

SNTC Council of Chiefs
Meeting Summary (March 2, 2011)

Community Roundtable

Chief Terry Porter updated the Chiefs on **Bonaparte**'s ongoing commitment to trades training for their youth. "It's a long process and we'll see all the results in five, six years," he said. Some of the Bonaparte youth recently graduated as certified welders. Chief Deneault said that CN is looking for First Nations workers and that he'd let Chief Porter know when CN will be at Skeetchestn.

Diane Anthony reported that **Adams Lake** recently signed a "protocol with Simpcw. The signing and celebration was well-attended and "witnessed by youth and elders." Adams Lake is "looking forward to working with others on ventures."

Neskonlith is working on protocols, updating their governance structure and Comprehensive Community Planning. Everyone is pleased that the irrigation system for agriculture will be operational this spring. Young people from Neskonlith will be attending the Gathering Our Voices conference. Chief Wilson noted that economic development is moving forward. They're doing energy assessment plans to reduce costs and exploring alternative energy approaches.

Recently-elected **Skeetchestn** Councilor Tom Hewitt said that a peaceful demonstration on the Bonaparte plateau is planned for March 7th. As a result of their media campaign, six of eight companies have said that they'll come to the table.

Tk'emlups' recently hired a new CEO, John O'Fee, said Dolan Paul. The renovations to the band administration offices' are nearly complete. Phase 1 of the wastewater project will finish up this April.

Chief LeBourdais said that the **Whispering Pines/Clinton** is addressing trespass issues with Kinder-Morgan and Fortis; negotiating its Hihume claim with Canada; and beginning discussions on a draft protocol with Bonaparte plateau bands (High Bar, Bonaparte, Pavilion, Skeetchestn and Whispering Pines/Clinton).

Acting Chief Fortier reported that **Simpcw** is raising funds for Councilor Paul Celeste who lost his home to a fire. Four candidates are running to be Chief.

At **Splatsin** work continues on their multi-plex centre. They have a youth representative and they'll be hosting the next elders meeting.

Tribal Chairperson (Kukpi7 Christian)

There will be two Tribal Council Resolutions presented at the upcoming UBCIC meeting: one on ousting provincial jurisdiction over heritage conservation and another on provincial funding of consultation and accommodation. There's dialogue between Secwepemc bands on FROs and working together. The chiefs discussed a "collective action strategy" to support Skeetchestn.

Elders

Diane Sandy reported that Richard Billy is the interim President of SCES. The elders also want their representative at the SNTC table to attend on a rotating basis. Chief Wilson expressed the Chiefs' thanks for the report from the elders.

The Council of Chiefs approved a financial contribution of \$3,500 to the Adams Lake IB to help offset costs of their taking the lead role in hosting last year's BC Elders Gathering.

SNTC purchased advertising in the Royal Canadian Legion's "Military Service Recognition Book" to honour Secwepemc veterans.

Youth

The youth group wants to include all 17 Secwepemc bands, not just SNTC members. They're also planning workshops on the land to learn from the elders.

Health

Kukpi7Christian reported that the seven interior nations signed a Unity Declaration. They'll work together on a community-driven, nation-based approach to First Nations health.

Splatsin First Nation's submission to Interior Health Authority's Request for Proposals to design, construct and operate a 60-bed residential care facility at Splatsin was supported by the Chiefs.

Following a presentation by SNTC's Martha Matthew, Director of Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training, the Chiefs approved the ASET proposal for Aboriginal Employment Opportunities in Health Care funding. They also committed to an in-kind contribution for the payment of wages of our member bands addictions counselors to attend the Community Addictions Training and the Advanced Counseling Training.

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Tribal Director

Tribal Director Bonnie Leonard submitted a long list of completed action items. In the past month she worked with many people on topics such as commercial fisheries, First Nations health, youth, Rights and Title, heritage conservation, and employment and training.

Secwepemc Fisheries Commission

SFC attended the recent Conservation and Harvest Planning Forum on Fraser system salmon. They thanked marine and lower Fraser First nations for limiting their early-timed Chinook fisheries last year. An honour song was performed by John Pierro (Bonaparte). Then, SFC made a presentation requesting continued conservation efforts for 2011.

Stsmémelt Project

Lynn Kenoras had a good meeting with staff from Secwepemc Child and family Services staff. The Project Research unit will focus on historic documents to be used to support the implementation of legal framework for Secwepemc jurisdiction. Planning has started on the next Chiefs Special Forum. There have been presentations in 11 communities.

Finance

The Council of Chiefs approved, by motion, SNTC's provisional annual budget for 2011-2012. Nance Henne (Finance Director) said that all monthly financial reporting is up-to-date.

Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training (ASET)

ASET Director Martha Matthew recently met with representatives from provincial ministries funding, programs and services. Changes to the department's organizational structure are being made in order to efficiently deliver programs and services. Shuswap Training and Employment Program staff recently attended the "2010: Labour Market in Review Workshop."

Chief Mike Leach, Chair, St'a'imc Chiefs Council

Chief Leach was invited to the Council of Chiefs table to speak about the St'a'imc experience with nation building and their recent \$210,000,000 agreement with BC Hydro.

Although he spoke about politics and business, what Chief Leach believes in most is people. "The Creator is sovereignty and the people are the keepers of sovereignty. It really comes down to people believing in their responsibility," he said. "Our people found it in themselves. We've never looked back," he added.

It started when the elders brought everyone to sit together. "The main question we asked ourselves was: Who are we?" From that simple question came the recognition of the Frog Clan. "That was the start of nation," said Chief Leach.

For the next twelve years they worked on a community Constitution. Written in the traditional language it speaks to St'a'imc way of life. "It's not a policy book. It says who we are. State your rights, don't explain them," Chief Leach advised.

Their Constitution also provides for the St'a'imc Governance House. Revenue from the agreement with BC Hydro will fund this governance structure.

There is no extinguishment of rights and title in this agreement, but, there are past impacts and infringements. It establishes a revenue-sharing process and 40% of monies will be disbursed on an annual basis, while 60% goes in trust to grow.

"It's a living agreement, not just a settlement," because it's implemented through ongoing government to government relations between the St'a'imc, BC Hydro and the province. Chief Leach believes that some in government are starting to see that rights and title based agreements are a better way to go than treaty.

In response to questions from around the table, he offered some advice:

- "Don't go separately, go collectively" into negotiations.
- "Take an inventory of everything" in the territory and then measure impacts.
- BC Hydro will negotiate. "They have set a precedent; they have no choice."

In conclusion, Chief Leach said that "the concept of the Allied Tribes is on the horizon." He offered to host a Gathering between the St'a'imc and the Secwepemc, later this year "after the fishing is done," as an informal way to bring people together.

In attendance

Chiefs: Terry Porter, Wayne Christian, Michael LeBourdais, Rick Deneault, Nelson Leon, Judy Wilson and Fred Fortier (Acting Chief).

Councillors: Jean Brown (Splatsin); Dolan Paul (Tk'emlups); Diane Anthony, Cliff Arnouse, Charlie Andrew (Adams Lake); Tom Hewitt (Skeetchestn)

Youth: Reanna Leonard

Elder: Diane Sandy

SNTC: Bonnie Leonard, Walter Quinlan, Veronica Leonard