

# BRITISH COLUMBIA ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS



## REGIONAL CHIEF'S QUARTERLY REPORT

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

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

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

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

### 1. Strong and Appropriate Governance



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

***BCAFN Governance Toolkit – A Guide to Nation Building in Three Parts:*** Thank you to all of you who have provided feedback on the Governance Toolkit and for all your kind words of encouragement and support. We are very pleased that communities are finding it a useful resource during this period of Nation building and rebuilding and in navigating the often complex governance options that exist for our Nations. Whatever your Nation’s priorities and plans, ensuring strong and appropriate governance will improve your Nation’s chances of success on your chosen path.

Our team is currently working on the second edition of Part One of the Governance Toolkit: *The Governance Report*. The chapters are being updated to reflect the on-going work of our Nations in implementing their title and rights along the continuum of governance options that have been, and continue to be, developed. If you wish to make a contribution or have any suggestions for the next addition of the Report please contact myself or our offices. Part Two – the Governance Self-Assessment continues to be piloted and will be released in November of this year. Part Three – *A Guide to Community Engagement: Navigating Our Way Through the Post-Colonial Door* was released this past June at our Special Chiefs’ Assembly.

Part 1 - *The Governance Report*: The Governance Report was released in 2011 and a hard copy was sent to all BC First Nations (a black 2 ½” binder). All of the first edition hard copies have now been distributed. However, the Report remains accessible on our website and, at no cost, can be downloaded ([www.bcafn.ca/toolkit](http://www.bcafn.ca/toolkit)). The Report, to recap, is organized into four sections: 1) Options for Governance Reform; 2) Core Institutions of Governance; 3) Powers (Jurisdictions) of the First Nation; and, 4) Financing First Nations’ Governance. Over the past two months, our offices have begun the process of contacting every First Nation in BC to collect any new governance information for inclusion in the second edition. If your Nation is working on a particular governance initiative, has enacted any new laws/by-laws, or has information about governance reform that should be included in the Report, please let us know so that this information can be incorporated into the next edition. By continuing to share our experiences and information and by building on our success, we will collectively achieve our goal of all our Nations being truly self-determining. It is important that no community is left out or behind, particularly the smaller Nations that may have similar goals but less resources and capacity at their disposal.

Part 2 – *The Governance Self-Assessment*: The Governance Self-Assessment will be formally launched on November 26, 2012, at the BCAFN Special Chiefs’ Assembly in Vancouver. The *Governance Self-Assessment* has been developed in two modules to assist communities in conducting a self-assessment of their governing body and administration. The Assessment has been designed to help identify, through questions and resultant dialogue, governance priorities and opportunities within your governing body and administration and to develop an internal workplan for governance related initiatives in your Nation. Using a “beta” version of the Assessment in pilot projects, the BCAFN has continued to refine the Assessment that will be accessible by all BC First Nations that are interested in undertaking their own self-assessment. The format of the Self-Assessment has been inspired by a number of similar tools including those used by Accreditation Canada. I am pleased to say that we are working with Accreditation Canada in the refinement of our tool and am happy to announce that on September 5, 2012, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Accreditation Canada. We hope that through our partnership with Accreditation Canada we can work together to develop and provide an online survey system for the Self-Assessment and develop software to support the processing of data collected and the generation of assessment reports and work plans, all information collected would of course be for the sole use of the individual Nation to assist in its efforts around governance reform.

Part 3 - *A Guide to Community Engagement: Navigating Our Way Through the Post-Colonial Door*: As indicated above, Part 3 of the Toolkit, “A Guide to Community Engagement” was

formally released at our BCAFN Special Chiefs' Assembly held June 28<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in Richmond. All BC First Nations should have received your hard copy of Part 3 by mail (a red 1" binder). As with the Governance Report, the Guide is also available to download in whole or in part on our website ([www.bcafn.ca/toolkit](http://www.bcafn.ca/toolkit)).

Our team very much enjoyed compiling the Guide. It was great to see so many of our Chiefs in attendance at our Special Chiefs' Assembly when it was released. I am very pleased with how the Guide has turned out and that so many communities are beginning to use it. One of the biggest challenges we face in all of our communities and as leaders is ensuring that the citizens of our Nations are leading and are at the forefront of any social movement for change and Nation building. This is so important to the on-going process of decolonization and it is not easy. Like the Report, the Guide contains a lot of information and ideas based on the experiences of our Nations and other colonized people. The reality is that our Citizens will not support change unless they drive that change, as part of the difficult process of decolonization. The Guide assumes that while the task of moving beyond governance under the *Indian Act* is necessary, the process of decolonization is challenging to say the least. We hope this Guide will assist communities in building and maintaining momentum for change by bringing the discussion of strong and appropriate governance back to our citizens. In the Guide, we have included a number of practical and tested tools, such as power points, questions and answers, surveys, handouts, and checklists that can be used in your community in navigating through "the post-colonial door". If you would like to share feedback on the Guide or have suggestions for additional community engagement tools that should be included in future editions please do not hesitate to contact me.

***Self-Government Recognition Legislation:*** It is now five years since the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) was endorsed by the United Nations (September 13, 2007). In the March 3, 2010 Speech from the Throne, the Government of Canada announced that it would take steps to endorse the UNDRIP in a manner fully consistent with Canada's Constitution and laws. On November 12, 2010, Canada issued a formal Statement of Support endorsing the UNDRIP.

An important aspect of implementing the UNDRIP is, of course, recognition and then implementation of our right to self-determination, including our right to self-government. In order for the promise of the UNDRIP, in this case with respect to governance, to become a reality (short of a court case repealing all or part of the *Indian Act*), Canada will need to pass legislation to remove itself from control over fundamental aspects of our lives that they control/govern under the *Indian Act*. One way to do this is to pressure Canada to pass self-government recognition legislation that, at the option of a Nation, would release that Nation from its colonial bonds under the *Indian Act*.

Self-government recognition legislation was recommended years ago by the Penner Special Committee on Indian Self-Government and by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. So, the idea is not new, but, for many reasons it has never been possible. With your vision and support, and building on the mandate provided to the BCAFN in June 2011 and again in June 2012, I am pleased to say that we are, in fact, making progress on this initiative. This work is very important and if we are successful we will create essential legal space to significantly

speed up the process for community-led governance reform beyond the *Indian Act*. The proposed legislation is being developed to provide a legal mechanism for Canada to “recognize” a First Nation (or a group of First Nations) as self-governing where the community (or communities) has developed and ratified its own Constitution. If passed into law, this bill will be a significant tool for our Nations to walk through the post-colonial door and away from the *Indian Act*. When a community is ready, and has developed its own Constitution, Canada will be required to recognize that Nation as self-governing. For those of you that have been unable to reach a final agreement under the BC Treaty Process but whose citizens are supportive of your Nation exercising powers of self-determination, recognition legislation would provide the mechanism to move forward without Canada acting as a “gatekeeper” and will provide legal certainty to your government. It will, equally, be of use to those Nations that are not part of the BC Treaty Process and may not have been actively negotiating governance with Canada and BC, but who have developed their post-*Indian Act* institutions of government and want to exercise a broader range of jurisdiction than is currently permitted under the delegated authority of the *Indian Act*. This First Nations’ governance recognition legislation will be opt-in.

I was pleased to have been able to provide an update at the June 2012 BCAFN Special Chiefs’ Assembly on this initiative and am grateful for all of the feedback I have received so far from our Chiefs and First Nations’ leaders. We will continue to work in partnership with Senator St. Germaine’s office and our friends in Parliament to develop the private members’ bill. We anticipate that this private members’ bill will be introduced in the Senate this October. As I reported in June, because this is not a government-led bill and is, in fact, one of our responses to the current government’s legislative agenda (see below), there is no guarantee the bill will become law during this, or even the next, Parliament. However, eventually it will become law if we press on. We will, with the support of our First Nations in BC, continue to pressure for this recognition legislation and continue to lobby our interests on Parliament Hill until we are successful.

If you would like more information about this initiative or if you would like to be more actively involved in the discussions and the planning for this proposed First Nations’ self-government recognition legislation, please contact me directly at: [regionalchief@bcfn.ca](mailto:regionalchief@bcfn.ca) or 604-922-7733.

***Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)—Funding Announcements Impacting B.C. First Nations Representative Organizations and Tribal Councils:*** On September 4th, 2012, the Minister for AANDC, John Duncan, announced a change to the manner in which Aboriginal Representative Organizations (AROs) and Tribal Councils across the country will be funded. The change will result in federal funding cuts for core administration supports. The federal government has suggested that the changes to core funding will promote greater funding equity among Aboriginal organizations across Canada and provide for funding to be more targeted to specific outcomes. In practice, the funding cuts will see core funding for ARO’s reduced by 10 percent beginning in 2013-2014. Regional organizations will also have a ceiling up to \$500,000 applied to their core funding, so many larger regional First Nations’ organizations across Canada will experience funding cuts far greater than 10 percent. Based on analysis of the information that has been made available by AANDC, the funding cuts to all regional First Nations organizations between 2012 and 2015 are projected to amount to over \$11.2 million or 16.3 percent. As well, AANDC has announced reductions in the funds available

to AROs for proposal-based projects. In the case of Tribal Councils, a revised funding formula will be in place by April 1st, 2014. According to AANDC, the new tiered funding formula for Tribal Councils will provide “incentives to encourage aggregation in the size of populations served by tribal councils and in the range of major AANDC programs they deliver.” The new funding formula for Tribal Councils will impact our Nations differently. Based on early analysis of the information provided, the funding cuts to all First Nation Tribal Councils between 2011 and 2015 are estimated to amount to over \$21.2 million across the country, representing a 43 percent reduction.

The wave of funding cuts made by the federal government is disturbing, particularly given the commitments made by the federal government coming out of the First Nations-Crown Gathering in January. The federal funding cuts impact on First Nations across Canada. My colleagues and I on the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC), and on the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) executive committee will continue to work with our National Chief, and most importantly our Nations, to develop a united strategy to address these cuts. The national AFN has committed to coordinating an analysis of the impacts of the funding cuts announced by AANDC. I will continue to update you on this important work as more information becomes available. In the short term, the national AFN has committed to supporting regional efforts to address the funding cuts and will continue to advocate for our Nations with the federal government, including efforts to explore access to any alternative funding sources. The recently revived Fiscal Relations Working Group will, among other issues, continue to reinforce the need for stable, predictable funding levels for our First Nations organizations and communities.

I am particularly troubled by the notion that federal funding formulas should continue to dictate how our First Nations organize themselves. We have an inherent right to self-determination. The *Indian Act* system of governance imposed on our Nations has, and continues to, ignore that inherent right. It is critical during this period of Nation building and rebuilding that our people are a part of creating and revising systems and funding agreements that respect our decision-making authority and priorities as we move beyond governance under the *Indian Act* and rebuild our Nations.

**Parliamentary Update:** The House of Commons reopened on Monday, September 17th, 2012. The Senate will reopen on September 25th, 2012. Like many of you, I remain concerned that the federal legislative agenda continues to promote new laws and regulations for us based on a “we know best attitude”. Many of our communities have been working tirelessly to take back control over the decision-making that impacts on our communities and the current legislative agenda does not, unfortunately, properly respect this ongoing work of Nation building and rebuilding.

The UNDRIP requires Canada to take action and this, of course, has to be done by legislation. Those aspects of the *Indian Act* system of governance that are offensive to our Aboriginal title and rights and that do not reflect our proper place within Confederation need to be addressed. Unfortunately, Canada may be using this requirement for “change” as an opportunity to impose its own political ideology about how our lands and peoples should be governed post-*Indian Act*.

Prior to the endorsement of the UNDRIP and escalating after it, the Government of Canada has been engaged in one of the most aggressive legislative agendas respecting our peoples. In the recent past, parliamentary time devoted to legislation affecting 'Indians and lands reserved for Indians' has been mostly limited to implementing land claim or self-government agreements as well as specific optional initiatives proposed by groups of First Nations. From time-to-time Canada has introduced legislation that would affect all First Nations that are governed under the *Indian Act* (e.g., those that are not self-governing), but today there are an unprecedented number of bills that seek to affect governance within our Nations. These are discussed below.

The federal agenda is being advanced in the absence of our Nations having had the full opportunity to find and develop our own solutions for a post-colonial world. This "neo-colonial" approach has to be stopped in favour of an approach that respects our right to determine the policy that will guide the drafting of laws that affect us (whether federal or our own laws). Canada needs to recognize our governance rights which are supported by fair access to lands and resources.

At this time, it is very important that we ensure our perspectives are provided to parliamentarians as they consider the laws that come before them that would affect our lives. At the political level, we will continue to express our opposition and cry foul when there is a lack of consultation, but more importantly we need to continue working to provide concrete and substantive alternatives to the solutions being developed for us by federal policy makers. This can be achieved by building on the work of our Nations in re-establishing our own post *Indian Act* governance and letting federal law-makers know we have our own solutions, such as self-governance recognition legislation. Accordingly, we will continue our lobbying efforts on Parliament Hill and develop carefully and well-prepared submissions for parliamentary committees, and give testimony at committee hearings. If any Chiefs are interested or have a particular desire to speak to any of the current legislation being proposed by Canada, as outlined below, then please contact me and we will endeavour to ensure that you are provided an opportunity to present at committee or that your views and submissions are included in those presentations that we make on behalf of us all. I also encourage all of you to meet with local Members of Parliament and provincial Members of Legislative Assembly.

For more information about specific legislation, please do not hesitate to contact our office. The national AFN also provides parliamentary updates that are available at [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca).

**Bill C-10: Safe Streets and Communities Act:** Bill C-10 received Royal Assent on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Due to the omnibus nature of this Act, the Governor-in-Council fixed several dates on which sections of the Act would come into force. The full Act will come into force by November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012. As I have stated in previous Quarterly Reports, the likely impacts this Act will have on First Nation victims and offenders is concerning. In particular, the Act's promotion of expensive and punitive jail measures does not address the underlying issues that lead to our people being over-represented within the justice system in the first place.

**Bill C- 27: First Nation Financial Transparency Act:** Bill C-27 completed second reading on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012 and was referred to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. The proposed legislation would apply to all non-self-governing First Nations across



Canada. The national AFN continues to advocate strongly for the Committee to hear from First Nations, including advocating for the Committee to travel to First Nations communities so that legislators may hear directly from our communities as to the potential impacts of Bill C-27 and what we actually need to build strong and appropriate governance.

*Bill C-38: Jobs, Growth and Long-term Prosperity Act: The Jobs, Growth, and Long-Term Prosperity Act* (formerly Bill C-38), known also as the Federal Budget Implementation Act, received Royal Assent on June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Given the omnibus nature of this act, the various sections of the act have been deemed to come into force at different times. Most sections of the Act have already come into force, and the majority of remaining sections will come into force on or before January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013. Bill C-38 introduces, amends, or repeals nearly 70 federal laws including amendments to: the *Fisheries Act*, the *Navigable Waters Act*, the *Species at Risk Act*, the *Canada National Parks Act*, the *Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act*, and the *Parks Canada Agency Act*. The Bill also contains a new *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (CEAA 2012).

In June 2012, the BCAFN sent out briefing materials to you on Bill C-38. At the BCAFN Special Chiefs' Assembly this June, the Chiefs' in Assembly passed *Resolution #1(g): Opposition to Federal Bill C-38 Budget Implementation Legislation* directing the BCAFN to develop an action plan to address issues around Bill C-38. Similar resolutions were passed by the UBCIC and the FNS. Accordingly, the FNLC held a strategy session on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the UBCIC offices to discuss the impacts of Bill C-38 and the related regulatory changes still forthcoming. The BCAFN, the FNLC and the national AFN will continue the analysis of Bill C-38 and of the related regulatory changes. Ottawa insiders have suggested there may be another omnibus bill this fall.

*Bill C-428: An Act to Amend the Indian Act (publication of by-laws) and to Provide for its Replacement*: This private members' bill was introduced in the House of Commons by Rob Clarke, Conservative Member of Parliament for Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River. The bill received first reading on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and it is anticipated that the bill will return for second reading in October 2012. If passed, this act would, among other things, amend the *Indian Act* to require band councils to publish their by-laws. At this time, it is unclear if the Conservative government will support this bill. The national AFN continues to monitor the progress of this bill and analyze the potential impacts. We will continue to report back to you as more information becomes available. As I noted in my previous Quarterly Report, Bill C-428 is in no way connected to BCAFN's work on proposed First Nations' self-government recognition legislation and the BCAFN has not been involved in any way with Bill C-428.

*Bill S-2: Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act*: Bill S-2 completed first reading in the House of Commons on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011. It is anticipated that the bill will come before the House of Commons for second reading this fall and then proceed to the Status of Women Committee. The act will impose new rules on the division of matrimonial property on-reserve in the absence of a First Nation making its own laws. First Nations that do not want the federal default rules to apply to their community are strongly encouraged to enact their own Matrimonial Real Property legislation to avoid having this federal legislation imposed upon them. The BCAFN Governance Report, Chapter 3.22, provides a good background on

Matrimonial Real Property jurisdiction ([www.bcafn.ca/toolkit/governance-bcafn-governance-tool-3.22.php](http://www.bcafn.ca/toolkit/governance-bcafn-governance-tool-3.22.php)).

*Bill S-6: First Nations Elections Act:* On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 this bill was referred by the Senate to the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples. Under the bill, First Nations can opt-into the new elections regime proposed under the bill. In some instances, a First Nation may be brought under the new elections regime by ministerial order. First Nations, under certain conditions, may also choose to opt out of the legislation by adopting a community election code. As the AFN's National portfolio holder for First Nations' Governance, I presented to the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012 to speak to this bill. My presentation to the Senate Committee can be found on our website ([www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca)). I argued that the Minister should not be given the authority under this act to bring First Nations under the new elections regime. On May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Bill S-6 was introduced in the House of Commons at First Reading. Among the changes proposed in the bill is the extension of the terms of office for chiefs and councils and the possibility for common election days among several First Nations.

*Bill S-8: Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Legislation:* On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Bill S-8 was introduced in the House of Commons at First Reading. The bill was introduced in the last Parliament as Bill S-11 and, following representations made by First Nations, some changes were made to the present bill, including a commitment in the preamble for First Nation input into the development of any regulations under the proposed act. As I have noted in previous Quarterly Reports, one of the main concerns raised by us has been that the bill would create regulations regarding First Nations' drinking water, without providing First Nations with the financial capacity to comply with these strict regulations. While there has been some support for the changes to the bill by Nations in Alberta and the Atlantic, consensus remains that investments are required to support capacity development for First Nations in this area. This bill is about water governance and we are adamant that the decision-making authority of our First Nations' governments must be respected, and therefore that our First Nations be directly involved in the development of associated regulations relating to water governance on our lands.

*Bill S-207: Act to Amend the Interpretation Act (Non-Derogation of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights):* Bill S-207 received second reading in the Senate and was referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This bill proposes to amend the *Interpretation Act* to add that no enactment (legislation or regulation) shall be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from the Aboriginal and treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada that are recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Senator Charlie Watt, who introduced the bill in the Senate in December 2011, has argued that if passed, this bill would provide an approach that "does away with the need to add a non-derogation clause to each and every bill in order to ensure that the bill contains no infringement of those rights." Non-derogation clauses in law are actually very complicated and their impact not always well understood. This matter has been studied in quite some depth and we will continue to monitor the progress of this bill.

*Proposed First Nations Property Ownership Act*: Legislation looking to apply property ownership rules on reserve lands was mentioned by the federal government in its budget in March 2012. There has since been much talk about this proposed legislation amongst our leadership and significant coverage in the media. Given the apparent lack of understanding in the public regarding this issue I wrote the following “OpEd” piece for the *Globe and Mail* that was published on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012:

“The Globe and Mail

First Nations want property rights, but on our own terms

First Nations are in a period of nation-building or rebuilding, taking back control of our lives after years of colonial rule and being governed as wards of the state by Canada under the *Indian Act*. Our nations are considering how they govern themselves (their core institutions of government) and what they govern (their jurisdictions). Central to this discussion is determining an appropriate system of land tenure that reflects a particular nation’s culture and traditions while also supporting the development of an economy. This necessarily includes a conversation about what types of legal interests in land can be created, who can hold them and how they are recorded. Every nation that has gone through the process of moving beyond the *Indian Act* has undertaken this work – work required to translate hard-fought-for aboriginal rights into practical and real change on the ground in each of our communities.

As a result of our nations’ governance-rebuilding work, there are already many different types of land-tenure systems on First Nation lands; systems that support property rights and, to use the language of economist Hernando de Soto, “unlock the capital” of First Nation lands.

These systems have been developed carefully in order to ensure that collective interests in the land remain so our people have a place they can live and practise our respective cultures and maintain “community.” And to ensure that the primary economic gain from the capital created in our land goes to our citizens (either collectively through our governments or to individuals as property owners) and not to third parties and potential speculators.

The land tenure discussion in our communities has, therefore, not been just about what is needed to make the land more marketable or provide security of tenure, but how to do so while maintaining a community and collective rights. When it comes to property systems, both domestically on or off reserve, and internationally, there are, of course, many ways to govern.

Recently, there has been talk of a proposed federal First Nations Property Ownership Act (FNPOA), which reflects a particular ideological approach to land ownership. The manner in which this proposed bill has been promoted suggests there is no property ownership on First Nation lands today. Also, that creating fee simple interests – where, we assume, title would be raised through a new national body and possibly held by non-Indians – is the best solution. The potential introduction of this bill, which we also understand would be optional for each nation, is creating much debate.

Debate is good. However, it is important that the debate does not take away or distract from the important work that is already well under way in our nations to reform land management, or take away from the more fundamental work of nation rebuilding. Determining a land tenure system, while important, is only one part of the solution. Each of our nations needs to go through its own process of deconstructing the colonial past, and the solutions certainly cannot

be imposed or dictated by the Crown.

It is not clear at this time which of the more than 600 nations support the approach taken in the FNPOA. The Assembly of First Nations, through a chiefs' resolution, has expressed opposition to the FNPOA. However, as with any initiative, if nations want to pursue a particular option, that is their prerogative, but it cannot be imposed on others. Further, as there are limited federal resources to support moving beyond the Indian Act, it is important that resources are directed to initiatives where there is strong support and the best chance of success. For legitimate and well-thought-out policy reasons, most of our nations do not support or see the need for the FNPOA.


But don't confuse this with thinking they do not support change and moving away from the *Indian Act*. Rather, First Nations are advancing innovative and sustainable approaches that will unlock capital, create partnerships and protect their lands and resources for future generations consistent with their rights and responsibilities – on their own terms. And it means the approach and ideological underpinnings of the FNPOA is simply not for them.

Jody Wilson-Raybould is the Assembly of First Nations' Regional Chief of British Columbia."

**BC Fiscal Relations Working Group:** One of the important outcomes of the First Nations-Crown Gathering in January was the acknowledgment by the federal government that First Nations require a new "fiscal relationship" with Canada. Following the direction of our Chiefs, as mandated by *Resolution 06b/2011*, the BC First Nations Fiscal Relations Working Group (FRWG) was re-established. The mandate of the Working Group is quite broad. However, the focus to date has been on issues of "own source revenue" and responding to Canada's desire at "harmonization" of financial transfer agreements for self-governing First Nations. The first meeting of the Working Group was held in Westbank on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Attendance at the first meeting included perspectives from self-governing First Nations, those First Nations still negotiating towards self-government, and those First Nations with sectoral agreements where negotiations have halted due to Canada's punitive approach to offsetting transfers by our Nations' own source revenues. The Working Group has undertaken to review and discuss options on how to address First Nations' concerns with AANDC's current "Fiscal Harmonization Initiative". The BCAFN coordinated a joint response to the federal government and a letter was sent to federal Cabinet Ministers on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The BCAFN agreed to assist in coordinating a meeting with AANDC senior representatives to discuss next steps and the possibility of a joint table. If your Nation is interested in being added to the distribution list for this Working Group or if you would like more information please contact me directly at [regionalchief@bcfn.ca](mailto:regionalchief@bcfn.ca) or 604-922-7733.

## 2. Fair Lands and Resources

Strong & Appropriate  
Governance  


Fair Lands &  
Resources  


Improved  
Education  


Individual  
Health  


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

**BCAFN Legal/Political Strategy:** At the BCAFN Special Chiefs’ Assembly on June 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 2012, we presented a revised BCAFN Legal/Political Strategy to the Chiefs in Assembly following the input we received at a previous Special Chiefs Assembly held in Westbank on March 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This work continues as an extension of the recommendations of the British Columbia All Chiefs’ Task Force that recommended such a strategy be developed. By *Resolution #1(e)/2012 BCAFN Legal/Political Strategy* the Chiefs in Assembly adopted the revised strategy at the SCA in June. This resolution acknowledged that the BCAFN Legal Political Strategy had been redrafted to reflect the feedback received from BC Chiefs at the March 2012 Special Chiefs’ Assembly and summarizes the purpose of the revised BCAFN Legal Political Strategy as the following:

- a. Support and assist First Nations in British Columbia by working to ensure that all First Nations have access to, and can share, timely information respecting the advancement of Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights, through legal action, negotiation, legislative and policy reform, international processes and the exercise of jurisdiction by First Nations;
- b. Support and assist First Nations in their efforts to advance strategic title and rights, including treaty rights, litigation in an efficient and cost effective manner;
- c. Provide guidance to the BCAFN Regional Chief and the Directors of the BCAFN society with respect to the role of the BCAFN in supporting the legal activities of BC First Nations including any potential interventions or other involvement by the BCAFN in any legal proceedings that concern the advancement of Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights;
- d. Work towards ensuring that negotiation processes and negotiations among or between First Nations and the federal and provincial Crown and third parties that affect or may affect the Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights of BC First Nations are fair, impartial and conducted in good faith;
- e. Work towards ensuring that federal and provincial policy and legislation respect the Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights, of First Nations;
- f. Support and assist First Nations in their efforts to exercise their jurisdiction and implement their Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights; and,
- g. Support the development, implementation, and coordination of communications and economic strategies to advance the Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights of First Nations.

All BCAFN resolutions are available online at [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca). Thank you to all of you who attended the SCA in June and who offered feedback on the strategy in advance of this meeting so that we could present a revised strategy document to our Chiefs. Our legal and political environment is continually shifting, evident through new federal legislation, decisions of the courts, and the incredible advancements made by our Nations on the ground. As such the Legal/Political Strategy too will evolve. I look forward to continuing the important work set out in the strategy and seeing it evolve further.

***Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline and Major Development Projects:*** Whether the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline is built or not is increasingly becoming one of the biggest issues of our time. Of course, the decision regarding Enbridge is part of the broader question of what type of development we want in BC and Canada, and also challenges us to define what we mean by “sustainable” development; a term used noticeably less often by federal policy makers. While Enbridge has certainly highlighted this political shift, major development projects like the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion are only a few of the many other examples out there of projects that are presenting challenging questions for our communities. This is a defining moment in our history in BC. Our rights and title, which are still being considered by the courts, have come face-to face with proposed development projects and the debate on “progress”. Governments at all levels are under pressure to set out their positions and to articulate what they are doing to navigate the many dimensions (e.g., environmental, economic, and human) of major development projects. First Nations do not oppose development in all cases; however, our Nations will not support projects where the sustainability of our territories and way of life are unduly threatened. While some of our Nations support the Northern Gateway Pipeline project, the vast majority of our Nations in BC have now publically come out against Enbridge.

On July 23, 2012 the B.C. Government held a press conference to make an announcement regarding Enbridge. A technical analysis was offered which listed five areas that must be addressed before the B.C. Government would consider the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline, or any heavy oil pipeline proposal. Critics have described the province’s position as officially “no position.” The following is taken directly from the provincial position paper, “Requirements for British Columbia to Consider Support for Heavy Oil Pipelines”:

- Successful completion of the environmental review process. In the case of Enbridge, that would mean a recommendation by the National Energy Board Joint Review Panel that the project proceed;
- World-leading marine oil spill response, prevention and recovery systems for B.C.’s coastline and ocean to manage and mitigate the risks and costs of heavy oil pipelines and shipments;
- World-leading practices for land oil spill prevention, response and recovery systems to manage and mitigate the risks and costs of heavy oil pipelines;
- Legal requirements regarding Aboriginal and treaty rights are addressed and First Nations are provided with the opportunities, information and resources necessary to participate in and benefit from a heavy oil project; and,
- British Columbia receives a fair share of the fiscal and economic benefits of a proposed heavy oil project that reflects the level, degree and nature of the risk borne by the province, the environment and taxpayers.

The BCAFN and the FNLC were not informed of this position paper or the requirements therein prior to the announcement. In fact, the province made no mention of the development of such a position paper at all.

In part as a response to Canada's position and the ongoing environmental assessment of the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline, as mentioned in the parliamentary update above, our Chiefs in Assembly passed Resolution 1(g)/2012 with respect to Bill C-38 now *the Jobs, Growth, and Long-Term Prosperity Act*. The Resolution objects to Bill C-38 and calls for meaningful engagement from the Government of Canada with First Nations on improving environmental assessment and regulatory processes so that these processes respect Aboriginal title and rights, including treaty rights.

The direct impacts of *the Jobs, Growth, and Long-Term Prosperity Act* to the Enbridge Pipeline proposal have been released by Canada and included via a revised Agreement on the Joint Panel Review website at [www.gatewaypanel.review.gc.ca](http://www.gatewaypanel.review.gc.ca). One of the key changes as a result of the Act has been that the Joint Review Panel will now provide a single and final report to the Governor in Council (Cabinet), to include a recommendation on whether the project should proceed. The report will also include suggested terms and conditions that the National Energy Board should impose on the project if it is to proceed. The Governor in Council will have the final say on whether the project proceeds or not.

The timeline for the Joint Review Panel for the Northern Gateway Project, as it stands now, is as follows:

- August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012 deadline for letter of comment
- September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012: questioning phase of the final hearings begin starting off in Edmonton. Final hearings will also be held in Prince George and Prince Rupert
- March-April 2013: The Panel anticipates Final Arguments to take place
- January February 2013: Community Hearings Resume—Oral Statements
- December 2013: Final Report

A vast majority of First Nations governments in BC have expressed their fear that it is not a matter of “if” but rather “when” an oil spill will occur, either on land or at sea. With major development projects like Enbridge, the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion and likewise, a reasonable question for our Nations continues to be whether the perceived benefits associated with the project are worth the risk. The BCAFN, together with the UBCIC and the FNS, will continue to work on behalf of our BC First Nations to ensure our voice is heard and that our inherent right to make decisions concerning our lands and resources is respected. First Nation Governments will have final say in whether the Northern Gateway Pipeline Project will proceed.

***Efforts to Prohibit Trophy Bear Hunting in BC:*** Our Nations continue to demand respect for their decision-making authority over their traditional territories, and I continue to be inspired by our leadership across BC, who work tirelessly to protect those territories. Many of you are

aware of the ongoing efforts of our First Nations along the North and Central Coast of BC to prohibit trophy bear hunting. These Nations have joined together to declare a ban on the trophy bear hunt in their traditional territories. The Coastal First Nations are an alliance of First Nations that includes the Wuikinuxv Nation, Heiltsuk, Kitasoo/Xaixais, Nuxalk, Gitga'at, Haisla, Metlakatla, Old Massett, Skidegate, and Council of the Haida Nation. Chief Doug Neasloss of the Kitasoo/Xaixais First Nation is so committed to the protection of the bear population in his traditional territories that he has undertaken to patrol his traditional territories to enforce the ban. Our First Nations, as traditional knowledge holders, continue to warn governments and the general public that the trophy bear hunt is unsustainable and based on their own traditional knowledge and baseline studies, they have made substantive efforts to work with the province to prohibit trophy bear hunting. Still, the failure of the province to effectively monitor and regulate the trophy bear hunt, threatens the bear populations, in particular the Kemode bear. Our coastal First Nations are in the difficult position of enforcing the ban and exercising their jurisdiction. Exercising our jurisdiction is an approach increasingly taken when the sustainable use of natural resources within our territories is not respected. First Nations' enforcement of this ban is an example of First Nations implementing Article 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The convention requires Canada to support the customary and sustainable use of biological resources, including the conservation of key resources for use by First Nations. On September 13, 2012, I joined the National Chief in releasing a public statement in support of the call by Coastal First Nations to end trophy bear hunting.

***William v. British Columbia, 2012 BCCA 285:*** I wish to thank the Tsilhqot'in National Government Chiefs and their legal counsel for presenting on the June 27th, 2012, at the BCAFN Special Chiefs' Assembly – the day after the BC Court of Appeal decision in *William*. Basically, the court upheld the trial judge's findings in respect of rights with respect to the Tsilhqot'in peoples' Aboriginal rights within their territory, but concluded with respect to Aboriginal title that title is not throughout the whole territory but limited to areas of more intensive use historically (village sites, salt licks, fishing rocks, farm lands etc.). The judge did not grant a declaration of title over any of these smaller areas arguing the evidence did not allow him to determine exactly where they are. The Tsilhqot'in leadership indicated they are going to apply to the Supreme Court of Canada for leave to appeal the decision of the BC Court of Appeal. This is a very important case that will have an impact on all Nations. In accordance with the BCAFN's legal/political strategy, I am preparing an affidavit in support of the Tsilhqot'in. The deadline for filing the leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada is September 26th, 2012. The Tsilhqot'in National Government have vested a great deal of time and resources into this litigation and, as demonstrated by the show of support at our Special Chiefs' Assembly in June, the BCAFN and our Nations are behind them as they continue to assert their Aboriginal title to their territory.

***Modern Treaty-Making:*** On the heels of the Lornie Report which is now public, the Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples released its own report on the Treaty Process in BC entitled, "A Commitment Worth Preserving: Reviving the British Columbia Treaty Process". The report urges the federal government to immediately develop timely responses and action plans to address the following:



- A revision of the federal decision-making processes and negotiation mandates to allow federal negotiators more flexibility and authority to allow for more open, genuine, and interest based negotiations with First Nations;
- The need for adequate resources for the BC Treaty Commission to appoint or provide dispute resolution services to assist First Nations in addressing overlapping claims within the B.C. Treaty Process; and,
- For the B.C. government, the federal government, and First Nations Summit to jointly determine what First Nations need to resolve overlapping claims within the B.C. Treaty Process and define each party's responsibility in this regard.

On September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Minister Duncan announced plans for AANDC to “work with its partners on a new approach to treaty and self-government negotiations.” Canada has stated that they will be moving toward a “results-based approach” and will “focus its resources on tables with the greatest potential for success.” AANDC has committed that there will be discussions at the national level with the AFN, as well as regional discussions, and discussions at individual treaty tables. While we have heard similar pronouncements over the years, Canada clearly has a goal to focus its resources to achieve faster results.

I continue to work with my colleagues on the FNLC in BC, and with the national AFN, particularly in my role as Chair of the Comprehensive Claims Working Group, to ensure the interests of our BC First Nations are represented in regional and national discussions. There is ongoing work through the FNS and the Common Table on many of the issues raised in both the Lornie and the Senate Reports, all of which, to some degree, are also being addressed through the Comprehensive Claims Working Group and the review of the federal comprehensive claims policy. The review of the federal comprehensive claims policy is one of the few mechanisms currently open to us to advance our issues with respect to how claims, whether through the treaty process or not, are being addressed in BC (please see below).

***Tla'amin Nation:*** I would like to acknowledge Tla'amin Nation on the ratification of the Tla'amin Treaty in July. The final poll in the treaty vote was held on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and a majority of Tla'amin members voted in favour of the Tla'amin Treaty agreement with the governments of Canada and British Columbia. Important work is now underway to prepare the Nation for the effective date of the treaty which is anticipated in 2014. According to the BC Treaty Commission, the treaty makes Tla'amin Nation the largest landowner in the Powell River region. Tla'amin is the eighth First Nation to ratify a treaty under the BC Treaty Process.

***International Activities:*** As noted above, September 13<sup>th</sup> marked the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Development on an international level to promote the rights of Indigenous peoples is occurring now at a tremendous speed. Canada's adoption of the UNDRIP in 2010 was seen by many as an important milestone in protecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples; however, implementation continues to be a challenge as we work collectively to redesign our First Nations-Crown relationship so that it reflects the important international standards. On the national stage, the AFN continues to provide opportunities for our Nations to discuss and interact on the implementation of the UNDRIP. One such example being a live webinar which took place on September 13<sup>th</sup> at [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca). At the 11<sup>th</sup> session of the Permanent Forum on

Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), I was fortunate to witness the appointment of Grand Chief Ed John as Chair of the Forum. Since then, the Grand Chief and UNPFII have focused on a range of important issues, one example being food security with respect to traditional/cultural foods. On August 9th the world celebrated the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The UNPFII engaged in the topic of modern media as a means to empower indigenous voices. I look forward to the continued work of Grand Chief John as he represents our Nations on an international level and to the benefits we will receive from hearing international examples of Nation building and rebuilding.

***Musqueam First Nation and Amendment to section 15(1)(h) of Taxation (Rural Area) Act:*** On September 13, 2012, members of the FNLC met with the province, tabling a letter of opposition to the amendment to section 15(1)(h) of the Taxation (Rural Area) Act and requesting a meeting with the Premier, Minister of Finance, and Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation on this issue. This amendment was developed and implemented without any consultation with First Nations or any organizations representing First Nations and has significant implications for First Nations in British Columbia. Section 15(1)(h) of BC's Taxation (Rural Area) Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 448, has been in place for over a century and has exempted from provincial taxation "land and improvements vested in or held by Her Majesty or another person in trust for or for the use of a tribe or body of Indians, and either unoccupied, or occupied by a person in an official capacity or by the Indians". As I have noted in my previous Quarterly Report, this section of the act was considered in *Musqueam First Nation v. British Columbia* (Assessor of Area #09), 2012 BCCA 178, where the BC Court of Appeal (BCCA) held that the Musqueam controlled companies holding certain lands in trust for the Band received under a reconciliation agreement with the Province should not have to pay property taxes. This decision of the BCCA as to the scope of the exemption in s.15(1)(h) of the Taxation (Rural Area) Act represents significant benefits to Musqueam and to many of our First Nations. However, as I reported earlier, on May 14, 2012, the Province passed the Budget Measures Implementation Act, 2012, S.B.C. 2012, c. 8 (the "Budget Act"), amending section 15(1)(h) of the Taxation (Rural Area) Act to narrow the applicability of the tax exemption to instances only in which lands are held in trust by the Crown. The FNLC have stated to the Province that this amendment is not in keeping with the BCCA decision and does not represent the honour of the Crown. Despite having won the court case, Musqueam First Nation now faces the real possibility that the province will tax lands which were transferred to Musqueam as a result of another court case. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the FNLC and with our Nations to strongly urge the province to reconsider the amendment to section 15(1)(h) of the Taxation (Rural Area) Act.

***AFN Chiefs' Committee on Claims (CCoC) and Comprehensive Claims Policy (CCP) Working Group:*** As the Chair of the national AFN Chiefs' Committee on Claims (CCoC), BC continues to take a lead role in national discussions on claims resolution. Thank you to those of you that are participating in this process along with myself. Our collective voice is important.

***Comprehensive Claims Policy (CCP) Reform:*** Further to the First Nations-Crown Gathering, the CCP Working Group met with government officials in April 2012. The CCP Working Group expressed concerns with Canada's lack of engagement, the failed policy, and the fact that there have been no tangible outcomes despite the commitment date of January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013 being set. Canada agreed that funding and a workplan would need to be put in place. A meeting is

planned in October where work will continue based on the process set out in the AFN “Aboriginal Title & Rights and Comprehensive Claims Policy Reform” paper:

1. Convene with three representatives each from AFN and Canada to oversee reform discussions;
2. Establish a joint working group to set-out issues for a proposed joint framework for policy reform;
3. Based on confirmation of a joint framework, develop recommendations for policy reform for presentation to the senior table; and
4. Confirmation of reform proposal by AFN and Canada.

The timeframe for this work to get done is quite short and the expectations high. We know which sections of the federal policy are problematic and we need to understand how far Canada is prepared to move, if at all, to make the necessary changes to achieve their goal of improving outcomes. In terms of the work of the BCAFN, in partnership with the FNLC, this work must be seen as a priority in ensuring fair access to land and resources. While the FNS and UBCIC take the lead on these matters in our Province, as the Chair of the National Committee I will endeavour to ensure the process continues and our perspectives are included in the debate.

*Additions to Reserve (ATR):* At the AFN’s Annual General Assembly in July 2012 the Chiefs-in-Assembly reviewed and approved *Resolution no. 26/2012* supporting the continuation of the joint AFN/Canada technical working group (JWG) work to obtain positive changes to the Additions to Reserves (ATR) policy and process on issues that would include, but not be limited to:

- i. A renovation of the existing ATR policy and “Chapter 10” of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada’s Lands Manual to make this policy and process more efficient, effective and transparent;
- ii. A revised ATR process that would ensure that the implementation all settlements agreements that include ATR commitments take precedence over other interests (e.g. municipal tax loss, etc.) and uphold the Honour of the Crown and respect the constitutional status of First Nation Aboriginal and Treaty rights;
- iii. The cooperative examination of legislation, in accordance with the standard of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, that would both expand the current legislative models available in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba to First Nations in other provinces and territories, and include other legislative measures that, in conjunction with the revised ATR policy, make the process more efficient, effective and transparent.

The CCoC will continue to report back to the Chiefs-in-Assembly on the progress made with Canada at the Joint Working Group.

*Specific Claims:* The JWG has been meeting regularly to scope out issues related to revising the ATR policy including the creation of a new ATR category entitled “Tribunal Decisions” for land proposals resulting from a positive decision of the Specific Claims Tribunal to re-acquire or replace specific claims land. There are currently 138 active specific claims in BC.

The Government of Canada (Specific Claims Branch) is preparing a Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) that is expected to be submitted this fall 2012. The AFN prepared a report entitled “Justice Delayed – a submission to Canada for the Five Year Review of the Specific Claims Action Plan: “Justice at Last”.” This submission to Canada was based on the feedback received through the Think Tank sessions held in Vancouver on February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012 and the second on March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in Ottawa. Thank you to those that provided input. There were numerous concerns expressed by those who attended the Think Tank sessions and we encourage all claimants to make their own recommendations to Canada for their five year review.

Specific Claims Toolkit: The UBCIC, in partnership with the AFN, has taken the lead and developed a Specific Claims Toolkit which includes templates and other relevant information to assist First Nations in preparing claims submissions to Canada. The Toolkit can be found at <http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/issues/SpecificClaims.htm#axzz25iu8oYfB> . If you have any questions or require any assistance please feel free to contact Tonio Sadik at the AFN (TSadik@afn.ca) or Jody Woods at the UBCIC (jwoods@ubcic.bc.ca).

Specific Claims Tribunal: The Specific Claims Tribunal is now hearing claims. On May 30<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>, 2012 in Vancouver, the Tribunal heard its first case: *Osoyoos Indian Band v. Her Majesty The Queen In Right Of Canada*. The Honorable Harry Slade, Chair of the Tribunal, found that, “The Osoyoos Band has established a breach of legal obligation arising from the Crown’s administration of reserve lands by failing to act on its duty to exercise its title on the abandonment of the line of rail over the Right of Way Land, for the use and benefit of the Band as reserve.” We will continue to update you as relevant information becomes available regarding the work of the Tribunal. Nations with claims that can be taken to the Tribunal are encouraged to file them.

### ***Fish, Fisheries and Fish Habitat:***

Engagement with Minister Ashfield and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO): On June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 the FNLC met with DFO Minister Ashfield in Vancouver to discuss ongoing work to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the FNLC and the DFO, which, among other things, recognizes the role of the First Nations Fisheries Council (FNFC). A draft MOU is currently in circulation and I will continue to report back to you as more information becomes available. One of the desired outcomes of this MOU would be a more regularized schedule of meetings between the DFO and the FNLC where First Nations leadership could raise issues of concern for our communities across BC.

Cohen Commission Update: As many of you are aware, Justice Cohen is now expected to table his final report this month in advance of the September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012 deadline. Following Bill C-38, the FNFC together with the First Nations Coalition (FNC) made a second submission for the commissioner to consider. We will continue to provide you with updated information as it becomes available. More information is also available on the commission’s website ([www.cohencommission.ca](http://www.cohencommission.ca))

Aboriginal Aquaculture Engagement Initiative: The FNFC and the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association (AAA) co-hosted a “Tier Two” wrap-up session related to the Aboriginal

Aquaculture Engagement Initiative on Thursday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in Vancouver. The BCAFN was pleased to attend and have an opportunity to hear from many BC First Nations on both the opportunities and the concerns associated with aquaculture in BC. The session was an opportunity to discuss priorities, strategies and issues applicable to First Nations' aquaculture development in BC. This was only one of the many meetings that our First Nations and the FNFC have held on the topic of aquaculture. Opportunities and concerns associated with aquaculture will most certainly be a topic of rigorous discussion at the National Aboriginal Fisheries Forum in Nanaimo on October 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

Kwicksutaineuk/Ah-Kwa-Mish First Nation (KAFN) Class Action lawsuit: In 2009, KAFN Chief Bob Chamberlin commenced a class action lawsuit which identified the Crown's regulation of specific salmon aquaculture as being responsible for the decline of wild salmon stocks within the Broughton Archipelago. KAFN launched the suit on behalf of Aboriginal collectives within the Broughton Archipelago. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, the BC Court of Appeal upheld a lower court decision not to certify the class action. On August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012, KAFN announced that they have applied to the Supreme Court of Canada for leave to appeal. If successful, the Supreme Court of Canada would consider whether Aboriginal collectives are able to join together as a "class" to bring a claim before the courts to protect our rights. For more information about the decisions handed down on this class action visit the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs website [www.ubcic.bc.ca](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca).

### 3. Improved Education

Strong & Appropriate  
Governance

Fair Lands &  
Resources

Improved  
Education

Individual  
Health

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

**AFN Chiefs' Assembly on Education:** Education is a priority of the AFN both nationally and regionally. At the AFN's AGA this July in Toronto, the theme was "Honouring our Traditions: Achieving Action for our Future." An important discussion around action on First Nations' Education arose on the floor of the Assembly. As a result of this discussion was the call for a national meeting to further strategize on the topic First Nations' Education. Accordingly, the Chiefs' Assembly on Education will take place in Gatineau, Quebec, from October 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 and I hope that many of you will be able to attend.

**BC Education Initiative:** First Nation Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and BC First Nations, through the Education Jurisdiction Main Table, continue to negotiate funding with AANDC to support the exercise of First Nation jurisdiction over education in accordance with the BC Education initiative objectives. This work is still being frustrated by federal approaches to First Nations' "own source revenues" (OSR) with Canada insisting it must offset federal transfers for education with OSR before funding is agreed to and jurisdiction over education can be exercised. The BC Education initiatives has incredible promise and it is very disappointing that OSR preconditions are standing in the way of progress on a First Nation initiative that can

bring substantive change to our communities in supporting their education objectives. This question of OSR is being addressed within the broader context of the BCAFN Fiscal Relations Working Group discussed above.

**BC Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA):** On January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Canada, British Columbia, and FNEC signed the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA) addressing how existing schools on-reserve are funded. There may be some confusion as to how, and if, the TEFA addresses the issue of First Nations' jurisdiction over education. The simple answer is that it does not address jurisdiction at all and is not related to the BC Education Initiative.

The TEFA will now be entering the implementation stage. On June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, information on the TEFA and the process for accessing the funding was sent to First Nations communities who have opted in and the new funding structure came into effect on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012. To support communities with the transition, FNEC, First Nations Schools Association (FNSA), and Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association (IAHLA) have developed a number of resources. One such resource is the TEFA E-Bulletin available at [www.fnesc.ca](http://www.fnesc.ca) and [www.fnsa.ca](http://www.fnsa.ca). FNEC has also announced that they will be hosting Regional Sessions across BC from September to December 2012. These community meetings will provide updates on the work of FNEC, FNSA, and IAHLA, provincial and federal updates, and opportunities for First Nations to receive support in designing the implementation of the TEFA. For more information on regional sessions near you please visit [www.fnesc.ca](http://www.fnesc.ca).

In addition to facilitating improved funding relations between the parties, TEFA also reaffirms agreements previously reached by FNEC and the federal government related to reduced reporting for First Nations schools in B.C. FNEC spent a considerable amount of time during TEFA negotiations discussing concerns in terms of proposed changes to the national nominal roll process. Through the negotiations, FNEC reached agreement that one of the components of TEFA reporting would be submission of the annual AANDC nominal roll. FNEC continually maintained that this commitment was based on the 2011/2012 version of the nominal roll in the BC Region. TEFA also includes a commitment that in the event of any inconsistency between federal education policy and guidelines and TEFA, the TEFA would prevail.

Unfortunately these TEFA commitments have not been satisfactorily resolved at the TEFA implementation table and so on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012, FNEC gave notice to AANDC that under Section 9.1 of TEFA, they would be engaging the dispute resolution process to address the nominal roll issue. While it is troubling that unilateral actions taken by AANDC are causing this new agreement to falter, I am encouraged by the determination of FNEC and our BC Nations to hold our partners in this new agreement accountable and to keep moving forward. If you would like more information about this issue or TEFA, please feel free to contact Jan Haugen at [janh@fnesc.ca](mailto:janh@fnesc.ca) or 604.925.6087.

On November 22-24<sup>th</sup>, 2012 FNEC will be co-hosting the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Provincial Conference on Aboriginal Education: *Reconciliation through Education* in Vancouver. This will represent another opportunity for us to come together, share our best practices and work with FNEC to ensure our children are supported.

## 4. Individual Health

Strong & Appropriate  
Governance  


Fair Lands &  
Resources  


Improved  
Education  


Individual  
Health  


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

***First Nations’ Health Authority and First Nations Health Council:*** As I indicated in my last Quarterly Report, exciting work is ongoing in BC in the area of First Nations’ Health. In May 2012, the First Nations’ Health Council’s (FNHC) annual conference, *Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey* (Gathering Wisdom V) brought together over 800 delegates including BC Chiefs, Health Directors, and Provincial and Federal Partners to discuss the future of health for First Nations in BC. As many of you are aware, the First Nations Health Society (FNHS) was renamed the interim First Nations Health Authority on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. On August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012, following the direction of our First Nations’ leadership at Gathering Wisdom V, the bylaws were changed to remove “interim” and officially recognize the title of the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA). In addition, First Nations passed Resolution 2012-01 Workplan to describe the key milestones, timeframes, and responsibilities for implementing the Resolution. Based on communications with the FNHC, this important work has been finalized, and will be provided to all First Nations along with quarterly progress reports on continued work.

The creation of the FNHA represents the hard work and determination of so many of our people to create the first province-wide authority of its kind in Canada. The FNHA will be involved in the historic transfer of programs, services and funding from First Nations Inuit Health – BC Region, into First Nations control. One key priority in the Resolution adopting the Workplan is the ongoing implementation of the BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance. This includes significant work to finalize a number of sub-agreements that describe the legalities and logistics of the transfer of people, assets, funding, and records from Health Canada to the FNHA.

Another highlight in the Workplan Resolution is the regional work to conclude arrangements with Regional Health Authorities. In 2011-2012 First Nations in each of the 5 regions initiated Partnership Accords with their respective Regional Health Authorities. Partnership Accords were concluded in the Fraser, North, Vancouver Island, and Vancouver Coastal regions, and I understand that the Interior Partnership Accord will be completed in November. The Partnership Accords are not all the same and reflect the priorities and issues of each region. It is my understanding that the FNHC and FNHA will report extensively on these activities during Fall 2012 regional caucus sessions. For more information please visit: [www.fnhc.ca](http://www.fnhc.ca)

As a member of the FNLC, I have been working with the executive of the UBCIC and the FNS on a protocol of recognition, support, cooperation and coordination with the FNHC and we anticipate that all parties will be in a position to sign this protocol later this fall.

**First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council (FNCFWC):** At our BCAFN Special Chiefs' Assembly this June, *Resolution #01(a)/2012* was passed supporting the BCAFN, along with other members of the FNLC, entering into a declaration and protocol of recognition, support, cooperation and coordination with the FNCFWC. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the FNCFWC and the FNLC met regarding the work that is being undertaken by the Wellness Council. This meeting was also an opportunity for the FNLC and the FNCFWC to formally sign the declaration and protocol between the respective organizations. As we are all too well aware, the number of Aboriginal children in care in BC is disturbingly high and the FNCFWC, together with our Nations, are undertaking important work to address this reality. At the AFN Annual General Assembly in Toronto this July, the Chiefs passed *Resolution #17/2012*, titled "Chiefs Task Force on Child and Family Services." This resolution reaffirmed, "First Nations leadership does not require any guiding federal or provincial policy to move forward on the basis of our Constitutional and internationally protected inherent rights and responsibilities over all First Nations, regardless of residency or 'Indian Act status.'" The resolution also called for the reestablishment of the Chiefs Task Force on First Nations Child and Family Services (AFN *Resolutions 23/2004* and *17/2009*), a national strategy on First Nations child and family wellness, and that the AFN Executive identify regional representatives and resources in order that the Chiefs Task Force could meet. The BCAFN will continue to look for opportunities to support our Nations, the FNCFWC and a new national Chiefs Task Force with the critical work aimed at improving the health and well-being of our children. For more information about the ongoing activities of the FNCFWC please visit their website at [www.fncfwc.ca](http://www.fncfwc.ca) or contact them at 604.922.7795 or [admin@fncfwc.ca](mailto:admin@fncfwc.ca).

**Support and Ongoing Work Related to Aboriginal Women and Girls:** The Murdered and Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, more often referred to as the "Pickton Inquiry", is now in the report writing stage of the process with the Final Report due October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2012. Earlier in the year, fourteen of the groups that represent the interests of murdered and missing girls and women, including the families of the victims, the downtown eastside community, and Aboriginal women's groups, removed themselves from participation in the policy forums or study commission aspects of the Inquiry. Although they removed themselves from the formal process, often critically viewed as being unrepresentative, many individuals and groups have continued to meet as an informal coalition to discuss and advocate for justice and the protection of society's most vulnerable population. On August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012, a Unity Feast was held in honor of missing and murdered girls and women. Singers, drummers, dancers and guest speakers gathered to share a meal and honour the memory of friends, relatives, and sisters. As we look to October 31<sup>st</sup> when the final report is due, events like this feast and other opportunities to strategize and build unity will be important to our overall goal of ensuring that we put an end to the systemic societal problems and problems within our justice system with respect to the protection of our Aboriginal girls and women.

While reporting on the work of advocacy for women and girls, I would like to congratulate Michele Audette on her successful bid for President of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) at the NWAC's 38th Annual General Assembly on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Michele is also president of the Quebec Native Women's Association and many of you will know her from her role as co-chair of the AFN Annual General Assemblies and Special Chiefs' Assemblies. In addition, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Chief



Maureen Chapman for serving as our interim AFN Women's Council representative for BC and to I look forward to the perspectives that both these leaders will bring to this very important work.

NWAC is currently rallying their partners, other advocacy groups and communities around the country to participate in the Sisters in Spirit Vigils to be held across Canada on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Over 20 communities in BC have already registered to participate by holding events on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Information about these individual events is available online at <http://www.nwac.ca/programs/2012-vigil-locations>. The public are invited to add their support to a joint statement that has been developed for release on October 4<sup>th</sup>, a day when we honour the lives of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.

Finally, at a recent FNLC meeting, I was pleased to learn more about the ongoing work of the Ministry's Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women (MACAW) in our province. As many of you are aware, Wendy Grant-John chairs this important council which consists of ten Aboriginal women from BC. The goals of the MACAW are to:

1. Develop and review an inventory of current programs available to Aboriginal women;
2. Identify outcomes needed to improve quality of life for Aboriginal women;
3. Develop targets to achieve the outcomes of Goal 2; and,
4. Maintain the baseline and update outcomes annually

The BCAFN and the FNLC are currently exploring opportunities to support the MACAW, including signing a joint declaration and memorandum of understanding between the FNLC and MACAW. I will continue to keep you updated on this important work.

***First Nation Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCS) and the Federal Court:***

The First Nation Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFCS) and AFN complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission that was initiated in 2009 continues. In April 2012, the Federal Court ruled in favor of the AFN/FNCFCS when it found that a new hearing must occur to examine evidence that First Nations children are being discriminated against because of federal underfunding of child protection services on-reserve. The Government of Canada is appealing this decision despite presentations at the UNPFII committing to reconciliation and rebuilding for the Crown-First Nations relationship. In a recent ruling, Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) has been formally allowed to record the proceedings and will provide updates. The BCAFN will continue to provide updates as events unfold. More information on the case can be found at FNCFCS [www.fncaringsociety.com](http://www.fncaringsociety.com) or at [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 the FNCFCS launched the "Our Dreams Matter Too Campaign"; a national walk and letter writing campaign. The launch coincided with the National Day of Reconciliation and the fourth anniversary of the Prime Minister's Residential School Apology. This inaugural campaign hosted over 50 different walks throughout the country. The Chiefs in Assembly have formally supported the Our Dreams Matter Campaign as well as two accompanying FNCFCS campaigns, Shannon's Dream and the establishment of Jordan's Principal, through Resolution 01(l)/2012 at the Special Chiefs' Assembly in June 2012.

**BCAFN Regional Youth Dialogue Forum:** As Regional Chief, I am fortunate to work alongside two committed young leaders, Erralyn Thomas and Josh Gottfriedson – our BCAFN Youth Representatives. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Erralyn and Josh on their successful bids at the AFN AGA in Toronto in July for the AFN National Youth Council Executive. Erralyn will be sitting on the AFN Youth Council Executive and Josh has been elected as an Executive Co-Chair.

It has been my pleasure to witness the development and launch of the first (of what will hopefully be many) BCAFN Regional Youth Dialogue session to be held on September 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 in Nanaimo. The event is being coordinated by Josh and Erralyn and supported through funding by the New Relationship Trust. Youth leaders aged 19 to 29 from 50 First Nations communities on Vancouver Island will gather for the two-day *Vancouver Island Youth Forum: Empowerment Through Inheritance* at the Vancouver Island University campus in Nanaimo. The forum will be a chance for some of our young leaders to discuss quality of life, their participation in governance, and Aboriginal rights and title, including treaty rights. Our BCAFN Youth Representatives are hopeful that this Regional Youth Dialogue Session will be the pilot for similar sessions at different regional locations across BC. For more information about the forum please email [youthforum2012@bcfn.ca](mailto:youthforum2012@bcfn.ca) or visit our website at [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca).

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in B.C.:** It has now been four years since the Government of Canada made its official apology for the atrocities suffered during the residential school era. The process of reconciliation continues to be both difficult and critical for our citizens; especially as the deadline for the Independent Assessment Process approaches. If you haven't already done so please remember the deadline for submissions under the Independent Assessment Process is midnight on September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. However, if for some reason relating to disability or undue hardship or other external circumstances you cannot make the September 19<sup>th</sup> deadline you are encouraged to contact Service Canada 1-866-879-4913. For information on accessing a lawyer to assist in navigating this complex process please see [www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca](http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca). Another important resource is the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program where health support workers can assist you with access to emotional health and wellness support services. For more information please see [www.hc-gc.ca](http://www.hc-gc.ca).

The healing process continues both on a national, community, as well as an individual level. Through TRC funding, residents of Lower Post held the *Gathering Around the Fire* event on August 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The Gathering brought together former students of the Lower Post residential school along with members of the community, government representatives, and First Nations leadership for a weekend of healing focused on traditions and a cleansing of the land. The Gathering afforded members of the community the opportunity to discuss healing and next steps. One such step was identified as the continued work to cleanse and remove the former residential school building in Lower Post.

**Day Scholar Class Action Launch, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012:** On August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, I was pleased to join the National Chief in supporting the Sechelt First Nation and Tk'emlups when they filed their class action law suit against the federal government in respect of the impact of day schools. The

Common Experience Payment for Residential School Survivors was only available to former students that boarded at residential schools. Day scholars also suffered abuse at the hands of school administrators and teachers being victims of the same system designed to “kill the Indian in the child.” We will provide updates on the progress of this class action law suit in subsequent Quarterly Reports.

## **PART TWO: RELATED ACTIVITIES**

***BCAFN Special Chiefs’ Assembly- June 2012:*** In addition to releasing Part Three of the Governance Toolkit: *A Guide to Community Engagement: Navigating Our Way Through the Post-Colonial Door*, the BCAFN Special Chiefs’ Assembly held on June 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 was an opportunity to report on and endorse the revised BCAFN Legal/Political Strategy, to continue discussions on the proposed private members’ self-government recognition bill, to consider resolutions on issues concerning First Nations in BC, and to prepare for the July 2012 AFN AGA in Toronto.

On the afternoon of June 29<sup>th</sup>, a special all candidates forum was held, where we were able to hear from five of the eight candidates vying for the position of AFN National Chief. I heard from many of you that you appreciated the opportunity to meet and talk directly with the candidates.

I would like to thank all those who attended and contributed to the Assembly in June. We are in an important transition period. It is critical that we continue to meet regularly as leaders to share our experiences, discuss matters of mutual importance and concern to one another and develop strategies to advance our rights and title in this period of Nation building and rebuilding. The next BCAFN Special Chiefs’ Assembly and the BCAFN Annual General Meeting are scheduled for November 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the Westin Bayshore in Vancouver. Notices will be sent out with more information about these meetings and the elections for Regional Chief and for members of the AFN Board of Directors and Women’s Council Representative. Information will also be available on our BCAFN website at [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca).

***National AFN Election and General Assembly—July 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 2012:*** The AFN held its AGA in Toronto, from July 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This meeting included the election of the National Chief. A record number of candidates, eight in total, campaigned for the National Chief position, with each bringing forward a range of experience and perspectives, and I would like to congratulate all the candidates on their individual campaigns. I would especially like to thank all of the candidates that attended our BCAFN Special Chiefs’ Assembly on June 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> to share their vision with our Chiefs and to those that presented to our BC Caucus in Toronto.

For me the election focused our attention on approaches to governance, leadership, and how to define our shared path forward, both as treaty and non-treaty Nations. It is fair to say that the AGA received notable media coverage and through social media outlets and the news coverage, these discussions were able to reach a much broader audience across the country than in previous years. The vivacity and complexity of perspectives and ideas highlighted by all

the candidates and participants is telling, in terms of how critical and exciting a period of Nation building or Nation rebuilding we are in.

At the AGA, as is now the established practice, we had the opportunity to meet as a regional caucus each day. I was very pleased to see that we had very strong representation (163 chiefs or proxies) and unity. Our songs from the BC caucus room were heard throughout the conference center and sent a very powerful message. The voting took place on Day Two of the Assembly and voting went to three ballots. Regional Chief George Stanley and Joan Jack were resigned from the first ballot followed by Ellen Gabriel, Terrance Nelson, and Dianne Kelly in the second. After a full day of anticipation the final votes came in at 341 for Shawn A-in-Chut Atleo, 141 for Pam Palmater, and 30 for Regional Chief Erasmus. I was pleased to congratulate Shawn A-in-chut Atleo on his re-election for a second term as our National Chief and look forward to continuing to work with him.

Amidst the excitement of the election, the AFN held strategy sessions on 1) justice, safety & security, 2) infrastructure, 3) action on the 60s scoop, and 3) Bill C-38. On Day Three the Chiefs in Assembly addressed 28 different resolutions of which 12 were put forward by our BC delegation. All resolutions are available on the AFN website.

**Engagement with the Province:** As Regional Chief, I am committed to continue working on behalf of our BC First Nations to build a strong relationship with the provincial government as outlined in the *New Relationship* where each of our Nations can address their own specific issues directly with the Crown. However, recent provincial announcements, like that made on July 23<sup>rd</sup> that outlined B.C.'s requirements for heavy oil pipeline consideration (as discussed above), do give us reason for concern. A key element to any relationship is communication. I see this announcement, and the lack of communications around the announcement, as an important reminder of the work still needed to build and maintain a strong and respectful relationship with the Province.

On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the FNLC met with B.C. Premier Christy Clark and her Deputy Minister, John Dyble in Vancouver. As I noted in my previous Quarterly Report, the purpose of this meeting was to seek the Premier's commitment to re-engage with BC First Nations at a senior political leadership level. As a follow up to the meeting with the Premier, on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the FNLC and Deputy Minister Dyble met to discuss opportunities for the FNLC to work together with the Province on shared priorities. The FNLC will be meeting again with Deputy Minister Dyble and other provincial deputy ministers on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012. We will continue to update you and provide more specific outcomes of these meetings as the information becomes available.

**36<sup>th</sup> Annual BC Elders Gathering, July 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 2012:** Once again elders from across our region had the opportunity to come together to share, celebrate, and learn together at the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual BC Elders Gathering in Abbotsford on July 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Over 3,000 people attended including B.C. Lt-Governor Steven Point who spoke to the assembly after the opening procession. The theme for the conference was "Les'emot: One heart, One Mind, One Family". Every year this is a great event and one that I am always very pleased to attend and have the opportunity to recognize and support our elders. The gatherings are particularly fun because,

while serious issues are discussed, there is plenty of time for catching up, celebrating life and all that it means to be a First Nation's person today. I look forward to next year's gathering which will be hosted by the Lheidli-T'enneh in Prince George.

***Paddle for the Peace, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012:*** The West Moberly First Nation along with the Peace Valley Environment Association and Y2Y conservation initiative held their 7<sup>th</sup> annual "Paddle for the Peace" on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2012. The Paddle for the Peace is a two plus hour paddle on the Peace River through the area to be flooded by the proposed B.C. Hydro Site C Dam. The paddle raises awareness about the impacts of the proposed project to the traditional territories of the West Moberly First Nation and the environment. Grand Chief Stewart Phillip and myself shared a canoe. We both appreciated the opportunity to be on the water alongside the citizens and leadership of the West Moberly First Nation and thank the coordinators of the event.

***Okanagan Nation Annual General Assembly, July 25-26<sup>th</sup>, 2012:*** I was pleased to have had the chance to speak at the Okanagan Nation Annual General Assembly which took place July 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in Vernon, B.C. The AGA was co-hosted by the Okanagan Indian Band. Over two hundred citizens of the Okanagan Nation Alliance were in attendance. I would like to thank the Okanagan Nation Alliance for inviting me and giving me the opportunity to speak about the BCAFN's current initiatives. In conjunction with the AGA there was also a chance for youth to come together for a Youth Leadership Gathering. Presentations were held on important topics such as education and wellness. Next year's ONA AGA will be hosted by Lower Similkameen Indian Band.

***Kamloopa Pow Wow 2012:*** This August long weekend, I had the opportunity to attend the Kamloopa Powwow which is hosted every year by Tk'emlups te Secwepemc Indian Band. I would like to thank Chief Gottfriedson for his invitation and would like to congratulate the coordinators on another successful year. This was, in fact, my first time to the Pow Wow and quite a new experience. The hundreds of dancers, drummers, and thousands of spectators makes you realize just how important it is to celebrate our diverse cultures and to share them with one another. At the end of the day, we can have all the rights in the world but if we do not have our culture we do not have our identity. I was honoured to participate in the Grand Entry amidst the dignitaries of the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc and look forward to going back.

## **PART THREE: BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS' OPERATIONS**

### ***BCAFN Elder Representative:***

Chief Robert Joseph

Kwakwaka'wakw elder is the Regional Chief's Elder Advisor

### ***BCAFN Youth Council:***

Josh August Gottfriedson  
Erralyn Thomas

Tk'emlups te Secwepemc  
Snuneymuxw First Nation

[maleyouth@bcfn.ca](mailto:maleyouth@bcfn.ca)  
[femaleyouth@bcfn.ca](mailto:femaleyouth@bcfn.ca)

**BCAFN Board of Directors:**

Chief Cheryl Casimer	St Mary's Band
Chief Maureen Chapman	Skawahlook First Nation
Chief Nelson Leon	Adams Lake Indian Band

**BCAFN Staff:** I want to take this opportunity to thank Cheryl Wadhams for the incredible support she has been to our small team as receptionist at the BCAFN. Cheryl has been with the BCAFN since 2008. Her last day with the BCAFN will be September 13th, 2012. We wish Cheryl much success in her new position with the First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council.

Courtney Daws	Director of Operations	<a href="mailto:courtney.daws@bcafn.ca">courtney.daws@bcafn.ca</a>
Angie Derrickson	Policy Analyst	<a href="mailto:angie.derrickson@bcafn.ca">angie.derrickson@bcafn.ca</a>
Alyssa Melnyk	Policy Advisor	<a href="mailto:alyssa.melnyk@bcafn.ca">alyssa.melnyk@bcafn.ca</a>
Whitney Morrison	Executive Assistant	<a href="mailto:executive.assistant@bcafn.ca">executive.assistant@bcafn.ca</a>
	Finance	<a href="mailto:finance@bcafn.ca">finance@bcafn.ca</a>
	Reception	<a href="mailto:reception@bcafn.ca">reception@bcafn.ca</a>

**Information Sharing/Webpage:** The BCAFN website hosts the "Governance Toolkit" where the Governance Report and the Guide to Community Engagement, along with reference documents and other resources are accessible online ([www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca)). We continue to work with First Nations that wish to contribute to and update their individual profile page to share information and highlight their successes with others. If you would like to provide any feedback, contribute to the site, or update your First Nation's profile, please contact [angie.derrickson@bcafn.ca](mailto:angie.derrickson@bcafn.ca).

**NOTICES**

September 22-23, 2012  
**BCAFN—Vancouver Island Regional Youth Forum:**  
***Empowerment Through Inheritance***  
Vancouver Island University  
Nanaimo, BC  
Sponsored by the New Relationship Trust

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**KEY DATES:**

Pre-Registration Deadline – Tuesday, September 19, 2012  
Registration deadline for youth delegates – September 17, 2012  
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Please note that this is a regional event reserved for Vancouver Island First Nations and their youth delegates; however, we look forward to providing this opportunity in other regions in the future.

For detailed information please visit [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca)

October 2-4, 2012

**National Aboriginal Fisheries Forum “Seize the Economic Opportunities”**

Vancouver Island Conference Centre – Nanaimo, BC

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**Co-hosted by:** First Nations Fisheries Council of BC, Assembly of First Nations, Aboriginal Aquaculture Association, Native Brotherhood of BC, Atlantic Policy Congress  
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For detailed information please visit [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)

Oct 1-3, 2012

**AFN – Chiefs Assembly on Education**

Palais des Congres de Gatineau

Gatineau, QB

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**KEY DATES:**

Pre-Registration Deadline - Tuesday, September 25, 2012  
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For detailed information please visit [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)

November 23-25, 2012

**AFN – 4<sup>th</sup> National First Nations Youth Summit**

Saskatoon, SK

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**SAVE THE DATE**  
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For more updates please visit [www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca)

November 26-27, 2012  
**BCAFN – Special Chiefs’ Assembly**  
Westin Bayshore  
Vancouver, BC

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**KEY DATES:**

**Elections – Tuesday, November 27, 2012**

**POSITIONS FOR ELECTION AT THE 9TH AGM ARE:**

**Office of BC Regional Chief – One Seat**

**BCAFN Board of Directors – Four Seats**

**BCAFN Women’s Council Representative – One Seat**

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More details will be forthcoming upon confirmation of an Electoral Officer  
For more information please visit [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca)

Up to date information can be accessed on our website: [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca).