

SNTC Chiefs' Meeting Updates March 2009

The first Wednesday of each month marks the coming together of the chiefs of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council (SNTC) to voice their concerns and ideas, setbacks and successes, their community's needs and wants.

First on the agenda was the finalization of the Protocol Agreement for Cooperation with the Thompson Nicola Regional District (TNRD). A formal signing ceremony will take place at the TNRD offices downtown Kamloops on March 26th.

Creating strong ties between communities was a big topic at this month's meeting. Along with the TNRD protocol discussions surrounded the importance of building intergovernmental relationships with other nations, and the adoption of a resolution for the establishment of a Secwepemc National Government. The introduction of this resolution is meant to initiate discussions between Secwepemc communities with the intent of building a united Secwepemc nation.

A progress report was given on the Secwepemc Land Use Planning Project. The project is working towards Aboriginal input in provincial planning matters.

Upcoming work in salmon restoration in the Columbia River was introduced to the council, along with the confirmation of an upcoming Secwepemc Economic Development Corporation (SEDCO) board meeting which will take place April 17th at the SNTC.

It was also brought to the attention of the chiefs that plans were in full swing for the Secwepemc business opportunities forum scheduled for late summer, early fall this year. Also upcoming is the Annual Shuswap Gathering hosted this year by the Shuswap Indian Band, and scheduled for July 24th-26th. The chiefs have approved an increase in donation made by the SNTC towards the Gathering.

Two delegates presented to the chiefs on behalf of their respective organizations. Nathan Matthew, Executive Director of Aboriginal Education at Thompson Rivers University (TRU), brought forth issues and successes regarding Aboriginal education while also introducing training opportunities with the Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics. More information can be found at www.tulo.ca.

From Ottawa the chiefs welcomed Deborah Taylor, Executive Director of the First Nation Market Housing Fund (FNMHF) who provided the council with information packages and a brief presentation complete with a questions and answers session regarding funding opportunities for on reserve housing initiatives.

Chiefs in attendance were Chief Wayne Christian of Splatshin, Chief Michael LeBourdais of Whispering Pines, Chief Rick Deneault of Skeetchestn, Chief Felix Arnouse of Little Shuswap, Chief Keith Matthew of Simpcw, Chief Judy Wilson of Neskonlith, Chief Shane Gottfriedson of Kamloops Indian Band and Chief Paul Sam of Shuswap.

The Shuswap Nation Tribal Council will reconvene Wednesday, April 1st, 2009. The SNTC Chairperson elections will take place at this time.