

# FIRST NATIONS Edition

April 17, 2015

Twice monthly summary of news reports from throughout British Columbia on First Nations, rights & title issues, and Aboriginal communities.



Five Vancouver Island First Nations Sign Treaty Agreement-in-Principle (Treaty Page 8)

## AROUND THE PROVINCE

## INSIDE

- 3** **Around the Province**  
B.C. First Nations  
Leaders Address UN  
Representative
- 7** **Treaties**  
B.C. Treaty Commission  
Clarifies Treaty Investment
- 8** **Local Government**  
Penticton Band and City  
Reach Fire Service Deal
- 9** **Health & Community**  
Alberta Chiefs Say  
Murdered Aboriginal  
Women Statistic is Flawed
- 10** **Education**  
TRU and School District  
Look at NITEP
- 10** **Culture**  
Squamish Legacy Project  
Underway
- 11** **Editorials**
- 13** **Location Map**

### Tsilhqot'in and B.C. Set Date for Final Protocol Agreement

The Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) and the provincial government have set June 26, 2015 as the date to finalize a government-to-government agreement that will outline the next steps for reconciliation. Following the June 2014 Supreme Court of Canada's decision granting the Tsilhqot'in Aboriginal title to approximately 1,700 square kilometres of land, the two parties signed a letter of understanding (LOU) to make best efforts to negotiate a protocol agreement by March 31, 2015. The additional three months is to enable them to ensure the protocols for a lasting reconciliation are completed. Issues in the LOU that have already been addressed include an apology from the province for the wrongful hanging of six Tsilhqot'in chiefs in the late 1800s, and an interim agreement reached last month that would enable guide outfitters to continue operations on title lands for 2015. The remaining focus will be on matters related to governance, culture and language, long-term economic development, health, justice, education, and land and resource management. TNG represents six communities (Tl'etinqox, ?Esdilagh, Yunesit'in, Tl'esqox, Tsi Del Del and Xeni Gwet'in), with a total of approximately 3,300 members.

*(B.C. Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation – News Release, April 2)*



#### Cornerstone DISCLAIMER

The BC Media Monitor relays what is being reported in newspapers throughout B.C. and is compiled directly from those news articles. Cornerstone makes no editorial judgment on the articles summarized in the BC Media Monitor and is not responsible for the content of the original articles.

Editor: JOHN KAFKA, Partner  
[john@cornerplan.com](mailto:john@cornerplan.com)

Story Editor, Production & Design: LINDA ZACEK  
[linda@cornerplan.com](mailto:linda@cornerplan.com)

202 - 9780 Second Street, Sidney, BC V8L 3Y8  
Phone: (250) 655-9191

## Aboriginal Conference Builds Business Opportunities

The 2015 National Aboriginal Business Opportunities Conference, organized by the 2G Group, will take place April 29 – 30 in Prince Rupert with a wide range of speakers on a variety of topics of interest to both industry and First Nations. The first day's keynote speaker is Xení Gwet'in First Nation Chief Roger William, who will take about the Tsilhqot'in Decision, and panel discussions will be focused on the liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry, local First Nations, and economic progress and capacity building. Mitacs Strategic Enterprises vice-president Duncan Phillips will be the keynote speaker on the second day of the conference to talk about a holistic program for engaging Aboriginal communities. The second day will also include workshops on connecting business with LNG opportunities, health and safety requirements, project financing, and leasing.

*Conference agenda can be viewed at:  
<http://www.theeventpros.ca/conferences/2015-NABOC-PrinceRupert.html>  
(Northern View, April 1)*

## B.C. First Nations Leaders Address UN Representative

During a recent gathering of B.C. First Nations leaders and United Nations special rapporteur Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Okanagan Nation Alliance Grand Chief Stewart Phillip said that the rights of Aboriginal people across Canada have worsened under Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government. It will only get worse until a new government that respects the rights of First Nations is elected, said Phillip. Westbank First Nation Chief Robert Louie agreed saying equality is needed along with a push to be self-sufficient and self-governing. Louie pointed to the success of his band as an example of how First Nations can thrive if given the equality they deserve. Tauli-Corpuz was there to listen to the concerns and issues facing Canada's First Nations.

*(Kelowna Capital News, April 1)*

## B.C. Approves Gold Mine

B.C. Environment Minister Mary Polak and Energy and Mines Minister Bill Bennett recently released the provincial decision to grant Pretium Resources' Brucejack gold mine project an environmental assessment certificate. The ministers noted that the company would need a tailings storage facility or dam because it will store a portion of its waste tailings underground and the rest will be deposited in Brucejack Lake, which does not contain fish. The ministers said they were satisfied that certificate conditions would mitigate any social and other effects on the Nisga'a, Tahltan, and Skii km Lax Ha First Nations, and they also stated that the Nisga'a Lisims Government and other local Aboriginal groups had been involved in the project planning and have approved the proposal. The project, which still requires federal environmental approval, is expected to result in 500 jobs during construction and 300 during operation of the mine.

*(Northern Connector, April 3)*

## Industry Should Not Use Site C Power, to Show Respect for First Nations

Lawyer Rob Botterell, who has represented First Nations in various cases, recently sent an open letter calling on natural gas producers to commit to not using power generated from the proposed Site C dam as a show of respect for First Nations opposition to the project. "True reconciliation... requires further respect for and accommodation of, First Nations' constitutionally protected treaty rights, title and interests," Botterell wrote. Botterell suggested that companies include the commitment to not buy energy from BC Hydro within the text of impact benefit agreements with First Nations. Treaty 8 First Nation chiefs' position on this measure is not yet known, but Blueberry River First Nations Chief Marvin Yahey said he would bring the letter to his council for discussion. However, Ministry of Energy and Mines spokesperson David Haslam noted that BC Hydro's electrical system does not pinpoint a single resource, such as Site C, to a single industry.

*(Alaska Highway News, April 1)*

## COMMUNITY ELECTIONS

**Okanagan Band  
Re-elects Chief**

Members of the Okanagan Indian Band recently re-elected Byron Louis as chief. Louis received 275 votes, followed by Daniel Anthony Wilson with 163 votes, and former chief Fabian Alexis with 130 votes. Of the 25 people running for councillor positions, the 10 elected were: Homer Alexis, Lyle Brewer, Barbara Cole, Tim Isaac, Allan Brent Louis, Coo-la Cachoot Louis, Raymond Joseph Marchand, Russel Williams, Daniel Anthony Wilson, and Leland V. Wilson.

*(Westside Weekly, April 8)*

**Tatoosh Elected for Third  
Term as Hupacasath  
Chief**

The Hupacasath First Nation has voted in Steven Tatoosh for his third consecutive two-year term as chief. Tatoosh said his priorities for this new term are to continue paying off Hupacasath debt, housing, and economic development. Elected as councillors are incumbents Warren Lauder and Jim Tatoosh, and newcomer Jolleen Dick.

*(Alberni Valley News, April 9)*

**Controversial Chief Re-  
Elected**

Ron Giesbrecht was re-elected as chief of the Kwikwetlem First Nation, receiving nearly twice as many votes as his opponent, George Chaffee. Giesbrecht was the centre of controversy last year when it was revealed that he earned almost \$1-million dollars in the 2013-14 fiscal year, which included an \$800,000 land deal bonus. The controversy involved a single transaction with the provincial government in which Giesbrecht, as economic development officer, received a 10 per cent bonus, on top of his salary. Following the release of the information under the First Nations Financial Transparency Act, several band members filed a lawsuit alleging Giesbrecht breached his duty to obtain consent from band members, but the lawsuit was later quietly dropped. Giesbrecht's contract entitled him to the bonus, but since then the bonus provision was removed from the position's contract. Councillors Fred Hubert and Ed Hall were also re-elected for another four-year term in council.

*(Tri-City News, April 3;  
Vancouver Sun, April 4)*

**Lil'wat Votes Down Land  
Code**

On March 21, under the new Election Code, members of the Lil'wat Nation elected Dean Nelson as the band's political chief and Leonard Andrew as cultural chief. Elected to the 11 council seats were: Alphonse Byron Wallace, Felicity Nelson, Joshua Ryan Anderson, Rosemary Stager, Maxine Joseph-Bruce, Vaughn Gabriel, Lois Mamaya<sup>7</sup> Joseph, Carl Wallace, Helena Edmonds, Luke Johnny, and Martina Pierre. The election also included a vote for a new Land Code, which was defeated with 399 "no" to 202 "yes" votes. Unsuccessfully seeking re-election as political chief was Lucinda Phillips, whose political platform included pushing the Land Code forward. Those supporting the land code deals see them as an expedited way to economic opportunities that will help provide independence and self-governance in a short period of time. Those against, believe they allow the government to take away First Nations inherent sovereign right to govern their traditional land in unceded territories.

*(Whistler Question, April 7)*



## Federal Government Won't Appeal Kitselas Land Claim

Last year, the federal court upheld an earlier Specific Claims Tribunal decision, which ruled that the federal government owed compensation to the Kitselas First Nation for land wrongly excluded from the original Kitselas reserve allotment in 1891. The federal government has decided to not file an appeal with the Supreme Court of Canada on this decision. The government argued that it should not be obligated to compensate for lands wrongly excluded from original reserve allotments, and if there is an obligation that it should be shared with the province. However, the federal court judge noted that the tribunal stated the question of compensation was to be decided after the issue of the claim's validity was established. With the appeals process now over, the issue of compensation can be addressed. As much as \$150-million in federal funds can be awarded by the tribunal, which was set up in 2008 to hear cases involving First Nations' claims to specific parcels of land outside the treaty process.

*(Terrace Standard, April 8)*

## Binche Prepare for Separation from Tl'azt'en

Binche First Nation is currently entering into the third step of a four-step process to separating from the Tl'azt'en Nation and becoming a self-determined band. In 1959, the Binche, Tache, Dzit'ainli, and Yekooche First Nations were amalgamated as the Stewart Trembleur Band, which later changed its name to Tl'azt'en. The Yekooche de-amalgamated in the 1990s. The Binche first talked about separating in 2011, passed a resolution to become independent soon after, and are now working with Tl'azt'en on finalizing terms-of-division for splitting assets, liabilities and reserve lands. Joshua Hallman, chair of the Binche Operations Committee, said the negotiated terms-of-division were submitted to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, which were reviewed and returned with legal formatting suggestions. Binche expects to have the de-amalgamation within a year, said Hallman. Tl'azt'en Chief Justa Monk said it's "not a done deal yet" as they still have to finalize assets, followed by a referendum for both Tache and Binche, and then wait for a final decision from the ministry. However, Binche has already started preparing for separating and are currently working on establishing their own government structure and elections code, as well as putting financial and human resource policies in place. Once established as a separate First Nation, Binche will have to pay for their own administration costs such as public works, education, and health.

*(Omineca Express/Bugle, April 8)*

## Judge Orders Tribes to Pay for Firing Ex-Employee Without Cause

B.C. Supreme Court Justice Ronald Skolrood has ruled that Cowichan Tribes' May 2013 dismissal of Jennifer George as associate director of the band's Lalum'utal' Smun'eem Child and Family Services was without cause and a breach of her contract of employment. The band dismissed George with inaccurate and incomplete information and without the opportunity to explain or respond, said Skolrood. Cowichan Tribes has been ordered to pay George \$123,580 in general damages and \$35,000 in aggravated damages, but declined to award any punitive damages. The band investigator's report submitted as evidence accused George of being intoxicated, verbally harassing another member (Anita Seymour), and threatening to take away her children. Skolrood said what was established is that while at a pub, George was intoxicated and warned Seymour not to interfere with visits between her grandchildren and their father, but that Cowichan Tribes failed to prove the allegations of physical assault and threats. Skolrood also criticized several Cowichan band members, including Seymour's sister, the band's human resources manager who helped draft the letter of complaint, saying that she repeatedly lied under oath about key documents that eventually led to the dismissal.

*(The Province, April 9)*

## Squamish Members March to Protest LNG Project

Hundreds of people marched from Nexen Beach to the Woodfibre LNG office in downtown Squamish to declare that they don't want liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the Howe Sound or the LNG plant in town. The Skwomesh Action Group and My Sea to Sky organized the event, with the goal of letting everyone know where the Squamish Nation people stand on the issue. One of the main concerns protesters have is the effect the LNG plant would have on local marine life. Although two Squamish municipal councillors attended the gathering, no Squamish Nation councillors were present. Three members were expected to attend, but cancelled for different reasons. "Our council needs to know our people will fight this regardless of what they decide," said band members Khelsilem Rivers and Charlene Williams, two of the organizers. Squamish Nation council is conducting its own environmental assessment on the project, which is expected to be completed by the end of April. Williams noted that a petition with over 100 signatures was presented to the chief and council, who are anticipated to make a final decision within the next few weeks.

*(Coast Reporter, April 10)*

## Tanker Ban Bill Defeated

A private member's bill initiated by Skeena-Bulkey Valley MP Nathan Cullen, An Act to Defend the Pacific Northwest – Bill C-628, was defeated in the House of Commons on April 1. The proposed bill was intended to ban supertankers from transporting oil on the North Coast, and more specifically to halt Enbridge's Northern Gateway project. Over 130 First Nations, the Union of B.C. Municipalities, the B.C. government, environmental groups, and two thirds of British Columbians agree that the Northern Gateway pipeline and tanker project poses unacceptable risks, said Cullen.

*(Northern View, April 8)*

## Idea Fair Generates Aboriginal Business

The Skwin'ang'eth Se'las Development Company recently hosted the Idea Fair, an event to generate ideas and create strategic plans to stimulate First Nations business and economic development. Invitations were sent to all First Nations in the Greater Victoria region, including the Esquimalt and Songhees First Nations, as well as to local businesses, government agencies, non-profit organizations, educational facilities, and the Aboriginal Tourism Association of B.C.

*(Times Colonist, April 9;  
Victoria News, April 10)*

## Protesters Rally Against Trans Mountain Pipeline

On March 11, protesters marched through downtown Fort Langley to show their opposition to Kinder Morgan's proposed Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project. Kwantlen First Nation (KFN) member Brandon Gabriel organized the This Is Our Home protest in collaboration with Pipe Up Network, Kwantlen Polytechnic University students, and local residents. The march and rally started at the KFN sports park on MacMillan Island, with a procession to the Fort Community Hall. Kinder Morgan is proposing to almost triple the capacity of its existing pipeline and is looking at moving the route in several areas, which could include changes near Fort Langley. Protesters are concerned about spills near the numerous creeks and rivers the pipeline crosses, and Gabriel hopes that protests will help educate people of the impact of pipelines. The National Energy Board is currently hearing evidence from interveners about the pipeline, including Kwantlen and other First Nations.

*(Langley Advance News, April 9)*



## TREATIES

LNG Project Partners  
Seek Public Input

Steelhead LNG, in partnership with the Huu-ay-aht First Nation, recently held a “town hall” meeting to inform the Port Alberni community about their proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant in Sarita Bay. In January, members of Huu-ay-aht voted 121 to 77 in favour of approving leasing their lands for the project, and the focus is now on assessing the viability of the LNG facility through environmental and socio-economic studies. Engagement to date has been with the Huu-ay-aht, and collecting public input is a necessary element, said Steelhead’s manager of community relations.

*(Alberni Valley Times, March 31)*

## B.C. Treaty Commission Clarifies Treaty Investment

The B.C. Treaty Commission (BCTC) clarified recent incorrect reports about the number of First Nations currently in the treaty negotiations process. The province stated there were 50 First Nations out of 200 currently in treaty negotiations and the media has said that \$600-million has been spent by taxpayers so far, with only four treaties completed. BCTC said the facts are that there are 65 First Nations, representing 105 Indian Act Bands out of a total of 199, participating or have completed treaties through the B.C. treaty process. There are 47 First Nations, representing 83 Indian Act Bands, currently actively engaged or completed negotiations, with eight treaties completed. Since 1993, \$627-million in negotiation funding has been allocated to 65 First Nations, of which approximately \$493-million is in the form of a loan from the federal government and repayable by the First Nations. There has been \$134-million in non-repayable contributions, approximately \$80.4-million from the federal government, and \$53.6-million from the provincial government.

*(Nation Talk, April 8)*



BC TREATY COMMISSION  
KEEPER OF THE PROCESS

Hereditary Chiefs Say  
Treaty Commission Does Not Affect Them

Gitksan Hereditary Chiefs (GHC) negotiator Beverley Clifton Percival and Office of the Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chief John Ridsdale said the uncertainty of the future of the B.C. Treaty Commission does not impact their negotiations with government. Both groups said they have deliberately avoided the treaty process. Percival agreed that the treaty process is not working and that is why GHC is working with the provincial and federal governments to reach legal agreements in areas such as resource and land development, which acknowledge their Aboriginal rights and title. Ridsdale said his group has avoided the treaty process because it signs land away and “we’ve never given up that jurisdictional authority.” The Office of the Wet’suwet’en will work with the province on governance issues but would not take part in discussions to allocate land, said Ridsdale.

*(Interior News, April 8)*

Subscription Copying  
Rights:

This BC Media Monitor - First Nations Edition copy, whether in digital, fax or hardcopy, has been purchased exclusively for the subscriber. Emailing, faxing or copying to unauthorized persons is restricted without the prior consent of Cornerstone Planning Group. If you require additional copies please contact John Kafka at [john@cornerplan.com](mailto:john@cornerplan.com).

## Vancouver Island First Nations Sign AIP

On April 9, southern Vancouver Island's Songhees, Beecher Bay, Malahat, T'Sou-ke, and Snaw-Naw-As First Nations – members of the Te'mexw Treaty Association (TTA) – have signed an Agreement in Principle (AIP) with the provincial and federal governments. The tentative deal involves a transfer of about 1,565 hectares of Crown land and \$142-million when a final treaty agreement is reached. The AIP is not legally binding, but will set the stage for talks leading to final agreements with each First Nation. TTA has been negotiating a treaty for almost 21 years, and will now move into the final agreement stage of the treaty process.

*(Globe and Mail, April 9; Times Colonist, April 10)*

## Nazko Taking Time Out from Treaty Process

The Nazko First Nation recently advised the B.C. Treaty Commission and the federal and provincial governments that they would be taking time out from active treaty negotiations. Even though Nazko has been in active negotiations for over a decade, all parties remain apart on the contents of an acceptable agreement. Chief Stuart Alec said certainty that Aboriginal title is recognized and not extinguished, control of development within traditional territory, and economic self-sufficiency are key in a successful treaty, and the governments' unwillingness to update mandates to reflect the Tsilhqot'in decision remains a concern. Alec noted that Nazko is not formally withdrawing from the process and looks forward to resuming negotiations with revised government mandates and refreshed commitment from all three parties. The First Nation is urging the governments to find ways to expedite negotiations, and to find ways to reduce the burden of debt felt by Nazko and other First Nations in the treaty process. Nazko also wants the governments to adopt the 43 recommendations in federal government Ministerial Special Representative Doug Eyford's recently released report, A New Direction: Advancing Aboriginal Treaty Rights. B.C. Assembly of First Nations board member Chief Maureen Chapman said the recommendations speak directly to the need for a new cross-government reconciliation framework, developed jointly with First Nations. Eyford's report also notes the need for more options outside of the current B.C. treaty process.

*(Nation Talk, April 2; Quesnel Cariboo Observer, April 10)*

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### Penticton Band and City Reach Fire Service Deal

The Penticton Indian Band (PIB) and the City of Penticton have reached a new agreement for fire protection, which will expand service to the reserve to include Greenwood Forest Products, P&E Lumber, SuperSave, the fish hatchery, Barefoot Beach Resort, Sun Leisure Trailer Park, Riva Ridge, Skaha Hills, and PIB's school. The band will maintain its volunteer fire department to respond to fires at homes on the reserve and will also be available to assist the Penticton Fire Department (PFD). The costs of services will be shared by the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, PIB, and the city. PIB's current annual fee is about \$225,000, which will increase as more homes and businesses are built on reserve lands. Under the new agreement, PFD will do inspections of buildings that will provide a new level of fire prevention and safety, which will in turn lower insurance prices. Chief Jonathan Kruger said the band is also working on updating their emergency plan and expanding the base of their volunteer department.

*(Penticton Herald, April 10)*



## HEALTH &amp; COMMUNITY

**Survey Helps Identify Living Conditions on Reserves**

Jasmine Thomas, crew lead for the First Nations Health Authority, recently visited Skidegate to complete the First Nations Regional Early Childhood Education and Employment Surveys, which are being conducted in 250 First Nations communities in 10 regions across Canada. Skidegate was one of 39 randomly selected communities in B.C. Participants are randomly selected in 10 different age and gender categories. The goal of the survey is to identify gaps in areas of early childhood learning and employment, and the information gathered will assist with community planning initiatives, negotiations, and proposals for funding.

*(Haida Gwaii, March 27)*

**Harper's 2008 Apology Supports Day Scholars**

Sechelt (shíshálh) First Nation Hereditary Chief Garry Feschuk said the class action lawsuit on behalf of day scholars would not be necessary if Prime Minister Stephen Harper had lived up to his word. Day scholars were not directly acknowledged in Harper's 2008 apology to Indian Residential School students and were denied compensation under the Common Experience Payment to former students. However, Feschuk said a section of the apology that summarized the whole residential school era clearly applied to day scholars, and it made no sense to arbitrarily exclude them. The shíshálh and Tk'emlups First Nations are currently seeking federal court certification for the class action lawsuit that was launched in 2012.

*(Coast Reporter, April 10)*

**Alberta Chiefs Say Murdered Aboriginal Women Statistic is Flawed**

In a March 20 private meeting with First Nations chiefs in Alberta, Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt suggested that 70 per cent of the perpetrators in Canada's missing or murdered Aboriginal women were indigenous. In May 2014, the RCMP released a report that reviewed 1,181 police-recorded incidents of murdered and unresolved missing Aboriginal women from 1980 to 2012. The report stated that of the 1,017 homicide cases, close to 90 per cent were solved and 62 per cent of the victims were killed by a spouse, family member, or someone they were intimate with. Bernice Martial, Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty Six Nations and chief of the Cold Lake First Nation, believes the information is "inaccurate and untrue" and wants to see the RCMP's

methodology and data.

RCMP Commissioner Bob Paulson confirmed Valcourt's statistics in a letter to Martial, and noted that they did not previously disclose the ethnicity of the offenders because

the ethnicity is

not relevant, but rather it's the "relationship between the victim and offender that guides our focus with respect to prevention." The statistic was not released earlier because of its potential to "stigmatize and marginalize vulnerable populations," said Paulson. Martial and five other Alberta First Nations said even though they believe the statistic may be flawed, they would rather have known about it when the report was released, and they are calling for Valcourt's resignation. Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde said now that the information is out, people need to find a way to move forward and start working on strategies to end violence in Aboriginal communities.

*(Vancouver Sun, April 10 and 11)*



## Aboriginal Organizations Receive Civil Forfeiture Grants

Several organizations are receiving funding from the province's civil forfeiture program, which this year is providing grants to initiatives that address violence against women and support the Violence Free B.C. strategy. The Xaxli'p First Nation is receiving \$19,920 for their Youth Empowerment Project. The 30-week program for at-risk Aboriginal youth includes a 10-day Rediscovery Cultural Camp with traditional activities such as hunting, tanning hides, berry picking, learning about traditional medicine plants, and stories from elders. Also included are sports and recreational activities, youth nights, and employment preparation workshops. Métis Community Services Society of B.C. has been granted \$20,000 for its Releasing Integrating Soaring Equality Healing Group, and an additional \$20,000 for its Aboriginal Fathers Program's Regenerating Aboriginal Identity and Healing workshops. The Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society will receive \$19,377 for its Standing Strong project, which provides holistic healing services to urban Aboriginal people in Central Okanagan. The Okanagan Métis and Aboriginal Housing Society's Sen'kllp Den project is getting \$15,800 to help provide a safe structured environment for at-risk Aboriginal youth.

*(Okanagan Saturday, March 21;  
Bridge River-Lillooet News, April 8)*

## EDUCATION

### TRU and School District Look at NITEP

The Thompson Rivers University (TRU) and School District 27 (SD27) are working on a joint proposal to establish a NITEP Field Centre at TRU's Williams Lake campus. NITEP is the Indigenous Teacher Education Program at the University of British Columbia that provides teacher training opportunities for Aboriginal people. If the application is successful, TRU would host the training centre from 2016 to 2020, and SD27 would offer educational placements and practicum opportunities. The school district is also working with TRU and First Nations communities and organizations to recruit the required 12 students for the program, who would take their teacher training through a blended face-to-face and online learning system.

*(Tribune Weekend, April 3)*

## CULTURE

### Squamish Legacy Project Underway

Work has begun on the Legacy Project Canoe Restoration Shed, which will sit on the waterfront in downtown Squamish in an area that was once a Squamish Nation village. The shed will be a traditional-looking Coast Salish shed that will showcase the warrior (racing) canoes, and will also be used to restore Squamish canoes or build new ones. Storytelling boards describing the Squamish Nation's connection to the site could also be part of the project, which is a collaboration between the Downtown Squamish Business Improvement Association, the district, and the Squamish Nation. A Heritage Canada Grant is providing for half of project's \$100,000 costs.

*(Squamish Chief, April 2)*

## EDITORIAL

**Vancouver Sun, April 6 –  
Nick Allen wrote, in part:**

“In times gone by, Navajo Indians ate whatever Mother Nature was generous enough to bestow, their existence intimately and spiritually bound up with the land on which they lived.

Today, life is very different in the Navajo Nation, the largest American Indian reservation in the U.S. It covers an area in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah that is the size of New Brunswick and has a tribal population of 300,000.

According to the Navajo Area Indian Health Service, around 25,000 people in the region have type 2 diabetes and 75,000 are pre-diabetic.

Tribal politicians have been forced into action and this week the reservation became the first place in the United States to begin taxing junk food, despite opposition from some cash-strapped Navajo themselves.

The Healthy Dine Nation Act covers food and drink with ‘minimal-to-no nutritional value’ and makes it subject to a two per cent tax. As well as predictable items like ice cream and sweets, it includes fruit juice, sugar-free Jell-O, diet sodas, and energy drinks.

A survey found that up to 90 per cent of the food sold in Navajo grocery shops qualified for the tax. Meanwhile, an existing tax of five per cent on fruit and vegetables has been scrapped. The new tax will bring in an estimated \$1-million U.S. a year which will pay for projects including farmers’ markets, community vegetable gardens, greenhouses, and exercise equipment.”

**Vancouver Sun, April 8 –  
Sophie Pierre wrote, in part:**

“The B.C. government has recently made it clear that it has misgivings about the treaty negotiations process, while leaving the impression that it is a mere spectator and not a party to the process.

It’s necessary to bring some perspective to this discussion, respond to mischaracterizations that have been bandied about, and suggest a way forward.

Canada has taken two of the most important issues in B.C. treaty negotiations – fisheries and the fiscal relationship – off the table for years at a time, while it tried to work out a new policy approach. B.C. and Canada have regularly and repeatedly delayed, sometimes for years, one of the key milestones in the process – their land and cash offer to First Nations.

B.C. also significantly undermined trust and contributed to delays with its 2002 referendum on treaty negotiations.

So, where are we now?

Canada and B.C. need to take stock of their own responsibility for delays, costs and outcomes and refocus their attention on how they can become more effective negotiating partners.

Now is the time for the principals to the B.C. treaty negotiations process – the First Nations Summit, Canada and B.C. – to re-energize, not walk away from, treaty negotiations.”

*Sophie Pierre is the former chief commissioner of the B.C. Treaty Commission, who retired April 1, 2015*

**Times Colonist, April 8  
– Les Leyne wrote, in  
part:**

“The federal special adviser’s report on the abysmal rate of progress in negotiating First Nations treaties considered the idea of matching the B.C. Treaty Commission with a national one as a way to spur some action.

Although judges continually urge good-faith negotiations, Eyford said litigation continues to dominate Crown-Aboriginal relations. The federal department is party to 452 proceedings involving Aboriginal rights and spends \$100-million a year on litigation.

While the Tsilhqot’in Nation got a historic declaration of title, Eyford said implementing that decision will require negotiations with the Crown. The inference is that it will take years more to negotiate the details.

Eyford said many other Aboriginal groups now presume they have title as well, and that First Nations consent is now required for resource development. It’s been 10 months since the decision was handed down and the federal government still hasn’t formally responded.”

### Vancouver Sun, April 10 – Editorial, in part:

“A reluctance to discuss the ethnicity of those behind the disproportionately large number of Aboriginal women being murdered in Canada can only thwart those searching for solutions to the tragic situation.

It appears political correctness has been behind an RCMP decision, up to the present, not to make reference to the ethnicity of possible perpetrators.

As the RCMP prepares to release next month a followup report on murdered and missing Aboriginal women, it has come to light that some 17 per cent of the 1,182 Aboriginal female victims counted by the force between 1980 and 2012 were killed by Aboriginal males.

According to a news report last week, a transcript of a March 20 conversation in a Calgary hotel room has the Aboriginal Affairs Minister confiding to several native chiefs: ‘I will tell you – because there is no media in the room – that the RCMP report states that up to 70 per cent of the murdered and missing indigenous women issue stems from their own communities.’

It is high time government sat down with the Aboriginal communities and considered ways to address the violence. This is not the only avenue to be taken, given that the numbers suggest 30 per cent of the women may have been murdered by non-Aboriginals. But it certainly is an important one, and suggests the Aboriginal communities themselves must take greater ownership of the issue. Not all problems can or should be solved by governments taking a paternalistic role.”

### Coast Reporter, April 10 – John Gleeson wrote, in part:

“Almost seven years ago, Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologized to Canada’s First Nations for the abuses they suffered under the residential school system.

However, when it came to compensating individuals, some of the survivors were deemed unworthy, as they were abused at school only by day. In Harper’s world, apparently real abuse requires a sleepover.

Which is why next week Sechelt and Kamloops First Nations will be in federal court in Vancouver in an attempt to certify a class action lawsuit against the federal government on behalf of their surviving day scholars.

It’s truly shameful.

For the former students, the final insult was to receive, decades later, a ‘full apology’ from the prime minister only to be told that it really wasn’t about them, or their families, or their language, or their culture. The childhoods stolen from them didn’t count.

There is no honour in the government’s position.

I really do hope the First Nations kick Canada’s butt on this one.”

### Times Colonist, April 11 – Editorial, in part:

“Five southern Vancouver Island First Nations signed a tentative agreement Thursday for land and cash from the federal and provincial governments. It’s an important step toward the final agreement that would see the Songhees, Beecher Bay, Malahat, T’Sou-ke and Snaw-Naw-As First Nations – members of the Te’mexw Treaty Association – receive \$142-million and about 1,565 hectares of Crown land.

The spirit of optimism and cooperation that characterized this week’s meeting is in contrast to the confusion and dismay that surrounded the cancelled appointment last month of George Abbott as head of the B.C. Treaty Commission.

It’s to everyone’s advantage that the treaty process make meaningful progress. The tentative agreement signed this week is an encouraging sign that progress can and will happen.”

**Need Research?**

Need to Research Background Information on First Nations, Individuals or Agencies?  
**Cornerstone Planning Group** can provide past media reported interactions between First Nations and government or industry based on a word-specific search through back-issues of the B.C. Media Monitor.

Contact John Kafka for details: john@cornerplan.com / Ph: 250-655-9191



**Subscription Service**

Each issue of the BC Media Monitor ~ First Nations Edition (BCMM) is built with diverse interests in mind to keep all of our subscribers informed. More than 160 publications, including Aboriginal publications, are reviewed for Monitor production. BCMM provides a concise overview of the previous two weeks' First Nations events and issues in B.C. - in just one reading. Back copies of the Monitor can be keyword searched to provide the detail and background on a name, location or concern.

Every second Friday our subscribers receive BCMM via email. A subscription to BC Media Monitor ~ First Nations Edition includes a 'email-scan' service for one original source article per issue.

**GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTOR MAP:**

Highlighting locations related to stories in this edition.



**BC Media Monitor**  
 First Nations Edition

**TO SUBSCRIBE**

**1 year**  
 \$699 (+\$34.95 GST)

**6 months**  
 \$405 (+\$20.25 GST)

#202 - 9780 Second Street,  
 Sidney, B.C. V8L 3Y8  
 phone: (250) 655-9191

email:  
 linda@cornerplan.com

