

Fast Facts

on First Nations Consultation



In the Spotlight

Volume 1
Issue 7
Spring 2010

Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation

Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation (SLCN) near the town of Valleyview in Alberta's Treaty 8 region has roughly 2600 band members, with about half living on reserve.

A band-managed company, Sturgeon Lake Resources Ltd., set up on behalf of SLCN, is responsible for responding to the large volume of resource development notifications SLCN receives from industry each year. In peak operating season, this number can easily reach 8 to 10 notifications per week, many involving consultation with the band. This level of activity increases pressure on SLCN's capacity to deal with the workload.

Three years ago, the band had no significant relationship with industry. "A positive aspect of the First Nations Consultation Policy," says SLCN Chief Richard Kappo, "was that it prompted industry to sit down with us to develop improved consultation practices." This

consultation takes place under The Government of Alberta's First Nations Consultation Policy on Land Management and Resource Development and associated Consultation Guidelines. Chief Kappo also believes industry's respect for SLCN's traditional uses of land was critical in building the relationship.

SLCN is fast-becoming an important and well-respected player in the local region's resource development sector and economy. The band sub-contracts other work as needed, making SLCN a growing leader in supporting the local and regional resource development sector.

SLCN is also a leader in workplace safety standards. The Nation has been awarded a Certificate of Recognition (COR) for developing a high level of work safety practices in the construction industry, a standard paralleling Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) requirements, says Chief Kappo. COR is part of WCB's Partners in Injury program.

"A positive aspect of the First Nations Consultation Policy, was that it prompted industry to sit down with us to develop improved consultation practices." - Chief Kappo

The Certificates are issued by the Alberta Construction Safety Association and co-signed by Alberta Employment and Immigration.

Today and beyond, SLCN is moving forward with building positive and mutually-beneficial partnerships with area industry proponents. Chief Kappo explains: "If 10 people work on a project, it translates into \$12,000 a month less the band has to spend on social assistance. These funds can then be redirected into the Nation's educational and training services, staying in the community where they benefit band members the most."

(Note: On February 26, 2010, a fire broke out in the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation band office. Nobody was injured, but the fire destroyed a significant number of the band's records. Alberta and the Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation have instituted an interim process to help the band continue to process industry consultation requests. In the interim, Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation can be contacted at 780-524-3307.)

Consultation Updates

First Nations Consultation Policy and Guidelines Review

The Government of Alberta's First Nations Consultation Policy on Land Management and Resource Development, released in 2005, acknowledges First Nations' Treaty rights and respects traditional uses on Crown land. The Consultation Policy and associated Guidelines aims to create more predictability and certainty for industry investment, reduces potential land use conflicts and ensures First Nations' rights are respected.

Alberta's 2005 Consultation Policy committed the government to a full Policy review four years after implementation. To help ensure its duty to consult continues to be met, Alberta is currently undertaking a substantive Policy review process with both First Nations and industry. The Guidelines are also being assessed as part of this initiative.

The review process began in 2008 with a series of internal focus groups involving

Alberta government field staff. Province-wide focus groups were held in November and December 2008. These sessions produced valuable advice from cross-ministry government staff, which will be useful in helping to shape a revised Policy and Guidelines.

The government is now engaging First Nations and industry representatives in the review. This is an important opportunity to provide input into the consultation process—for the benefit of all parties.

The Grand Chiefs of Treaties 6, 7 and 8 support the review process. Senior First Nations and Alberta government officials are currently working together in a focused Policy review sub-table group designed to facilitate dialogue on how to improve the consultation process.

Industry is also participating in the review process. Alberta Aboriginal Relations staff began engaging with industry in a series of focus groups in November and December 2009 to launch that component of the review.

Once the input of all parties has been fully considered, and upon provincial Cabinet approval, Alberta expects to release a revised Policy in fall 2010, with updated Guidelines to follow at a later date.

For information on Alberta's Consultation Policy and Guidelines review process, please contact Terrance Flynn, Policy Co-ordinator, Alberta Aboriginal Relations, at 780-644-1840, or by email at terrance.flynn@gov.ab.ca.

Alberta's current First Nations Consultation Policy and Guidelines can be found on the Aboriginal Relations' website at www.aboriginal.alberta.ca

Land-Use Framework Regional Planning Process

On December 3, 2008, Alberta formally announced its Land-use Framework (LUF) as a regional approach to manage the province's public and private lands and natural resources and to achieve long-term economic, environmental and social outcomes. Creation of seven regional land-use plans, with a Regional Advisory Council (RAC) for each planning area are fundamental elements of the LUF.

RACs are composed of temporarily appointed, multi-sectoral regional interests and include municipal, industry, non-governmental and Aboriginal representatives. The RACs advise the Government of Alberta on developing the regional plans. The first of the seven RACs was announced on December 19, 2008, for the Lower Athabasca Regional Plan (LARP). Alberta announced the RAC for the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) on May 13, 2009.

First Nations exercise their treaty rights and traditional uses in Alberta's regional planning areas and have an important role to play in plan development. Aboriginal participants are currently involved in the LARP RAC. Space on the SSRP RAC is also being held for an Aboriginal participant. In addition, each First Nation in or adjacent to the planning area will be consulted. Aboriginal communities' input into the regional plans add to the effectiveness of both plans.

The *Alberta Land Stewardship Act* (ALSA) received royal assent on June 4, 2009

and was proclaimed in October last year, creating the Land Use Secretariat. The Land Use Secretariat (LUS) is a commission within the public service that reports directly to Minister Mel Knight. The LUS is not part of an existing department and has a Government of Alberta of focus. The ALSA provides the legislative framework to achieve the actions outlined in the LUF.

Lower Athabasca Regional Plan

Northeastern Alberta has been the epicentre for economic growth in Alberta and Canada through oil sands development. The LARP will identify environmental management outcomes for air, land, water and biodiversity and guide future resource decisions while balancing social and economic interests.

In July 2009, the LARP terms of reference were released, setting the stage for the development of this regional plan. LARP information sessions were held in more than a dozen Lower Athabasca communities, from Bonnyville to Fort Chipewyan.

The LARP RAC held its final meeting on March 3-4, 2010 and provided its advice to the Government of Alberta as per the terms of reference. Public, stakeholder and Aboriginal consultation on a vision for the region will take place.

South Saskatchewan Regional Plan

Terms of reference for the SSRP were released in November 2009. The SSRP planning area is located in southern

Alberta and is incredibly diverse. Its landscapes include grassland, parkland, foothills and Rocky Mountains. The region's major economic activities are agriculture, energy production, forestry, and tourism and recreation. The SSRP area is home to 45 per cent of Alberta's population and includes seven First Nations communities whose reserves were established through the signing of Treaty 7 in 1877.

The Alberta government will consider input on the draft SSRP through three phases of public, stakeholder and Aboriginal consultations. Alberta conducted 16 public information and input sessions between Nov. 30 and Dec. 10, 2009 in southern Alberta cities and towns, including Calgary, Cardston, Milk River and Medicine Hat, among other locations.

Alberta is currently preparing SSRP public and stakeholder reports based on input from the 32 sessions. Once complete, this feedback will be considered by the SSRP RAC as it prepares its advice to government. The SSRP RAC continues to meet.

The Government of Alberta recognizes that Aboriginal consultation is critical to building lasting relationships and encourages all Aboriginal peoples in Alberta to be involved in the development of the regional plans.

For further information on the regional plans, please visit www.landuse.alberta.ca.

Contact Us

We would like to hear your feedback, story ideas and updates from the field. Please contact **Fast Facts** Editor Lorne Fidgette at 780-427-2034 or toll-free by first dialing 310-0000 and then the number. Email: lorne.fidgette@gov.ab.ca.

Government of Alberta Contacts List

Aboriginal Relations

Aboriginal Consultation:

Graham Statt, Executive Director, Aboriginal Consultation	780-644-4948
Allan Pard, Senior Advisor, First Nations Consultation	780-721-4269
Terrance Flynn, Policy Coordinator, Aboriginal Consultation	780-644-1840
Cory Enns, Director, Aboriginal Consultation	780-644-1055
Ashley Bodnar, Consultation Manager	780-644-1036
Eric Davey, Consultation Manager	780-644-4949
Lorne Fidgette, Consultation Manager	780-427-2034
Ryan Tew, Consultation Manager	780-644-4947
Tanya Holden, Consultation Officer	780-644-1523
Darcy Falk, Consultation Officer	780-644-3030
Kimberly Watson, Consultation Officer	780-427-9659
Kenton Boutillier, Consultation Officer	780-427-0567
Dennis Bell, Senior Manager, Regional Land Issues	780-427-0368
Shane Gauthier, Consultation Manager	780-644-4653

Sustainable Resource Development

Mark Storie, Team Lead, Consultation and Aboriginal Relations	780-644-5516
Colin Needham, Senior Resource Management Advisor, Peace River/High Level	780-624-7147
Henri Soulodre, Senior Resource Management Advisor, Slave Lake/Grande Prairie/Edson/Whitecourt	780-849-7403
Ken Yackimec, Senior Resource Management Advisor, Lac La Biche/Fort McMurray	780-623-5326
Andy Masiuk, Senior Advisor, Edmonton	780-422-9498
John Belanger, Senior Advisor, Edmonton	780-644-2305
Tim Burggraaff, Resource Management Advisor, Ft McMurray	780-623-5455
Darren Frederick, Resource Management Advisor, Lac La Biche	780-623-5380
Marcus Ruehl, Resource Management Advisor, High Level	780-926-7006
Mike Collie, Resource Management Advisor, Fairview	780-835-7304
Dion Lawrence, Resource Management Advisor, Grande Prairie	780-538-8097
Darcy Evanochko, Resource Management Advisor, Rocky Mountain House	403-845-8201
Kurt Borzel, Resource Management Advisor, High Prairie	780-523-6560
Neil Brad, Fish and Wildlife Consultation Advisor, Edmonton	780-644-8732

Keith Beraska, Lands Consultation Advisor, Edmonton	780-644-8734
Dave Coish, Forestry Consultation Advisor, Edmonton	780-644-8733

Land Use Secretariat:

Dave Bartesko, Senior Consultation Manager, Land Use Secretariat, Edmonton	780-422-4871
Randy Leal, Aboriginal Consultation Manager, Land Use Secretariat, Calgary	403-297-5451

Energy

Cole Pederson, Director, Aboriginal Consultation, Edmonton	780-644-8173
Alison Parry, Consultation Manager, Edmonton	780-422-7009
Claire Foulds, Consultation Manager, Edmonton	780-422-9467
Warren Michael, Consultation Manager, Edmonton	780-427-8973

Culture and Community Spirit

Erin McGregor, Director, Aboriginal Consultation, Edmonton	780-638-3057
Aaron Wilson, Aboriginal Consultation Advisor, Edmonton	780-638-3058
Melissa Austin, Aboriginal Consultation Advisor, Edmonton	780-638-3056
Valerie Knaga, Aboriginal Consultation Advisor, Edmonton	780-638-3055
Kaye Due, Aboriginal Consultation Adviser, Edmonton	780-638-3054
Blair First Rider, Aboriginal Consultation Advisor, Cardston	403-653-5104

Environment

Norman Calliou, Section Head, Aboriginal Relations	780-422-7898
Mark Calliou, Regulatory Support Manager	780-644-8365
Karina Andrus, Acting Manager, Relationships and Policy	780-644-8580
Donna Hovsepian, Senior Advisor, Regulatory Support Central Region	403-391-3959
Alvaro Loyola, Senior Advisor, Regulatory Support, Northern Region	780-644-4883
Andrea Wonnacott, Advisor, Regulatory Support, Northern Region, Edmonton	780-422-7028
Crystal Stamp-Cardinal, Senior Advisor, Regulatory Support, Southern Region	403-297-4099
Brenda Paul, Senior Advisor, Relationships and Policy, Northeast to Central Alberta	780-422-5619
Kim Shade, Advisor, Relationships and Policy, South to Central Alberta	403-388-3120
Greg Bereza, Advisor, Relationships and Policy, Northwest to Central Alberta	780-644-7855