

# LAKSILYU CLAN MEETING



8/19/2009

## FINAL REPORT

This report is a summary of the 3 day community forum which took place on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at the small feast hall in the Moricetown Multiplex.



# Laksilyu clan meeting

DAY ONE – APRIL 24, 2009

## Warner Naziel

- I was working for CSTC in Prince George. I received a job offer for this Researcher/Asst. Negotiator position and I gave it a lot of thought. I was with my children in Prince George and had a good job. I am committed to not wasting any time, if I am sacrificing my time away from children, it must be valuable.
- Don Ryan was unable to be here today and will be here tomorrow
- I wanted to find what we did in treaty since 1995. Judy and I organized all treaty related documents. We organized them in chronological order. This information amounted to \$12 million dollars and we asked ourselves what had been done. We went through the binders and compared the dialogue from 1995 to the present and it looked like the same dialogue, people were still stagnant
- I've spent a lot of time on our territories. The reality is we are still stuck on reserves. We all have numbers – status cards.
- Warner presented Laksilyu information and showed maps with little land remaining
- I encourage you to share stories about the territory, history of Laksilyu you have been taught
- Warner reviewed the history of Wet'suwet'en ( attached presentation)

## Discussion:

Perhaps because our history is oral and in the past few years we have lost many of our elders, we have lost their stories, we should be writing this history down. Although the treaty office has a lot of documents available, not everyone is going to go there to access that information.

*Melanie Morin is working with School District 54 on a history work book that will be available.*

Are you trying to be self-governed? Who will benefit from this? Who has all the jobs? We are educated; my family is not hired by the OW office. What is sense in showing us these things here? Father Morice was a Whiteman. There is only 1/16 of Wet'suwet'en clan members here. We need to be consulted. Go to Lake Babine and see where they are. They won't let me gas up there. How many of our people work in the OW office? Who is running the show in the canyon?

*The approach we are taking is that the clans will make decisions about what they want to see in a treaty and we will take this information to the MTWG. The clans are responsible for their territories. The power comes from the clans. It is not up to anyone at OW. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to take, run with it. Your children in the community want you to make the right decision.*



*We appreciate your frustrations. We are not doing our jobs as a clan; we are caught between clans and trap lines. We are talking about a government system that is thousands of years old. What is the solution? We are here to create opportunities for our future. All clans are going to start meeting like this. The government is not a few people, it is all people, and we all need to be part of this. This afternoon we will give you history on development. We do see the need for jobs and jurisdiction for their territories. We need to have regular clan meetings; I am optimistic about this process.*

Do people know our real names before father Morice changed our names like Joseph? Are there any records?

*We have nothing recorded and we have tried to research that. There are a lot of names recorded but very old. Babies were given names when they were born and names changed as responsibility changed.*

Since the court case, we had other people speaking and working for us. I'm very proud of David and Warner. These 2 men went away to university, travelled around the world to see how others live, and with that knowledge have come back to work with us, my heart is very full.

Prayer: T'sek'ot

Lunch

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### *David deWit – Natural Resources Manager*

Introductions made to the Natural Resources Team

In 1987 the Supreme Court of Canada recognized aboriginal title to land has never been extinguished and brings us here to today. The government and industry must consult for development on the land. We must engage clans, this has been a weakness in the past, and we could have done a better job if we had open communication. We need to share information we receive and get direction from the clan and this is how we can move forward. We helped raise our families together to become Laksilyu members. Consultation to date is designed by government. It is a process where government said aboriginal title has not been extinguished. Prove to us you use the lands. We have lost a lot of information, we have information our elders have given us. Information in your names, in songs, dances at potlatches, we would like to try to enhance and promote. We need to be proud where we came from and show our youth. That is where our title comes from. With the consultation process, we need to report to clan member the proposed activities.

Blue Pearl Mining – do the clans want that? Do they see a benefit in using a resource knowing there will be levels of pollution or does the clan have a better use for that territory? We collect environmental information on water, fish and plant studies and we need to bring you the impacts of development. Part of the consultation and accommodation policy is that we will make a requirement that companies have to pay to consult on exploratory activities on the territory. We want to be compensated and get benefits from jobs. We have plans we want to pursue to ensure our children have an opportunity.

Wind power – we will review our data base of gravesites, trails, cultural heritage resources in that area.



This summer we will meet on the territory, bring our youth there, and make achievable goals to support each other. That is what the Natural Resources department does

- Reactive process
- Working with School District 54 developing information for our youth
- Clan meetings go, learn more, Darren asked what we are doing with this information, take a camera out tomorrow, take videos, put on web site. We recognize our weakness in sharing information with the clans

## John Ridsdale – Referrals

- Google earth map shows Wet'suwet'en territories. Blunt creek area, shows cut block and agricultural areas. Each year we need to know what is going on the territories.
- I have approximately 1,800 referrals in my system. Our hope is you will send people to assist the OW. Our schooling with the technicians is to bring it to the people. We have requested someone with each clan go to the Environmental Monitoring Assistant Program at NWCC. These assistants will be out learning how to research that information will come back to the clans. Clans can decide if the project can proceed. We want more of our own people trained. It is an opportunity for youth to stay home and take care of their territory.
- We are against industry when they do not clean up their mess.
- We have 38 house territories we have coded and now the government is using our system and recognizes our system. They accepted rights and title when they started using our maps.
- All maps displayed have been done in-house at OW
- Wind power projects, they send digital information and we overlay this information over our territorial maps.
- Warner spoke about telling the public we have a right to be on the territory. I made a few copies of an announcement we sent out (attached). It shows that all projects must be done with full consultation. David spoke of pipelines, chiefs worry if you let one pipeline in, it becomes a corridor.
- All trails were one ridge above a water system. Highways were built over our trails. When transporting, our water is at risk. I spoke about the price of water. They are taking water tenures throughout BC. On the lower mainland it is 700 on the waterways.
- Warner spoke about land titles. We send letters and maps showing our concerns. We have layers for moose, berries, medicines and show them our concerns and they come back they will issue the tenure anyway. We sent a letter to the senior land officers, province and federal. It is an important statement, we did not cede our territory, and they dismiss us and do not take us seriously. This letter says they are infringing on our rights (attached).
- Parks: Access, can we still do our hunting and trapping? they cannot stop Wet'suwet'en traditional practices. Our aboriginal rights have not been relinquished. We need to be consulted before any projects go on the territories.
- As Laksilyu, you need to tell us what to do, you need to be informed and we need to inform you.



- We served a writ to BC timber sales regarding the impacts to our forests due to B.C.'s logging practices. They were logging across the lake and building roads and looking for gravel to build roads. They came across depressions and did not know that before refrigerators, we wrapped our dried meats in skunk cabbage leaves and stored in holes in ground called food caches. We cooked in ground ovens. We had cache pits and ovens by Uncha Lake. BC Timber Sales dug up gravel and destroyed pits. We did not know if there were bones. We served a writ and sued BC timbers sales, they destroyed our cultural heritage.
- The Government likes Indians to fight amongst themselves, divide and conquer mentality.

## David Belford – Minerals Liaison

- Explained process for reviewing mineral exploration, and mine development projects on Wet'suwet'en territories.
- Provided overview of the eight active mineral exploration sites, and two stone gravel quarries on Laksilyu territories. Mineral Exploration is taking place on the following Laksilyu House territories;
  - Tsekalbaiyex - Endurance Gold Corp. (Gold) early stage exploration southwest of Moricetown.
  - Yextsowiten - Mega Silver (Silver) early stage exploration Duckwing Lake area.
  - Ginehklaiyax:
    - Grand Portage (Gold/silver) early stage exploration high alpine southeast shoulder of Telkwa Pass.
    - Cadillac Mining (silver/gold) early stage exploration southwest of Moose Skin Johnny Lake.
    - Caracle Creek Mining (gold/silver) early stage exploration northeast shoulder of Tachek Mtn.
    - Lions Gate Energy (copper/moly) south of Moose Skin Johnny Lake.
    - Segunio Raton (mine reclamation) southwest side of Tachek Mtn.
    - Shyder Gravel pit extension northeast of Burns Lake.
    - Atlas Quarries – re-opening old quarry for landscape rock
  - KwenBeaYex – Horsfeld Placer gold operation on Bob Creek southeast of Houston
- Global economic recession has impacted mineral exploration and mining sector.
- Over 27 companies on all Wet'suwet'en house territories in 2007, but by Spring 2008 many junior, early stage companies stopped exploration work.
- In 2009, less than half these companies will be active but mining activity expected to pickup in 2010.
- The majority of the exploration taking place on previously explored or worked claims. Water quality already impacted to some degree by cumulative impacts. OW NR requires water quality samples before work starts, and at the end of the work season to track baseline water quality.
- The mining sector has supported OW's mineral liaison, and consultation in the past.



- In 2009, the Natural Resources will require a Memorandum of Understanding with funding support from all mineral exploration companies active on the territories for 3 years.
- All mineral exploration, mine development, alternate energy, and other resource development proposals are reviewed for infringements to Wet'suwet'en title, rights, and interests, as well as impacts to cultural and environmental values.
- Regular, ongoing consultation with the clan and house members will increase Natural Resources staff knowledge of specific areas for protection, and expectations from land use, and resource development. Communications and consultation would improve if each House selects a representative to act as a "runner" between the membership and the OW.

## Discussion:

I am concerned about logging. At Uncha Lake they cleared out logging. We need to utilize that wood they cut down. Do we have access to that wood? They take our logs, we should have right to go into there, we should have access to that income. There is a lot of value in that bug kill wood.

*We need to hear this, the trees on your territory are for your use. The Sappier case said we could cut down trees for our homes and furniture. Yes, we have full rights. They are taking away our use to that timber, taking away our habitat. This is exactly what we need to hear so we can start discussions. We need to pick-up negotiations; we have started the process but success comes with the houses standing behind us. Yes, we can make this a reality.*

There has been a lot of environmental impact on our territories and it would be wise to encourage our members to take environmental courses, each clan should have a representative in environmental studies. To me, the door is wide open to get someone in there to be our spokesman for all Laksilyu. You have a small group at the OW, but if each clan has a representative that is qualified and we can find monies to do that, you now have someone on your staff and have Wet'suwet'en employed.

*I agree 100%. The OW has spent time with NWCC. This course ensures environmentally that our needs around streams, plants, geography are being met. We can try to secure 5-8 seats so each clan could be represented. This would be a great potential for that person being a steward on our territories. The local course is 6 weeks and gives the foundation if an individual is inspired to continue on with that education. On Sunday we can bring our brochures for more information in that course.*

One thing over the next few days we need to hear, you have history of development without our consent. The government and industry take the best of our resources on our territory. Since Delgamuuth we have the right to consultation, we are not in tune with what you do at each the chiefs office. We need to have a Stewardship policy.

*You are right; it would do well for our department to get direction like that. All we need is a nod of the head and we can go forth.*

What areas have not been claimed?

*On Sunday I will be doing a presentation. We took 22,000 sq km, cut blocks, grazing, pesticides, agricultural land reserves, private land (not on table as it has been sold). Each clan's territory is scaled down to*



see how much private land has been sold and surveyed. You can take the presentation home on Sunday. That will be put on our website. David discussed Woodmere Nursery. Carbon credits.

There is a new owner of ski hill (20/20 Group). There is a transfer of land that we are negotiating with the government. It is illegal for them to sell lands while we are at the treaty table. The Chiefs said mutually beneficial agreements are necessary. Over summer we will do a scoping process with the clans, what do they want to do up there? What is the Laksilyu vision for business? Where are our skills? Set goals, know what you want.

There is \$25-\$60 million in grants for a Job Opportunity program for displaced forest workers. Our neighbors have gotten a large sum of money for trails and cabins. We can't write proposals until we receive your feedback.

There is a proposal on other side of Dennis and McDonnel Lakes, the Microwave, destined for snow mobilers. That valley will give us opportunity as it is close to town. Over 10 years ago the Wet'suwet'en erected 5 cabins; some were in locations where they were not used. It seems as though more non-natives use them as maybe we did not make plans. We need to do something we are all interested in.

The OW purchased a saw mill and log lathe, housing program (timber frame). We all need housing; this is an opportunity for working trades to build log homes.

Proposals for a green house. Joe Wong at Woodmere Nursery employs close to 50% Wet'suwet'en. Joe has said his children not interested in running the nursery when he retires. Joe knows the nursery is on Wet'suwet'en territory. There is potential for a partnership and it could be a reality to take over that green house in the future.

Innovation Foods, low cost foods. Joe is going to grow food in a greenhouse for Innovation Foods. We could do that here.

THERE ARE GREAT  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR  
MEMBERS TO FILL THE ROLE  
OF STEWARDS ON THE  
TERRITORY.

It keeps coming to mind, we go through one generation to the next of ideas get pushed forward and shot down. Our mentality is similar to crabs in a bucket. We can't seem to run alongside with these processes. Our healing has not happened in our own clans. How do we protect ourselves in our own chief system? If our hereditary system runs the way it is supposed to, the chiefs are the stewards and look after land for our people. We are falling under the western system, my land, my pocket etc. It is a power struggle. People are going after names to help themselves. The one that speaks the loudest gets the contract.

As Wet'suwet'en and Laksilyu we need to start communicating within our own clan system and figure out how to help our young children to get those jobs. Vern just shared that. What is stopping them from going further? What healing process have they not gone through? We can do all that planning but if we don't have the people, how do we go forward? How do we infiltrate this planning into our clan? If we don't do it, the Europeans will come in and do it for us.

Ron Austin: I support Darren about the differences we have in our own clan. At funeral feasts we come together. If someone has a business, we don't support it. It is true; at the end of the day we are given opportunities to work with land and start to set up with forestry and industry and to say, yes, we can receive



dollars from the resources from our land. We won't know what to do with them. As soon as the feast is over, that is it. I agree, we are the care takers of our territories. Sylvester William said we are caretakers, when I leave, I won't take that land with me. We need to start taking a look at ourselves. We are further along than other places in B.C. We bow down to the provincial government laws. Is it possible to get reports on some of the licenses that go through the OW for forestry etc?

*We will work on getting you information on forest and range agreements*

Why are we not getting information from chiefs?

*We need to start having more clans meetings. That is how things were done in the past. We did not always live on reserve, we came to gathering places. Part of healing is rites of passage for our youth. There were different teachings that were passed on to youth; we celebrated young women and men.*

Theresa: I was raised by Josephine Namox; her husband was Alfred Namox, my great grandfather. I slept beside my great grandmother until I was eight years old. I was her eyes, ears and hands. She never left this village, my grandmother Sarah, told me who my family is – Laksilyu. We are one people. Over the years, I've seen elders go. I've I seen my grandmother suffer on this reserve. (Theresa conversed at length with her clan and her words were not written down as the writer felt this was a private time for the clan.)

Darren: What are advantages of making parks in our territories and how does it benefit Wet'suwet'en people? Can we hunt and trap still?

*6 new parks were established and this was supported by the chiefs. One question, will this restrict our rights to fish, hunt and berry pick? There are No restrictions to Wet'suwet'en on Wet'suwet'en territory within provincial parks. Even if lakes post signs saying there are no motorized vehicles, if we are practicing our tradition right, we have full access. If anyone has conflict, let our office know. There is no need to have our rights minimized.*

Ron Mitchell: Fisheries and rangers. There a couple of charges pending with our fisheries and DFO are encouraging our rangers to charge them. We won't charge our own people. We will not have rangers charge our own people. The government is using our rangers to have our people charge one another. That is something to think about.

*A few people writing letters cannot protect 22,000 km. We need clans to be active on their territories and the parks are the best short term measures to protect our territories from mining or logging. Along Morice, Bernice. Old man Lake on Laksilyu territory. We entered into a co-management agreement. We are developing management plans. We did a presentation at Brohman Lake and asked what they wanted to see. They wish to see trail from Maxaan to China Knows opened again.*

Darren: When beetle kill first came into Tweedsmuir Park our FN people said we will go in and select burn sights. MOF said let nature take its course. Nature is destroying itself. Is it wise to put all our territories in

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parks and restrain us? As we are stewards of lands, we feel this will destroy our land. It affected the whole province.

I listened to Hagwilnegh, if our people are breaking the law using our hereditary system and selling our rights for money, is it okay to allow that to happen? How do we control that? The idea of rangers was they could do that, be our voice, otherwise it would go through DFO. What route do we take for those using our system for their own gain? Do we allow that? What is it saying to the rest of us? The newspapers are saying the same thing. It may be one or two breaking the law but all of us pay for us. How do we bring jurisdiction into this, looking after our land?

Vi: Every Wednesday the elders have a luncheon. We want to have the elders deal with issues they are concerned about. At the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting we spoke about the fisheries in canyon. They see that they have lost control of the canyon as fisheries took over and managed the canyon and chiefs and elders have no say. What Darren is discussing, how do we control this? Our elders remaining have no say. Your uncles were fishermen in the canyon. Louie Tommy would watch how much fish were caught. He directed the rest of them so that the whole house gets some. We don't have that anymore. Our own house members don't care if my house gets enough salmon. All fish gathered is sold. Chiefs want to have fisheries manager and yourself to a meeting to discuss that situation.

*We are we turning a new page and it is time to take action. I wish I was here in the Tweedsmuir Park day. We don't have to wait for government to mobilize our selves.*

Lucy: You discuss the canyon and Nikw ts'de'ni (our ancestors). You say only my grandfather, they have fathers too, and they are our ancestors. Johnny Donald was a chief here when I was growing up, discussed how fish were managed. When fish comes you see tourists that want to buy fish. We are not supposed to sell fish. God gave us these fish to prepare for winter which is why we respect this canyon. Whomever fish, don't waste no fish. Two baskets – took 10 men to put basket into water. When taking out basket goes around and sees who needs more, only how much they can handle and share. Don't catch fish to rot, respect the canyon, that was the way the law was. Everyone worked together and shared with each other. That was life when I was growing up; I miss the good old days. We had our own laws in this village, we were all one people, all Wet'suwet'en. I think back, talk about it and we did what was right instead of money, money, money. Our ancestors did not involve money. Fish were for winter food. They were happy people, caring, sharing, today I do not see it and it hurts. Fisheries use nets, one person gets fish and other don't. It is not fair and we must look after elders first before you eat your own.

Betty: I fished in the canyon since I was 14. I back the rangers 100%. Some single parents do not get the fish. I work there, people ask me for fish. We fish for the community and some members don't get fish and other members do, we are supposed to support each other. We are supposed to bring fish to those that cannot fish. Some workers don't put their fish in the bin and save the fish for other family members. I don't think that is nice, they were hired to fish for the community. They will say "that is spoken for". When fisheries rangers are not around, they may go to Hagwilget, some people need permits and don't get them to transport their fish. If people are doing something wrong, we cannot find the rangers. I try my best to help people out. An old couple came from Lejack area, and for 3 days they were asking for fish, a very old couple. Someone was fishing that was not working and had a pool full of fish, and they would not give these old people fish. That embarrassed me as we were trying to catch fish and they were scarce at the time.



David:

- Our nation is going to be faced with something that will wipe out salmon and that is pipelines. Have you heard of the Tar Sands in Alberta? They are taking oil out and want to sell it to Asia. The only way to get it transported is to build a pipeline through our territory. Now it goes to Vancouver, and they are working on a line to the states. It will go across BC which is the shortest distance to Asia. There is a gas line through the Telkwa River and it was installed in the late 50's and exploded a couple of times due to landslides. They want to put a 36" pipeline from Kitimat that will parallel Morice River, and cross the Goznell towards Burns Lake. The Headwaters is where salmon spawn and it is a miracle that has happened for years. This has the potential of an oil spill and will wipe out the sockeye. This is our big fight right now. We have met with FN leaders from Hadia Gwaii and Ft. Chippewa. Warner and I will go to Vancouver to work together to stop this line. Two lines will go through. They need a condensate (similar to kerosene) in to Kitimat and it will be piped through our territory to Ft. McMurray.
- We need to unite all FN across BC. There must be a smarter way for this economy to go. There is only so much oil on this earth. There are alternate ways and we must invest in this.
- There is a street rally on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon in Terrace. Enbridge is the company proposing this line. There will be a big group of people opposing this project. This is where we can be successful by standing together.

• We need to stand together to protect our fish and water, otherwise there will be nothing left for our children. This will create a healthy community.

- The history of industry is all profit.
- We need to reinvest into the community, health care and education.
- David displayed presentation of other pipelines.

Warner:

I did some work in northern Alberta. I spent 3 months in Ft. Chippewa. There are approximately 1,200 people in this community and it is the oldest community

in Alberta.

- People are dying from a rare form of cancer. One out of 10 get this cancer
- Tailings ponds are beside the Athabasca River. Toxins are leaking into the ground to the river impacting eco-systems
- They depend on muskrat, moose, caribou
- Some fishermen caught a 2 headed fish
- The hunters left moose in the bush because the rib cage was filled with blisters. Fish have blisters all over their bodies
- Humans are eating this fish and wildlife that are saturated with toxins
- There is a lot of asthma as there are lots of emissions from smoke stacks which are coming back down to earth. There are also other types of breathing problems



- When berry picking, there is a powder residue on top of them, something they have never seen before.
- A lot of people are down trodden and cannot get motivated due to funerals.

## PARKS – FRANCOIS DEPEY

6 new provincial parks have been created in Wet'suwet'en territory in 2008. Chiefs supported the decision during the Government to Government (G2G) forum that followed the Morice Lands and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) in 2007. They recommended to include Wedzin Bin (Morice lake) as one of those parks as it is a very critical spawning area for Wedzin Kwa (Bulkley/Morice rivers) salmon.

The 6 parks are (in brackets: **CLAN - HOUSE / Chief**):

- Burnie-Shea Lakes (TSAYU - DJAKANYEX / **Kweese**)
- Atna River (GILSEYHYU - C'INIGGIT NENIKEKH / **Goohlaht**)
- Morice Lake (GILSEYHYU - C'INIGGIT NENIKEKH / **Goohlaht & GITDUMDEN - LHUDI BIN / Woos**)
- Nenikëkh - Nanika Kidprice (GILSEYHYU - C'INIGGIT NENIKEKH / **Goohlaht & GITDUMDEN - LHUDI BIN / Woos**)
- Nadina Mountain (GITDUMDEN - KEEXWINITS / **Gisday Wa**)
- Old Man Lake (GILSEYHYU - KAYEX / **Samooch & LAKSILYU - GINEHKLAIYEX / Hagwilnegh**)

Milestones:

- 2008: The office of the Wet'suwet'en Natural Resource department requested that Parks boundaries should match Wet'suwet'en house territory boundaries as much as possible. BC government/Ministry of Environment (MOE) complied with this request for some parks.
- September 15, 2008: first meeting to work collaboratively with BC MOE/Parks on management plans for the 6 new parks.
- September 29, 2008: presentation of the project at the chief meeting.
- November 6, 2008: Park naming meeting in Moricetown – opportunity Moricetown students to get together with elders and listen to stories that could be used to rename parks with Wet'suwet'en names.
- November 25, 2008: report on parks at chiefs meeting.
- February 11, 2009: Parks meeting for all clans in Moricetown.
- March 2009: "Nenikëkh" is adopted as new spelling (suggested by Wet'suwet'en Language Authority) for Nanika park.
- May 1, 2009: presentation for Gilshyu clan meeting at Francois Lake hall.



- Summer 2009: hiring of Karen Plasway by BC Conservation Corp for Cultural Heritage research and input in management plans.
- June 26, 2009: presentation for Gitdumden clan meeting in Moricetown.
- July 30, 2009: All clan meeting to discuss park co-management ideas at Wedzin Bin
- August 17, 2009: presentation for Tsayu clan meeting in Moricetown.

In September 2009 we plan to organize another day on the territory to go with boats to some historical fishing camps at the outflow of Wedzin Bin in Wedzin Kwa and to see the Chinook spawning dunes in the river.

We also intend to have a full day meeting with chiefs (open to clan members) to discuss various options in terms of co-management agreement with BC government based on experiences from other first nation. We would like to invite representatives of the Haida and possibly from the Champagne Aishihik (Yukon) nations.

Prayer: T'sek'ot



Meeting adjourned

# Laksilyu clan meeting

DAY THREE – APRIL 26, 2009

## Overview – Warner Naziel

Friday – Natural resources presentation

- Referral process
- Wood lot licenses
- Agricultural expansion
- Proposed mines

Saturday – Field Trip

- We made history by going out on our territory together.

Sunday – Work Plan

- The mandate comes from the clans. I did not want to take direction from an isolated group of people; I wanted to talk to the Clans to present their information to the treaty table.
- Each chiefs represents a larger group of people so we brought the clans together
- We took those concerns of the Laksamshu clan to the treaty table and told them what their clan wants to see in a treaty.
- On day one you got a general interest of our history
- Treaty does not sound like a good idea but I'm involved in it. Our ideas for the treaty table are that we will come forth with a message from the clans what they want for their future. The MTWG may have an opportunity to sit with the clans. They are in negotiations with a hereditary system, have worked with bands for many years, a language they speak well.
- Gitinyou, Gitxsan & Wet'suwet'en are all part of Delgamuuth. We want to ensure they know they are working with the clans and house groups
- Natural Resources is interested in getting more direction as they are unsure what the clan's strategy is. This is an opportunity to discuss what is important to you.
- We walked trails; felt the cabin, something tangible, a chance to feel Madeline, felt she was there with us. Our job is to understand Laksilyu concerns and explain these to the federal and provincial governments, be your messengers. Laksilyu can decide what they want on their territories; you do not need the OW to do that for you. You have a lot of strong people



*You have an interest in the land, on the land and under the land. Rights and title flow from the occupation of the territories. Your ancestors did that for us and passed that on to us.*

amongst you, your ancestors did not have the OW to tell them to build cabins, they did it on their own

- Come up with ideas that are Laksilyu ideas, think of bigger ideas, perhaps a Laksilyu trust, getting back on land, building cabins, forestry, be sovereign
- There will be a posting in the newspapers that talks about the Wet'suwet'en are asserting themselves
- We are sending out a reminder that land purchased was illegal, it belongs to us, they can still be neighbors

## **Sovereignty – Don Ryan**

- I am reluctant to be here discussing treaty. You have watched what I have done to take on the crown. The court case was very significant. I put the jurisdiction of the territory back in your hands. The court case is now over 10 years old. You have been at the treaty table for 15 years. What has happened in that time? Very little.
- I have come back so people understand things we are doing in different forums. This forum is one of those forums and is significant as you do not need the consent of the crown to do what you are doing. You have jurisdiction and authority and the court case said that to you in 1997.
- You have an interest in the land, on and under the land. It flows from the occupation of the territories. That is where rights and title flows from. Your ancestors did that for us and passed that on to us.
- My role was to help out the Wet'suwet'en. The proof I had to do for those folks on the land. It is important what they said to us and what you need to do. This forum is the most important forum there is. I left in 1999 to do a self imposed exile for 10 years to recover from the court case. August 1<sup>st</sup> will be the 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary.
- By the time we finish, we will show you the treaty can do certain things, but it can't do a lot of things
- You have all the chapters on the table now. You will have to read it and understand what it is saying. We could move quickly to an offer from the crown to you and you will dismiss it. I don't want to see you accept the offer. It is very clear in what they are doing to you. Look on map. You can see fee simple lands they tell us they are not on the table. It is a profound impact on all of you when they do that. We are going to make it an agenda item for the Wet'suwet'en.
- I may not see the results of it in my lifetime and it requires you to do something. It is your responsibility. We will show you how it can be done. The first thing is we will protect the main stem of the river.



This river is the lifeblood of all territories in this watershed. You have been too quiet and not aggressive enough to protect that. The fish are dying on this territory. Your strategy for each house territory was to ensure there was salmon and fish on each of them. The Frazer system has collapsed as we did not fight this. We have a chance to protect the rest of the territory. Due to fee simple lands and industry, the upper Frazer has died. It is also happening on the Skeena system. Massive transfer from the ocean to the headwaters and back to the ocean.

- The Treaty forum is one, litigation is one were we do the fighting; there are a lot in this room that can go in the court, Natural Resources. You need to be very aggressive on C&A and you must understand it is a default process. In the C&A they promised us that in the court case, reconciliation of the two sovereignties.
- I want people to understand the different forums we can use.
- There is a lot of work in terms of policy, regulatory regimes and legislation. In the past 10 years I have been doing some of that work. We will not have to reinvent that, I am prepared to bring that from the Gitksan. The latest is on wildlife and lands and minerals. I am looking to all of you to start that. We will rely on a lot of young people to see our way through this and this forum is the only forum where we can do this. I am excited about this process we have been thinking about in the office in town. We need to mobilize the clans to tackle all of the issues.
- You can see houses that are impacted and you need a strategy to work on those.
- People need to understand what Section 35 is. I know what it is and what title is. We need to understand what we need to do before being pushed to the higher elevations.
- The Gitksan's and Wet'suwet'en cannot be the only ones leading the charge. I have spent 10 years trying to mobilize. We will take on fee simple and submerged lands.
- The picture at Round Lake is a telling tale what they say to you at the treaty table. All those lands you were on are not on the table, the lake. Why? They don't want you to discuss submerged lands as you have a case against Canada, an infringement case. You have a different management of those lands and you are a threat. You need to assert yourselves on this land base. How will we do that? I am looking to each clan to do that. I'm hoping to have all the clans meet this year, first initial round then probe into the details how we will do that. If not, you will be left with the high elevations.
- This is a long term process and will take us decades.

Darren: After the clan meetings, what is the plan for all clans to be under one roof as a whole Wet'suwet'en system?

*Judy and I are entrusted to putting together the Wet'suwet'en Summit where all clans meet. We will meet in Burns Lake, our eastern communities are fearful of what we are doing here. They have created 6 nations as CSTC. David was in a meeting last week and they invited everyone onto Carrier Sekanie territory. David was very upset. He corrected them and welcomed them to Laksilyu Territory part of 22,000 sq. km. There is an underlying message, we have people from Brohman Lake Band, B/L Band, Skin Tyee, and Nee Tye Bhun. It is difficult to get them here. It is a big task as we are faced with INAC system. They do not participate in feast hall as much. Immediate families collect money for their dead, not a feast. They feel disconnected now. We are*



*working on Unity. We will pull all clans together. Next week we will be in Burns Lake as large population are Gil\_seyhu at Francois Lake. We are planning a field trip on those territories. We will discuss trespass issues and industry on their territory.*

*We have a steering committee to work with us, Burns Lake, Marvin George, and asked him to come back to assist us. He was an ear to the elders in Delgamuuth and is one of our most valuable resources. This will be the first time in my living history that Laksilyu will be able to say what they want. You are making history today. You never lost your jurisdiction, you have always had it.*

*This is not the last time Laksilyu will be able to talk. David & I are working together to pull funds to continue*

*meetings. There are revenues and resources being taken off your land, taxation are being collected by the Government.*

*We need to go as one voice, we have been quiet for too long. It is time we come together collectively, put aside our disputes and rise up together otherwise, we will lose this. We have the strength, but we have been too quiet.*

*Vi: I'd like to speak in Wet'suwet'en but it is difficult because I want everyone to hear. I've been involved in the court case since the 1980's and saw work done by our ancestors. They laid the road for us.*

*We discuss Unity with eastern members; I've heard this for past 15 years since we started treaty negotiations. Those people we talk about are all our relatives, our people, 6 generations back came from Ootsa Lake, Skin Tyee. There is a big difference between the Carrier Sekanie and the Wet'suwet'en. They work in Section 38. Wet'suwet'en are working with maps which outline Wet'suwet'en territory.*

*The Carrier Sekanie gave us a map 4 years ago and which was based on Indian Affairs mapping. It showed trap lines, we are not working on trap lines; we are working on the territories. Carrier Sekanie has to protect what they claim is theirs.*

*In 1993 we met and had a feast at old hall and chief councilor from Burns Lake Robert Charlie said yes, we need to learn about the feast system but we don't know where we belong here. None of our elders practice the feast system which is the foundation of Wet'suwet'en government. He wants to know if there was a chance he could get a name. He was told that in order to get a Wet'suwet'en name you must earn it. That turned him off, declaring to be part of the Wet'suwet'en Nation. Several years later he told me he had no place with us.*

*Darren talks about healing, if we don't get them to release this and be part of the Wet'suwet'en Nation, I guaranteed I will die before any resolution is completed. It is nothing for us to discuss lightly, we must be focus, speak with one voice, and when our leaders speak, we must stand*





behind them. It seems we are happiest when we have an office full of non-Wet'suwet'en people. You heard Vern; he said exactly what I am saying. Until I see Wet'suwet'en people working, my nephews, and then I will think we are a success that is what I heard from Vern. For him, a job is most important, for many of us it is the most important, money feeds us, houses us, pays for food and so many Wet'suwet'en people today, men especially are depending on \$175.00 per month and any other ways they can earn income.

I have been away for a while, fighting with myself, should I sit back and watch or become a voice again. I speak for my mother and myself. It is a tough time for those of us who have lost their mothers and fathers. We discussed Madeline Alfred, I remember seeing her in the first court case, sitting in the witness box, very proud, head held high and she spoke the truth, her hand on the bible. If you have an opportunity, read what she said in court on your behalf. That is what the lawyers picked out and came forward with these issues. The months and years before the court case, your grandmothers, aunts, uncles and grandfathers did the same work we are being asked to do here today. Where are we going today?

I want to discuss today the mandate. What is a mandate – when there issues to be settled among a nations, leaders and members sit as we are now, come to a decision, today treaty negotiations, give that decision to go forward. Otherwise we just say we came for free meals. This should be your focus today. Don and Warner came to us asking what we want to do. It is a pretty big question.

My mother is still here walking on our territory and she is 89 years old. I have learned from her, I left home young but did not forget my language as I kept in contact with my mother. Her family has never lost sight of how much she is teaching us, every day we learn something new and I guess I am very fired up and want to see a good round table discussion. Do not be afraid that what you say will be unacceptable, every word you give to our workers is important. If I need clarification, I will ask so I can understand. Don't take their words for granted, it is how we learn. Go to the office, tell them how you feel.

Don discussed the court case and what power it gave us. The Wet'suwet'en have been quiet too long. Your parents were not quiet, I did not speak then. Our chief is not here, not leading us, my responsibility as oldest in my mother's family. Don't be offended, this is how I see, if there is anything you want to say, speak to me. What I have learnt in last 20 years is to be shared with you.

Bonnie George: I've been listening and it made me think what mom dad and granny said, going to her cabin and looking at our little ones that are our future. They have a struggle ahead of them as they don't look like Wet'suwet'en and I want them to be proud.

When we have potlatch, some are here, and we need to work together and it is the individual houses responsibility. We do not hesitate to have potlatches for deaths in each other's community, we need to branch that out further, even with headstones, and we have members in Stelaco. That is the only way we can be stronger. Build a strong foundation. When you work with a sense of



belonging, everything else comes easy. We need to encourage our clan members to be part of everything. That was a sore spot in my mom's life. It goes to individual houses, I want to challenge every Laksilyu house. They want to learn about their culture and it does not matter if your pockets are empty. It is how we build our foundation for our children. I encourage all Laksilyu to get involved, it is the only way we can keep our culture and tradition strong. We need to ensure our business is in order. After losing mom, I realized how important it is to keep our culture together.

Ron Mitchell: I was like Vi too, involved with the Delgumuukw court case and in Wet'suwet'en I was their voice through my pen and pencil and I walked through 22,000 sq miles naming heritage sites, etc. Yesterday on our territory, it was an up and down day for me as I walked. I saw Wah Tah K'eght's face light up. He said I'm home, I have not seen that for a long time.

We discuss ourselves as Laksilyu, Wet'suwet'en in the feast hall, in the last couple of years I am reminded we are lucky what we have here as Wet'suwet'en. When we hear of the west and east how they treat each other, we don't do that here and we must hang on to that. I agree with Bonnie, that when something happens in the east, not many of us go there, just the immediate family go there. If I lived there, I would feel that too, it is an important time for them. We discuss working together as a whole, it is what we must do to make them feel they are part of our system, as Wet'suwet'en. During the court case, we told the world we took care of each other and that came back to me yesterday going through the territory, listening to Henry discussing how many days it took to go up the ridge. Listening to Lucy at the opening, I sat with elders, my late father; I cried, laughed and joked with them, got mad when they got mad. Some had never been in court.

I agree with Darren and healing, it starts with you. Back in the 80's & 90's the Laksilyu were leaders in the community, we were strong and what I am hearing in last 2 days, we can make that happen. We don't have many elders, there are only four sitting with us and we must treasure them, take what we can while we still have them. They are our link with the past. We look at all the maps, some of these elders know all the boundary lines, and I heard them say that in the court case, it is all within them. I felt good yesterday and I know what it is like going to the camp and I felt it by the log cabin. As a child I spent a lot of time there. The last thing, with the people in the east, we need to pull evidence that Francois Lake gave. Put their words on the wall as they discussed the territory and land as Wet'suwet'en. We do not need to make any reference to Carrier Sekanie. It is what I learned, our elders only talked about our people.

I am looking forward to planning today, at end of day we will have a plan together. Yesterday there were no boundaries between us, we were feeling good walking the territories and I appreciate Warner and David and the staff putting that together for us, yesterday was a good day. We can be like we were yesterday on the territory, a lot of laughter and I look forward to end of today's plans.

Betty: I hope I'm not offending anyone; I am recording speeches people are making as I am not good at writing. I like to listen back when I am at home.



Lucy: Yesterday we had a good trip to my territory and my family's territory. My cousin Madeline, my father in-law, Peter Bazil, he had a line first then Madeline and now Henry is on it. I saw a picture of the cabin, the first stop we made was beautiful. The cabin is still standing. It was wonderful to see and from there, stories told in bus, how Indian people make territory markers, use creeks and hills, points of mountains, don't make maps like today. The all worked together, they apologized if they went into someone's territory and were told it's, okay, you are my neighbor.

These boys are learning a lot. We had a beautiful day and trip, up to Quick, lunched there then went into Round Lake, Mabel Forsythe cut the ribbon. There was an old building there where my uncle Louie Tommy had a house there. She showed us where the grave was, and she knew Leonard George, and will give picture to Violet. My grandfather is buried there.

We spoke to the white people and welcomed them. When we arrived I think we scared them; they stopped and went back in the hall and we went in and introduced ourselves.

In the old days the white people used to deal with us. Today we learn from the white people. When the Europeans came here there was no prejudice in my time, neighbors were all white in Houston. Indians and whites got along in those days, respected each other as they were very poor too, their country was torn apart by war and they were given leased land in this country. Now the government is selling those lands again. We did not sell it, the government did. White men that bought it worked hard to clear it. They had only a suit case and started with nothing. Today we should look at people the same way. It was not Indians who sold the land, the government sold the land. The white man paid big money and is still paying taxes today on it. It was not an easy life to leave their countries, to survive they came here, we should respect them. Younger people are different, showing prejudice against white, and white born prejudiced against other people as they don't know the history. The Nether people said the Indian showed us how to fish, hunt and garden; the Indian had big respect for Nether people. In the old days the white people suffered a lot, Nether people cleared that land. Nether people worked for \$1.00/day only. White people respect that, worked hard for their money, no bulldozers, only saw and axe. Our people worked hard. We always must look at our ancestors, if not for them, we would not be here today.

People with names must be respected, elders, now don't do that. I try to talk with my great grandchildren but they don't want to listen to me. That is how it is turning today, must know our ancestors. They died of old age, no sickness and gave their will orally before they died with their own mouth. They invited people into their house, said their words, gave the history of their lives and made their will to the family and went to sleep. Henry's grandmother died in her own house in Smithers, asked for Frank, she raised him. We came down and she mentioned everything and talked about Madeline, only girl she had. Lucy mother, Peter Bazil cousins, she had one daughter. Talks about all of them, how to treat them, what they say, I'm going to leave my daughter, love her for me, who ever left behind; take care of them, for me. Today is not like that, now sick, pills, hospital and finally die. Lots of ways in our lifetime, think how far you remember.

I never grew upon this territory; Buck Flat is where I grew up. My brother was drinking heavy and asked me to go to my dad's side of family Gitdumden. All stories mom and dad told me, back in



Moricetown, love stories. My uncles (5) and one auntie cared for us. My uncle asked why you are alone, mom sent me over there, asked my mom, how relatives cared for us, sharing, loving. That is how I grew up, today too much hatred; I wish it would be removed from their hearts. I hope it will quit.

We must respect this meeting, those working on these meetings, do not sleep before, travel around, writing everything down, lots of work, must respect meaning of the meetings, we must listen. I hear half the words, pretty good; it is not a nice thing to do your house clan giving heck on names. Her uncle is house chief; one clan may have 3-4 houses but all the same. We have 3 houses and all at feast hall, Laksilyu clan is Laksilyu, same as other 4 clans. She was hurtful, not to be done that way, we must forgive them for that and stop what they are doing, must put love back in the heart.

I thank the boys working on this. Don has been working for us for years since the court case started. Thanks to the boys, they are doing a very good job and I appreciate that. We need more boys to get interested. TV and videos are ruining our boys today.

Prayer: Darren

Lunch



# Laksilyu Work Plan

## August 16, 2009

### LANDS STRATEGY

- Stand up to industry as clan members.
- Appoint representatives for OW on fishing, mining etc.
- Protect lowlands.
- Land alienation, fee simple lands.
- Plant & restore trees, know areas where they are being slashed.
- Land assessment taxes, we need to have access to them.
- Pipeline project will happen no matter what we do. Information needs to go out to the community
- Shell cannot sell land in Smithers where there was a gas station as it is contaminated.
- Observe Cree, oppose tar sands, it is poisoning their people.

### FINANCE STRATEGY

- Establish trust for Laksilyu.
- Money for tourism.
- Government getting rich off our territory.
- Volunteer and don't wait for someone else to do it.
- Create joint ventures.
- We need to be updated on the treaty process.
- Want 100% of funds made off our land, not 5%.
- Benefit natural resources

### AGRICULTURAL STRATEGY

- Joe Wong – Woodmere Nursery. Partner with him and eventually own the nursery. We will decide where the berries will be planted. Plant berries closer to our community.
- Herbal medicine important – go green.
- CAPITALIZE ON INDIAN VIAGRA☺
- Permits issued, land cleared, we lose our berry picking, herbals, moose etc. Farmers only gain. Minimize permits, money should come back to Wet'suwet'en.
- Change fee simple lands for sale. Build our presence with cabins, use year round.
- We are losing our land to farmers



## FISHERIES/WATER STRATEGY

- Holes by canyon, bring back cultural protocol, being misused, elders without fish
- We need order back in canyon & it needs to be cleaned up.
- Create fish hatcheries in our headwaters.
- Salmon, some had to leave area to get fish. Create list of clan members so we know how much fish we need. **Sandra Williams will put list together.** Recommend we train our children to fish with pole and nets off the rocks.
- Protect our source of water. Create our own labs to test water. Other companies coming in disturb the land.
- Air Quality
- Protect the headwaters
- With all the water resources we have, we have a million dollar water plant and we spend \$1.50/bottle for drinking water. We should bottle our own water and sell it ourselves.

## HUNTING/GATHERING STRATEGY

- Employ and train Laksilyu guiders.
- Hear about selling our own animals. Should not be DFO or wildlife we should charge them. We should go to the feast hall to discipline our people – gain respect.
- Become stewards of our land.
- How can I access another territory to pick berries, let other clans know where you were and what you got.
- Need to go as a group, share with family and fun. Bring feast to the land what we harvest.

## CULTURAL STRATEGY

- Granny's cabin – start work bee to put it together, use for education. Build more cabins, using beetle kill.
- Outdoor tourism, involve children. Camps – Distinctly Wet'suwet'en. Laksilyu will provide camps.
- Erect cabins for eco-tourism.
- Strength in numbers, we have different expertise. Men go on territories with young children
- Family reunions
- Markers on territories
- Connect children to the territory
- Conference Centre on Wet'suwet'en territory
- Build replica of Wet'suwet'en village on Hudson Bay Mountain
- Need celebration potlatches, child moving onto womanhood
- Need elders to teach our young people, be our mentors
- Discipline in the community-correct it ourselves.
- Language programs back to our territory.
- Keep Laksilyu meetings going ourselves, do not depend on OW.
- Stay in contact with each other.



- Unity – need to continue, respect each other. Bring our voices louder. Take message to other clan members.
- Use logs for cabins and do not use insulation as it attract vermin
- Cultural training ground to attract youth
- Communication – need to work together.
- Turn Quick School into a treatment lodge or a Healing lodge for our young people
- Father clan responsibilities – need to be more active
- Give chief names to people who use the territory
- Baby Names
- Succession
- Learning a different dialect
- Create a safety net for underprivileged.
- No more Bingo Hall chiefs
- Chandler Park – have Wet'suwet'en take it over. Start our own high school. Racial prejudice in schools is difficult for our youth to continue their schooling. We should not have to ask permission. Start healing and communicating together. Top floor of government building is empty.
- Gil\_seyhu go as a family on the territory regularly – go every year. We do not organize ourselves, we need to do that.
- Want elders to teach the youth hunting, trapping and fishing. Want my children and grandchildren to know how to use the territory. Father figures need to volunteer how to teach our youth.
- Say breaking in to cabins can be a problem. Old cabins should never be thrown away – leave as a marker from our ancestors.
- Volunteers needed to work in graveyard. There are a number of headstones that cannot be read of our elders & past chiefs. It is our responsibility to put headstones back.
- Should put a marker at Round Lake Charley's gravesite and others on our territory.
- Need to connect youth to the elders. Four weeks from now meeting, invite our teenage relatives. Contact myself or Darren to organize it.
- Coordinate a clan picnic

## ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

- Clean up community, junk cars etc.
- Capitalize on natural resources.
- 5 clans sign up for environmental program.
- Canyon an eyesore
- Have Handicraft Shop opened, fix up, and add on to. Tourists will pay us.
- Encourage youth to take environmental courses.

## FORESTRY STRATEGY

- Beetle kill, trade with forestry
- Employment for Laksilyu
- Need lumber to build our centre.



- Sustainable for our children.
- Want to benefit from economic development

## MISCELLANEOUS CONCERNS

- Communication:
  - From top down.
  - Concerned about chiefs office, do not know what is going on there.
  - No newsletter.
  - Table smaller than it used to be.
  - Those who go to those meeting do not report back to us, that is their job. We need to be able to communicate back what will affect our lives. Members and youth need to know so they can teach their children, prepare Wet'suwet'en history.
  - Sometimes we don't want to communicate as we don't want to take on others responsibility. In the old days everyone knew what was going on in the community. We helped others build their house as they will do back to you.
  - In time, we won't need Indian Affairs. They have made us very weak. We have come a long ways but have a ways to go.