



Inside...

- Land Protection and Management
- Human Resource Capacity Planning for Good Hope Lake
- Self Governance and Constitution Development
- Kaska Dena Winter Cultural Hunting Camp
- Buffalo Hunt Builds Relationships
- Angela Hocken – Tribute to a Kwadacha Youth



Kaska Dena News

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Reflecting on this past year, I am reminded of the theme we chose for the 2013's KDC General Assembly; *Our Land, Our People, Our Culture – Moving Forward*. This theme was chosen in recognition of our continued work towards protecting our lands, our Aboriginal Rights and Title, developing opportunities for economic growth and prosperity within our Traditional Territory and ensuring that our lands, our resources and our culture remain intact and available for the benefit and enjoyment of our children, our grandchildren and our future generations.

There is a sense of pride in witnessing the strides our Nation is making in moving forward. An Incremental Treaty Agreement was signed this year, resulting in land being transferred indisputably as Kaska Dena owned which we can now use for economic development purposes. We continue to make great strides in negotiating an

Agreement in Principle for Treaty, and began community engagement around developing a Kaska Dena Constitution for self-government. Our SEA is in its second year of implementation, we are negotiating forest tenures and Turnagain Guide Outfitting was transferred to Kaska Dena in September.

Our accomplishments in 2013 show what we are capable of achieving if we continue to work together. I look forward to working with Kaska leaders and community members in the New Year, as we continue to work together to build a strong future for our children.

Merry Christmas, and may you be reminded of the most important things in your life this Christmas. Wishing you and your family all the best for 2014.

Souga Sin La

George Miller, Chair
Kaska Dena Council



TREATY UPDATE

The KDC negotiating team continued with Agreement in Principle (AIP) negotiations in 2013, working on an aggressive 18 month workplan that was initialled off by the three Chief Negotiators (Canada, BC & Kaska Dena) at the July, 2013 Main Table. Once completed, the Agreement in Principle, if approved by Kaska Dena members, will serve as a blueprint to move into Final Negotiations.

Covering three broad topics of lands and resources, governance and fiscal relations, the Agreement in Principle will begin to provide a vision of what a future could look like for Kaska Dena as we shift from dependence under the existing *Indian Act*, to independence through treaty and self-government.

Kaska Dena negotiators will continue to strive for a completed AIP that presents Kaska Dena with full land ownership over treaty settlement lands, rights to water, protection of our Aboriginal rights, secure programs and services provided to us by Indian Affairs and the freedom for members to decide what is best for Kaska Dena through self-government.

The KDC negotiating team will continue to provide updates to community and off reserve members through community gatherings, mail-outs, hand-outs and KDC website (www.kaskadenacouncil.com). For information on treaty updates and community meetings contact your Band office, the Kaska Dena Council office at 250-779-3181 or KDC website.

Land Protection and Management

Strategic Engagement Agreement (SEA)

Now in the second year of implementation of the SEA, the process is working well. Better communication, stable funding and capacity are all benefits that are being experienced as a result of the Strategic Engagement Agreement and the process it sets out.

Under the coordination of Steven Jakesta, SEA Regional Coordinator, the Land and Resource Officers, Vanessa Law, Myles Carlick and Shawna Case receive the referrals and work with the Regional Coordinator to look at the potential concerns or impacts each of the referrals may have on Kaska Dena cultural, heritage or environmental values. A response is then formulated and sent back to government. To further support the process, in 2013 Kaska technical advisors completed mapping of additional Kaska sensitive areas to assist

Government when applications are received.

With funding, capacity and the government to government process in place, the relationship between Kaska and the province has improved, there is greater understanding from the province with respect to Kaska values, and Kaska are now able to have a voice at a common table.

Natural Resource Council meetings are held every three months, and will continue making ongoing decisions as needed. The most recent Government to Government meeting was held in Prince George from Oct 22-23, 2013. Outcomes from this meeting included:

1. Amendments to the Culturally Sensitive Map to include the information gathered from the Dease River First Nation and Daylu Dena Council community meeting
2. Reviewed and discussed the next steps and scheduled meetings in the communities for:
 - a. Wildlife priorities
 - b. Ne'ah Plan (Horseranch)
 - c. Cassiar TSR
 - d. Mackenzie TSR
 - e. Ungulate Winter Range
 - f. Mineral exploration – best practices

During the upcoming meeting in February, in addition to the topics above, we will be addressing review and discussion regarding legislative changes to water, resource roads and land-use planning for North Liard and Kwadacha Area.

Land Use Planning

Land use planning continues to be a priority for Kaska Dena as a way to better protect and manage our Traditional Territory. With the Strategic Land Use Plan in place, the designation of the Ne'ah (Horseranch Range) as a Protected Area and the designation of Gu Cha Duga, as a Special Management Zone, efforts are now being directed at land use planning for the North Liard Area. This includes Coal River, Smith River, Liard Hot Springs and Nelson Forks as well as south of Kwadacha. Community engagement has begun with Kwadacha and Daylu to receive feedback and in-put from community members to assist the technical advisors in completing this important work.

Photo Credits:
Mason Abou
Maureen Garrity
Bill Lux
George Miller



Good Hope Lake Human Resource Capacity Planning

Building capacity in our communities means providing the opportunity for Kaska members to gain the skills and education to be able to get good jobs, be successful and to assist in taking responsibility for our Nation’s social, and economic well-being. Human Resource Capacity Planning is essential in order to ensure that Kaska Dena communities have the skills and training for the roles and responsibilities that will come with self-governance – having the right people in the right jobs at the right time.

New roles, positions and skills will be required to transition from *Indian Act* Bands to a self-governing Nation. As well as a plan to transition skilled individuals, a plan is needed to train youth and others for new positions.

“To govern effectively in a post-treaty environment, First Nations must plan for training, capacity building and professional development of the current leaders and the next generation of leaders and managers. This investment is essential to ensure that First nations possess the knowledge, skills and experience to effectively govern.”

- (BCTC, 2013 Annual Report Pathways to Change)

Over the past two years both Kwadacha and Daylu have received funding to begin human resource capacity planning. Now it is Dease River First Nation’s turn. Through treaty-related measures funding, Good Hope Lake has been funded to conduct a Human Resource Capacity Planning initiative. Tania Johnny, Dease River First Nation member and resident of Good Hope Lake, has been contracted as

Human Resource Capacity Coordinator. Governance Committee members Darren Johnny and Agneslyn Dennis will provide in-put as well to the work that Tania will be doing with the community.

Tania will receive training and mentoring to conduct surveys of on and off reserve members of Dease River First Nation as well as to conduct workshops to begin addressing questions such as: what is our current capacity level, how best to prepare to transition current staff into self-governing positions, what training is required to prepare members and the younger generation to assume future positions that come with being a self-governing nation and what partners do we need to support implementation of a human resource capacity plan?

Between December and the end of April, the HR Planning Initiative will take place. Community engagement will take place through surveys, workshops and community meetings, with a draft and final report being presented to the community and to Chief and Council by spring 2014.

Tania Johnny, Dease River First Nation member and resident of Good Hope Lake, has been contracted as Human Resource Capacity Coordinator.



Good Hope Lake

Self-Governance and Constitution Development

A Kaska Dena Constitution puts down in writing all the important information about who Kaska Dena are, what is important to us, and how we wish to govern ourselves.

During the month of November, First Nation Governance specialist, Shana Manson, travelled to the three Kaska Dena communities, accompanied by assistant negotiator Bill Lux, to begin the process of engaging community members in developing a Kaska Dena self-governance structure to decide how the three BC Kaska Dena communities will work together, and a Constitution.

A Kaska Dena Constitution puts down in writing all the important information about who Kaska Dena are, what is important to us, and how we wish to govern ourselves. This is all important information to have in writing so that we can prepare for transition from Indian Act band administration where AANDC oversees all Band decisions, to independence under self-government where Kaska Dena can make our own decisions regarding how we want to govern ourselves.

A significant amount of work has been done to date on the Kaska Dena constitution, and Shana has taken that work and is working with the three BC Kaska Dena communities to develop a



Kwadacha community meeting

constitution for the purpose of treaty. The constitution therefore, will address a governance model for the three BC Kaska Dena Nation governments, leaving the door open for a Kaska Dena National Constitution in the future.

The work in developing the Self Governance structure and Constitution will take place between November 2013 and May, 2014. Shana Manson will meet with Leadership, Elders, Youth and community members between November and March.

The first round of community meetings took place on November 5 in Daylu, November 6 in Good Hope Lake and November 14 in Kwadacha. As well as meeting with the communities as a whole at community dinners, Governance and Constitution Committees were established and meetings were held with Elders as well. Elders came up with a Kaska word for the Constitution – De-na Kat'zie, which means “the peoples way”. Interesting questions from youth and elders alike, came up at the community meetings. One youth asked “What is the Indian Act?” while others asked what is the importance of a Constitution? These questions sparked good discussion and increased understanding.



Daylu community meeting

Continued on page 5

Kaska Dena News

Continued from page 4

Each community now has a Governance and Constitution Committee. The role of these committee members is to meet with Shana each time she visits the community; hold conference calls with her on an as needed basis in between meetings and to act as spokespeople for their community, bringing any questions or concerns back to Shana for clarification.

Next Steps

A special information bulletin about the Kaska Dena Constitution will be distributed to Governance Committee and community members in January reflecting input from the community engagement. The next community workshops will be held in each of the communities early in the New Year. All community members are invited to participate – your voice is important.

Governance & Constitution Committee Members:

Daylu

Melanie Miller
Helen Loots
Kendra McMillan
Roma Walker
Debbie Groat

Kwadacha

Shawna Case
Mason Abou
Heather Poole
Nicole McCook
Angie Hocken

Daylu Elders

Fred McMillan
Eva Johnny
Fannie Vance
Helen Kirk
John Porter

Kwadacha Elders

Felix Charlie
Annie Charlie
Shirley Fleschut
Linda Masseltoe
Jean Poole
Tommy Poole

Good Hope Lake

Agneslyn Dennis
Darren Johnny

Nellie Charlie
Robert Inyallie
Eileen McCook
Melvin McCook
Johnny Poole
Robbie Pierre

A special information bulletin about the Kaska Dena Constitution will be distributed to Governance Committee and community members in January.



Good Hope community meeting

Kaska Dena Winter Cultural Hunting Camp

Camp participants learned to work as a team. They learned hunting skills, and how to respect and prepare the meat.

From February 13, to February 22, 2013 a Kaska Dena Winter Cultural Hunting Camp took place in our traditional territory in the Moose Lake and Toad River area. Camp Coordinator George Miller, along with Guides Roy Abou and Floyd Frank took four participants to learn about traditional ways from Elders John Porter and Angus McDonald.

The participants, Tavis Miller, William Shepherd, Shane Tibbett and Justin Stone, learned to work as a team, and with the guidance and instruction from the Elders, guides and coordinator, learned about setting up a hunting camp, hunting skills and how to respect and prepare the meat.

In order to set up a hunt camp, they first learned how to operate a chainsaw and axe safely and how to fall a tree correctly. The students were taught how to set up a wall tent, lay brush and install a wood stove and chimney.

Elders John Porter and Angus MacDonald taught the students about the traditional way to skin and butcher a moose. The students participated in preparing the meat, learning how to clean the bum-gut, bible, four-guts and belly fat. As well, they learned how to cook bannock.



Elder John Porter instructing youth in traditional ways.



Cleaning 20 foot-long bum-gut.



L to R: Roy Abou, Floyd Frank, Justin Stone, William Shepherd, Shane Tibbett, John Porter & Tavis Miller (Photo George Miller)

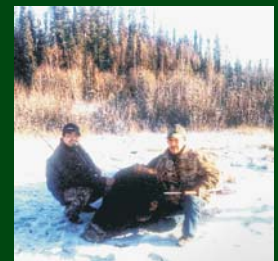
Buffalo Hunt Builds Relationship Between Kwadacha and Doig River First Nations

From November 7th to November 11th, hunters from Kwadacha, Tsey Key Dene and Moberly First Nation participated in a Buffalo hunt on Doig River Traditional Territory. This hunt arose out of communication between Kwadacha Chief Donny Van Somer and Doig River Chief Norm Davis and the granting of permission from Chief Davis to hunt buffalo on Doig River Traditional Territory.

On November 7th, eight members of Kwadacha First Nation (Danny Case, Donny Van Somer, Mason Abou, Bradley Seymour, Dwayne Seymour, Tony Dennis,

Darryl McCook, Craig McCook), along with Daniel Pierre (Tsey Key Dene) and Gordie and Seymour Miller (Moberly First Nation) traveled 240 km northeast of Fort St. John to hunt the buffalo.

The hunt resulted in six buffalo which the hunters brought back to Kwadacha, distributing the meat among Elders and other community members. The granting of permission from Chief Norm Davis was greatly appreciated by those who participated in the hunt, and the community members who received the meat, resulting in a strengthening of relationship between the two Nations.



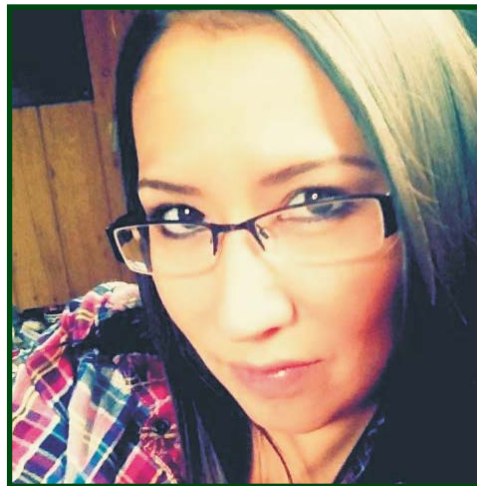
Angela Hocken – Tribute to a Kwadacha Youth

Angela is well known in the community of Kwadacha as a capable young person, displaying leadership qualities through her work, her interactions with others and her involvement in community events.

She contributes to the community of Kwadacha through a wide range of roles and responsibilities and is well respected by Kwadacha Leadership, Elders and youth alike. Angela works for the Atse Davie School in Kwadacha where she teaches language and culture, and is a girl's group leader (Babisa Moonelazi) at the school as well.

Angela is known for her energy and organizational skills and has organized a number of events for the community this year. This included taking on the role of social organizer at the KDC General Assembly held in Kwadacha in July – four days packed with a variety of social events and games for both youth and adults. Angela also organized the Aboriginal Day celebrations in Kwadacha this year.

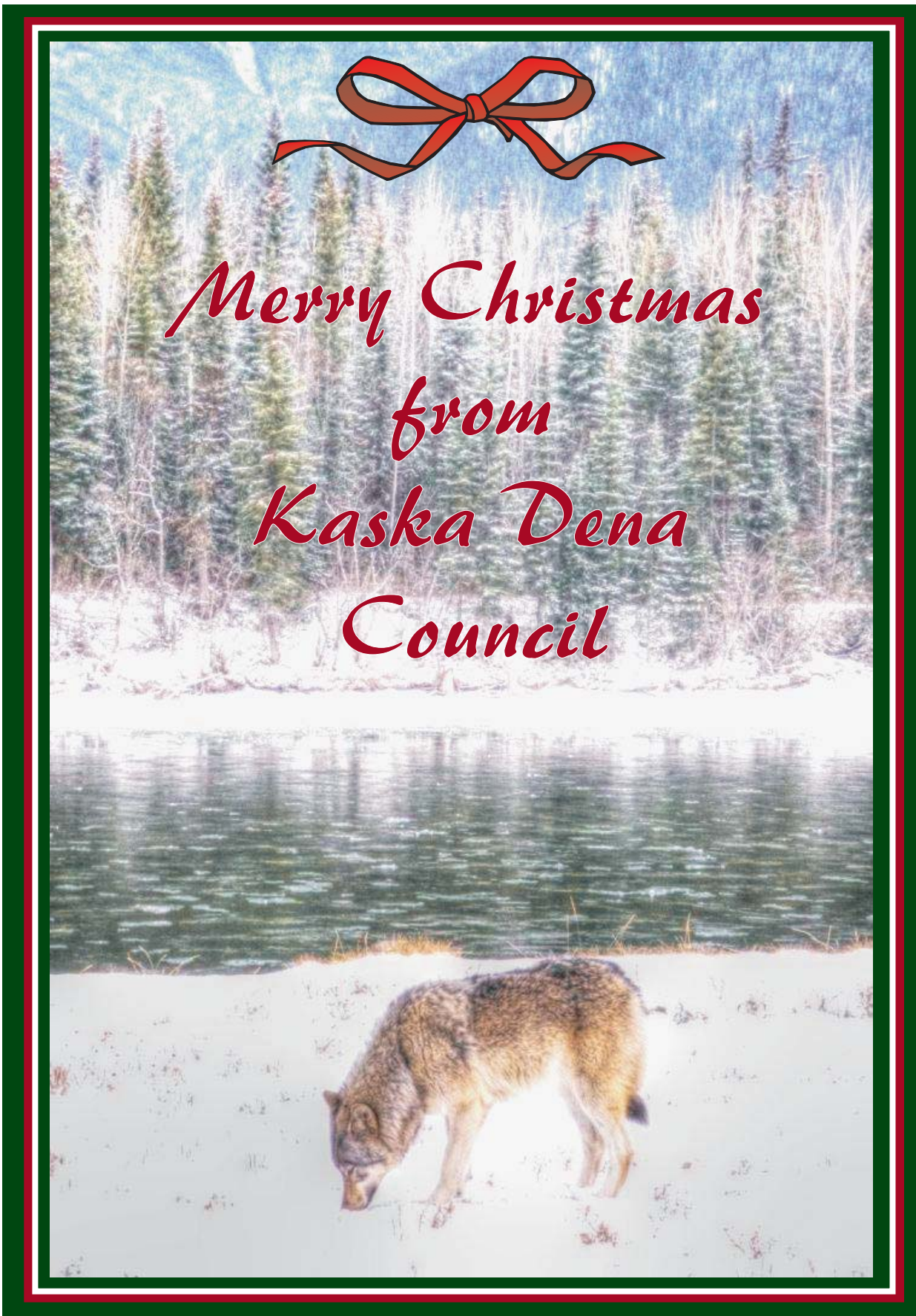
Angela serves on a number of committees. She is an Aboriginal Service Plan Committee Member on the Kwadacha Tsey Keh McLeod College of New Caledonia, is a member of the Kwadacha Education Society, is a Kwadacha



Community Store Committee Member and has recently taken on the role of Governance and Constitution Committee member.

Her contributions and dedication to the community of Kwadacha are valued, respected, and greatly appreciated.

(If you know of a member in your community who you would like to receive acknowledgement in the KDC newsletter, please contact the KDC Executive Director: kdcexecdir@northwestel.net)



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