

FIRST NATIONS

Edition

September 19, 2014 Twice monthly summary of news reports from throughout British Columbia on First Nations, rights & title issues, and Aboriginal communities.



Clark Visits Nemiah Valley
(Province Page 4)



Tsilhqot'in Declare New Tribal Park
(Province Page 4)



Dasiqox Tribal Park

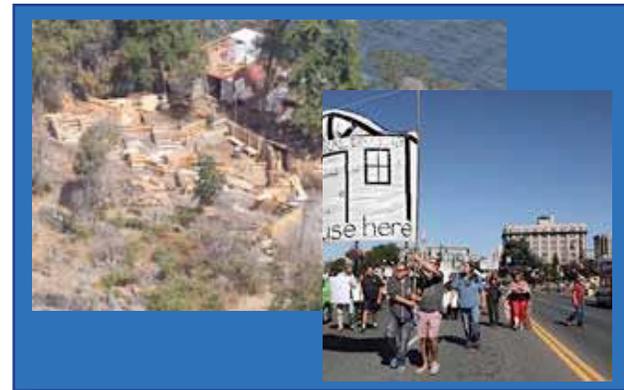
AROUND THE PROVINCE

INSIDE

- 3** **Around the Province**
First Nations Seek Mine Action and Accountability
- 6** **Across the Nation**
Liard Put Under Third-Party Management by Feds
- 6** **Treaties**
CN Stays Injunction for Treaty Dispute Discussions
- 7** **Forestry**
Ministry Scraps Area-Based Forest Tenures
- 7** **Fisheries**
Salmon Stewardship Topic of Presentation
- 7** **Local Government**
United Call for Assessment of Site C Cost
- 8** **Health & Community**
Roundtable on Missing Women Good Idea
- 9** **Education**
UBC Offers Connection to Aboriginal Perspective
- 10** **Culture**
Haida and Heiltsuk Reaffirm Peace
- 10** **Editorials**
- 12** **Location Map**

First Nation Leaders Meet with Ministers to Discuss Grace Islet

On September 11, a group of Salt Spring residents opposed to the construction over a First Nation's burial ground on Grace Islet rallied outside the legislature building in Victoria while First Nations leaders met inside with the deputy and assistant deputy ministers from the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations. The group says the provincial government's implementation of the Heritage Conservation Act is biased and questioned the issuing of a site alteration permit allowing the property owner to build a house on Grace Islet. The First Nations leaders are asking the minister to resolve the issue and immediately designate the islet as a heritage site. A provincial government spokesperson said "the ministry continues to work with First Nations, local government and the landowner on an alternate resolution." Grace Islet supporters have gathered over 620 signatures on a petition seeking the provincial acquisition and protection of the property.



(Gulf Islands Driftwood, September 10)

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First Nations Seek Action and Accountability on Mount Polley Disaster

Chief Michael LeBourdais of the Whispering Pines/Cinton Indian Band said interior First Nations are calling on the province to answer questions and take immediate action toward holding Imperial Metals accountable for the Mount Polley mine tailings bond breach, including a safe and reliable clean-up plan. The mine is located in their traditional territory and band members have used the area and waterways for generations, so therefore they are concerned about how the province and company are cleaning up the spill and how they will ensure that the landscape is rehabilitated, said LeBourdais. To date, the province has not involved the First Nation in spill management plans, any investigation into the cause, or clean-up plans. LeBourdais is calling for the province to immediately commence consultation. Whispering Pines is also calling on the Chief Inspector of Mining to order the mining operation to be closed or to cancel Imperial Metals' permits to allow for those affected by the spill to be consulted on "whether and how the mine should be designed and operated in the future." St'at'imc communities downstream from the mine have concerns about impact to fisheries and surrounding habitat on the Fraser River and they need to be included, said Cayoose Creek (Sekw'el'was) Indian Band Chief



Once a small woodland creek, now a lifelike moonscape of mining tailings entering the Fraser River watershed

Michelle Edwards. Whispering Pines and other Secwepemc communities have already begun documenting the effects of the spill, and members have established a Sacred Fire and Senxiymetkwe Camp near the spill to monitor environmental impacts and take testimony from local residents. First Nation members, along with Likely residents, also recently hosted a press conference to present a first-hand, eyewitness account of the devastation and destruction. "We have seen that Imperial Metals are pumping the tailings into fresh water leading to Quesnel Lake," said Kanahus Pelkey, a camp founder. B.C. Environment Minister Mary Polak said as of September 9, between 200 to 300 gallons per minute was still flowing out of the breach despite the government-imposed deadline to stop the effluent flow by September 4. The government sent a warning to Mount Polley

Mining Corporation telling the company to ensure the storage facility could withstand a one-in-10-year, full-day rain event. Polak said a first offence warrants a warning, but if they do not follow through the penalties could be up to \$300,000 per day in fines and potentially jail time.

The Northern Secwepemc the Qelmuw (NStQ), under an August 18, 2014 Letter of Understanding with the provincial government, will design a government-to-government process by October 31, 2014 to assess the adequacy of existing mine related laws, regulations, and policies. A specialized team of third-party experts has been assembled to work with NStQ to ensure a fully informed and engaged process is in place for holding the government and Imperial Metals accountable for a timely and thorough response to the Mount Polley disaster.

(Okanagan Sunday, September 7; Vancouver 24 Hours, September 10; Nation Talk, September 11; NStQ Treaty Group – News Release, September 17)

Northern Shuswap Tribal Council:
www.northernshuswaptribalcouncil.com
 First Nations Health Authority: www.fnha.ca
 Ministry of Environment: www.gov.bc.ca/env/
 Ministry of Energy and Mines: www.gov.bc.ca/ener/
 Interior Health Authority: www.interiorhealth.ca
 Imperial Metals Mount Polley Mine:
www.imperialmetals.com/s/MountPolleyUpdate.asp

Tsilhqot'in Declare New Prosperity Land as Tribal Park

A Tsilhqot'in First Nation is planning to declare about 3,120 square kilometres of land in the Chilcotin as a tribal park, with a formal unveiling ceremony for Dasiqox Tribal Park set for October 4. Although Taseko Mines Ltd.'s Fish Lake and proposed New Prosperity Mine site lie outside of the Tsilhqot'in title area recognized by the Supreme Court, it has been included within the park boundaries, which has some questioning the validity of declaring the tribal park and what it means for the mine project. The tribal park's purpose is to protect cultural, heritage and ecological values of the region. Large-scale industrial mining and clear-cut logging would not be permitted, but smaller sustainable resource activities would be allowed if they were determined to be suitable. An inventory report commissioned by the Xenigwet'in and Yunesit'in First Nations in August noted that the area features a unique "rain shadow" forest ecosystem and some of the best habitat for large carnivores, and states that the only option to protect them is through a designation of full protection status, such as a tribal park/provincial Class A park combination or Conservancy.

(Vancouver Sun, September 11)

Clark Meets with First Nations to Discuss Tsilhqot'in Ruling

On September 10, Premier Christy Clark and B.C.'s Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation Minister John Rustad travelled to the Nemiah Valley to meet with Xenigwet'in First Nation Chief Roger Williams. "We told her she needs to see our [Tsilhqot'in] title land," said Williams. Prior to the visit, the Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) chiefs met with Clark in Vancouver with four requests: 1) address the issues of the past by exonerating the Tsilhqot'in chiefs that were wrongfully hanged during the 1864 Chilcotin war; 2) help bring the federal government to the negotiating table to address the rights and title area and to implement the Supreme Court decision; 3) explore long-term social and economic opportunities, including hunting, fishing, forestry and resource extraction management; and 4) that Clark visit Nemiah. While in Nemiah, Clark signed a Letter of Understanding on title land with the TNG chiefs with the goal of building a more positive relationship, and which also sets the groundwork for long-term reconciliation efforts and how to implement the Tsilhqot'in land title judgement.

Clark later met with representatives from more than 200 First Nations in Vancouver to discuss the Tsilhqot'in decision, which she described as a "fork in the road" that allows both sides to choose a new path. Clark also recently named Musqueam leader Wade Grant as an adviser to help guide toward economic and social agreements with First Nations. Assembly of First Nations B.C. Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould said it would take more than just talk and "mandate tweaking" – concrete changes created together are needed so that First Nations can build capacity and take on greater responsibilities for governance.

(Vancouver Sun, September 6 and 12; Williams Lake Tribune, September 10; Tribune Weekend, September 12; Globe and Mail, September 12)

Haisla Company Seeks LNG Export Licences

Cedar LNG Export Ltd., an economic development arm of the Haisla Nation, has filed applications with the National Energy Board for three 25-year licenses to ship a total of about 20 trillion cubic feet of B.C. liquefied natural gas (LNG) overseas. The plan calls for a network of six docks jutting from Haisla land for floating LNG vessels and six mobile processing plants with construction starting in 2017-2020. The project is still in the planning stages, with discussions underway with various industry participants. The Haisla previously agreed to lease parts of their coastal property to two other B.C. gas-export terminal projects.

(Daily GPI, August 29)

Klabona Keeper Occupy Drill Site

On September 9, the Klabona Keepers, consisting of members of the Tahltan Nation, hiked to the remote drill site of Black Hawk Drilling Ltd. and took it over, shutting down the exploratory drilling operation. Black Hawk, which works for Firesteel Resources Inc. of Vancouver and OZ Minerals of Australia, flew its drilling crew out when the occupation began. The Klabona Keepers first set up protest roadblocks against the project in 2006 when Firesteel began to examine a copper-gold deposit in the Sacred Headwater. At that time the company withdrew, but Tahltan members noticed they had returned earlier this summer and told them they had to remove the drill or the protestors would take over. President and CEO of Firesteel, Michael Hepworth, noted that the drilling crew is working in the area with the approval of the Tahltan Central Council (TCC) and are fully permitted by the B.C. government to do exploratory drilling. A spokesperson from the Ministry of Mines confirmed that the company does have “all the necessary tenures and permits” and that the government is working with TCC. Although TCC is the main governing body of the Tahltan Nation, the Klabona Keepers operate independently and the two groups are sometimes at odds, but generally support each other.

(Globe and Mail, September 10)

First Nation Partnership Signs Camp Lease

Black Diamond Dene Ltd. Partnership, a 2009 equity-based agreement between the Fort Nelson First Nation (FNFN) and Black Diamond, has signed a long-term camp lease for workforce housing facilities in the Horn River Basin, north of Fort Nelson. The lease includes a 425-room lodge and related infrastructure. The partnership’s goal is to provide quality, competitively-priced service while including FNFN members in the benefits that come from development within their traditional territory.

(Fort Nelson News, August 20)

Williams Lake Band Chief Re-elected

On August 21, members of the Williams Lake Indian Band re-elected Chief Ann Louie for another four-year term. Louie received 99 votes while her opponent, Earl Thomas, received 52 votes. Chris Wycotte, Willie Sure, and Heather McKenzie were elected as council members and will join councillors Rick Gilbert and William Sellars, who are currently half-way through their four-year terms. The new chief and council were effective immediately following the election and their first meeting was on September 2.

(Williams Lake Tribune, September 3)

Neskonlith Oppose Sun Peaks Expansion Plan

In August, Sun Peaks Resort applied for provincial approval to locate a new chairlift in the Gil’s area as part of its project to add 250 hectares of new ski terrain this winter. The Neskonlith Indian Band, who only heard about the plan in the spring through the news media, is opposing the expansion project, said Chief Judy Wilson. The band is concerned about not being consulted and about the lack of environmental assessment, said Wilson. Sun Peaks general manager Darcy Alexander said the resort deals directly with the provincial government, and it is the government’s responsibility to deal with First Nations rights as part of the approval process. Logging is already underway at the expansion site and the new ski terrain is expected to be ready for this ski season.

(Kamloops This Week, September 5)

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ACROSS THE NATION

Liard Put Under Third-Party Management by Federal Government

On August 26, the Yukon's Liard First Nation community was informed by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (AAND) Canada that the federal government would be appointing a third party to manage the band's finances. As a "last resort," third party management can be imposed by AAND in cases of bankruptcy or allegations of mismanagement. Chief Daniel Morris blames the federal government and the previous administration for the current situation and said the First Nation plans to fight the move. Morris and the band council were elected last December and were "shocked" to find that the previous administration had left them with a financial ledger bordering on bankruptcy. AAND asked the new chief and council to come up with a repayment plan for debt dating back to 2010, but Morris said they were asking for "the impossible." AAND has been investigating the Liard's finances for several months and is auditing the band's spending over several years.

(CBC News, September 2)

TREATIES

CN Railway Stays Injunction for Treaty Dispute Discussions

The Canadian National Railway (CNR) has stayed its injunction order against the Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs (GHC) to allow all parties involved in the treaty land dispute time to resolve the issue. GHC expects the government to withdraw its offer of Gitksan land tenures and rights in the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum First Nations' treaty agreements in principle on or before September 17. The Gitksan agreed on September 8 to extend their suspension of evictions of sports fishermen, forest personnel, and CNR to September 17 pending discussions that began on August 26 between the Crown, Kitselas and Kitsumkalum. Meanwhile, GHC said they would maintain all camps on highways, railways and rivers.

(Nation Talk, September 9)

Mine Project has Support from Local First Nation

Pretium Resources Inc. is proposing to build a \$750-million underground gold-silver mine next to Brucejack Lake, which is in the traditional territory of the Skii km Lax Ha First Nation. Hereditary Chief Darlene Simpson supports the Brucejack project and much of the labour for the exploratory and preparatory work have been provided through the First Nation's Tsetsaut Ventures, with the employment of 63 First Nation members (about 70 per cent). The mine will not require a tailings pond to be built because half of the tailings would go back underground and the rest would be pumped into Brucejack Lake, which does not contain fish and already has mine tailings in it from a previous mine project. A B.C. Environmental Assessment Office review of the project is currently underway

(Business in Vancouver, September 8)

The Ktunaxa Nation Council recently announced two new members to the organization: Dale LeClair as Chief Administrative Officer; and Robin Louie as Director of the Economic Sector.

(Daily Bulletin, September 8)

FORESTRY

Ministry Scraps Area-Based Forest Tenures

Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operation Minister Steve Thomson recently issued a statement regarding the report on the government's proposal to convert volume-based forest licences to area-based tree farm licences. The report contains 35 recommendations covering economic, social, environmental, and administrative issues, and specifically stresses the need for strong First Nations and community support. However, following the recent Supreme Court Tsilhqot'in decision and requests from forest companies and communities to focus on key immediate priorities, the ministry has decided not to proceed with legislative changes but will continue to consider the recommendations in ongoing work, said Thomson.

(North Thompson Times, September 4)

FISHERIES

Salmon Stewardship Topic of Presentation

On September 6, Will Atlas, a member of the Qqs (the Heiltsuk word for eyes) Projects Society, a stewardship organization that supports youth, culture and environment, gave a presentation at the Quatse Salmon Stewardship Centre. Atlas showed the film *Sitting on Water: A Season on the Koeye River* – a documentary about salmon stewardship in Bella Bella and its benefit to the river and community. The film documents the Koeye River Weir Project put together by the Heiltsuk First Nation using traditional practices to monitor salmon activity. Following the film was a presentation about recent industrial impacts on salmon, such as dams and commercial harvests, as well as climate and ocean acidification impacts. Atlas also pointed to evidence that salmon populations are resilient and respond well to recovery efforts and the increasing role local communities, especially First Nations, have in salmon recovery.

(North Island Gazette, September 11)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local Government Should Plan Water Issues with First Nations

University of Victoria professor in environmental law and sustainability, Deborah Curran, told attendees at the recent Okanagan Basin Water Board's annual meeting that the laws are changing to better protect the province's water supplies, which will affect local governments. The new Water Sustainability Act recognizes the importance of environmental flow and licences may be changed to benefit fish. Aboriginal rights and title also have implications for water entitlements and governments must recognize the importance of negotiating with other users and rights holders, said Curran. The act does not specifically address Aboriginal title but following the Tsilhqot'in land title decision, Curran believes that court precedent on land claims with sufficient evidence is now set. Aboriginal rights to water would likely supersede those of licence holders and municipalities and therefore Curran stressed the need for local governments to start negotiations with First Nations to plan for water use rather than wait for conflict.

*(Okanagan Saturday, September 6;
Morning Star, September 14)*

First Nations and Local Governments Call for Assessment of Site C Cost

A group of First Nations, government officials and landowners, including Hudson's Hope Mayor Gwen Johansson, West Moberly First Nation Chief Roland Willson, president of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, and two representatives from the Peace River Regional District, have come together to increase awareness of three topics surrounding the proposed Site C dam. First, is the need to implement the Joint Review Panel's (JRP) recommendation to refer Site C to the B.C. Utilities Commission for a full cost analysis before any decision is made about the dam. In the panel's report they noted that they didn't have the "information, time or resources" to conclude the accuracy of the project costs provided by BC Hydro. Second, the dam's impact on First Nations rights, and third, the potential effects on the agricultural lands of the Peace River valley. The provincial and federal governments have six months to review the JRP report and make their decision.

*(Alaska Highway News, September 9;
Globe and Mail, September 10;
Vancouver 24 Hours, September 10)*

Cities' Advisors to Support Aboriginal Apprentices

By the end of September, the Industry Training Authority Customer Support team will have placed a total of 10 Apprenticeship Advisors in Cranbrook, Dawson Creek, Kamloops, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Prince George, Terrace, Lower Mainland, and Victoria. The advisors' primary responsibilities are to provide regional support to apprentices and sponsors, and create a positive impact on continuation and completion rates for apprenticeship. The role will also focus on recruiting and supporting Aboriginal apprentices within local communities.

(Townsmen, September 8)

Campbell River Band and City Partner in Sidewalk Improvements

The City of Campbell River, in partnership with the Campbell River Indian Band (Wei Wai Kum), has installed a new sidewalk along their shared boundaries on 16th Avenue and Highway 19A. The improvements were made to increase safety and security for youth, elders, and commuters. Funding for the sidewalk came from Development Cost fees collected during the construction of the Walmart and Home Depot.

(Campbell River Mirror, September 12)

HEALTH & COMMUNITY

Roundtable on Missing Aboriginal Women Good Idea

Ernie Crey, an advisor to the Sto:lo Tribal Council and former social worker, and who's sister was one of serial killer Willie Pickton's victims, supports the recent call for a national roundtable discussion on Canada's missing and murdered Aboriginal women. Since the federal government is firmly against the call for a public inquiry into the issue, the roundtable approach could work in the interim, said Crey. The idea to bring together federal, provincial and Aboriginal counterparts came from Michele Audette of the Native Women's Association of Canada. The provincial premiers have also backed the roundtable idea, which could provide improvements in housing, children and family services, and policing, and also touch on the relationships between Aboriginal communities and the justice system.

(Chilliwack Progress, September 5)

Highway of Tears Investigation Funding Slashed

In August, RCMP and the Justice Ministry acknowledged that the budget for the RCMP's Highway of Tears investigation of murdered or missing women and girls, known as Project E-Pana, has been cut by 84 per cent. Provincial funding to RCMP was reduced by \$4.2-million, which will result in a reduction of \$1.4-million to the major crimes section and E-Pana will lose six investigators. The project was launched eight years ago to investigate the deaths and disappearances of 18 women and girls, 10 of which were Aboriginal, in B.C.'s northern and central regions, many along Highway 16 between Prince George and Prince Rupert. To date, more than \$25-million has been spent on E-Pana and no charges have been laid in any of the cases. The only major development was two years ago when the team connected DNA of one of the victims with an American sex offender who died in prison. B.C. RCMP has assured that despite the cuts, they have the resources necessary to cover the investigative needs at this time. Carrier Sekani Tribal Council Chief Terry Teegee is disappointed that the provincial government is cutting funding when they should be increasing support for this issue. B.C. NDP justice critic Mike Farnsworth also criticized Premier Christie Clark for joining Canada's premiers call for a national inquiry into missing and murdered Aboriginal women, while cutting funding in her own province.

Additional efforts in education and prevention campaigns continue and have not been impacted by the budget cuts. An awareness program about sexual violence in the region, called You are in Highway of Tears Country, promotes safe travel along the highway. The program was created by the Northern Women's Centre in collaboration with Carrier Sekani Family Services, Lheidli T'enneh Tribal Council, and Prince George Crime Stoppers. There are posters and flyers with a map of northern B.C. showing the highway with the goal of reaching out to people living, working, and travelling in the region. Aboriginal women and girls, tree planters, and young travellers are particularly at risk, and the idea is to raise awareness and promote safe travelling practices such as buddying up and informing others when and where you are travelling.

*(Stuart Nechako Advertiser, August 18;
Vancouver Sun, August 27 and September 12)*

EDUCATION

UNBC and Lheidli T'enneh Open Traditional Dwelling

The University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) and the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation (LTFN) officially opened a traditional Dakelh-style pit house near the university. The pit house was built between July 5 and 25 by a group of 12 UNBC undergraduates and LTFN high school students as part of an experimental learning course offered through UNBC's First Nations studies program. The traditional dwelling is built on a circular pit three feet deep, with a pyramid-like wooden roof structure.

(Prince George Citizen, September 8)

UBC Offers Connection to Aboriginal Perspective

This semester, the University of British Columbia (UBC) Okanagan has a place for students and residence to learn, connect with each other, and grow as a community through Aboriginal perspectives at the new Indigenous Integrated Learning Community (ILC) in the Kalamalka residence on campus. ILC is open to all Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal undergraduate students, with a focus on fostering practical connections with the local Aboriginal community and creating programming that may include both on and off campus activities. Participants will have an opportunity to engage in various annual cultural events such as the Okanagan Nation Salmon Feast and the Lake Country Native Association Powwow.

(Kelowna Capital News, September 2)

CULTURE

Cowichan Museum Exhibit Shows Métis Way of Life

The Cowichan Valley Museum and Archive is showing the Métis exhibition *Otipecyimsowak: We Are Our Own People*, until October 18. The exhibit focuses on three main cultural themes: the buffalo hunt, the voyageurs who transported fur via canoe, and Métis music and dance. On display are some famous Métis items such as a capote, a coat worn by the voyagers that is made from a Hudson Bay blanket, a Métis flag, a sash, a buffalo head, and some traditional beading. The exhibit also includes five women's personal stories about what it means to be Métis.

(Cowichan News-Leader Pictorial, September 5)

Haida and Heiltsuk Celebrate and Reaffirm Peace

On September 20, the Haida Nation and the Heiltsuk Nation gathered for a Peace Treaty Potlatch, hosted by the Council of the Haida Nation, to witness the signing of a historical agreement of peace, respect and responsibility between the two First Nations. The two nations first peace treaty took place in the 1800s at a time when they were engaged in violent conflict that wiped out large numbers of the population. The Haida and Heiltsuk chiefs made a verbal agreement to end the conflict and exchanged three songs to recognize the agreement, which are still performed today. The present day event will celebrate that spirit of peace with a feast, dancing and cultural sharing, and will also provide the opportunity to formally enter the agreement into the records. The potlatch is open to anyone, but attendees are expected to stay for the entire duration and to spread word of what they witnessed.

(Northern View, September 10)



EDITORIAL

Westerly News, August 20 – Elmer Frank wrote, in part:

“Imperial Metals, the owner-operator of Mount Polley also owns two properties in Clayoquot Sound; the Catface copper deposit on Ahousaht territory and the Fandora gold formation in Tla-o-qui-aht territory.

Since the recent Tsilhqot’in victory at the Supreme Court of Canada, and the victory of our five Nu-chah-nulth First Nations earlier this year, recognizing the right to a commercial fishery, our Hawiith [Hereditary Chiefs] certainly don’t intend to let Imperial Metals, or any company they may sell their rights to, come here and do any mining activity.”

Elmer Frank is an elected councillor of the Tla-o-qui-aht

Vancouver Sun, September 5 – Editorial, in part:

“Stephen Harper’s rejection of a federal inquiry into murdered and missing Aboriginal women leaves the door open for a more productive course of action – a federal-provincial roundtable on the topic with Aboriginal leaders.

But Harper is right to nix a lengthy inquiry that would benefit mainly Aboriginal consultants and lawyers.

The issue has been exhaustively defined.

Remedies are complex and expensive, and it is not clear that presumably costly recommendations from a federal inquiry would be a big game changer.

Certainly, it would delay action – precisely the reason that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police rejects the idea.

But governments do not need formal inquiries to address compelling issues of safety for vulnerable citizens. They pass legislation and fund new initiatives all the time in the absence of such undertakings.

For example, Ottawa needed no inquiry earlier this year to table legislation to provide an additional \$1.9-billion in funding, and badly needed administrative standards, for on-reserve education systems.

The initiative probably would have done more than any other single action to improve the lives and employment prospects of on-reserve Aboriginal women across Canada.

Yet, the Assembly of First Nations nixed the bill, interpreting it as interference, which prompted the Conservatives last May to shelve action.

Regrettably, the Aboriginal leadership has yet to present any of its own alternatives for upgrading on-reserve education.”

Vancouver Sun, September 12 – Editorial, in part:

“A decision this week by the Tsilhqot’in First Nation to designate a park within its traditional territories can only add to uncertainty following a recent Supreme Court decision on Aboriginal title.

The Tsilhqot’in decision is an unnecessary gesture that ignores a long-standing practice of governments legally designating and managing federal and provincial parkland.

Notably, the land takes in terrain on which Taseko Mines is hoping to develop the \$1.1-billion New Prosperity copper-gold mine.

To be clear, the proposed mine is on Tsilhqot’in traditional land, but is not part of the 1,750-square-kilometre land parcel west of Williams Lake to which the Supreme Court recently awarded the Tsilhqot’in title.

Business has always had more of a challenge in B.C. because, historically, the province never signed treaties with a vast majority of Aboriginal groups living in the province; as a result native groups never ceded their lands.

But since the June court ruling on Aboriginal title, the outlook for resource development has grown even more challenging.”



Need Research?

Need to Research Background Information on First Nations, Individuals or Agencies?

Cornerstone Planning Group can provide past media reported interactions between First Nations and government or industry based on a word-specific search through back-issues of the B.C. Media Monitor.

Contact John Kafka for details
john@cornerplan.com
250-655-9191

Globe and Mail, September 15 – Justine Hunter wrote, in part:

“B.C. Premier Christie Clark has had an epiphany on Aboriginal title: It does exist, without question or dispute.

Ms. Clark formally acknowledged Aboriginal title when her cabinet sat down with the province’s chiefs last week.

So now the Clark government recognizes what the provincial government spent more than 25 years in court trying to deny.

What that means in practical terms, however, is not yet clear.

Gordon Campbell, as premier, also reached a point where he decided the province had to recognize that Aboriginal rights and title exist. His solution was ambitious, but hasty.

Mr. Campbell abandoned his plan after a backlash from his caucus, pressed by the business community that warned the law would grant First Nations ‘a veto over every aspect of resource development in B.C.’

Ms. Clark is being cautious, not wanting to incite that alarm again.

By acknowledging title, she earned goodwill from the chiefs in the room, but she has not defined what that means for the vast majority of First Nations who have not secured a treaty in B.C., or for the resource industries the rely on the land base.”

Fort Nelson News, September 27 – Mark Milke wrote, in part:

“Back in 1950, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development spend \$922 per registered ‘Indian.’ As of 2012, the renamed Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada spent \$9,056 per registered First Nations person.

That is just one federal department. Consider another federal ministry, Health Canada. The data shows that healthcare spending per eligible First Nations and Inuit person rose to \$2,626 annually in 2012, up from \$2,055 in 1997.

And the data shows that spending for First Nations people has risen dramatically, especially when compared with per person spending on all Canadians.

All of which raises two critical questions. How is the money spent? And does the current system help or hinder Aboriginal prosperity?

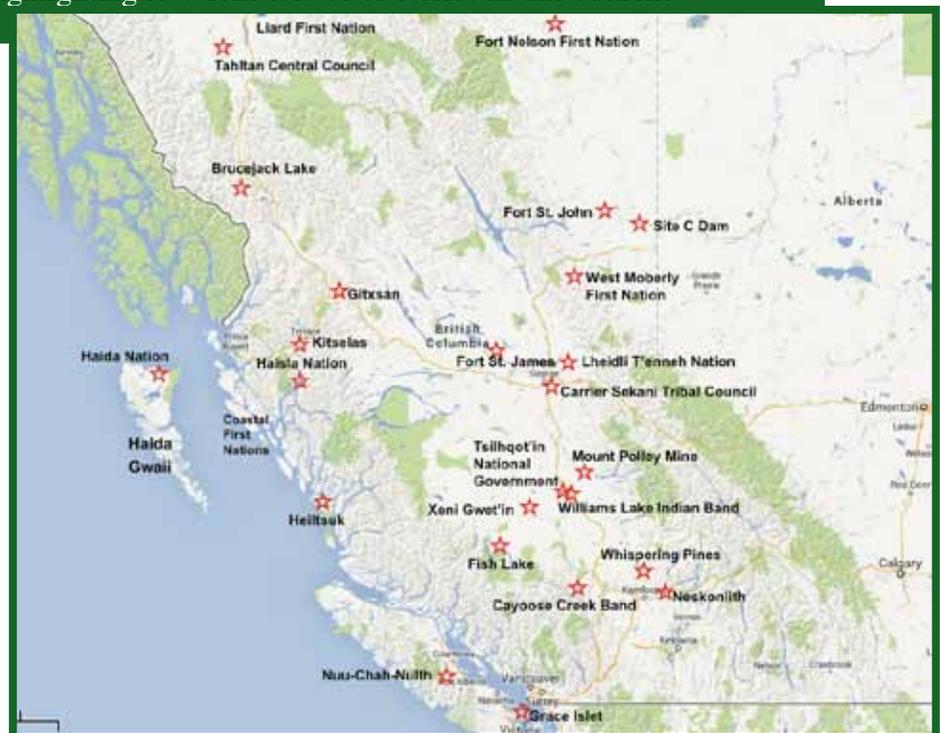
None of this means the spending levels in 1950 were optimal; or that Canada’s Aboriginal populations were not severely disadvantaged.

But no matter how one cuts the data, the spending trajectory on First Nations – after inflation – has skyrocketed.

Regrettably, the reluctance to discuss spending too often ignores specifics on how the money is spent or whether collectives help or harm people. Well-intentioned debates over how best to improve the lives of Canada’s Aboriginal population are critical. Such debates must start with actual, solid numbers.”

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTOR MAP:

Highlighting locations related to stories in this edition.





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