



Canyon Current

A monthly newsletter from the Kitselas Treaty Office

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An old photo of Gitaus Hall's fire crew, 'Fox Company', taken 15 years ago.

Gitaus Fire Hall needs volunteers

By Sharlene Mohr

About two weeks ago there was a familiar sound at 1am in Gitaus – the sound of an emergency 'group page'.

I sit up whenever I hear this emergency call, antsy, hoping everything will be alright.

I think, "Whose house is the page is about? Is there anyone to respond?"

Fire Chief Wes Patterson of the Thornhill Volunteer Fire Department responded to that call. The page was for a home in Gitaus, and thankfully the fire was caught in time.

Two people who were not firefighters gave Patterson a hand and he was very thankful for their quick response.

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Become a firefighter

“They just knew what to do and did all the right things,” Patterson said. “One guy called 911. The other one was right in there, helping.”

But Patterson was lucky for the help that night because Gitaus Fire Hall has very few firefighters.

Back in the day, the hall had a dedicated group of volunteers. The very first responder was Ron Mould, and Ron Gerow was right beside him from the start.

From there, the department grew. There was Judy Gerow, Chad Gerow, Toron Mould, Corrina Miller, Lisa Joseph, Norma Joseph, Kyle Joseph, Delbert Brown, Tyler West Johnson, Mikayla Mohr and myself.

But over time, different things happened and individuals had to leave the department – people moved, started school, got jobs, had health problems, etc.

Gitaus is now in need of volunteer firefighters.

My daughter, Mikayla, started training but is still too young to actually respond to an emergency; the minimum age is 19. She’s also moved away temporarily.

I have recently returned to the fire department (and love it!) but am limited; I have back issues.

I can still help though, by running pumps.



The Gitaus Fire Hall is one of three halls that are part of the Thornhill Fire Department. The other halls are in Terrace and at Lakelse Lake.

There is always something for people to do.

The need for volunteer firefighters at Gitaus Fire Hall is an important issue to the whole Kitselas community. Let’s work together and make sure we are ready if there is a fire or emergency.

Yes, we are all busy, but when it comes down to it, the next emergency could be at your home or the home of your neighbour or loved ones. I want to be there to help

and hope you do too.

If people are interested in volunteering, let Wes Patterson or me know.

The Thornhill Fire Department will start running two hour practices on Saturday mornings, and Monday and Thursday nights at the Gitaus Fire Hall. Join us!

We can always provide rides. Here’s a call out for new or returning firefighters. Kitselas needs you!



Be aware of dangers in our community, for all of our sakes and especially to keep our children safe.

Stay safe, protect neighbours and yourself

By Sharlene Mohr

Kitselas has many resources but what is our most precious resource? Our people!

Kitselas people are located along the Skeena River on Queensway (Kulspai), in Gitau, and in Old Kitselas (Endadoon). We are located throughout different cities and locations around the world.

The communities of Gitau and Kulspai, however, are going through major changes as a result of development and proposed development in the area.

In this time of change, many people are concerned about the threat of rising crime in the communities.

Fortunately, there are ways to help prevent crime and protect your home and neighborhood,

from simple actions like keeping your doors locked, to starting a Neighborhood Watch.

Here's a few more ideas:

- Keep valuables out of sight – such as change in the car, your purse, or keys – anything that would 'invite' a thief.
- Keep spare keys with a trusted neighbor, not under a doormat or planter, on a ledge or a mailbox.
- Set timers on lights when you're away, so that your home appears occupied.
- Light up or get rid of places intruders might hide, for example, spaces between trees, stairwells, hallways, and entry ways.
- Talk to your neighbors and

help each other stay safe.

"A safe community is an involved community," says RCMP Constable Angela Rabut. "Talk to your neighbours. Get to know who and what belongs in your neighbourhood. If something or someone doesn't belong, call the police right away."

She adds, "Police can't be everywhere at once. We need the public's support and cooperation to do our job – to protect the public effectively."

If you see someone who shouldn't be doing something, write down the date and time.

Write down their license plate and a description of their vehicle.

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Be safety conscious

Write down what the person(s) looks like.

Kitselas has many services that can help during emergencies.

We have the BC Ambulance Service, Thornhill Volunteer Fire Department, RCMP, Community Policing, Animal Control, and Public Works.

But in order for these services

to fully help us, our homes need to be well lit, and have easily seen address numbers.

“House numbers are very important and can save us precious time to get to an emergency quickly,” says Constable Rabut.

“It also saves the entire neighbourhood from having police knocking on doors in the middle of the night waking – and usually alarming – people.”

Also important is to follow through when you make a call, which means be willing to be a witness, give details, and if necessary, go to court.

POLICING AFTER TREATY

Kitselas currently receives funding for a half-time Community Police Officer

The police officer is shared between Kitselas and Kitsumkalum.

40% of their time is for Kitselas, 40% for Kitsumkalum and 20% for administrative duties.

Kitselas is too small to consider setting up its own police force.

With a final treaty agreement in place, Kitselas would negotiate an agreement with the RCMP to provide policing for our communities.

Kody Bevan’s baked bannock bread recipe

— Thanks to Pam Bevan for submitting this recipe!

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups flour
- 1-1/2 tablespoons baking powder
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1-3/4 cups of water
- 1/4 cup of oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.



2. Add dry ingredients into a bowl and mix together.
3. Make a hole so you can pour liquids (water and oil) into it.
4. Mix slowly by hand with a fork until mixture has no clumps and is more solid.
5. Knead thoroughly but not roughly; dough should resemble a soft pillow.
6. Spread dough 1-1/2 inches thick onto baking pan (cake or cookie sheet works too).
7. Place in oven for 30-40 minutes (less or more time, depending on your oven).
8. Bannock should be a golden brown.
9. Let cool for about 5 minutes
10. Enjoy!



Grandpa Dave's Fish 'n' Rice Recipe

Thanks to Dorothy Joseph for submitting this recipe!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 quart of jarred fish
- 2 celery sticks
- 1/4 of a cabbage
- 5 thick strips of bacon
(the type you have to slice yourself)
- 1/2 teaspoon curry
- a dash of salt (if needed)

DIRECTIONS

1. Fry bacon for a few minutes in a frying pan, until bacon says 'ouch' or it's lightly crispy.
 2. Chop celery and cabbage.
 3. Add celery and cabbage to bacon in the frying pan.
 4. Cleaning bones out of fish and add to frying pan.
 5. Add curry and salt.
 6. Serve with 3 cups of rice – less if for two or three people only.
 7. Enjoy!
- This recipe should feed a good sized family.

Kitselas praised by BCTC

By Sarah Artis

The provincial organization responsible for fair treaty negotiations is calling a territory agreement between Kitselas and Metlakatla a “best practice” example of success of BC First Nations working together to resolve land conflicts.

The Kitselas and Metlakatla Treaty Settlement Lands Agreement (see page 7 for more info) was one of two such agreements featured in the BC Treaty Commission’s (BCTC) 2014 annual report.

Agreements the Tla’amin Nation has with many of its neighbours are the other example of success.

The report states “the First Nations carried out overlap work primarily on their own” in these examples of “best practices.”

As opposed to its usual overview of activities, BCTC’s 2014 annual report focused solely on the issue of overlapping land claims between BC First Nations, a major hurdle in the completion of many treaties.

In writing the report, BCTC interviewed legal experts, mediation and dispute resolution experts, and First Nations who have succeeded in resolving land claim conflicts.



The BC Treaty Commission is the independent facilitator for treaty negotiations. Go online for the presentation of its 2014 annual report.

“The report on overlap is long overdue in my opinion,” says Glenn Bennett, the Kitselas Treaty Office’s Director of Implementation.

“The report indicated the issue of overlap should have been dealt with sooner rather than later according to the BCTC process,” says Bennett. “Kitselas is seeing the problems of not addressing the overlap issue right now, for example, Kitselas’ Agreement in Principle not being signed by Canada and BC.”

The BCTC reports’ main recommendation is that “First Nations resolve issues related to overlapping traditional territories among themselves.”

If Aboriginal communities do not resolve these conflicts among themselves, the federal government could intervene and make its own decisions about boundaries.

The potential long-term impacts of this could be disastrous, resulting in territory decisions that many First Nations disagree with.

While presenting the BCTC annual report in a live press conference on October 7, 2014, BCTC Chief Commissioner Sophie Pierre said most everyone, including First Nations, agrees that we need to put historical questions aside and figure out how to move forward together so everybody benefits.

“Everyone agreed that what we need is a structured process to support First Nations,” she said.

SUPPORT AVAILABLE

The BCTC report states, “Overlapping claims and shared territory issues continue to attract significant attention from all the parties. The issues are complex and each initiative is different, requiring

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flexibility, substantial resources, and options for facilitation or mediation.”

The BCTC does offer support to First Nations working to resolve overlapping land issues.

“We facilitate meetings between the two nations where there’s overlap,” said Dave Haggard of BCTC during the press conference. “We have managed to secure some funding to help pay for their expenses to come to those meetings. If they don’t want us involved, we draw back. If they want us involved in a certain way, then we’ll do that. Or we’ll bring in an outside mediator.”

BCTC helped fund the talks between Kitselas and Metlakatla that led to the nations’ Lands Agreement and supports ongoing discussions.

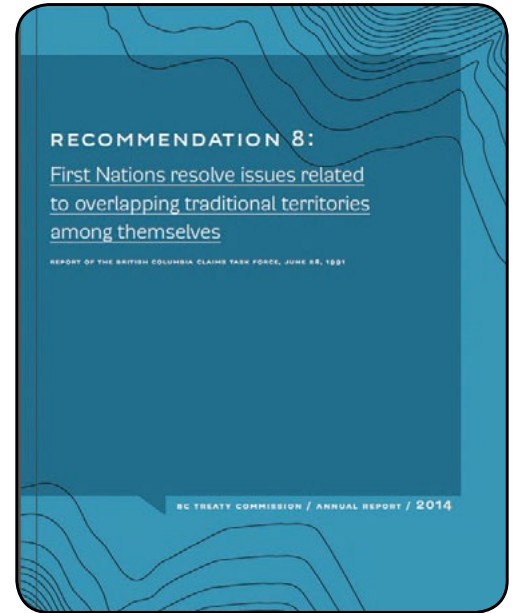
TSILHQOT’IN DECISION

The BCTC annual report also touched on the Tsilhqot’in court case.

“On June 26, 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada released its decision in *Tsilhqot’in Nation v. British Columbia*, 2014 SCC 44 (“Tsilhqot’in”). The case is the first in which any Canadian court has formally declared the existence of aboriginal title lands, and for that reason it is a landmark decision,” says the report.

During the press conference, Chief Commissioner Pierre added, “Tsilquotin didn’t just determine Aboriginal title for the first time in Canadian history. It also recognized First Nations sovereignty.”

But Pierre emphasizes that the way forward is still through treaty negotiations, stating the courts are



The BCTC report cover states its main recommendation.

not equipped to deal with the issue of competing interests of title and governance.

“Courts continue to encourage the three parties to the negotiation table,” she said.

KITSELAS & METLAKATLA TREATY SETTLEMENT LANDS (TSL) AGREEMENT

From the BCTC 2014 annual report

‘On April 3, 2014, Kitselas Chief Joe Bevan and Metlakatla Chief Harold Leighton signed the Kitselas and Metlakatla Treaty Settlement Lands Agreement and exchanged gifts to honour each other’s nations and their respective efforts. The agreement emphasizes that these two Tsimshian nations “have shared interests in regards to lands, resources, and Aboriginal rights and desire to work together and in cooperation . . . and have engaged in good faith negotiations with each other in an effort to reach agreement in their shared interests.”

The parties used a “nonobjection” technique to support their proposed TSL, and Metlakatla also agreed not to oppose the transfer of Incremental Treaty Lands to Kitselas.

“It took years of meetings, determination and mutual respect for Metlakatla and Kitselas to finalize and sign the shared territory agreement. We hope to use this agreement as a template for similar agreements with our other neighbouring First Nations,” says Chief Harold Leighton.’

Negotiations Update

What's happening at the treaty negotiations table?

By Clarisa Spencer



CLARISA SPENCER
*Kitselas Treaty Office
Documents Coordinator*

Treaty negotiations in September were held in Victoria.

To ensure fair travel for all negotiating teams, each month, the location of negotiations rotates between Vancouver (where Canada's negotiating team is), Victoria (where BC Negotiating team is), and Terrace (where Kitselas and Kitsumkalum teams are).

In my last update, I said Canada is ready to talk fish. Department of Fisheries and Oceans representative Megan Sterling will join treaty negotiations in October to begin fish negotiations with Kitselas.

We've been preparing for the fish talks for a long time prior to this announcement.

"Kitselas has been getting ready with our proposal based on past work," says Kitselas Chief Negotiator Mel Bevan. "We are prepared to begin presenting our proposals at the next negotiating meeting in Vancouver."

Kitselas' goals are to have access to fish for social and ceremonial purposes, and to have economic and commercial access to fish.

In the final treaty agreement, the fish chapter will clearly define Kitselas' role in fish management.

The next treaty negotiations will be on October 21-23, 2014 in Vancouver.

If you have any questions please contact me at the Kitselas Treaty Office at 250.635.8882 Ext 103.



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Canyon Current

The Canyon Current is a free newsletter produced by the Kitselas Treaty Office to inform the Kitselas people about our treaty activities.

Want to receive the Canyon Current by email? Have photos or story ideas? Email Joan at: treatyreception@kitselas.com

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