal of Aboriginal self-management, self-reliance and self-sufficiency and the provision of safe, affordable housing for off-reserve Aboriginal people.

## 2009/10 Highlights

- More than 480 homeless Aboriginal people were provided with housing and supports through the Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program.
- Approximately 400 units of supportive housing have been completed under the **Provincial Homelessness Initiative**, which benefits many homeless Aboriginal people.
- Administration of over 500 social housing units was transferred to AHMA.
- Created over 50 new units of affordable housing for Aboriginal individuals and families under the **Aboriginal Housing Initiative**:
  - \* Official opening of **Kickwillie Place**, a new family development centre providing 40 units of affordable family housing and on-site child-care services. Through a partnership with the City of Vernon, the Province provided \$11.2 million through BC Housing's Aboriginal Housing Initiative and a \$210,000 grant through the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
  - \* Official opening of **Kackaamin Family Development Centre**, a centre providing 14 housing units and two youth dormitories. Intended to be a place of stability, support and new opportunities for Aboriginal families at risk of homelessness, the Centre will offer support services to family members looking to overcome drug and alcohol addictions. Through a partnership with the private sector and community stakeholders, the Province provided a \$6 million capital grant under BC Housing's Aboriginal Housing Initiative.
- Announced a \$750,000 contribution through the Innovative Clean Energy Fund toward the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations \$3-million geothermal project that will provide heat and hot water in buildings constructed under the Ty Histaniis Reclamation Project.

- With support from the provincial government, T'Sou-ke Nation constructed the largest grid-connected photovoltaic solar energy system operating in British Columbia today. The Innovative Clean Energy Fund contributed \$400,000 to build a 75-kilowatt solar photovoltaic installation, with a total project value of \$1.25 million. Over the last year, T'Sou-ke Nation has reduced energy consumption by approximately 30 per cent. In July 2009, T'Sou-ke Nation hosted approximately 50 First Nations from across the province for two days of information-sharing and celebration.
- A joint federal-provincial investment of over \$17.8 million was announced April 4, 2009, to build the new South Fork Water Treatment Plant which will improve the quality of local drinking water for the City of Nanaimo, South West Extension, and the Snuneymuxw First Nation.
- Since 2008, the Province and Health Canada have provided \$40.8 million to facilitate broadband connectivity and capacity building for First Nations communities in British Columbia. As of the end of March, 2010, 148 of 203 First Nations had access to high-speed Internet services.

## Cornerstones to Progress – Accomplishments Since 2005

- 2008: Launched the **Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program** providing \$700,000 annually to Aboriginal non-profit organizations in nine communities across British Columbia to connect homeless people to housing, income assistance and support services in their communities within an Aboriginal context.
- 2008: The First Nations-led connectivity and capacity building initiative continues to be supported by the Province. Since 2008, \$40.8 million has been provided for broadband connectivity and capacity building.
- 2008: The BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the Province, and the Government of Canada signed a tripartite **First Nations Housing Memorandum of Understanding** (MoU) in May 2008. This MoU established a framework for ongoing discussions and the development of interlinked on- and off-reserve housing strategies.
- 2008: Undertook a province-wide engagement process involving over 250 people from Aboriginal organizations, First Nations and other groups to inform and guide future work related to off-reserve Aboriginal housing.
- 2007: Through the **Aboriginal Housing Initiative**, the Province committed \$50.9 million to build 200 new units of affordable off-reserve Aboriginal housing to create safe, secure and culturally appropriate housing for youth, women, elders and those struggling with addictions. Since 2006, over 80 units of affordable housing have been created. This initiative is funded in part through the Off-Reserve Aboriginal Housing Trust, which had been transferred from the Government of Canada to the Province.
- 2007: Provided funding for Elders' Lodges – assisted living homes for Aboriginal elders.
- 2006: Completed an on and off-reserve housing needs and capacity assessment review. In addition to a literature and statistical review, Aboriginal communities and organizations around British Columbia provided information. This input is now guiding development of safe, affordable and culturally appropriate housing to British Columbia's Aboriginal people living off-reserve.
- 2004: **The Provincial Homelessness Initiative** was launched as a result of the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions. More than 4,000 new and upgraded supportive housing units and shelter beds have been created through the Provincial Homelessness initiative, which will benefit many homeless Aboriginal people.

## The Strategy for the Future

The Province is committed to working with Aboriginal groups, First Nations, Métis, and the federal government to develop innovative approaches to housing for the province's Aboriginal population.

The information gathered through the province-wide engagement process is being used to guide future work in developing ways to provide safe, affordable and culturally appropriate housing to British Columbia's Aboriginal people living off-reserve. This includes building capacity among Aboriginal partners to manage and develop housing – part of an overall commitment by government to support capacity-building in local Aboriginal communities.

Affordable broadband connectivity is a catalyst for economic diversification and is fundamental infrastructure required to transform and enable the delivery of integrated services to citizens. Through a process of collaboration with First Nations organizations, broader public sector organizations and the private sector that have an interest in providing services to and for First Nations, the provincial government will continue working with First Nations organizations and the federal government toward ensuring that 203 First Nations have broadband access.

## Measuring Success

Adequate and affordable housing is foundational for improving the health, education, employment and well-being of Aboriginal people. Safe, affordable housing for Aboriginal people will provide for stronger and more vibrant Aboriginal communities throughout the province. While some progress is being made, the social and economic gaps between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians remain significant.

Performance indicators include measuring the number of new housing units off-reserve, water safety, broadband connectivity, and transferring the administration of social housing units to AHMA.

The Ministry of Citizens' Services has established a performance measure to demonstrate government's success in supporting First Nations-led initiatives to provide access to broadband facilities. By brokering strategic relationships, influencing the telecommunications environment and facilitating results, the Ministry of Citizens' Services (through Network BC) helps First Nations achieve high speed connectivity service to unserved communities. In 2009/10, 73 per cent (148 of 203) of First Nations had access to broadband facilities, exceeding the target of 69 per cent.



## CREATING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AT FRIENDSHIP LODGE



Six months after it welcomed its first tenants in June 2009, Friendship Lodge celebrated its first Christmas. The 30-unit development, which provides homes and supports for Prince George adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, had a surprise guest that day. Santa knocked on tenants' doors with small gifts for everyone. "People were so touched; several were crying," recalled Jennifer Harrington, Prince George Native Friendship Centre Society's Director of Supportive Housing. "For some, it was the first time they had felt a part of something and like they belonged somewhere."

Prince George Native Friendship Centre Society, which manages Friendship Lodge, recognizes that stable housing is extremely important to its tenants, but that the "magic" happens when these people are also provided with the support services they need to regain a sense of control.

"Some of our tenants have been in and out of homelessness all their lives and they're looking for more than a home; they need a sense of community," added Harrington. "Since coming here, some have reconnected with family members who they hadn't been in touch with for years. Others have stabilized their addictions by seeking help from counsellors. Those with mental illnesses are now coping better with their medications. Two tenants have already moved on and are doing really well living independently."

Life skills workers are on site 24 hours a day. Programs at the Friendship Centre, a short walk away, are also available to tenants. A community kitchen program has started at Friendship Lodge, which teaches participants how to buy and store food and how to plan menus and prepare nutritious meals.

The society also understands how important it is for Friendship Lodge to be accepted into its neighbourhood. "We were very involved in the zoning process... delivering flyers, talking with neighbours, and holding monthly meetings to alleviate fears of what having a development like this in their community would mean to them."

That proactive position has paid off. "One of our neighbours came by over the holidays to say that they'd originally been opposed to Friendship Lodge being here, but now they think it's great," said Harrington.



British Columbia's Innovative Clean Energy Fund will help the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations tap into geothermal energy by providing \$750,000 for heat and hot water in buildings constructed under the Ty Histaniis Reclamation Project.

"At Ty Histaniis, we are building for the future," said Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations Chief Councillor Francis Frank. "We are taking action to address housing and social challenges that have held back our community for too long."

The Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations district geexchange energy system project also supports community development by playing an important role in much-needed construction, including new homes to replace overcrowded dwellings in poor repair.

This is a wonderful example of First Nations leadership and innovation, and the province's commitment to building a new relationship with Aboriginal people. This project builds on other successful initiatives with the Tla-o-qui-aht, including the Incremental Treaty Agreement signed late last year.

# HEALTH



Since 2001, some progress has been made in improving both the determinants of Aboriginal health status and health outcomes. Nonetheless, significant gaps in health status continue to exist: Aboriginal British Columbians do not enjoy the same health status as the rest of the province's population. Aboriginal people face serious health challenges such as lower life expectancy, higher rates of suicide, diabetes, heart disease, and substance use.

The provincial government, working with the First Nations Health Council, Métis Nation BC, and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, among other Aboriginal organizations, is committed to improving health outcomes and eliminating the gap in health status between Aboriginal British Columbians and the rest of the population.

Using an integrated approach to health and community programs helps to provide the support Aboriginal people need to build healthier lifestyles.

## 2009/10 Highlights

- Opened the new Seniors' Lytton Health Centre to improve acute care and community health services to better meet the needs of First Nations and other residents in the Lytton area.

1 Pathways to Health and Healing 2nd Report on the Health and Well-being of Aboriginal Peoples in BC, PHO Annual report 2007, page xxxi.

- Provincial implementation of First Nations early childhood health screening programs for vision, dental and newborn hearing were undertaken. Vision and dental screening for kindergarten age children was offered to all First Nations schools on reserve, and hearing screening was universally offered to all newborns in hospital and clinic settings at birth. Health Authorities have also completed screening for vision and dental for all kindergarten children in public schools for the 2009-2010 school year.
- B.C. First Nations, through the First Nations Interim Health Governance Committee and Regional Caucuses, engaged with Tripartite partners to develop a Basis for a Framework Agreement on Health Governance.
- Released *Pathways to Health and Healing* – 2<sup>nd</sup> Report on the Health and Well-being of Aboriginal People in British Columbia from the Office of the Provincial Health Officer.
- 2009-10 marks the fourth year of the InTraining program through partnership with SportsMed BC which included approximately 2,400 Aboriginal participants who had signed up to complete the 13 week walk/run training, and 1,130 Aboriginal participants completing the Vancouver Sun Run.
- The Provincial Health Services Agency (PHSA) Aboriginal Program developed an Indigenous-specific cultural competency training program for health care professionals. The program is an eight hour multi-level facilitated on-line training program to be delivered to all PHSA employees.
- The BC First Nations Health Directors Association was incorporated in April 2010. The Association is one of four governance components identified in the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan. The Association will support and standardize training and competencies for Health Directors; establish a code of ethics; share information, resources and technology; serve as a recruitment agency; share information with leadership; and provide for a collective voice while working together to develop new relationships with provincial and federal governments. A 13 member board of directors was appointed with representation from all five health regions.
- The Province, Canada, Regional Health Authorities, the BC Centre for Disease Control and the First Nations Health Council collaboratively developed an H1N1 Action Plan for Remote Communities. The Action Plan describes policies and procedures for remote communities in the event of influenza-like illness and provides for greater local decision-making, enabling a more flexible response to H1N1 outbreaks. The Action Plan resulted in a 75 per cent on-reserve vaccination rate.
- First Nations Health Council funded 39 Youth Suicide Prevention Camps. Camps ranged from traditional camps, to urban projects for youth living off-reserve.
- Health Career Awareness Workshops were completed at summer science camps and youth gatherings across B.C. to encourage Aboriginal students to pursue a career in the health field.
- The First Nations Holistic KidSport Program was piloted in select communities. Projects included athlete and coach development, youth engagement, recreation workshops, training methodologies, education and leadership curriculum, life skills workshops and physical fitness protocols. Each activity incorporated role models and traditional Elders to provide teachings that promote self development and self awareness.
- A \$485,000 provincial investment *supporting sexual health and self-esteem programs* for Aboriginal youth and intervention for men at risk of abusing is part of a new program developed by the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres.

- The Aboriginal Agriculture Education Society of British Columbia committed to creating and expanding of community gardens in at least 17 First Nations communities through funding for training, tools, equipment and small machinery. This initiative is based on the success of the ActNow BC program, First Nations Community Food Systems for Healthy Living.
- An Aboriginal Service Delivery Conceptual Framework has been developed to guide staff at the Ministry of Children and Family Development in their cross-ministry work to reduce socio-economic gaps.
- The Province is currently supporting First Nations and Aboriginal communities across the province to reclaim their traditional approaches in caring for their children and families. These communities are being supported to design and develop their own culturally-based approaches for the care and protection of their children and families.
- In partnership with delegated Aboriginal agencies, the Province and Aboriginal communities in the North Region began work on the implementation of a reconciliation process known as Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth and Families. This process supports the development of a collective vision and an action plan to help coordinate our collective efforts to create a better child and family services system for all Aboriginal children.
- In March 2010, the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Nisga'a Nation entered into a unique delegation agreement that supports the Nisga'a Nation in the provision of services to their children on and off Nisga'a lands and supports the Nisga'a Nation to exercise jurisdiction with respect to their children off reserve lands. This unique delegation agreement is an important component of the new five year Fiscal Financial Agreement signed between the Province, the federal government and the Nisga'a Nation.

## Cornerstones to Progress – Accomplishments Since 2005

- 2009: The ***Recognition and Reconciliation Protocol on First Nations Children, Youth and Families*** was signed between the Province and the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs committing the parties to an inclusive process to establish a common vision for First Nations child and family wellness in B.C., in addition to other commitments laid out in the protocol.
- 2008: British Columbia was one of the first provinces in Canada to endorse ***Jordan's Principle***, which ensures First Nations children receive the health and social services care they need. A joint process document for implementation between all parties has been drafted and will be finalized with First Nations input.
- 2007: Signed the historic ***Tripartite First Nations Health Plan*** between the Province, Canada, the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and Union of BC Indian Chiefs.
- 2007: Appointed the province's first ***Aboriginal Health Physician Advisor***, Dr. Evan Adams, who is responsible for monitoring, tracking progress and reporting on the health of Aboriginal people in British Columbia.
- 2007: Established the Provincial Committee on First Nations Health, part of a new governance structure created to ensure that First Nations have input into decisions affecting their health. The committee involves First Nations, Ministry of Health, health authorities and Health Canada in collaborative decision-making at the highest strategic health planning level.

## The Strategy for the Future

The provincial government, partnering with the First Nations Health Council, the federal government, Métis Nation BC, and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, will continue to take action to improve Aboriginal health outcomes by improving the delivery of health services and promoting prevention measures.

Together with the federal government and the First Nations Health Council, the Province is implementing the 29-plus action items of the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan. A key action item is the work to build a First Nations health governing body that would take over the administrative role of Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch in British Columbia.

With jurisdiction, culture and traditional practices at the cornerstone of services for Aboriginal children and families, the Province is supporting Aboriginal self-determination through community and service development initiatives that are led by Aboriginal communities. There are currently 89 First Nations involved in the Indigenous Approaches work, along with many urban Aboriginals and Métis communities which will result in culturally-based and community owned services systems for Aboriginal peoples.

## Measuring Success

To track progress on closing the gap in health outcomes, the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan identifies seven performance indicators:

- life expectancy at birth;
- mortality rates;
- youth suicide rates;
- infant mortality rates;
- prevalence of diabetes;
- incidence of childhood obesity; and
- the number of practising, certified First Nations health care professionals.

Other key indicators include First Nations defined wellness indicators, the measurement of new and improved health governance, management, and service delivery relationships at all levels.

Disease prevention, chronic disease management, improved lifestyle choices, education, culturally sensitive programs, access to better and more timely services, increased support for people with substance use and other mental health issues, all support better health outcomes for Aboriginal people.

However, better health services and prevention programs are only part of closing the health gap. Increased education, higher income and better housing are a few of the critical areas which need to improve as we work towards our goal of closing the health gap.

## VEGGIE GARDENS TO SPROUT IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

As part of the Province's new Produce Availability in Remote Communities Initiative, 17 First Nations in remote communities will soon have the resources and training to plant and sustain food gardens that will regularly provide fresh fruits and vegetables to people in their communities.

The gardens will be grown under the guidance of community leaders. By creating local, sustainable food systems, First Nations can continue to build healthy communities while increasing employment and promoting self-reliance.

Anticipated outcomes of the program include improving knowledge and skills in choosing healthy foods, increasing the supply of British Columbia produce to local grocers, improving produce distribution to remote communities and supporting communities to grow their own produce.

Using the land for sustainable and environmentally sound projects also helps to preserve the land for future generations.

The Aboriginal Agricultural Education Society of British Columbia, now in its fifth year, has supported First Nations community gardening initiatives through the First Nations Community Food Systems for Healthy Living project.

Through programs like the Produce Availability in Remote Communities Initiative, the Province is acting to close the health status gap between First Nations and other British Columbians. The initiative also builds on the Province's healthy living initiative, ActNow BC.

## IMPROVED ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES IN LYTTON

The new Chief David Spintlum Lodge assisted living complex and St. Bartholomew's Health Centre ensure First Nations and other residents in the Lytton area now have better access to acute care and community health services.

The centre includes an emergency department, lab and X-ray services, offices, a medical clinic and leased space for a pharmacy. The centre also features six assisted living units through the Independent Living BC program. These private apartments are tailored to seniors who can no longer live on their own but have enough independence to manage day-to-day living with some added support.

The health centre also incorporates green features and has been designed to achieve LEED GOLD standard through the Canada Green Building Council.

The \$8.7-million dollar project was funded by the Province, BC Housing and the Thompson Regional Hospital District with additional funding from Interior Health and the hospital district for equipment.

"We have been working in collaboration with all levels of government to improve the health and wellness of our First Nations communities, and appreciate the commitment displayed through their continued support under the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan," said Chief Janet Webster of the Lytton First Nation.



# ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES



The provincial government continues to work with First Nations, Métis Nation BC, Aboriginal organizations and communities to ensure that economic opportunities are available to create a prosperous future for Aboriginal people across the province.

Land and resource agencies within the provincial government are making strides toward coordinating and streamlining consultation with First Nations. This process improves information sharing and allows government to work in an integrated fashion to fully meet its obligations to consult with First Nations. Land use agreements with First Nations clarify government-to-government relationships, provide certainty of access to economic resources and create economic opportunities, protect environmental values, and respect traditional values, resources and land interests.

The economic downturn has put additional pressure on Aboriginal groups including Aboriginal business and not-for-profit organizations. The Province continues to work with Aboriginal partners to explore opportunities for further collaboration and to craft solutions jointly during these challenging economic times.

## 2009/10 Highlights

- The Province signed five significant agreements with three of the Treaty 8 First Nations – Doig River First Nation, West Moberly First Nations and Prophet River First Nation – that provide for collaborative planning, management and operation of Treaty 8 lands in the northeast, and will contribute to stability and certainty on the land base and will help stimulate investment in northeastern B.C.
- A landmark \$2.25-million strategic engagement agreement reached with the Nanwakolas First Nations and a \$1.26-million strategic engagement agreement reached with Tsilhqot'in National Government will streamline consultation on natural resource decisions, provide increased certainty for investors and build on government's New Relationship with First Nation communities in the province.



- **Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC** and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Arts led Canada in the development of the Aboriginal cultural tourism sector and increasing tourism revenues for the Aboriginal tourism sector to approximately \$38 million in 2009, up from approximately \$20 million in 2005.
- Through strong partnerships between the Province, Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC and others during the 2010 Winter Games, increased support for the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry was achieved. Over 200,000 visitors attended AtBC events, and approximately 70 international media stories were written about the Aboriginal Tourism industry during the 17 days of the Games.
- Métis Nation British Columbia purchased a 25,000 sq ft building on 13.5 acres of land with support from the Province. Programs and services have expanded since the purchase and have paved the way for an abundance of economic development opportunities including industry partnerships, culinary training and a new catering business.
- 'Namgis First Nation and the Province signed a Land Management Agreement to help manage commercial sea kayaking activities on north-eastern Vancouver Island. The agreement will allow 'Namgis First Nation to develop a strong tourism base within 'Namgis territory.
- In February 2010, the Province entered into a revenue sharing agreement with the Squamish First Nation to host the Chances Boardwalk Community Gaming Centre. Squamish First Nation is one of three First Nations, following the Ktunaxa Nation Council and the Cowichan Tribes, that have entered into revenue sharing agreements with the Province in order to receive 10 per cent of the net revenue generated from casino gaming. This funding is used to support projects that benefit their communities.
- In March 2009, the Province completed the Tse Keh Nay – BC Protocol Agreement for Reclamation, Remediation and Monitoring of Mines Sites. This Agreement sets out a process by which the parties intend to develop and implement a plan to address historic and current mining sites within the asserted territories of the Takla Lake, Kwadacha, and Tsay Key Dene First Nations.
- Three Memoranda of Understanding were signed between the Province and First Nations under the First Nations Resort Development Initiative, to investigate the feasibility and possible development of First Nations owned resorts and RV park resorts.
- In May 2009, the Province and BC Hydro completed an agreement with the Tahltan Central Council to guide consultation activities on the proposed Northwest Transmission Line project.
- In May 2009, the Province signed a Mining and Minerals Agreement with the Stk'emlupsemc of the Secwepemc Nation as represented by the Tk'emlúps (formerly Kamloops) Indian Band and the Skeetchestn Indian Band to guide consultation activities in the Nation's asserted traditional territory.
- The Province introduced **Bill 10, Protected Areas of BC Amendment Act**, 2009, to create nine new conservancies covering more than 111,000 hectares on Haida Gwaii. The new conservancies are a result of the Haida Gwaii land-use agreement with the Haida Nation.
- Delivered the **Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Skills Training** (BEST) program in 12 communities. The BEST program provides Aboriginal people with skills training and one-on-one business counselling to help them research business ideas and create a business plan that will help them start their own businesses.
- The Province and the Red Bluff Indian Band signed an economic development agreement to enable the band to provide employment to its members and salvage beetle-kill timber in the

Quesnel area. The agreement allows Red Bluff to harvest the timber for 15 years and work with National Choice Bio Fuels to build a plant to process the timber into wood pellets.

- Road improvement projects are underway or completed for more than 200 Forest Service roads, including \$6 million for First Nations access roads.
- Construction of new Lax kw'alaams ferry dock, near Prince Rupert, will provide a permanent home for the Spirit of Lax kw'alaams ferry and reduce the travel time for service between Prince Rupert and Tuck Inlet.
- Forests for Tomorrow program provided opportunities for First Nation contractors to improve long term timber supply through the re-establishment of young forests on large areas that have been burned by wildfire or affected by the mountain pine beetle. The program allocated about \$4 million to First Nations employment and business opportunities and allocated \$300,000 to First Nations capacity building projects such as silviculture surveys and danger tree assessment training.
- With First Nations making up 25 per cent of the Wildfire Management Branch's seasonal fire crew members, the record-breaking 2009-10 fire season resulted in 238 jobs for First Nations.
- McLeod Lake Indian Band signed an interim measures agreement with government which provides for direct access to a total of four million cubic metres of timber.
- In the **Community Development Trust Job Opportunities Program**, 15 per cent of approved projects were with First Nations. These 66 projects valued at over \$13.2 million have created approximately 679 employment opportunities for First Nations people.
- The Integrated Land Management Bureau established a new model for coordinated consultation with First Nations on the Mt. Milligan Mine project. The new coordinated consultation process reduces the number of government agencies First Nations must interact with to just one. Permitting approvals that would normally take 260 days were delivered in 120 days while maintaining the quality of consultation.

## Cornerstones to Progress – Accomplishments Since 2005

- 2009: The Province announced revenue-sharing with First Nations on new mining projects. British Columbia is the first province in Canada to share direct revenue generated from new mining projects throughout the life span of the mining operation.
- 2007: Negotiations began on Crown land revenue sharing agreements with First Nations to share revenue from major resort proposals.
- 2007: Contributed \$30 million to the **Coast Opportunity Funds** directed toward economic development opportunities for First Nations businesses involved in activities including sustainable fisheries, forestry and tourism along the central and north coast.
- 2007: The **Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy**, representing a partnership initiative between the Province, federal government and AtBC is announced. The strategy provides a long-term plan for the sustainable growth and development of the province's Aboriginal tourism industry and is overseen by AtBC. In 2005, the Province provided \$5 million to AtBC toward the provincial Aboriginal cultural tourism strategy. The strategy will support a strong and sustainable Aboriginal cultural tourism industry for British Columbia.

- 2007: WorkBC was launched as an innovative new labour market strategy to ensure success in meeting key economic priorities and advancing B.C.'s global economic competitiveness. One of the goals of WorkBC is to **increase Aboriginal participation and labour market success**.
- 2006: The historic **Coast Land Use Decisions** for the North Coast and Central Coast protect vast areas of temperate rain forest, while providing a unique framework called Ecosystem Based Management. These protected areas preserve some of the largest intact temperate rainforests in the world and serve to balance the needs of the environment with the need for sustainable jobs and a strong economic future for coastal communities. Over 20 First Nations have signed Strategic Land Use Planning agreements for the Central and North Coast.
- 2006: First Nations Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative: \$8.9 million transferred to the **First Nations Forestry Council** to address First Nations needs with respect to the mountain pine beetle epidemic. Completed Phase I and II MPB Impact Assessment and response, and created communication tools for impacted First Nations communities.
- Signed a total of 227 interim measures agreements with 168 First Nations which provided over \$243 million in revenue sharing and direct access to 48.8 million cubic metres when issued within a variety of forest tenures.

## The Strategy for the Future

The Province will support the BC First Nations Economic Development Action Plan to build self-reliance, prosperity and economic stability in First Nations communities. Business arrangements and economic opportunities between First Nations, the Province, and the private sector will be encouraged.

Agencies are developing and implementing strategic engagement and economic and community development agreements with First Nations. These agreements will improve the investment climate in British Columbia, strengthen relationships with First Nations and support progress on Transformative Change Accord goals.

The provincial government will continue to support Industry – First Nations agreements by encouraging industry to develop partnerships with First Nations to enable the sharing of economic benefits of development with First Nations communities. First Nations participation in the tourism sector will continue to be supported by investigating the feasibility of resort proposals and locating suitable Crown land for resort development as well as partnership with existing and proposed non-First Nation resort proponents.

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MTCA) will continue to work in partnership with AtBC to implement the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Strategy, developing Aboriginal cultural tourism activities such as the Klahowya Village in Stanley Park.

The Province will also continue to provide First Nations with access to forestry tenure and related opportunities.

Métis Nation BC will develop and implement a framework for economic development to create economic opportunities for the Métis Nation, Métis communities and Métis owned businesses.

## Measuring success:

Key performance indicators include reducing unemployment among Aboriginal people, increasing the number of Aboriginal entrepreneurs, increasing employment income, and tracking the number of initiatives supported by the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation that provide economic opportunities to Aboriginal peoples.

### NANWAKOLAS STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT



“We are committed to diversifying our economy and creating new business opportunities – not only for Nanwakolas First Nations, but for other coastal communities.” –Dallas Smith, president of the Nanwakolas Council.

Demonstrating leadership and vision, the numerous First Nations associated with Nanwakolas Council signed the first-ever Strategic Engagement Agreement (SEA) with the Province. This \$2.05-million

agreement builds on the success of the Nanwakolas clearinghouse pilot project and will help secure a prosperous future for the Nanwakolas people and their region as a whole.

“We are pleased that the Province has been willing to take the New Relationship to the next step with our nations,” says Mamalilikulla Qwe Qwa Sot’em Chief Harold Sewid. “It is important for nations with little or no capacity to be able to participate and eventually make decisions that impact their territories without borrowing from the future through the B.C. Treaty Commission process.”

The SEA establishes co-ordinated, government-to-government consultation with signatory First Nations and six resource ministries, removes barriers to investment and helps close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

Strategic engagement agreements like this one demonstrate the growing momentum of the New Relationship, ensuring that the spirit of that relationship is translating into a real and beneficial economic reality for Aboriginal people in the province, and for all British Columbians.



In 2007, the clearinghouse pilot project began the process of streamlining First Nations consultation within the traditional territories of signatory First Nations. Under the current SEA, there are six participating Nanwakolas Council First Nations: Da’naxda’xw Awaetlala, Gwa’sala-’Nakwaxda’xw, K’omoks, Kwakiutl, Mamalilikulla-Qwe’Qwa’Sot’Em and Tlowitsis with traditional territories covering roughly 3.2 million hectares from Parksville to north of Cape Caution, and extending inland from Knight Inlet on the Mainland.

## WYA WELCOME CENTRE

The Wya Welcome Centre at the Tofino-Ucluelet Junction will be a great place to stop for those interested in learning about the Pacific Rim and local First Nations.

Wya, which means a place of refuge in Nuu-chah-nulth, will feature a visitor centre, a community garden, a playground, some green space, and a few short-term RV sites.



“We want to invite guests to experience the West Coast from a First Nations perspective,” said Tyson Touchie, President of the Ucluth Development Corporation and a member of the Yuu-cluth-aht First Nation (YFN).

The centre will be a place for visitors to relax and learn about Yuu-cluth-aht First Nations culture and find out about the Maa-nulth Treaty which will be implemented in 2011.

Both the center and the community garden will provide jobs and opportunities for people in the community. Those working on the garden will receive horticulture training from a gardening expert and local artisans will have the opportunity to sell their arts and crafts at the gift shop.

“The Wya Welcome Centre will give the Yuu-cluth-aht First Nation the opportunity to showcase our culture while providing economic opportunities for our community members,” said Touchie. “People working at the center will learn a variety of job skills – from gardening to customer service to administration. These are skills that they will have for a lifetime.”

The center is scheduled to open in June of 2010.

The community garden at the Wya Welcome Centre is supported by the Aboriginal Health Initiative Program.

# CONCLUSION

Significant achievements took place in 2009-10. The 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games marked the first time in history Indigenous peoples have been recognized as official Olympic partners in the hosting of the Games. A number of agreements were successfully negotiated that are helping to strengthen government's relationship with Aboriginal people in British Columbia, such as the Reconciliation Protocols with the Haida Nation and Coastal First Nations. These achievements, along with progress in all other priority areas, are helping to reduce the social and economic gaps between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians.

The Province will continue working with First Nations (status and non-status; on and off-reserve), Métis and urban Aboriginal people in a respectful way to achieve progress in education, housing, health, and economic development strategies and initiatives.

The Province is committed to reconciling the long-standing grievances that have existed between governments and Aboriginal people. We can be proud of our achievements, and still realize that there is more to do. In the years ahead, the Province will continue to reach out in a variety of ways to build better relationships with First Nations, Métis Nation BC, and Aboriginal people throughout British Columbia.

## RESOURCES

### ADDITIONAL WEBSITES

To find out more about the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation visit [www.gov.bc.ca/arr](http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr)

To learn about the Province of British Columbia's New Relationship with First Nations and Aboriginal people visit [www.newrelationship.gov.bc.ca](http://www.newrelationship.gov.bc.ca)

To read Measuring Outcomes, the annual report tracking social and economic outcomes of Aboriginal people in British Columbia visit [http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/newrelationship/download/measuring\\_outcomes.pdf](http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/newrelationship/download/measuring_outcomes.pdf) or <http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/social/change.html>. An update will be released in the fall, 2010.

To obtain further information from specific ministries, access the main Government of British Columbia web page: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/>.





Ministry of  
Aboriginal Relations  
and Reconciliation