

SNTC Chiefs' Meeting Updates April 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.

Elections for the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council's chairman went off without a hitch this month. Nominees included both Chief Wayne Christian of Splitsin First Nation, and Chief Michael LeBourdais of Whispering Pines/Clinton Indian Band. Chief Wayne prevailed, and will hold the chairman position for three years time. The SNTC wishes all the best to both nominees, and congratulates Chief Christian on his newly appointed position.

A highway expansion project outside Pritchard disrupted ancestral remains of the Secwepemc people resulting in opposition from members of the surrounding communities. The issue was brought to the chiefs and it was resolved that the chiefs of the SNTC oppose any further work on the highway, and will do whatever is necessary to stop further desecration of ancestral burial sites, and sites of archeological importance to the Secwepemc people.

It was unanimously agreed that the remains would not be removed from the site, and that a sunrise reburial ceremony would take place in accordance with custom on Friday, April 3rd, 2009 at 6:00am.

Having met with representatives from the Northern Shuswap Tribal Council (NSTC), Chief Michael LeBourdais was able to confirm interest in the possible formation of the Secwepemc Secretariat which would serve to unite members of the southern and northern Secwepemc communities.

Talks have also begun surrounding the harmonization of election dates and electoral codes for Secwepemc communities. Currently, the Secwepemc nation has seventeen member communities, with seventeen different election dates. Discussions are also being held regarding membership codes.

In attendance were Chief Wayne Christian of Splitsin, Chief Michael LeBourdais of Whispering Pines, Chief Paul Sam of Shuswap, Chief Nelson Leon of Adams Lake, Chief Felix Arnouse of Little Shuswap, Chief Terry Porter of Bonaparte, Chief Judy Wilson of Neskonlith, Chief Shane Gottfriedson of Tkemlups and Chief Keith Matthew of Simpcw, along with numerous council, SNTC staff and community members.