



Fast Facts

on First Nations Consultation

A "MADE IN ALBERTA" APPROACH

First Nations Consultation Guidelines

The *Government of Alberta's First Nations Consultation Guidelines on Land Management and Resource Development* were released on September 1, 2006. The guidelines are consistent with the May 16, 2005 consultation policy and will guide First Nations consultation on land management and resource development in relation to activities such as exploration, resource extraction, and management of forests, fish and wildlife.

Since the release of the guidelines, over 500 people attended one of several information sessions hosted across Alberta. The information sessions gave First Nations and industry representatives the opportunity to ask questions and express concerns about the new guidelines. From those sessions, a Frequently Asked Questions document was created and is available electronically by contacting Lori Pailer at (780) 644-4945 or Lori.Pailer@gov.ab.ca.

Throughout the development of the guidelines, Alberta has accepted input and feedback from First Nations partners and industry stakeholders through advisory groups, correspondence, and personal meetings. Alberta continues to seek further input on the guidelines through the 2006/07 operating season. "Ideally, feedback will refer to specific cases of success or concern regarding the consultation guidelines," says Bill Werry, Executive Director. Alberta will continue to monitor implementation of the guidelines very closely and is planning a formal review process through the Annual Quality Assurance Assessment from February to May 2007. The consultation initiative, and the traditional use study initiative, will not be affected by the recent government re-organization.

For a copy of the guidelines, please e-mail or telephone Lori Pailer at (780) 644-4945 or Lori.Pailer@gov.ab.ca.

Applying Traditional Use Data: A Case Study

The following is an excerpt of a conversation with Mr. Laren Bill, Aboriginal Consultation Officer with Alberta Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture (TPRC) – formally known as Alberta Community Development. Laren has been working closely with the O'Chiese First Nation on their Traditional Use Study (TUS).

Interviewer: First of all, can you give a brief update on the traditional use study initiative in Alberta?

Laren: There are 32 traditional use studies underway involving 42 communities. Twenty-two agreements-in-principle to share data have been successfully negotiated with 30 First Nations. Between 2002 and 2005, Alberta provided \$2.25 million in support of First Nations conducting traditional use studies. In 2006, the government committed an additional \$9 million to the funding of traditional use studies across the province. The funding phase for comprehensive studies is slated to conclude in the 2008-09 fiscal year. Related to consultation, the vision for the traditional use study Initiative is to provide comprehensive coverage for all First Nations in Alberta and to ensure that valid and reliable TUS data is available for use in regulatory processes. This will allow First Nations,

Alberta and industry to work together in resolving land use conflicts.

Can you provide an example of a First Nation that is sharing traditional use data with your department and explain why they have chosen to share that information?

Laren: The O'Chiese First Nation has shared some traditional use site data with our department to work together to protect their culturally significant sites. Their data will act as a trigger for consultation when a proposed development in the same area may potentially adversely impact treaty rights and traditional uses. Since sharing their data, the O'Chiese First Nation are being consulted by industry more than in the past. When a proposed development triggers consultation, the proponent is required to meet with the First Nation and discuss the potential adverse impacts of the development.

The idea is to avoid the site completely and if that isn't possible, to mitigate or minimize the impact. Most often, it is possible to adjust the development in order to avoid the potentially affected site completely.

(Continued on back side)

New Government Structure

Premier Stelmach announced a restructuring for government in mid-December. "This new structure will enable government to better focus on the priorities, improve planning and coordination and help move the agenda forward," said Stelmach. A public news release is available at www.gov.ab.ca. The Premiers office has recognized the Aboriginal Consultation Strategy as one of the key priorities for the new department of International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations. The members of the cross-ministry team managing the consultation initiative will remain the same as will the implementation of *The Government of Alberta's First Nations Consultation Policy and Guidelines*. Here is a brief synopsis of the leadership in the ministries assigned to the consultation initiative:

International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations	
Minister	Guy Boutilier
Deputy Minister	Gerry Bourdeau
Energy	
Minister	Mel Knight
Deputy Minister	Dan McFadyen

Environment	
Minister	Rob Renner
Deputy Minister	Peter Watson
Infrastructure and Transportation	
Minister	Luke Ouellette
Deputy Minister	Jay Ramotar

Justice and Attorney General	
Minister	Ron Stevens, Q.C.
Deputy Minister	Terry Matchett, Q.C.
Sustainable Resource Development	
Minister	Dr. Ted Morton
Deputy Minister	Brad Pickering
Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture	
Minister	Hector Goudreau
Deputy Minister	Fay Orr

(Continued from front)

What kind of traditional use sites have been identified?

Laren: The type of sites that are primarily identified are those of cultural value and traditional use. Gravesites, ceremonial sites (such as a Sundance site), medicinal harvesting sites, and lodges are some examples of the types of sites identified. So far, the O'Chiese First Nation has shared 23 sites with our department. Once the sites have been verified and the locations confirmed, TPRC adds them to *The Listing of Significant Historical Sites and Areas*. In conjunction with the Government of Alberta's Land Status Automated System (LSAS), TPRC requires that the *Listing* be consulted by

proponents during the development process to identify potential land use conflicts, including those with traditional use sites.

What are some of the First Nations concerns around sharing traditional use data?

Laren: The traditional use data collected by any First Nation is very sensitive. The First Nation, and the Government of Alberta, do not want people to show disrespect for ceremonial sites or cause harmful vandalism. This is why the public version of the *Listing* does not include any specifics on the traditional use sites identified. The public version of the *Listing* is available through our website at www.cd.gov.ab.ca.

What are some shared outcomes both the First Nation and Alberta want to achieve by collecting and sharing traditional use data?

Laren: By collecting and sharing the traditional use data, awareness is created of the value and importance of this data in resource management decision making. Both parties are committed to the protection of traditional use sites by avoiding adverse impacts when resource development occurs. The system will be most efficient when the data is included in the existing land management systems like the *Listing* and the Land Status Automated System (LSAS). Alberta has created a "Data Management Committee" to discuss issues

concerning the application of TUS data in resource management decision making. The cross-ministry committee is co-chaired by the departments of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture and Sustainable Resource Development. Within the government, all data management matters are referred to this committee.❖

Traditional Use Studies (TUS) in Alberta

- ❖ 32 studies underway involving 42 communities
- ❖ 22 agreements-in-principle to share signed with 30 First Nations
- ❖ 229 cultural sites identified for protection in the *Listing*

Tsuu T'ina Launches New Website

Tsuu T'ina First Nation recently launched a new website expected to benefit the community through improved and efficient communications, reduce the need for paper, and let the world know about the Tsuu T'ina First Nation. The website will allow information to be accessed from several locations on the reserve and should speed up business within the community and with industry and government offices. There are some components of the website that are password protected and will allow the First Nation to use the site internally only.

The website was started from the ideas of the community, ideas from other First Nations websites, and staff at the Band office. The development of the website has been a learning process and has taken a year and a half. It is still growing and will always be changing. Division 1 Media Corporation set up the website but is now ready to hand it over to a local "webmaster" who will continue to update the information and add or remove web pages within the site. It was always intended to be managed by a local webmaster, someone who lives and works on the Tsuu T'ina reserve. The Program Directors at the local band office have also received training in posting information to the website to help keep it up-to-date. Some examples of the content on the website include, a history section with Elder documentary videos, traditional use territory maps, upcoming events, information on culture and tourism opportunities on the reserve, direct links to industry employment, and Tsuu T'ina contact information.

Since the website has been posted on the world wide web, Tsuu T'ina has received comments and questions from individuals around the world. There are more than 50,000 visits a month to the website. Before the website was officially launched, Chief Big Plume had a pleasant surprise when attending a meeting in Ottawa. Another meeting attendee complimented the Chief on the Tsuu T'ina website which demonstrates how global the internet really is. The new website has truly been an incredible communication tool and has fantastic potential to showcase the Tsuu T'ina website on the international stage!

Visit the new Tsuu T'ina Nation website at www.tsuutina.ca.❖

EnCana – Chipewyan Prairie First Nation Venture a Win-Win Scenario

Submitted by M. Ripley, EnCana



Oilsands company **EnCana** has a new kitchen and recreation facility at its SAGD operation site near Conklin that it hopes will help attract top-notch workers to its Christina Lake project. The 15,400 sq.ft. traditional log building houses a "state-of-the-art" kitchen and recreation facility was built by Log Technologies Inc., a joint-venture company majority-owned and operated by the Chipewyan Prairie First Nation.

Alberta's First Nations consultation initiative on land management and resource development is helping to forge and solidify business relationships between First Nations and industry. A leading-edge example of a mutually-beneficial business partnership is between the Calgary-based natural gas and oil producer EnCana and the Chipewyan Prairie First Nation (CPFN), a member of the Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta.

"By engaging in the First Nations consultation process, EnCana has strengthened an already solid business relationship with

the CPFN. Our partnership is based on trust, mutual respect and achieving benefits for both EnCana and the First Nation's members," says Andrew Popko, EnCana's Vice President of Aboriginal Relations. The Chipewyan Prairie First Nation benefits through increased employment, business and training opportunities in the region's booming oil sector.

One key EnCana initiative that the CPFN is participating in is the construction of several 15,000 sq. ft. log structures at the company's Christina Lake oilsands project in northeast Alberta. With the assistance of CPFN's traditional knowledge and labour, EnCana is incorporating a number of these log structures, which will house kitchen and recreational facilities, at the project site.

Motivated in part by Alberta's First Nations consultation initiative, the EnCana-Chipewyan Prairie First Nation partnership demonstrates the possibilities when resource companies and Aboriginal communities cooperate in collaborative business relationships.❖