



Office of the Wet'suwet'en

Volume 8 Issue 1

Winter 2010

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM THE WET'SUWET'EN VOICE

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Victory for BC: NDP tanker motion passes in Parliament

One more marker along path to shut down Enbridge threat

OTTAWA – British Columbia is one step closer to having a full legislated ban on supertankers off its north and central coasts after a motion introduced by MP Nathan Cullen received the support of Parliament just minutes ago.



"Banning tankers would protect the BC coast from Enbridge's risky venture," said an ecstatic Cullen following today's vote which passed the House of Commons 143 to 138. "This is absolutely one more marker along the path to defending the Northwest against the threat to our environment and way of life."

"For years the people of British Columbia and concerned Canadians have been calling on the federal government to protect their coast from the risk posed by oil tankers," echoed New Democrat Leader Jack Layton.

"Now the government has clear direction from this House to move forward and bring in this much needed legislation."

For Cullen, New Democrat Natural Resources and Energy critic, today's victory is the culmination of years of hard work and consultation with communities, First Nations, and other stakeholders.

"First Nations have led the fight to protect our environment and ocean economy every step of the way," he said.

"They have been joined by the municipalities of BC, concerned citizens and now by a majority of elected MPs. The government must respect the will of the House and wishes of Canadians by immediately introducing a bill to stop these tankers once and for all. If they need help, they can use our bill that we have already drafted."

Since Cullen tabled and led debate on the NDP motion last Thursday, thousands of Canadians have stepped up to support the tanker ban online, through email and petitions and lobbying their MPs.

"The out pouring of support has been outstanding," said Cullen. "I think it shows people are engaged with what is happening politically, especially when it affects such an important part of Canada's natural heritage as the BC coast."



MEDIA RELEASE:

DATE: Dec.8, 2010

WET'SUWET'EN CHIEFS CALL FOR CROWN RECOGNITION OF HEREDITARY GOVERNANCE AUTHORITY

Smithers: The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs are calling for the BC Government to recognize Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance Authority.

"The Hereditary Chiefs are calling on the Crown to recognize Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance (Inuk Nu'at'en), and the authority of the House members to make decisions on land use, and the development of natural resources on their traditional territories," stated Madeek, Gitdumden Clan Chief.

The Inuk Nu'at'en (Our Laws) has been the foundation of Wet'suwet'en governance, society, culture and authority on the territories since time immemorial. The Feast Hall is where all decisions are presented to House members for discussion and resolution.

On October 2009, Wet'suwet'en Chiefs and House members frustrated by 14 years of negotiations costing over \$12 million while the Crown continues to sell off lands in dispute, and permit exploitation of natural resources on Wet'suwet'en territories, unanimously opposed any further Treaty negotiations until the Crown recognizes Wet'suwet'en Governance Authority.

"Since first contact with Europeans settlers, Wet'suwet'en have tried to reach agreement with the Crown recognizing, respecting and reconciling our title, rights and interests over 22, 000 kms² of traditional territories" stated Wah Tah K'eght, Laksilyu Clan Chief.

During 2010, Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs pulled back from the treaty negotiations to review its relationship with the Federal and Provincial governments. Meetings with clan and house members clearly identified governance, and the authority of House members over their territories to be the highest concern for all Wet'suwet'en.

"Our people will no longer put up with the Crown selling our lands and permitting development of our natural resources," said Chief Namoks, Tsayu Clan, "Until the BC Crown recognizes Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance Authority on the traditional territories there can be no certainty for economic investment or development on Wet'suwet'en territories."

Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs believe Crown recognition of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance Authority over the traditional territories is essential to negotiating agreements which allow for responsible land use, acceptable natural resource development, and benefit all Wet'suwet'en.

"We look forward to engaging in discussions and negotiations on Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance Authority with the Crown in 2011," said Debbie Pierre, Executive Director-Office of the Wet'suwet'en. "In the spirit of these clan meetings, the chiefs are calling for Crown recognition of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance and authority on the territories.

Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs have listened, learned, and are acting on behalf of all Wet'suwet'en to reach fair, equitable agreements reconciling Crown and Wet'suwet'en Hereditary governance authority over private sector land use and natural resource development on Wet'suwet'en territories benefiting all Wet'suwet'en.

The Office of the Wet'suwet'en is arranging meetings with BC Treaty Commission, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and Natural Resource Operations to initiate discussions. The results of these meetings will be brought before House members at an All Clans Summit in the spring of 2011 for discussion and resolution on the future direction of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance and Authority.

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Office of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs

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"WE ARE PROUD, PROGRESSIVE WET'SUWET'EN DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF OUR CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND TERRITORY, WORKING TOGETHER AS ONE FOR THE BETTERMENT OF ALL."



WET'SUWET'EN HEREDITARY GOVERNANCE . . . OR ASSIMILATION?

We stand at a defining moment in the long struggle with colonialism, alienation of our lands, segregation of our people, and suppression of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance and Authority.

Since October 2009, the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs have met with elders, house members, Band Councils, community leaders, and the staff of the Office of Wet'suwet'en in discussions over how to proceed as a nation.

Some have spoken by their actions, some have chosen to stand alone, many wish to follow the Inuk Nuet'en (Hereditary Governance) and assert authority over their house territories.

As a result on these discussions, the Chiefs agreed Wet'suwet'en must come together as one, and petition the Crown to recognize Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance as representing all Wet'suwet'en regardless of where they live, and reconciling the authority of the Houses over their territories.

To achieve Crown recognition, and reconciliation of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance Authority at the negotiation table and on the territories, the Chiefs will be meeting with the representatives of the British Columbia Treaty Commission, the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and the new Ministry of Natural Resource Operations.

These talks will determine if agreements can be reached on governance, shared decision-making on the planning, use and development of the territories, and how revenues from the use of lands waters, and development of natural resources will benefit all Wet'suwet'en.

In 2011, Wet'suwet'en will be asked to decide how they wish to be governed, and whose authority they will respect. The choice, while never simple, is between the democratic Hereditary Governance of the Wet'suwet'en, or the hierarchical elected governance system of the Crown and Indian Act.

Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance & Authority:

The Inuk Nu'at'en (Our Laws) is based on the political independence of the House groups to determine the sustainable use of their territories. Leadership of the House group is an advisory role, not an authoritarian one. Decisions on land and resource use are made by consensus reached among the House members and voiced in the Feast Hall by the House chief.

Traditionally, Hereditary House Chiefs viewed their role as an obligation to serve the people, not an opportunity personally benefit or dominant politically.

To secure House territories against aggressive neighboring nations, Wet'suwet'en House groups formed an alliance of 13 House groups with governing 38 territories making up 22,000 kms². The alliance of 13 Houses into a tribal group of 5 clans empowered Wet'suwet'en to become a distinct people capable of defending their territories against trespass, and in war.

Gitdumden, Gil_seyhu, Tsayu, Laksilyu and Laksamshyu governed themselves through laws and systems that emphasized the importance and value of the natural resources on their territories.

In 2011, the chiefs acting on behalf of all Wet'suwet'en will meet with the Crown to reach fair, equitable agreements reconciling Crown and Wet'suwet'en Hereditary governance authority over private sector land use and natural resource development on Wet'suwet'en territories benefiting all Wet'suwet'en.



Collaborative Stewardship for Provincial Parks



Information sharing session with members of other first nations NOV 30th, 2010

Guests from Tahltan, Haisla, Gitinyow, Champagne and Hashihik nations travelled to the Wet'suwet'en territory to share their experience working for or in collaboration with parks.

From top to bottom: Lawrence Joe (left on the above picture)- Champagne/Aishihik, Janice Joseph (right on the picture below) – Tahltan, Bryan Williams (bottom picture left) – Gitinyow, Cecil Paul Jr. and Whitney Lukuku (bottom picture right) on behalf of the Haisla nation.

(Contributed by: Francois Depey—Natural Resources)





It only took 15 hours of driving in a blizzard and on a road covered with fresh snow for Lawrence Joe to join us for this meeting. Lawrence is the Director of Heritage, Lands and Resources department for the Champagne & Aishihik first nations. Their office is located at Haines Junction at the heart of their territory that overlaps on the Yukon Territory and the province of British Columbia. Because of this unique location, they are involved in various agreements with parks at territorial, provincial and national levels. Among other topics, he shared with us, was how they used parks to reconnect people with a portion of the territory from where they had been evicted in the mid 50's as their land had been turned into a hunting reserve (but not for them!). "Healing Broken Connections" is the name of the program they now run with parks to reconnect people with the land. Wet'suwet'en could relate to that story as some residents who used to live in areas where parks have recently (2008) been created, had been evicted from their territories in the mid 50s' to be relocated in reserves and residential schools. It applies to places like Morice lake, Nanikëkh – Nanika kidprice and Atna River parks. Janice Joseph a citizen of the Tahltan nation explained how she tries to get her people (youth and elders) involved with management of their territory, through the work that she has been doing for more than 17 years with BC parks. It is now time for Wet'suwet'en clan members to participate in park management in their territories. (You can read more about this project at www.wetsuweten.com)

Provincial Parks in Wet'suwet'en Territory

Let's work together to manage those protected areas

Old Man Lake	Atna River	Morice Lake	Nanikëkh/Nanika-Kidprice	Nadina Mountain	Burnie Lake
Gimelklayex	Kayex	Yexisowihen	Cas Yex	Kaxwimits	Djakanyex
Your Laksaamishyu representative:	Your Laksiyu representative:	Your Gilsayhu representative:	Your Gildumden representative:	Your Tsayu representative:	



MOUNTAIN MAN

by François Depey

The Kaiget pole was erected between 1820 and the late 1860s in front of the house of Gitdumskanees (Mountain Man), the then chief of the house of Many eyes (Ginehklaiyex) of the Laksilyu clan, at Tse-kya, below Hagwilget. Carved by Samali of Hagwilget and Tsibasa of Gitsegukla, the pole portrays the monster Kaiget and the crest of Gitdumskanees, represented as a human being with a cedar bark neck ring, usually worn in winter ceremonies. The totem pole was purchased by a swiss artist in 1938 who shipped it to a french museum in Paris. The totem pole has been moved to a new location in 2003 and now stand in the entrance hall of the Musée du Quai Branly near the Eiffel tower in Paris.

ROYAL BC MUSEUM

Courtesy of BC Archives collections - Call
Web: www.bccarchives.gov.bc.ca Email: access@www.bccarchives.gov.bc.ca

Indian fish house and totem poles down in the canyon ...

Pictures of the kaiget totem pole have been taken in Paris, France in October 2010:
www.quaibranly.fr/en/

Master carver Ron Austin working on a detail of a totem pole

T'sek'ot (Ron Austin) expressed his interest to carve a replica of the Kaiget pole and to have it raised again where it used to stand in Tse-Kya, below the existing suspension bridge above Wedzin Kwa (Bulkley River). In the summer of 2009 he met with a delegation (movie crew) from the french museum. Marie Mauzé, a french anthropologist who studied that totem pole, offered to support this initiative.



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESCHOOL



Submitted by: Tara Stewart, Family Support Worker

What's the difference between childcare and preschool? *Childcare* centers are generally an option for working parents who need their children to be taken care of during the day; centers accept babies as well as toddlers and are full time, full year programs. *Preschool* refers to an early childhood educational class for 3-4 year olds. A childcare center with experienced, well trained teachers and stimulating activities offers kids similar advantages to a preschool.

How Important is Preschool? Children gain a lot from going to preschool. In preschool they become exposed to numbers, letters, and shapes. And, more important, they learn how to socialize, get along with other children, share, contribute to circle time. Children who attend preschool enter kindergarten with better pre-reading skills, richer vocabularies, and stronger basic math skills than those who do not. Every child should have some sort of experience before he/she starts kindergarten. Your child will learn how to raise his/her hand, take turns, and share the teacher's attention. What's more important, he/she will learn how to separate from mommy knowing she will be back to pick them up. Kindergarten teachers will tell you that the students who are ready to learn are those who come into school with good social and behavior-management skills.

What will my child learn? In addition to strengthening socialization skills-how to compromise, be respectful of others, and problem-solve- preschool provides a place where your child can gain a sense of self, explore, play with his/her peers, and build confidence. Kids in preschool discover that they are capable and can do things for themselves, from small tasks like pouring their own juice and helping set snack tables to tackling bigger issues like making decisions about how to spend their free time. 4 and 5 year olds have begun asking some questions about the world around them, what happens to the water after the rain? Do Birds play? Quality preschools help children find answers through exploration, experimentation, and conversation.

But what about learning the ABC's? Young children can certainly learn letters and numbers, but to sit them down and "tech" them is the wrong way to do it. They learn best through doing the kinds of activities they find interesting, story time, talking to their teachers about stars, playing with blocks. To help kids learn language and strengthen pre-reading skills, for instance, teachers might play rhyming games and let kids tell stories. Keep in mind for small children, school is all about having fun and acquiring social skills, not achieving academic milestones. Kids need to be imaginative and to socialize, that's what fosters creative, well-rounded people. It's not whether they can read by age of 4 and multiply by 5. An ideal curriculum? Parading around in dress-up clothes, building forts, and being read to.





Healthy Babies Healthy Families

Submitted by: Wanda Nikal—Program Coordinator

For the Month of December Healthy Babies, Healthy families program is focusing on the Christmas Holidays. We have had Community Kitchens as scheduled and Parent Drop ins. We have two prenatal clients in Moricetown, One in Hagwilget and one in Broman Lake. We will be hosting a Christmas Dinner in each community and will have the moms help us with each one to teach if need be how to prepare a Christmas Dinner. We have made cookies in a jar on Monday for Community kitchen and will be hosting our annual Parents Turkey Dinner. We will also be helping with the Annual Community Dinner On Thursday December 10, 2010. For the last week we have a dinner in Hagwilget on Tuesday and Broman Lake on Thursday.

Our December Good Food Box will be distributed on Wednesday December 15th.



Packing Good Food Box



Play Group with
Ellen Anderson



New Baby
Santana Rose

OW WELCOMES OUR NEW FINANCIAL CONTROLLER

Lucy Glaim

My name is Lucy Glaim, I belong to the Fireweed Clan and sit in the Owl House. I have lived in the Bulkley Valley my entire life, I have 2 daughters who have graduated high school, one is working, the other is in full time university studies. I have worked



in the administration field since 1993 in various positions over the years steadily rising from receptionist, to finance clerk to bookkeeper to Chief Financial Officer and now as Finance Controller for the OW. My years of work experience combined with education attained through NWCC and C.G.A. have prepared me with a broad base of knowledge and I look forward to working with the OW team. My hobbies include bike riding, reading mystery and suspense novels and hiking.



Fraser First Nations stand together against Enbridge

Submitted by: *Friends of Wild Salmon*

On December 2, Sixty-one Indigenous Nations have come together in a historic alliance to protect the Fraser River watershed and to declare their opposition to the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline.

Signed in Williams Lake last week, and published in a [full page ad in the Globe and Mail today](#), the "Save the Fraser Gathering of Nations" declaration is based on Indigenous law and authority.

"We will not allow the proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines, or similar Tar Sands projects, to cross our lands, territories and watersheds, or the ocean migration routes of Fraser River salmon," reads the declaration. (You can find the entire declaration [here](#)).

The declaration is the second major First Nations declaration banning tar sands pipelines from BC this year, and it makes clear the nations see the federal review process for the project as a violation of their laws and rights under international law, including the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which Canada signed last month.

"The Enbridge pipeline would risk an oil spill into our rivers and lands that would destroy our food supply, our livelihoods and our cultures," said Chief Larry Nooski of Nadleh Whut'en First Nation, part of the Yinka Dene Alliance opposed to the Enbridge project.

"Our laws do not permit crude oil pipelines into our territories. This project isn't going anywhere."

From the headwaters of the Fraser, to its mouth at the Pacific ocean, nations along the watershed say critical salmon runs would be threatened by a proposed 700,000 barrels per day of crude oil and toxic hydrocarbons crossing the top of the Fraser watershed as proposed.

"St'át'imc territories are downstream of the proposed pipeline, putting our communities at risk," said Chief Art Adolph of Xaxli'p, a community of the St'át'imc nation whose territories cover the middle and southern parts of the Fraser watershed. "An oil spill into the Fraser River could be devastating for our people. Since time immemorial the river provides for us, and we have an obligation to protect it." "Oil spills from the Enbridge pipelines would be inevitable," said Chief Jackie Thomas of Saik'uz First Nation. "That risk to our livelihoods is unacceptable. Enbridge has spills all over North America, including the big Michigan spill earlier this year. We refuse to be next."





BOARD OF DIRECTOR Motions Carried September–November, 2010

Motion: 2010-88: The (WHC) Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs oppose the "long gun registry" and want Nathan Cullen to vote against it. Moved by: Woos 2nd by: Namox

Motion Carried: September 20, 2010

Motion: 2010-91: The WHC wish to engage in open dialogue with the provincial government, federal government, regional districts (2), and local government.

Moved by: Hagwilnegh 2nd by: T'sek'ot

Motion Carried: September 21, 2010

Motion 2010-93: Motion to accept the designated board member Carla Lewis from the Wet'suwet'en First Nations.

Moved: Madeek 2nd by: Namox

Motion Carried: September 21, 2010

Motion: 2010-94: The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and Board of Directors of the Wet'suwet'en Treaty Office (aka Office of the Wet'suwet'en) reaffirm that the Wet'suwet'en will focus on a positive path for the future. They will commit to outreach to their house members in creating a "Working Governance Model" through the rediscovery and codify the Inuk Nu'at'en – our laws.

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: Woos

Motion Carried: September 21, 2010

Motion 2010-95: The WHC approve the "ANUK NU'ATEN DIKANTS'ILHYE PROGRAM" (Traditional Decision Making Program) as a pilot project over the next 3 fiscal years.

Moved by: Hagwilnegh 2nd by: Madeek

Motion Carried: September 21, 2010

Motion: 2010-98: WHC approve exploratory discussions with other FN groups who have developed and implemented collaborative stewardship agreements.

Moved by: Woos 2nd by: T'sek'ot

Motion Carried: September 22, 2010

Motion: 2010-99: WHC are opposed to selling of non-private lands on Wet'suwet'en Territories

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: Namox

Motion Carried: September 22, 2010

Motion: 2010-108: The WHC want to intervene in the Lax'Kw'Alaams Court Case in order to protect the salmon stocks coming up the Bulkley River.

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: T'sek'ot

Motion carried: October 26, 2010

Motion 2010-114: Motion for T'sek'ot to start work on the poles for Northwest Community College as blessed by the Hereditary Chiefs.

Moved by: Woos 2nd by: Samooh

Motion Carried: October 27, 2010

Motion 2010-115: WHC chiefs are opposed to the construction of Pacific Trails Pipeline (PTP) on Wet'suwet'en Territory

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: Namoks

Motion Carried: October 27, 2010

Motion 2010-116: WHC approve the Natural Resources and Fisheries and Wildlife department to proceed with work and research on the PTP project for purposes of: Enhancing Wet'suwet'en authority. Inform better decision making. Access infringement on Wet'suwet'en rights & title.

Moved by: Woos 2nd by: Evangeline Alfred

Motion Carried: October 27, 2010



Motion 2010-121: WHC to meet December 1st, 2010 to discuss governance issues.

Moved by: Namoks 2nd by: Walter

Motion passed: November 23, 2010

Motion 2010-123: The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs do not agree in paying the \$75,000.00 annual rent fee on Forest Tenure until they explore and exhaust all opportunities for a viable business plan.

MOVED BY: HAGWILNEGH 2ND BY: WOOS

MOTION CARRIED: November 23, 2010

Motion 2010-124: The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs approve the exploration of selling raw logs.

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: Woos

Motion Carried: November 23, 2010

Motion 2010-125: Motion for Office of the Wet'suwet'en to purchase a vehicle for Wet'suwet'en Unlocking Aboriginal Justice (WUAJ). WUAJ would be responsible to pay for the vehicle as well as any maintenance and repairs.

Moved by: Walter 2nd by: Woos

Motion 2010-127: For the purposes of the Directive 20-1 that the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs approve the introduction of the Wet'suwet'en Agency planning documents with all Wet'suwet'en Communities and neighboring First Nations.

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: Walter

Motion Carried November 23, 2010

The Motion 2010-128: The WHC supports the recommendations of the Working Group to seek a secondment within the Ministry of Child & Family Services.

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: Woos

Motion Carried November 23, 2010

Motion 2010-129: Motion to seek approval for OW to sponsor the thesis on The Aboriginal Female School Experience by Birdy Markert.

Moved by: Woos 2nd by: Wah tah K'eght

Motion Carried: November 23, 2010

Motion 2010-133: The Cabin Building project ended on November 19th, 2010. The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs bequest the 66 km Morice River cabin to the Gil_seyhu clan.

Moved by: Madeek 2nd by: Namoks

Motion Carried: November 24, 2010

Motion 2010-134: The Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs endorse a Communication Engagement Agreement with Lions Gate Metals with clauses included, and arrange agreement sign-off at the December chief's meeting.

Moved by: Woos 2nd by: Samooh

Motion Carried: November 24, 2010



**ON BEHALF OF THE WET'SUWET'EN HEREDITARY CHIEFS, WE
WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A SAFE AND PEACEFUL SEASON.**

**The best of all gifts around any Christmas tree: the presence of
a happy family all wrapped up in each other.**



A HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DEBBIE PIERRE

Office of the Wet'suwet'en staff and their families, send our seasons greetings to you and yours.

As we reflect on the year gone past, the Wet'suwet'en have had many successes. After years of negotiations, the Wet'suwet'en will embark upon a new approach to child welfare by implementing a Wet'suwet'en Traditional decision-making model and moving forward with negotiations as an Interim Measure to support the Wet'suwet'en Child Welfare Agency under the Directive 20-1 Program of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Throughout the Clan and House meetings in 2009-10, the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs listened to their House members concerns about treaty negotiations, their authority on the territories, and escalating Crown sales of lands and permitting of resources on Wet'suwet'en territories.

In meetings with Ministers of the Crown and government representatives the Chiefs realized Crown recognition of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance, and the Authority of House members on their territories was essential.

In 2011, Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs will be asking their members to participate in the creation of a living Hereditary Governance model based on the Inuk Nu'at'en (Our Laws), design and ratify a Wet'suwet'en Constitution, and structure a central governance agency to protect the title, rights and interests of all Wet'suwet'en.

With this said, the Hereditary Chiefs and staff of the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, look forward working closely with the membership to advance Crown recognition of Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Governance and Authority in a positive and progressive manner.

Zoondala Hoonzoo
Debbie Pierre, Executive Director
Office of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs

