



Inside...

- Kwadacha Treaty Awareness Sessions
- Three Nations – Regional Gov't to Gov't Agreement
- New Buildings for a Growing Community
- Land Use Planning
- Lower Post Residential School
- Holiday Inn Scholarship Fund



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As the holiday season is upon us and we reflect back on 2014 it brings to mind what a notable year this has been for Kaska Dena and all First Nations, as we continue to move forward in our work to protect and gain rightful recognition of our lands, our resources and our Aboriginal Rights and Title.

A significant milestone in 2014 was the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling on the William Case, as it was the first time that the Courts granted declaration of Aboriginal Rights and Title. This momentous decision will change the way that the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments will do business with First Nations going forward.

Kaska Dena Council achieved a number of milestones this past year – the first parcels of Incremental Treaty Agreement are soon to be transferred as private economic development and community expansion lands, we are closer than we have ever been to completing the chapters of our draft Agreement in Principle, and together with leadership and community members, Kaska Dena negotiating team are reviewing our lands identification for treaty with the William Case ruling in mind. We had our first successful year as owners of our Guide Outfitting Area under Luke Vince's management. We have continued to make advancements in land use planning and forest tenure negotiations and have been successful with the implementation of our Strategic Engagement Agreement. This shows the dedicated efforts of Kaska Dena leaders and our negotiators to build more economic prosperity and certainty for our children and our grandchildren.

I hope we all stand proud together and acknowledge the accomplishments that we continue to achieve each year, and I look forward to our continued work together in 2015. I wish you and your family a happy and healthy holiday season.

Souga Sin La

George Miller, Chair KDC



TREATY UPDATE

The Kaska Dena Treaty negotiating team anticipate completing the draft chapters for the Agreement in Principle (AIP) by December, 2014 subject to legal review. Then the focus will be on the Lands negotiations based on Aboriginal Title through the (William) Tsilqhot'in ruling. Kaska Dena legal review of the Agreement in Principle will ensure that the AIP is consistent with the William ruling.

A Technical Lands Selection Working Group was formed through the Treaty Side Table with BC and Canada to review what work has been done by Kaska Dena. The first work of the recently formed Lands Technical Working Group was to look at how the landscape has changed since the

2002 Lands Report. For example, the Horseranch Range was identified as a Protected Area in the Land Use Options work; however, through recent negotiations between Kaska Dena and BC it is now classified as Conservancy Area by the BC Government. In other areas, the zoning has not changed.

Kaska Dena negotiating team will begin working with the communities to review, discuss and update the information on the Land Proposal from the October Main Table. The Lands Proposal was updated in light of the Tsilquot'in (William) Case on Aboriginal Title.

Communities will be kept up to date as negotiations and community meetings continue into the new year.

Kwadacha Treaty Awareness Sessions

From September 6 – 8th, a series of Treaty Awareness meetings took place in Kwadacha. George Miller, Chair of Kaska Dena Council, accompanied by Bill Lux, KDC Assistant Negotiator, Maureen Garrity and Norm MacLean, KDC technical advisors and guest speaker, Angela Wesley, from the Huu-ay-aht First Nation, spent three days holding meetings with community members. Angela had spoken in the spring to the community members in Good Hope Lake and Lower Post, and came to Kwadacha as part of the Treaty Awareness Sessions.

The Huuay-aht First Nation are one of five Nations who are signatories to the Ma'anulth Treaty and Angela spoke about her Nation's experience with negotiating a treaty. She also spoke to what it is like to now be a self-governing First Nation, no longer under the authority of the Indian Act, with certainty over their rights to use,

own and manage lands and the modern governance tools they now have to make their own laws, and build strong relationships with federal and provincial governments.

George Miller, Bill Lux and Norm MacLean provided updates on the current status of negotiations for Kaska Dena Council, which represents Kwadacha Nation, Daylu Dena Council and Dease River First Nation in treaty negotiations.

A community dinner was held on September 6th at the school, and was extremely well attended. On September 7th, a meeting was held with Elders at the Band Office Board Room, followed by a meeting in the afternoon with the senior students at Aatse-Davie School.

The senior students had the chance to ask questions of Angela and the KDC treaty team and asked to be kept informed as treaty negotiations proceed. This is particularly important given these students will be of voting age when it comes time to vote on whether or not to accept the Final Agreement which will become the Treaty.

At both the Elder's meeting and the Community meeting, Emil McCook spoke about how the word "treaty" used to be a negative word and the importance of recognizing and understanding that this is a modern treaty and not an extinguishment treaty like the "old" treaties that were negotiated years ago.

Kwadacha extended a warm welcome to all of the team and showed the hospitality that Kwadacha is so well known for. The team was given a tour of the village and the impressive construction work that is being done there. (see pages 4 & 5)

Photo Credits:
Shawna Case
Maureen Garrity
Brian Ladue
Bill Lux
Bruce McKay
Michelle Miller



Bill Lux explains treaty negotiations to senior students

Three Nations: Regional Government to Government Agreement

Building off the success of the Stikine Wholistic Working Group the three Nations, Kaska, Tahltan and Tlingit, were presented with the opportunity to discuss their interest in drafting a regional agreement that identifies areas of interest and benefit to the three Nations and the Province of British Columbia.

Through meetings with the three Nations leadership and communities, support was provided in moving forward with the Agreement and areas of common interest were identified.

In order to move the Agreement forward three project managers were appointed from each community. Freddie Louie represents the Tahltan, Susan Carlick represents the Tlingit and Michelle Miller represents the Kaska. To date, with the support of Jody Nishima, we have completed a draft regional agreement that has been presented to both the three Nations leadership and Province's leadership.

The purpose of the Agreement has been identified to "establish, resource, and secure an enduring and resilient regional Government relationship that:

- a) Advances the processes of reconciliation between the Parties;
- b) Promotes economic prosperity within the region;
- c) Addresses the links between economic prosperity and social and cultural prosperity;
- d) Acknowledges and builds on the positive economic, social and cultural outcomes that have been achieved through the Nations' successful community-based approaches;



Three Nations Meeting

- e) Ensures engagement of relevant partners and necessary resources to achieve the outcomes of this agreement.

The next steps will be a meeting between the 3 Nations leadership and relevant ministries to discuss moving forward.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Michelle Miller at (867) 335-5712.

The three Nations were given the opportunity to discuss drafting a regional agreement that identifies areas of interest & benefit to the Kaska, Tahltan & Tlingit along with the Province of BC.



Kwadacha: New Buildings for a Growing Community

Kwadacha has a number of musicians who write and perform their own music, so the recording studio will be an exciting addition for these young musicians.

Throughout the summer and fall, Kwadacha has seen a significant amount of construction activity as buildings continue to go up in response to the growing community's needs.

With the community's population expansion and the number of school-aged children, a beautiful new addition has been added to the Aatse Davie School which includes a new classroom and a library.

The old Band office is being transformed into a Recreation Center which will provide a central location for community members to gather, particularly through the winter months.

A central focus of the Recreation Center is a state of the art fireplace in the entrance way. The Recreation Center will house a kitchen, computer room, work-



Central fireplace in Recreation Centre

out room, large bingo hall, and a recording studio.

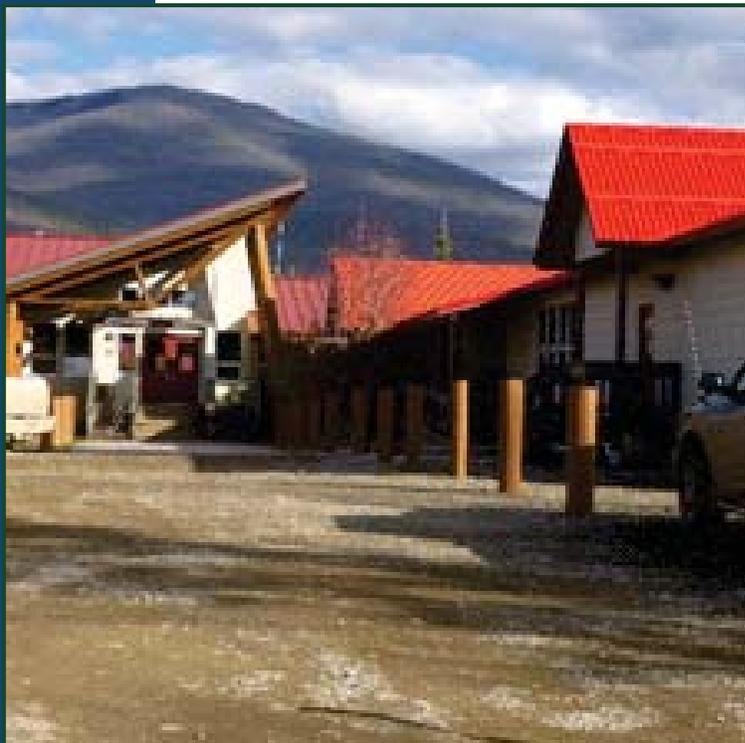
Kwadacha has a number of musicians who write and perform their own music, so the recording studio will be an exciting addition for these young musicians.

The old nursing station has been renovated as a fantastic, new Elder's Center. This new Center has a large kitchen, TV room, exercise room, office and a large central room for meals, meetings, playing cards and socializing.

This new Center will be welcomed by Kwadacha Elders and Elder's Coordinator Susan McCook to support their activities and to provide a dedicated location for this active group.

Four new houses have been built for community members. These beautiful new homes have an open concept for the living room and kitchen area, laundry facilities, wood stove in the living room, 2.5 bedrooms and beautiful 4-piece bathroom. To give homes that personal touch, residents were invited to select their own colour scheme for paint, flooring, etc.

Kwadacha community member, Mark McCook, has been very involved with multiple aspects of the construction work



Aatse Davie School with new addition on right



Elder's Center - Meeting & Games Room

in Kwadacha. Mark has demonstrated such proficiency in his skills that the construction company contracting Mark's services have offered him construction work with the Company in Prince George as well.



Mark McCook working on new Kwadacha home



One of four new homes built in Kwadacha and the interior of one of the new homes.



LAND USE PLANNING

Ne'ah Conservancy – Next Steps

Background

Between 2000 - 2012 the Dease-Liard Sustainable Resource Management Plan (SRMP) was developed through partnership between Kaska Dena and the Province of British Columbia. In May 2012, the SRMP was approved through a Strategic Land Use Planning Agreement.

On March 31, 2013 the Ne'ah (Horseranch Range) was designated as a Conservancy (Protected Area) and the Gu Cha Duga (for our Grandchildren) as a Special Management Area.

Now that the Ne'ah has been approved by Kaska Dena and the Province of British Columbia, it will be managed collaboratively by Kaska Dena and British Columbia through a Joint Management plan that will be set out by the Parties over the next

year that ensures the protection and maintenance of: (a) biological diversity and the natural environment; (b) First Nations' social, ceremonial and cultural uses, and (c) recreational values.

Conservancies may provide for a wider range of low impact economic development opportunities than Class A parks, but commercial logging, mining and hydroelectric power generation (other than local run-of-the-river projects) are prohibited in a conservancy. Other activities must be assessed to determine whether the development or use of natural resources occurs in a sustainable manner consistent with (a), (b) and (c) above.

Continued on page 6



Boya Lake

Land Use Planning Cont'd. from page 5

Current Work

DKI, working with the Dease River First Nation and Daylu Dena Council communities, completed a Cultural Report March 31, 2014. To gather this information, Kaska Dena with participation of BC Parks personnel held community meetings and helicopter trips over the conservancy in March 2014.

Members were interviewed, and Kaska Dena traditional knowledge information was reviewed.

Ongoing meetings have been held in Good Hope Lake on Nov. 25 and again on Dec. 2 and Lower Post on Nov. 26 and Dec. 3. As information is gathered and drafted for the plan, there will be further review by the community and a final review towards March 31, 2014.

Next Steps:

- 🌲 Review of the Ne'ah Cultural Values Report;
- 🌲 Decide on what TK information we would like to include in the management plan;
- 🌲 Begin drafting the plan and review the plan with BC; and
- 🌲 BC to put the plan out for public input, then BC and Kaska to review and finalize the plan for approval by July 2015.



Boya Lake

Boya Lake Park

The Strategic Engagement Agreement calls for the development of a Management Plan for the proposed Ne'ah Conservancy and Boya Lake Provincial Park. It also calls for a Kaska name for Boya Lake Provincial Park. The proposed Kaska name is: (Tachilla) **Tuch'itā [a.k.a. Boya Lake] Park.**

The Management Plan will address other management considerations. The next steps include confirming the Kaska name for Boya Lake, gathering more information on Kaska Dena cultural values and setting up a meeting for review of the completed draft Management Plan.

Land Use Planning – Ongoing Initiatives

There are ongoing initiatives for future Land use planning processes by Kaska Dena in the North Liard Area that includes Coal River, Smith River, Liard Hot Springs and Nelson Forks.

The DDC is now approving the draft North Liard Plan and it will be tabled at the SEA Government to Government Table. As for Kwadacha South, there is ongoing work to collect and review information that will be used in the development of a LUP for the area. Dena Kayeh Institute (DKI) will continue working with the communities to secure resources to continue with engagement in Land Use Planning Processes.

DKI, working with the Dease River First Nation and Daylu Dena Council communities, completed a Cultural Report March 31, 2014.



Horseranch Range

Lower Post Residential School

It has been over two years since the community of Daylu hosted Gathering Around the Fire, the healing and reconciliation gathering for former Lower Post Residential School students, their families and community members.

During the Gathering, representatives of the Provincial Government expressed the intent to continue to discuss within the Provincial Government and together with the Federal Government, a plan to enable the Lower Post Residential School

to be torn down and construction of a new administration building.

The Federal Government has committed funding to Daylu Dena Council to update the architectural drawings for a new administration building. Meetings are being planned for Deputy Chief Walter Carlick to meet with senior representatives of the BC Provincial and Federal Governments to develop a strategy for removal of the Residential School and construction a new administration building for Daylu.

The Federal Government has committed funding to Daylu Dena Council to update the architectural drawings for a new admin building.



Gathering Around the Fire

Holiday Inn and Kaska Dena Council Partner To Create a Kaska Scholarship Fund

The Holiday Inn on Howe Street in Vancouver has had a long term relationship with Kaska Dena as a hotel that Kaska frequently stayed in while meeting in Vancouver. Recently, the Holiday Inn struck a partnership agreement with Kaska Dena Council with respect to a Scholarship Fund for Kaska Dena.

All Kaska Dena or those who work for Kaska Dena Council may make reservations at the Holiday Inn on Howe street using a special booking code which will entitle them to a special rate at the Holiday Inn. The Holiday Inn will then dedicate a portion of room revenues



booked under the Kaska Dena Code to a Kaska Dena Scholarship fund.

Our thanks go out to the Holiday Inn for their consideration of Kaska Dena education and their willingness to work with us to create this valuable scholarship fund. Once the Kaska Dena Scholarship Fund is in place with established funding, an application process will be implemented and Kaska Dena will be notified as to how to apply. For further information contact Michelle Miller ((867) 335-5712).

*Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year
from the Staff at Kaska Dena Council*



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