

Volume 8, Issue 2

Autumn 2016

UPDATE FROM KASKA DENA COUNCIL

There was a great turn-out this year for the KDC General Assembly which was hosted by Kwadacha Nation. As with all our General Assemblies it was not only a time for updates on KDC’s initiatives and an opportunity for sharing of views, it was also a time for celebration of family, friends and Kaska Dena culture.

As we are striving to reach a draft Agreement in Principle (AIP) there are a number of other initiatives that KDC is actively involved in. Kaska Dena Council is pleased to be providing support to the Wildlife Monitoring Program; an important initiative being undertaken by the communities involving wildlife management through monitoring and reporting, erecting signage and relaying information to hunters on Kaska Dena and in particular, regarding our culturally sensitive lands.

KDC continues to pursue forestry tenures through negotiations with the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations that will help to secure economic opportunities for our communities. We remain involved in the negotiation and implementation of the Incremental Treaty Agreement to secure and transfer lands to our Nations for economic development in advance of a treaty.

The KDC negotiating team will be coming to your communities over the next 7 months, to discuss, consult and set out information on self-governance, as well as on our AIP negotiations and other initiatives. Meeting venues, dates and times will be posted in your communities and on the KDC website.

Inside...

- 2016 Kaska Dena Council General Assembly
- Three Nations Update
- Wildlife Monitoring Program
- Governance
- Kaska Dena Council Communications
- Community News



KASKA DENA COUNCIL 2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Kaska Dena Council held its Annual General Assembly from July 26-28, 2016 hosted by Kwadacha First Nation in Fort Ware, BC.

The General Assembly was attended by members from Kwadacha First Nation, Daylu Dena Council and Dease River First Nation, who made the journey into Kwadacha by plane and by vehicle.

Business was undertaken on the first two days, with reports given by KDC Chief Negotiator, Dave Porter, members of the KDC Negotiating Team and KDC's legal counsel.



L to R: Danny Case, Lacey Johnny and George Miller

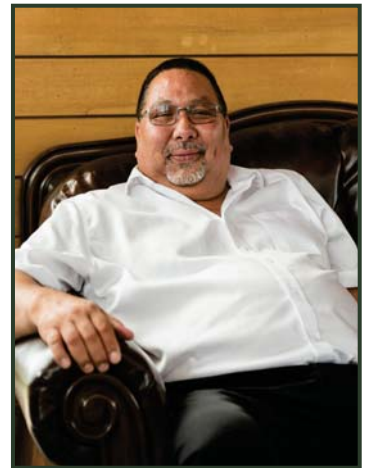
Elections for the KDC executive took place on July 26th. George Miller and Danny Case were re-elected for Chair and Vice-Chair of Lands and Resources respectively, and Lacey Johnny was elected as Vice-Chair of Finance. A special thanks was given to Betty Shepherd in recognition of her work undertaken as acting Vice Chair of Finance in the interim between elections.

Tom Happybrook, Commissioner with the BC Treaty Commission was the guest speaker at the KDC General Assembly. He is the Hereditary Whaling Chief (Hawil) of Huu-ay-aht First Nations, which is part of the Nuu-chah-hulth Tribal Group, located on the West Coast of Vancouver Island.



KDC 2016 General Assembly

Tom has served as President of the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council, which is made up of 14 different Nations. He spoke about his experience negotiating and implementing a Treaty and the improvements in his Nation's lives now that they are self-governing and no longer managed by the Indian Act.



Tom Happybrook

The third day of the assembly was set aside for a fun day of cultural activities, coordinated by Dianne McCook and Agnes Ball. The cultural activities took place on the banks of the Finlay River, outside of the Kwadacha Health and Administration Building. Children and adults alike participated in a variety of activities including hand games, archery, axe throwing and horse shoes, to name a few.

Another cultural activity that was sponsored by both KDC and Kwadacha was the hand-games tournament. We can always count on our Chief of Dease River First Nation, Ruby Johnny to coordinate

Continued on page 3

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Kaska Dena News

Continued from page 2

and ensure the success of the tournament. We were excited to see that teams consisted of both youth, adults and

elders.

We look forward to next year's assembly.



Winning Hand-games team

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3 NATIONS UPDATE

The 3 Nations are making significant advancements in ensuring the Kaska, Tlingit and Tahltan communities are actively involved in structuring the success of their children's education.

The 3 Nation leadership and technical team continue to move forward with the priority areas identified by the communities. Of the 9 priorities identified in the last year, we have focused our collective efforts on making advancements in Wildlife, Education and Shared Areas.

Wildlife:

The 3 Nations working collaboratively have assisted in the development of the land and wildlife guardians' programs throughout the 3 Nations territories. The guardians' program is continuously developing and we look forward to its ongoing success.

Education:

The 3 Nations are making significant advancements in ensuring the Kaska, Tlingit and Tahltan communities are actively involved in structuring the success of their children's education. In April 2016 the 3 Nations leaders signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

with the Stikine School District #87. The MOU is the start of a journey of working together to ensure the education provided in the 3 Nation communities is reflective of those communities.

Shared Areas:

The discussion among the 3 Nations in regard to shared areas has just begun. We have held one leadership meeting to start the conversation in regards to the shared areas among the Kaska, Tlingit and Tahltan. At the request of leadership, we are hosting a Shared Areas Workshop for the 3 Nations leaders in October 2016.

If you have any questions please feel to contact Michelle Miller, Kaska Technical Representative, 3 Nations.



KDC General Assembly 2016





WILDLIFE MONITORING PROGRAM

The Kaska Dena Wildlife Monitoring program has been able to continue its work from 2015 thanks to the renewed funding support from Canada and other supporting programs. Through this year's funding for the communities, Daylu Dena Council, Dease River First Nation, and Kwadacha First Nation were able to hire wildlife monitors to continue the important and successful wildlife monitoring activities for this year.

This year's funding will support joint initiatives with the BC Conservation Enforcement Officers to set up check points and site visits in each region. It also supports setting out traffic counters in high use areas to help determine impacts from overuse.

Kaska Dena Guardians will be out monitoring high use areas, collecting information and handing out brochures with information on Kaska Dena, checking for signs of wildlife, and talking with hunters about culturally sensitive areas. They will be informing hunters about Kaska Dena Traditional Territory and encouraging respect of the environment in the hopes of alleviating potential land use conflicts with hunters. As well, the Guardians will report on any activities of wrong doing.

Data is collected on wildlife and hunting activity by the Guardians, and signage is placed notifying hunters of Kaska Dena culturally sensitive areas. Hunters are encouraged to turn in the moose incisor tooth, which helps the wildlife monitoring program collect data about the age and number of moose that are harvested. As well, hunters are asked to donate any un-used meat or hides to Kaska Dena communities.

The wildlife monitoring program is an important initiative for Kaska, as wildlife have always been and remain an integral part of Kaska Dena culture. Through this program Kaska Dena are building capacity and increasing presence on the land as guardians, participating in the management of wildlife – a role that will strengthen as we assume more responsibility through Government to Government Agreements and potentially, self-government.



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GOVERNANCE

Traditionally, First Nations were self-governing. Kaska Dena elders fought for our land, were stewards of the land and took responsibility for caring for our people, our children and our culture. In 1876, the *Indian Act* came into effect, and our ability to govern ourselves was taken away from us. Our traditional governance was replaced with Indian Act Bands with policies and regulations imposed on us by the Canadian Government.

The Canadian Government now recognizes that aboriginal people have an inherent right to self-government; a right that is protected under the Canadian Constitution. Many First Nations have fought for a return to self-government and have successfully achieved self-government through Treaty, Land Claims and/or Self-Government negotiations. Most Yukon First Nations are now self-governing and a number of First Nations in BC have achieved self-government through negotiating a Treaty: Maa-nulth First Nations [Huu-ay-aht, Ka:'yu:'k't'h/Che:k'tles7et'h', Toquaht, Uchucklesaht, Ucluelet]; Tla'amin Nation; Tsawwassen First Nation and Nisag'a First Nation.

A part of Kaska Dena treaty negotiations involves negotiating self-government. Kaska Dena would establish

their own self-government arrangement which would have its own constitution and law-making authority over its treaty lands. Self-government provisions may include:

- Education
- Language and culture
- Health care and social services
- Police services
- Housing
- Property rights
- Child welfare
- Wildlife

To help Kaska Dena members become more aware of what Kaska Dena self-government could look like, have discussion and in-pur with respect to self-government, workshops will be held in each of the Kaska Dena communities starting in October/November and carrying on until March 31, 2017. This is a continuation of work that has been conducted over the past number of years, as we work towards developing a Kaska Dena self-governance model and constitution for consideration in a Final draft Treaty.

Guest speakers who have experience in self-government with their own nations will be coming to our communities to meet with you to discuss self-government and get your in-pur into a Kaska Dena constitution.

Remember that a Kaska Dena Treaty and Constitution requires ratification by Kaska Dena, so be sure to attend the workshops to learn more. That way when it comes time to vote, you can make up your own mind as to whether you want to vote for or against, and you will not have to rely on someone else's opinion or position.

Watch for notices in your Band Office about upcoming Kaska Dena Governance Workshops.



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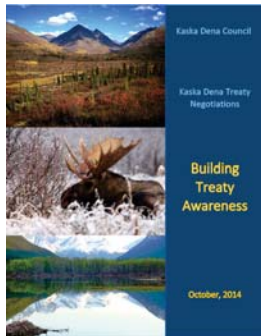
Kaska Dena News

KASKA DENA COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

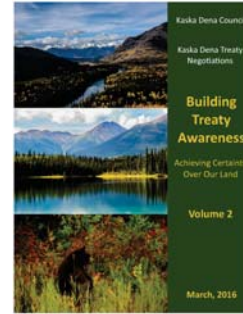
To update members about treaty negotiations, KDC undertakes a number of regular communication initiatives. Information sessions are held in the communities by the negotiating team, KDC newsletters are published three times a year (spring, fall and winter), KDC maintains a website for those who like to use the web or live away from the communities www.kaskadenacouncil.com and KDC produces informative publications. There are future plans to produce audio visual presentations for those who prefer to learn in ways other than by written materials.

Kaska Dena Council has produced a number of newsletters which are available on the KDC website and can be downloaded. KDC has also produced Treaty Awareness documents in an on-going series of treaty awareness publications. The publications shown below have been distributed at community meetings, the General Assembly and are posted on the KDC website. Printed copies are available by contacting the KDC Treaty Coordinator, Michelle Miller, at kdcexecdir@northwestel.net. If you have not received a copy, please contact Michelle or, if you prefer, download via the KDC website. These publications will also be available at future community information sessions.

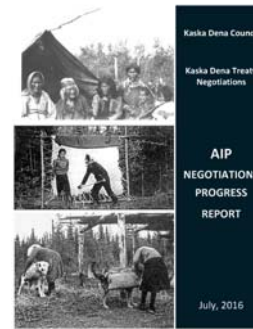
Building Treaty Awareness, October 2014, answers questions that were given to the treaty negotiating team by Kaska people through questionnaires and/or asked of the treaty negotiation team at community meetings.



Building Treaty Awareness, Volume 2: Achieving Certainty Over Our Land, March 2016, describes the Kaska Dena Land Model that is the basis for negotiating and achieving certainty over our land.



Agreement in Principle – Negotiations Progress Report, July 2016, The Agreement in Principle (AIP) is still being negotiated. This publication is an update on the status of AIP negotiations, and gives a brief overview of each draft chapter in the AIP.



More community engagement sessions will be taking place this fall, winter and spring, and meeting notices will be put up in the communities. Members are encouraged to meet with negotiation and technical team members when they come to the communities, and are encouraged to ask questions and seek answers to increase awareness and understanding about the progress of negotiations.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

A Shout-Out to Successful Initiatives

A number of initiatives and programs have taken place in Daylu, Good Hope Lake and Kwadacha in 2016. KDC would like to acknowledge and express congratulations to the success of the communities by highlighting just a few of the initiatives that have taken place this year.

These three Kaska Dena Nations have done an excellent job of not only creating capacity and jobs for their members, but are creating economic diversity for their communities as well.

Daylu Dena Council Store and Gas Station

Daylu Dena Council opened their convenience store and gas station this year, which has been a big success, providing gas and convenience items to their members and tourists. The site preparation and set up of the building was undertaken by DDC's economic development corporation, Iyon Kechika. Daylu members have always had to drive into Watson Lake for gas or convenience store items and refreshments. This year, that all changed with the opening of their brand, new store and gas station which is staffed and operated by DDC members.

Good Hope Lake Store and Gas Station

Dease River First Nation re-opened their gas services last summer due to the demand by contractors working

in the area, and this year they expanded their operations to open their convenience store. Members and tourists alike have enjoyed the coffee, hot dogs and other convenience items that the store offers, which is staffed and operated by DRFN members. Like Daylu members, DRFN members also had to leave their community previously for gas or convenience items. The opening of the store changed that and as well, created a new meeting place for community members.

Kwadacha Hydroponic Greenhouses

Kwadacha Nation has constructed three hydroponic greenhouses that will operate throughout the year, and will produce 30 tons of organic vegetables annually. The greenhouses are engineered using German technology, and will be heated by a biomass plant. The slogan that Kwadacha Nation has adopted is "a salad per person per day", and the greenhouses will certainly do that by producing a variety of greens, cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes for their community. The anticipated production from the greenhouses will be more than enough for Kwadacha members. In fact, the plan is to sell surplus organic produce.



Kwadacha Hydroponic Greenhouses

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www.kaskadenacouncil.com/newsarchives/newsletter-archive.

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