

**SNTC Council of Chiefs
Meeting Summary (December 2, 2009)**

Opening Prayer was said by Chief Judy Wilson.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL

Elders Gathering

The 34th Annual Elders Gathering will be held next July at the Sunwave Centre in Salmon Arm. The King and Queen are J.D. and Ethel Billy.

Councillour Evelyn Camille (Tk'emlups) represented the elders. She raised their concerns about the role of, and respect for, the elders in event planning. "The elders are the driving force of this event," responded Chief Leon. The elders have chosen a Planning Committee and "we have to honour their elected structure," added Chief Christian.

Chief Leon then used a whiteboard to draw an organizational/administrative structure that showed the elder's role in decision-making and budget approval. Chief LeBourdais explained that the organizational team is responsible for bringing the elder's ideas "to fruition." However, he cautioned that in event management, budget limitations mean that, like buying a car, you might not be able to get "a Cadillac," but, a new Camry instead.

Chief Matthew said that the question of financial liability had to be resolved because, "we don't want to put our elders at risk." Chief Leon said that a yet-to-be-determined existing financial system will be used.

As it stands, the Gathering will be hosted by the Secwepemc nation. The Adams Lake Band will take the lead and will hire an Event Coordinator. Support will come from the Elders Council, SNTC and the Secwepemc Cultural and Education Society.

Moving forward, Chief Wilson said that the Gathering is an important event that "rejuvenates the elders." She added, "we want their input. Their comments are valued." Chief Wilson then recommended "a traditional way to start again on the right foot, would be to offer tobacco to the elders at their next meeting."

Youth Council

Reanna Leonard reported that the Youth Council will do fundraising to help the Elders Gathering. A recent 50/50 Draw raised \$200.

The Youth group has also been distributing financial assistance material to Secwepemc youth who are interested in going to school.

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JURISDICTION

Chiefs Working Group on Stsmamlt will meet with Minister Mary Polack on December 8th to make a submission for funding to begin the Community needs assessment and engagement process.

Secwepemc Child and Family Services (SCFS)

Serious concerns about SCFS were raised from Skeetchestn, Bonaparte, Simpcw and Tk'emlups. Councillour Marion Lee said that, "people are really worried child welfare" and they are coming to the Elders Council for help and guidance.

Chief Leon expressed that "the service is not meeting the community's expectations. What we envisioned, what we supported, isn't what's on the ground. We need to meet with their decision-makers, the Board." A meeting has been scheduled for December 16th.

On a related note, Chief Paul Sam pointed out that there was funding available from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Accordingly, the Chiefs passed a motion for that a proposal for funding with respect to ongoing issues stemming from the Residential School policy be written.

Health

The Shuswap Health Directors submitted a Position Paper explaining the lack of consultation in the development of a new First Nations health authority. They are asking for that chiefs, councils and Health directors to meet on December 14th to plan for the upcoming regional meeting.

Education

Chief LeBourdais presented the Local Education Agreement Between the Bands of the Secwepemc Nation and School District No. 73 (July, 2005), as well as, the Protocol to Increase the Number of Aboriginal Teachers in School District No. 73 (November, 2004).

Forestry

Chief Matthew requested that SNTC contribute \$15,000 (over three years) to the Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition. He said that SNTC is a Board member and a "main driver" on SIBAC and that aboriginal interests are well-represented there. SNTC has received \$90,000 from SIBAC for a Mountain Pine Beetle and Cultural Values projects.

In response to questions from the chiefs, he explained that SIBAC members are towns and Regional Districts in the southern interior. The money requested would be used for core funding. Chief Wilson recommended that an economic analysis of wood fibre value be carried out. Chief Matthew replied that he would direct staff accordingly. Funding was approved .

Fisheries and Wildlife

Chief Deneault reported that he and Chief Felix Arnouse (Little Shuswap), members of their respective councils and the Fisheries Director will begin work on this Portfolio.

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RIGHTS AND TITLE

Jules-Wilson Litigation Update

This case is important to protect watersheds from further industrial logging, other than Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) infected trees.

Tolko got an injunction to log in Brown's Creek. The Okanagan nation got a counter-injunction, based on a Preservation Order, to stop logging. According to Chief Leon, the province proposed putting the engagement of title back into the court case. The Okanagan asked to see this proposal "in writing." The response has just been received.

Government to Government Meetings with the Province.

Chief LeBourdais has been working with Aboriginal Affairs George Abbott's office to organize meetings between the SNTC Chiefs and various provincial Cabinet Ministers. Reasons being: (1) the FNLC doesn't represent SNTC or its member bands, and, (2) to develop understanding between the ministries and the SNTC. These meetings will start in the near future and will take place on a monthly basis.

Green Lake

The tentative date for the next meeting is January, 22, 2010, at 100 Mile House.

All Chiefs Inherent Title and Rights Task Force

Chief Wilson gave an overview on the All Chiefs Inherent Title and Rights Task Force. Their work is based on two fundamental questions:

- 1) What does aboriginal title mean to us?
- 2) How do we organized ourselves around that?

Key concepts that she outlined:

Inherent rights are based upon the deep connection of indigenous peoples to the land.

The United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes: aboriginal right to self-determination; traditional lands; and the free, prior and informed consent of aboriginal peoples in decisions about development on traditional lands. (But Canada has not signed).

Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution (1982) re-affirms and protects aboriginal and treaty rights.

For the **Supreme Court of Canada**, aboriginal title is a right to be protected under the Constitution. What's more, the Court has decided that governments must "consult and accommodate" First nations before allowing development on traditional lands.

The Need for Policy Reform

At the **provincial** level: Neither the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) nor its enabling organizations (BCAFN, UBCIC, FN Summit) can provide prior, informed consent to on behalf of BC

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First Nations, because it is not the proper rights holder. According to Section 35, consent has to be given by First Nations according to their own political systems.

The **federal** Comprehensive Land Claims Policy limits what is negotiable; restricts self-government to reserve and settlement lands and; and extinguishes Aboriginal title under the modified rights model. BC First Nations - both those who've entered negotiations and those who haven't - have demanded policy reform. Federal governments, Liberal and Conservative, have refused.

At this week's AFN meeting in Ottawa, BC First Nations will unite to press the case for policy reform. Chief Christian said that the Task Force will soon send an Action Plan (including P.R. campaign with an Olympics strategy) to all of the communities.

GOVERNANCE

Finance Committee

Chief Matthew presented the Finance Committee report. "I'm happy to report that we are in fairly good financial shape in all three of our major line agencies," he said.

Nance Henne (Finance Director), Bonnie Leonard (Acting Tribal Director) and Murray Ross (Fisheries Director) met with Barry Huber of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to discuss funding and reporting matters.

There was a review of the first draft of the travel "coding" sheet.

Governance Policy

Chief Wilson proposed a Governance Policy for the Council of Chiefs. Chief Deneault voiced his approval. Councillour Fred Fortier (Simpew) said that it's a good way to define roles and responsibilities and to have mechanisms to resolve issues.

Chief Leon recommended that there be reference to Councillour's role at Council of Chiefs meetings (ex.: delegate for a Chief, participate in discussions). Chief Paul Sam added that the Finance Committee should look at finding a budget for Councillour's travel.

The Acting Tribal Director will begin work on a draft Policy.

A draft of a new **Agenda**, based on the Chief's Portfolios, was presented. It was suggested that it could work with diligence about: (1) submitting agenda items one week in advance, and (2) adhering to time limits when reporting. In addition, there are plans for some training for SNTC administrative assistants.

Attendance

- Chiefs Wayne Christian, Rick Deneault, Nelson Leon, Paul Sam, Judy Wilson, Keith Matthew, Michael LeBourdais.
- Councillours Jen Allen, Evelyn Camille, Fred Fortier, Marion Lee
- Bonnie Leonard, Veronica Leonard, Walter Quinlan (SNTC)
- Reanna Leonard (Youth Group)