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Children & Families

What is the Interim First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council (IFNCFWC)?

The Interim First Nations Child and Family Wellness Council (IFNCFWC) was established at the Indigenous Child at the Centre II Forum held on July 21 – 23, 2008 to: amend the Indigenous Child at the Centre Action Plan; develop a workplan to advance and implement the Action Plan; and develop a Terms of Reference for a permanent IFNCFWC.

In addition to the list of accomplishments provided in the September 2009 Information Bulletin, most recently the *Indigenous Child at the Centre Action Plan* was adopted by resolution of the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC in late September and early October. With this renewed mandate and direction, the IFNCFWC will move forward on the following priorities for the remainder of the fiscal year:

- Hold a third Indigenous Child at the Centre Forum in March 2010 to seek advice and direction from First Nations;
- Work with other organizations to plan and hold in BC a United Nations Expert Group Meeting on child welfare matters;
- Prepare a workplan for the Indigenous Child at the Centre Action Plan;
- Finalize a workplan with MCFD for the Recognition and Reconciliation Protocol on First Nations Children, Youth and Families;
- Participate in policy and relationship-building discussions including continuing efforts to engage the federal government, and establishing the Indigenous Caucus composed of Aboriginal, technical and service organizations with expertise in child welfare matters;

- Engage with First Nations on what a permanent governance structure for the Council should look like.

For more information about the IFNCFWC, please visit:
<http://www.informationbc.ca/child2/>

Economic Development

In mid-2007, through resolutions, BC First Nations tasked the BCAFN, FNS and UBCIC with coordinating the development of a BC First Nations Economic Development Action Plan. To achieve this, the three organizations established both a small Economic Development Working Group (composed of First Nations, First Nations organizations and experts, industry, and government) and a broader Economic Development Partners Group (composed of any person or organizations with expertise in First Nations economic development).

Through the ongoing work and advice of these groups, a draft BC First Nations Economic Development Action Plan was developed, reviewed and amended by First Nations through various regional sessions in the fall of 2007 and a province-wide First Nations Economic Development Assembly in February 2008. All feedback from these sessions was incorporated into the draft Plan, which was adopted by resolution of the three political organizations in 2008.

The Economic Development Working Group then developed a concept paper for the BC First Nations Economic Development Council, engaged with First Nations on this document at the BCAFN Assembly in February 2009, and received resolutions of support for the concept paper from the three political organizations in late 2009.

Given the current work being undertaken by the First Nations Task Force, the Economic Development

Working Group is not proceeding on further Economic Development Council development at this time, pending the outcomes from that process. Instead, it is moving forward on other priorities pursuant to the BC First Nations Economic Development Action Plan, including:

- conducting an environmental scan to determine the economic status of First Nations communities and economic opportunities for First Nations;
- developing an inventory of economic development related tools, programs, and supports;
- creating an economic development “SWAT” team to provide support and advice to communities;
- developing a program for executive/leadership exchanges;
- developing a resource website and resource centre to house all information;
- developing BC procurement legislation; and
- nurturing relationships, relationship/partnership agreements, information-sharing, resource pooling and communications/networking.

Work on these priorities is resourced through the contributions of the Economic Development Working Group member organizations – no new resources have been secured for these efforts; instead, existing resources are geared towards the priorities established by First Nations in the Economic Development Action Plan.

The Economic Development Working Group is currently reporting on all of its activities as part of the New Relationship Trust’s regional engagement sessions taking place throughout October and November.

First Nations Energy and Mining Council

The First Nations Energy and Mining Council (FNEMC) has a number of initiatives underway. These include the following:

Renewable Energy Strategy including Bioenergy

This strategy is currently being developed and a report is expected to be ready for distribution in the New Year.

Economic Benefits Strategy

This will identify the economic benefits that First Nations may derive from the development of the energy and mining sector such as resource revenue sharing, employment opportunities, participation of First Nations businesses, equity ownership and others. The study will also include developing and documenting best practice approaches by working with industry and government. As well, it will include recommended agreement phases to ensure First Nations are adequately consulted and accommodated.

Mining

The FNEMC has been asked to participate on the Minister’s Council on Mineral Exploration and Mining. This council will reconvene in the coming months and the FNEMC will participate to advance the following priority issues:

- Reforming the environmental assessment process to respect First Nations authority and decision-making for mining projects;
- Commitment to reform the existing free entry system with a process that will ensure that mineral tenures are acquired in a manner respectful of Aboriginal rights and title;
- Resource revenue sharing with the Crown and First Nations on mineral exploration and development; and
- Impact Benefits Agreements with industry.

Workshop on independent power projects

This workshop was held by the FNEMC on September 22nd and a

proceedings report will be available to all First Nations soon. There were presentations from industry associations, academia, BC Hydro, and First Nations’ legal counsel and experts that have negotiated previous agreements.

The workshop goals included:

- Identify the nature and extent of economic benefits thus far received, or expected to be received by the provincial government and private sector corporate actors in the ‘wind’ and ‘run of river’ IPP sectors;
- Gather information from Tribal Councils or First Nations business entities presently active in the energy sector regarding the challenges and experiences they faced;
- Gather and review existing Impact Benefit Agreement templates and traditional knowledge protocols.

BC Utilities Commission Inquiry into Long Term Electrical Transmission Needs

The BC Utilities Commission Act provides for an inquiry into BC’s infrastructure and capacity needs for electrical transmission. In December 2008, the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Petroleum Resources provided terms of reference for the inquiry which include that BCUC shall:

- make determinations with respect to transmission infrastructure and capacity needs for a 30 year period;
- assess generation needs by geographic location, taking into account areas inappropriate for development, objectives of the 2007 Energy Plan, future export opportunities, and cost-effectiveness and efficiency;
- invite and consider submissions and evidence from interested persons - specifically including First Nations;
- publish a draft report before June 30, 2010.

The FNEMC will be participating in this process.

BC First Nations Fisheries Council

Fisheries Assembly

The First Nations Fisheries Council is hosting a fall fisheries assembly from October 28–30 in Chehalis on the subject of “Protecting Access to Fisheries Resources.” Information is available on the website at www.FNFisheriesCouncil.ca. This assembly promises to be an important opportunity for First Nations from around British Columbia to gather together to share information and to work collaboratively on the protection of rights and title. The agenda, accommodation information, and maps are available on the Fisheries Council website. The Fisheries Council is able to provide financial support to one representative for each First Nation in British Columbia.

Appointments

The Fisheries Council has received a number of new appointments based on the appointment process which was approved by B.C. First Nations last spring. The process for appointments is posted on the Fisheries Council website, and involves First Nations from around British Columbia coming together within 14 geographic regions to agree on a method and process for appointing their own member to the Council. Please contact the Executive Director of the Fisheries Council for more information at Brenda@FNFisheriesCouncil.ca. The Fisheries Council hopes that all First Nations in B.C. will be able to see an appointment made for their region as soon as possible.

Aquaculture

The Fisheries Council and the Aquaculture Working Group are collaborating on follow up relating to two resolutions on aquaculture recently passed at the UBCIC, First Nations Summit, and BCAFN meetings. There is a national AFN policy meeting being held in the first week of November in Montreal, and the Fisheries Council will be bringing

the messages in the aquaculture resolutions to both First Nations from across Canada and to national Fisheries and Oceans Canada staff.

Commitment to Action

Work continues with Fisheries and Oceans Canada on the completion of a Commitment to Action. The Council met with Regional Director General Paul Sprout on October 5, 2009 and spoke to the areas of priority under the Commitment to Action, which include the development of working groups and work plans in the priority areas of: protection of access to Section 35 (1) protected fisheries; co-management; salmon shares; and aquaculture. More information on the progress of these groups will be provided at the Fisheries Assembly next week.

Information-sharing

The Fisheries Council has an extensive e-mail list service which provides regular information on fisheries issues of interest to B.C. First Nations. It also hosts regular bi-weekly conference calls which offer an opportunity for information-sharing and dialogue among B.C. First Nations with respect to fisheries issues. Please email info@FNFisheriesCouncil.ca if you would like to sign up for these notices.

First Nations Forestry Council

The First Nations Forestry Council has been discussing joint priorities with the Minister of Forests this past month. The economic downturn in the forest sector has finally hit the Ministry of Forests and finding available resources for continued support to the Forestry Council is becoming very challenging. The Forestry Council is focusing on policy development work that will support the implementation of the recommendations presented in the Roundtable report published by the Ministry of Forests earlier this year.

Federal funding for Mountain Pine Beetle continues to be a struggle, as all efforts to find financial resources

have been of late. The Forestry Council has a proposal for funding submitted with Western Economic Diversification under their Community Adjustment Fund (CAF). It is hoped that this will provide dollars to assist 10-15 MPB affected First Nations with continued fuel management planning and treatment work. A number of communities have their own ongoing submissions and programs in this area as well and the Forestry Council will continue to work with NRCAN, INAC, MOFR and FNESS on our joint fuel management working group to support the ongoing work in this area.

Forestry Forum

The Forestry Council will be hosting a 2 day forum on “First Nations in the Forestry Sector” from November 23-24 in Vancouver. It will be reporting on survey work undertaken to understand the current level of involvement and benefit to our communities in forestry at a provincial level. Further, the results of Forestry Council programs in Mountain Pine Beetle, policy development and capacity support have created information that the Forestry Council wishes to share.

First Nations Health Council

Gathering Wisdom REGISTRATION FULL

The third annual Gathering Wisdom Forum will take place from November 3-5, 2009 in Vancouver. Over 400 participants are registered for this year's forum. The annual forum provides a venue for the First Nations Health Council and our federal and provincial partners to gather feedback and input from communities and provide updates on the Health Plans' implementation. Federal Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq is tentatively confirmed for November 3rd to speak on matters relating to First Nations governance of First Nations health services in BC. For those who are unable to attend the forum please tune in to our webcast at: www.fnhc.ca

Comic Book- Physical Activity and Gang Prevention

FNHC in partnership with the Healthy Aboriginal Network recently completed a comic book on physical activity with a subtheme of gang prevention. The story follows Cullen, a young man at a cross roads in life who gains a sense of belonging through working as his community's recreation coordinator. The story was tested with youth and physical activity and gang prevention specialists, for authentic storylines, characters and dialogue by the Healthy Aboriginal Network. Perhaps the most redeeming feedback came from Aboriginal youth gang members incarcerated at the Manitoba Youth Centre, who loved the comic book and only asked for slight dialogue changes. 20,000 copies of the comic book will be distributed to all First Nations communities and First Nations schools later this month.

Principals Meeting – Governance

On September 25, 2009, the Principals to the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan met in Vancouver with the First Nations Interim Governance Committee co-chairs and regional members. National Chief Shawn Atleo also attended the meeting to provide support for the work of the First Nations Interim Governance Committee. This was the second Principals meeting in less than a month.

At the meeting, Federal Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq, and Ida Chong, Minister of Healthy Living and Sport, had the opportunity to hear directly from the First Nations Interim Health Governance Committee and have an open dialogue on the health governance process. The co-chairs and regional members in attendance provided important feedback and directions to continue moving towards the creation of a new First Nations structure to govern First Nations Health Services in BC. At the meeting, the Ministers also confirmed their political commitment

to continue active participation in the health governance work in order to advance the development of this new First Nations governance structure and to reach a potential agreement-in-principle by December 2009.

Co-Chairs to the First Nations Interim Health Governance Committee are Grand Chief Ed John (First Nations Summit), Grand Chief Doug Kelly (BC Assembly of First Nations), and Chief Shane Gottfriendson (Union of BC Indian Chiefs). Regional Members include: Tanu Lusignan (proxy for Chief Willard Wilson), Chief Margery McRae, Freddie Louie, Anne Marie Sam, Warner Adam, Doris Ronnenberg, Justa Monk, Chief Joe Dennis, Gwen Phillips, Chief Ko'waintco Michel, Chief Willie Charlie, June Quipp (interim member), Chief Maureen Chapman, Charles Nelson, Chief Bob Chamberlin (interim member), Chief Russ Chipps (interim member), and Cliff Atleo (interim member).

New Relationship Trust

The New Relationship Trust (NRT) is continuing its series of regional engagement sessions in October and November. The NRT supports initiatives that strengthen BC First Nations. These sessions will be an opportunity for NRT to provide an overview of our initiatives and for you to provide input to our future direction.

The dates and locations are as:

Oct 13	Prince George- Ramada Hotel
Oct 15	Fort St. John – Quality Inn
Oct 20	Williams Lake – Overlander Hotel
Oct 22	Kamloops – Chief Louie Assembly Hall
Oct 26	Cranbrook – St. Eugene Mission Resort
Oct 29	Campbell River – Quinsam Hall
Nov 3	Victoria – Victoria Native Friendship Centre
Nov 5	Vancouver – Tseil-Waututh Comm. Centre
Nov 10	Prince Rupert – Nisga'a Hall
Nov 12	Terrace – Kitsumkalum Hall

First Nations Technology Council

The First Nations Technology Council (FNTC) is beginning work on Phase III of the First Nations Information Support Service (FNISS). Working with their Advisory

Council made up of technicians from First Nations and advisors from Canada and BC, this phase builds on the Strategy and Action Plan completed in December 2008 and the Community Needs Assessment completed in March 2009. This phase of FNISS has 4 parts: Capacity, Access to Data, Tools and Software and Developing a Business Case for Information Support Services. As part of the Capacity module, FNTC will be developing a Strategic Capacity Plan for Natural Resources Information Management. In addition, it will be offering a number of workshops in GPS/GIS and Information Management (see www.fntc.info for details on how to register or call 1-888-921-9939).

The FNTC is also in the process of finalizing a survey to determine the need for an Information Centre/Call Centre that would be a focal point for providing better information and referral services. FNTC will accept completed surveys until November 15, 2009 and it is available on the FNTC website at www.fntc.info and there's a chance to win a laptop.

Aboriginal Tourism BC (AtBC)

Indian Summer Festival

AtBC issued a press release on September 28 regarding the successful Indian Summer Event held at Robson Square in Downtown Vancouver from September 25-27. The weekend was a tremendous success where an estimated 8000 people attended.

AtBC organized the Indian Summer Festival as another activity as part of their pre-2010 Olympic Games program and is confident that the success of this event has set the tone for the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry in February 2010.

Members Forum Oct 24-25, 2009

AtBC is planning to host the next AtBC Members Forum in October. The Member Forum will be held at the Delta Richmond Hotel (near the YVR Airport).

Marketing Initiatives

AtBC management continues to promote the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry in BC. AtBC organized Fam Tours with media for three weeks in September where a number of market ready businesses were showcased.

AtBC sponsored an evening for the Go Media Event held in Whistler in September. AtBC and the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Center partnered to showcase the potential of Aboriginal cultural tourism to approximately 300 media writers who are preparing for the 2010 Games. AtBC made key contacts and is working on additional stories to promote increased media awareness during the games.

Corporate Relations Program

AtBC has launched its 2009-2010 Corporate Relations program. AtBC is pursuing corporate partners to support the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry. AtBC will be inviting the corporate partners to our Christmas Party scheduled for December 3, 2009 tentatively scheduled at the Pan Pacific Hotel.

2010 Olympic/Paralympic Games

AtBC will be officially presenting the AtBC 2010 Program at the AtBC Members Forum in October. AtBC management and the Board of Directors continue to complete a number of items to ensure that Aboriginal cultural tourism is promoted at every possible location during the 2010 Games. The AtBC 2010 program will be posted publicly after the AtBC Members Forum.

Regional Sessions (Reminder)

AtBC continues to participate in the New Relationship Trust led Regional Sessions being held in October to November. AtBC wants to further promote Aboriginal cultural tourism. AtBC looks forward to meeting community leaders interested in Aboriginal cultural tourism development.

Calendar of Events

- Oct 24-25: AtBC Members Forum
- October 28-30: Fisheries Assembly (Chehalis)
- October-November: NRT Regional Sessions (province-wide)
- November 3-5: Gathering Wisdom Health Forum (Vancouver)
- November 18-19: UBCIC Chiefs Council (Vancouver)
- November 23-24: Forestry Forum
- November 25-27: First Nations Summit meeting (Vancouver)
- December 8-10: AFN Special Chiefs Assembly (Ottawa)