

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

April 20, 2017

Dear First Nations,

The First Nations Leadership Council is committed to changing the course of First Nation-Crown relations in BC in a way that empowers First Nations and results in real, concrete change to our children, families, and communities. The FNLC has identified the upcoming provincial election as a critical turning point in which First Nation voters have the potential to significantly shift not only the focus of the election but the outcome as well.

To assist you and your community's participation in this year's provincial election, the FNLC has compiled the attached 2017 Provincial Election Package.

The FNLC's 2017 Election Package is being provided to all 203 First Nations in BC. Included in the package are:

- Questions posed to all provincial parties;
- Responses from the parties; and
- Basic voting information from Elections BC;

Please note that the FNLC encourages not only the further distribution of this information to your community members but encourages each community to pose questions to your respective riding candidates. Please feel free to use or adapt the attached letter if you wish to do your own correspondence on election issues of significance to your community.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Matthew Norris (matthew@ubcic.bc.ca) or Colin Braker (cbraker@fns.bc.ca).

Yours truly,

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

On behalf of the FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT:



Grand Chief Edward John

Robert Phillips

Cheryl Casimer

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS:



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip

Chief Bob Chamberlin

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On behalf of the BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Chapman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

A/Regional Chief Maureen Chapman

CC: BC First Nations

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

1. Reconciliation, Recognition and Affirmation

The historic *Tsilhqot'in* decision, which made the first declaration of Aboriginal title in Canada and set out implications of that title - along with the Final Report and Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission - underscores yet again the need for a substantially reconstituted First Nations-Crown relationship in BC. This relationship needs to be based on the existence of inherent Aboriginal title, rights and treaty rights, be aimed at the constitutional imperative of reconciliation, and reflect both case law, as well as the standards set out in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, including the principle of free, prior and informed consent, which Canada has endorsed as a country. The relationship must be formed in such a manner as to bring about the negotiation, conclusion and implementation of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements.

- a. **In light of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by Canada, and the 94 Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), how does your party plan to work to transform the current relationship between First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Province of BC, in the implementation, negotiation and conclusion of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements?**

Any path towards reconciliation, recognition and affirmation must begin with the Declaration and support of basic principles.

*In 2016 NDP Leader John Horgan did just that. Unlike the Liberal government and the Green Party, John Horgan declared that an NDP government will officially adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. **It will be in our election platform.** It will be in the mandate letters to government Ministers. And an NDP government will commit to implement the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. **It will be in the election platform.***

These are not simple commitments. And an NDP government will not assume it knows the best way to proceed. We know that children and land are our future, and we have to get this right.

As a first step, upon being elected John Horgan will meet with the First Nations Leadership Council. He will invite the federal government to join that meeting. These won't be once a year meetings. Jointly, the governments will set out a path to work together to achieve certainty in the path forward.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

The TRC's Executive Summary and Final Report (2015) contain thousands of pages that describe the destructive history and legacy of the Canadian Indian residential school system, the lasting intergenerational effects of this institutionalized and culturally genocidal policy, and 94 progressive recommendations for healing the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

1.b Following the release of the 94 Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, how will your party implement the recommendations of the TRC in restructuring BC's approach to reconciliation?

The first step towards implementing the TRC's 94 Calls to Action is accepting them. Unlike the Liberal government and the Green party, John Horgan and the NDP have committed to implement the TRC's Calls to Action, and that commitment will be in our election platform.

When elected, every Minister will be asked to review the Calls to Action and their Ministry's role in implementation. The progress of implementation will be reflected in their Ministry Service Plans. The government will meet with and work with the First Nations Leadership Council, other stakeholders and the Federal government to implement the Calls to Action.

2. Education

The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework (2012) sets out an action plan for systemic change across the post-secondary system to ensure the success of Aboriginal learners. The Framework recognizes the important role of Aboriginal- controlled institutes and community based delivery and yet these institutes continue to struggle with the very limited access to proposal- based resources and no core funding at all.

In the Framework, the Province commits to "work with the Federal Government to explore mechanisms to mutually support Aboriginal institutes."

- a. If elected, would your party fully implement the Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and in particular, how would you insure that Aboriginal-controlled institutes have the funding required to meet the needs of their students and communities?**

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

An NDP government would implement the policy framework of the Aboriginal Post-Secondary and Training Policy Framework. We will work in partnership with First Nations, support First Nations control of First Nations education and will respect regional approaches to education.

We support the renewal of the Tripartite Education Framework Agreement (TEFA) by Canada, British Columbia and the FNEC on behalf of First Nations, and will encourage Canada to develop appropriate federal mechanisms to achieve funding that supports the continued development of the BC First Nations education system to continue improving student outcomes.

We will ensure government funded efforts and initiatives respecting indigenous languages are consistently guided by the objectives of revitalization, preservation and protection of First Nations languages.

The question of funding for Aboriginal-controlled institutes has been a longstanding issue in achieving the goals of supporting students and communities in achieving increased participation and success in post-secondary education. We will continue this path moving forward.

In 2008 the First Nations Education Steering Committee recommended that “Aboriginal representatives and the Provincial government should engage the Federal government in a review of the respective contributions and roles of Canada, British Columbia, and Aboriginal Nations within an integrated British Columbia post-secondary education system” That recommendation was reflected in the Policy Framework.

We agree with that recommendation, and would work with First Nations representatives, the British Columbia Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners Group and the Federal government to ensure both the Provincial and the Federal government contribute to stable, core funding.

Lastly, we know some Aboriginal controlled institutes, like the Native Education College in Vancouver, provide fantastic programs and services for the urban aboriginal program. This college is considered a private institution, so it's not entitled to the same level of funding as a public institution. We would review the way designations for Aboriginal controlled institutes are done, to ensure B.C.'s urban aboriginal population has the same access to educational services.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) calls on provincial governments to establish senior-level positions at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education.

Having an Aboriginal voice at a senior level in the Ministry of Education will ensure that the TRC and Auditor General's recommendations for Aboriginal education are at the forefront when decisions are being made.

2.b If elected, will you ensure that a senior-level position dedicated to Aboriginal content in education is established?

Yes. Just as it is important to have First Nations representation on College and University Boards of Directors, it is important to have a position focused on Aboriginal content in education as part of government's structure.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action call on governments to make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.

c. Will your party support the inclusion of a mandatory First Peoples focused course or bundle of credits as part of the graduation program?

We support the Truth and Reconciliation's calls to action including Call to Action #62's recommendations on education, including age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada as a mandatory part of the K-12 education system. We understand the Province, in collaboration with the First Nations Schools Association and the First Nations Education Steering Committee, has taken the first steps in this work. They've developed B.C.'s Aboriginal curriculum and two resources for teachers – "Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives in the Classroom" and "Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guides." An NDP government would work with First Nations leaders to evaluate the Aboriginal curriculum and ensure what's being taught at B.C. schools reflects the TRC's calls to action.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

In November 2016, BC Teachers won a Supreme Court of Canada decision to immediately restore clauses deleted from the teacher's contracts dealing with class size, the number of special needs students who can be in a class and the number of specialist teachers required in schools.

Aboriginal students make up 19.4% of the designated special needs population in BC and this ruling is an opportunity to attach and retain more Aboriginal teachers and professionals in the BC public education system.

2.d What is your party's position on this issue and if elected, how would you ensure that more Aboriginal teachers are trained and hired into the system?

It is important that the teachers in BC's classrooms reflect the children in those classrooms. After 16 years of Christy Clark's war on students, teachers and the public education system, the Supreme Court of Canada decision will mean more teachers will be hired.

But in March 2017, the provincial Liberal Government announced \$2 million funding for recruiting teachers to rural schools, would support national and international recruitment efforts as the way to solve problems recruiting teachers and classroom professionals in rural BC. We couldn't disagree more. Local people, and First Nations people in particular, are the best choice for teaching kids throughout BC. Our government's focus will be on identifying, training and employing First Nations teachers, and we will work with Colleges and Universities and First Nations education groups to develop a robust recruitment strategy to achieve that.

3. Fisheries and Aquaculture

We have observed significant changes in government approaches to engaging with First Nations as governments become more and more focused on economic growth, at the cost of infringing Aboriginal rights and reducing environmental protections. For these reasons, it is crucial, now more than ever, that BC First Nations and the Province work together to protect the lands, waters and resources that we hold dear.

- a. **If elected, how will your party work with BC First Nations and appropriate agencies to ensure that provincial legislation (*Water Sustainability Act, Wildfire Act, etc.*) respects First Nations' rights, including their inherent jurisdiction and authority for governance of their lands, waters and resources?**

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples sets out a principled framework, and the Supreme Court of Canada's Tsilhqot'in decision lays down Canadian legal language for what must be a partnership between governments, including First Nations governments in respecting rights in resource decision making.

We recognize both of these documents as fundamental to guiding our work towards reconciliation, recognition and affirmation.

A NDP government will require each Minister to consider the legislation they are responsible for, and the implications of the UN Declaration and the Tsilhqot'in decision on those laws. We will work with First Nations leadership, the First Nations Leadership Council and First Nations organizations to develop a way forward to address those laws together.

One needs only to look at BC First Nations' oral and physical history, art, songs and ceremonies to understand that fisheries and aquatic resources are deeply integral to the nutritional, social, economic and cultural well-being of our communities.

3.b If elected, what specific processes or programs would you develop in order to ensure your government is able to collaborate effectively with First Nation communities and organization on policy development and the management of freshwater fisheries, (including steelhead) with particular regard to habitat protection, resident species hatcheries and fish stocking activities for recreational purposes, and tenure for marine aquaculture sites?

In common with all areas of resource management, policies, laws and implementation, we will work with First Nations toward upholding the legal obligations of all parties and ensuring all levels of government work together in planning and managing the fisheries resource. Meeting with the First Nations Fisheries Council will be the first step toward this goal.

Today, we are seeing unprecedented pressures on wild fish stocks and habitats. Competing fisheries interests, such as the commercial and recreational sectors, as well as cumulative impacts from industrial development and extractive resource activities, have impinged on our inherent right to access and manage our resources.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

3.c If elected, how will your party use rentals and fees generated through surface and groundwater licensing to specifically fund freshwater conservation and protection, including using a portion of these revenues to support First Nations to engage in freshwater planning and governance initiatives over freshwater in their territories?

*We have proposed just such a measure in the **Sustainable Wildlife Management Act, 2016**. That bill requires the minister to identify funding sources for researching and maintaining the health of fish, wildlife and habitat in the province, and put those funds in a special account solely for that purpose. It also requires the Minister to do this work with First Nations on a government to government basis, and with stakeholders. The government refused to pass the bill.*

Rental revenue, fees, levies on equipment sales and other sources of revenue have all been suggested for this purpose. We would work with First Nations and stakeholders to determine the best mix of funding to use.

On October 31st, 2012, after 18 months of testimony and over \$26 million, the Cohen Commission's Final Report "*The Uncertain Future of the Fraser River Sockeye*" was released. The Report was heralded as a blueprint for salmon conservation, providing 75 recommendations to Government.

d. How will your party ensure that the 75 recommendations of the Cohen report will be implemented and acted upon to ensure the preservation of BC's salmon runs?

The BC NDP have supported the recommendations of the Cohen Report since it was first released.

Our primary focus in implementing the recommendations will be to review salmon farm siting criteria to ensure migrating salmon are not put at risk from farmed salmon locations, keeping the existing moratorium on new farms on the North Coast, and working with the industry and BC communities, First Nations and others to grow land based fish farming as an economic alternative to open pen operations.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

4. Forest Resources

First Nations' have existing inherent Aboriginal rights, including title, with respect to the lands and resources throughout the province, which include the right to access, use and benefit from these resources. Transformation in the forest sector requires much needed capital investments in new manufacturing. However, investments are difficult to attract with the increasing uncertainty of the impact of First Nations title and rights in regards to land and resource disputes

a. If elected, how will your party fully embrace and support First Nation ownership and participation in, and benefits from the forest sector and the forest resources of their traditional territories?

The BC Liberal government's fundamental unwillingness to recognize the legal realities of the Tsilhqot'in decision and to work in partnership with First Nations threatens the future prosperity of all British Columbians. Instead of taking a leadership role, the Liberal government is focused on short-term economic agreements, and is ignoring the tremendous opportunities of working in true partnership with First Nations.

An NDP government will review the effectiveness of Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreements and explore opportunities to increase First Nations participation in forestry besides non-renewable tenures.

True partnership does not involve signing time-limited agreements designed to promote "enduring partnerships with industry," as the government described the recent 25 year agreement with the Lake Babine Nation. True partnership involves building an enduring trust, making decisions together and recognizing each other's rights and obligations, and ensuring all British Columbians benefit from our natural resources. This is what we are committed to do.

The allowable annual cut in the forest sector is in decline due to economic, environmental and biological factors. First Nations communities have expressed clear interest in participation in the forest sector through timber harvesting activities and have been seeking sustainable harvest opportunities that provide meaningful economic returns. However, access to forest resources have been hampered by diminishing harvest levels and current licensee obligations. A new form of forest tenure system, the First Nations Woodlands License, was developed to support longer term area based tenure, though the implementation of these tenures have been limited and restricted due to the previously mentioned issues.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

4.b If elected, how will your party balance the decreasing allowable annual harvest levels while accommodating participation of timber harvesting opportunities for First Nations?

As government, our focus will be the health and long term viability of our forests. This is critical for our air, our water, the fish and wildlife that many of us rely on and enjoy. It is a foundation of our growing and valuable tourism industry and, of course, our forest industry.

We will maintain restoration programs for fire hazard reduction, wildlife habitat protection and forest biodiversity. We will implement forest health initiatives, including reforestation programs, to try and redress government neglect and effects of beetle kill in our forests. All of these will create jobs, and we are committed to First Nations participation in each of these.

The difficult question of harvest allocation as we face the reality of a falling AAC is complex, and the required information is not fully available to us as Opposition. As government, we would use that information and the input of all forestry partners, including First Nations to arrive at decisions which respect each party's legal rights, while putting forest health and community health as first priorities for the future.

5. Energy and Mines

BC has an antiquated mineral tenure system that is more than 100 years old. This system grants mineral exploration rights to private companies. These rights often come in conflict with First Nations' inherent title and rights. Ten years ago, BC exacerbated the issues by allowing mineral explorers to stake mineral claims online. Now anyone in the world with a computer and a credit card can stake a claim on First Nations land in BC. In the Yukon, the Ross River Dene Council legally challenged and won a case that effectively requires companies to consult prior to staking.

a. Is your Party committed to work with First Nations to undertake legislative reform of the current mineral tenure system, including incorporating the standard of free, prior and informed consent?

We will review mining legislation, along with statutes governing other resources in the province, to ensure they comply with the legal rights and responsibilities of all parties. We will work with First Nations, along with other stakeholders, to do this.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

In practical terms for mining in the province, that means improving the processes and tools that go towards exploring, staking and developing mineral tenures in British Columbia. It also means improving oversight and environmental protections over the life of mines, including tailings storage facilities. Enforcement will be key. We will work to ensure closed mines are adequately protected. Without these improvements uncertainty will frustrate development and legal challenges will drain time and money from both the mining industry and First Nations. We will work with First Nations, communities and the industry to make those improvements.

Numerous First Nations in BC developed their own Indigenous Environmental Assessment process outside of the dated and ineffective federal and provincial process. Canada has agreed to make legislative changes to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*.

BC has agreed only to make "enhancements" within the existing provincial legislative and policy framework. First Nations have long called for an overhaul of the provincial environmental assessment regime, and that such reform is undertaken in full partnership with First Nations.

5.b Will your party commit to legislative and policy reform of the Provincial environmental assessment process in full partnership with BC First Nations, and provide resources to support First Nations' Environmental Assessment processes?

BC's Environmental Assessment process needs to be reviewed and updated to fit the needs of 21st century British Columbia, including the reality of First Nations' rights.

The BC Liberal government's approach treats First Nations as another item on a checklist for the process, not as partners in evaluating projects. This, combined with the government's unwillingness to recognize and implement the results of the Tsilhqot'in decision in BC has bred uncertainty, delay, increased costs and lost economic opportunities for all British Columbians, including First Nations.

Our goal is a single process that more directly addresses issues such as climate change and cumulative impacts and is truly a partnership with First Nations. We will consult with First Nations leadership the First Nations Leadership Council and other First Nation organizations to determine how this can best work.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

Placer mining in BC causes massive environmental degradation and is not properly regulated by the government of BC.

5.c If elected, will your party ensure the BC Mining Code applies to the placer mining industry?

We are supportive of economic development based on extraction of natural resources when benefits accrue to locals, the Province and First Nations, and when clean air, water and land is maintained. An effective regulatory regime is required to achieve these goals along with proper monitoring to ensure oversight of the regulations.

With respect to placer mining it is imperative, like any other extractive industry, that impacts on water quality, wildlife, wildlife habit and other environmental values are properly assessed and monitored.

We will ensure best management practices are complied with and inspections by government mining officials are coordinated with First Nations. By being consistent in applying regulations and enforcement to protect British Columbia's streams and rivers certainty will be created for First Nations and placer miners.

If current approaches do not achieve this goal then we will undertake a coordinated approach to reach economic benefits without environmental degradation.

BC's Indigenous Peoples live in regions of the Province most affected by climate change. BC has just recently harmonized its low-carbon energy and climate change action plan with the new federal Pan- Canadian carbon plan. The Province of BC takes in over a billion dollars in a revenue neutral carbon tax per year, the proceeds of which are given away as tax breaks and not related to climate change. First Nations do not benefit from the carbon tax.

5.d If elected, will your party provide the necessary funds to establish a BC Indigenous Carbon Fund, and indigenous-led organization, which would catalyse First Nations involvement in the now carbon energy economy?

Unlike the BC Liberal government, we have a plan for making progress on climate change. Led by a Climate Leadership Team that will include First Nations, we will reinvest carbon tax revenue in projects that reduce emissions, create jobs and benefit British Columbians across the province.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

We will undertake a major energy retrofit of buildings in the province, reducing carbon emissions, creating jobs and making buildings safer, more comfortable and cheaper to operate.

We will work with First Nations and the Federal government to make these investments and improvements in First Nations communities, focusing first on those that rely on generators for power. Changing their energy supply will help the health of residents, save money and reduce carbon emissions permanently.

We see action on climate, energy conservation and renewable electricity projects as opportunities for training, jobs and economic benefits to First Nations and Aboriginal people.

We would like to discuss the BC Indigenous Carbon Fund, how it could work, and how it could help achieve climate change goals. If that mechanism is the best way to achieve climate goals and build First Nations involvement in the new economy, we will work with First Nations to establish the Fund.

6. Emergency Management

Many First Nations are often underserved and lack basic infrastructural amenities, giving rise to risks of injury, death and loss of property during unforeseen emergencies, an unnecessary risk that may be easily mitigated.

- a. If elected, how will your party ensure comparable levels of servicing for addressing (ongoing and continuing) critical foundations of Emergency Management, including structural Fire Services and forest fuel management prevention/mitigation? What commitment can be adhered to for First Nations' direct inclusion (partnerships) in all agreements related to the provisions of Emergency Management, Forest Enhancement and Fuel Management and Structural Fire Services reporting, and for First Nations Service Organizations to be formally identified in coordination, secretariat and leadership roles?**

Our first step on including First Nations communities in emergency management activities in the province will be to stop the jurisdictional warfare over "Ottawa's job" and "Victoria's job."

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

This was highlighted again over the Christmas holidays when the community of Ahousaht lost its main water supply and response was delayed while Victoria and Ottawa decided who was responsible. Meanwhile, Elders were moved out of their homes to get safe water, and days passed with little action.

Emergency management is everyone's responsibility and we will work with First Nations and Ottawa to stop the delays and frustrations caused by jurisdictional arguments. First Nations will be partners, not participants, and will have a place on the leadership teams of emergency management organizations in the province, with their role recognized, identified and funded in the same way as other participants.

7. Children and Families

Better supports are required for First Nation children and youth in care, along with stronger enforcement of policies meant to protect the vulnerable. Evidence shows that, once a person has been involved in the child welfare system in their youth, the chances are higher that they will be involved in the criminal justice system, and also that their own children will be involved in the child welfare system.

Statistics show that while Aboriginal people account for 4.3% of the Canadian population, nearly 50% of the 30,000 children and youth in foster care are Aboriginal.

a. What will your party do to address the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in care?

It is not a coincidence that the first call to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission asks on all levels of government to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care. It is not a coincidence that Grand Chief Ed John's first recommendation in his report on Indigenous child welfare in British Columbia was to develop child and family services directly within First Nations communities in BC.

We understand that investing in family supports for parents, kids and family networks and keeping children in their communities is ultimately best for them, and an NDP government will work towards that goal in partnership with First Nations and the delegated authorities. We will not repeat history. We will invest in prevention, not apprehension.

As a first step, we will review the recommendations of the Representative for Children and Youth, and build on those recommendations to work with First Nations and find a way forward.

First Nations Leadership Council questionnaire:

Although difficult, this is work that we commit to as a government. We know that children only get one chance at childhood, and it is the job of families, communities and governments to support their growth, their education and their connection to their community and culture.

Family connections and cultural connections ground and connect us all to the past and help us reach for the future. First Nations children deserve those connections.

8. Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls

Many of the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls and the systems in place to respond to that violence are totally or partially within provincial and municipal government jurisdiction. In order for the federally launched inquiry to result in meaningful change for Indigenous women and girls, the Federal government requires the cooperation and involvement of *all* provincial, territorial and municipal governments. Without commitment to meaningful cooperation and change from all levels of government, the success of the inquiry process will be severely hindered and the ongoing lack of coordination between levels of government will continue to put Indigenous women and girls at risk.

On February 13th, 2016, Minister Bennett, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, met with the Coalition on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls and confirmed that Canada wants to have the provinces and territories fully committed to the National Inquiry.

- a. If elected, will your party support the National Inquiry including your formal commitment to being fully involved in the process? This would include a formalized commitment to make changes as a result of the Inquiry, as well as a commitment to fund implementation and support participation of family members and impacted communities in conjunction with the Government of Canada?**

Yes. We will be at the table. We will work with First Nations, Provincial partners and Canada to get to yes, to support families and non-governmental stakeholders. Like many things, this is not an "Ottawa issue" or a "BC issue." The history and social patterns that lead to violence and the responses of communities, police and the justice system are the work of all of us to identify, change and respond to. Participating in the inquiry is an important part of that.

First Nation Leadership Council Questionnaire

BC Green Party

March 2017

In light of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by Canada, and the 94 Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), how does your party plan to work to transform the current relationship between First Nations, the Government of Canada, and the Province of BC, in the implementation, negotiation and conclusion of treaties, agreement and other constructive arrangements?

A BC Green Government would fully commit to all action required of Provincial governments to adopt and implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. A BC Green government would work hard to establish a respectful working relationship with First Nations, in full partnership with First Nations. More specific measures will be outlined in our platform. BC Greens would continue to participate with the Federal government and First Nations in the BC Treaty Process.

Following the release of the 94 Calls to action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, how will your party implement the recommendations of the TRC in restructuring BC's approach to reconciliation?

Implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will require action by both Federal and Provincial governments. A BC Green government would commit to all action required of Provincial governments to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. We commit to being guided by the principles of justice, recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, and partnership in each step towards full reconciliation of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in BC.

The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework (2012) sets out an action plan for systemic change across the post-secondary system to ensure the success of Aboriginal learners. The Framework recognizes the important role of Aboriginal- controlled institutes and community based delivery and yet these institutes continue to struggle with the very limited access to proposal- based resources and no core funding at all. In the Framework, the Province commits to "work with the Federal Government to explore mechanisms to mutually support Aboriginal institutes."

If elected, would your party fully implement the Policy Framework and in particular, how would you ensure that Aboriginal-controlled institutes have the funding required to meet the needs of their students and communities?

The BC Greens are committed to ensuring improved outcomes for Aboriginal students in all levels of education, including post-secondary education, and recognize that change is needed in

our post-secondary education system to reach that end. BC Green government would work with the Federal government to support Aboriginal Institutes as an important tool to improve success for Aboriginal learners in our post-secondary system.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) calls on provincial governments to establish senior-level positions at the assistant deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education. Having an Aboriginal voice at a senior level in the Ministry of Education will ensure that the TRC and Auditor General's recommendations for Aboriginal education are at the forefront when decisions are being made.

If elected, will you ensure that a senior-level position dedicated to Aboriginal content in education is established?

A BC Green government would commit to all action required of Provincial governments to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including establishing a senior-level position in the Ministry of Education dedicated to Aboriginal content.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action call on governments to make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.

Will your party support the inclusion of a mandatory First Peoples focused course or bundle of credits as part of the graduation program?

The BC Greens support including mandatory education requirements on First Peoples' history and contemporary contributions to Canada.

In November 2016, BC Teachers won a Supreme Court of Canada decision to immediately restore clauses deleted from the teacher's contracts dealing with class size, the number of special needs students who can be in a class and the number of specialist teachers required in schools. Aboriginal students make up 19.4% of the designated special needs population in BC and this ruling is an opportunity to attach and retain more Aboriginal teachers and professionals in the BC public education system.

What is your party's position on this issue and if elected, how would you ensure that more Aboriginal teachers are trained and hired into the system?

The BC Greens recognize the importance of increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers in the public education system to more adequately represent the population and enable Aboriginal students to be taught by Aboriginal teachers. We also recognize that more needs to be done to

attract and support Aboriginal people to go into teaching as a career. A BC Green government would instruct school boards to give special attention to attracting Aboriginal teachers in hiring processes undertaken to address the Supreme Court decision. We would also ensure that supports are in place for Aboriginal teachers once they are employed.

If elected, how will your party work with BC First Nations and appropriate agencies to ensure that provincial legislation (Water Sustainability Act, Wildlife Act, etc.) respects First Nations' rights, including their inherent jurisdiction and authority for governance of their lands, waters and resources?

A BC Green government, in consultation and partnership with First Nations, would ensure that provincial legislation respects Aboriginal rights.

If elected, what specific processes or programs would you develop in order to ensure your government is able to collaborate effectively with First Nation communities and organizations on policy development and the management of freshwater fisheries (including steelhead), with particular regard to habitat protection, resident species hatcheries and fish stocking activities for recreational purposes, and tenures for marine aquaculture sites?

We will be outlining specific processes for management of fisheries and other resources in our platform. An important initiative BC Greens would undertake is to press the Federal government in the strongest possible terms to restore Habitat Protection legislation in the Fisheries Act and other important environmental legislation stripped out by the previous Conservative government.

If elected, how will your party use rentals and fees generated through surface and groundwater licensing to specifically fund freshwater conservation and protection, including using a portion of these revenues to support First Nations to engage in freshwater planning and governance initiatives over freshwater in their territories?

A BC Green government would explore mechanisms to fund First Nation participation in management of freshwater resources.

How will your party ensure that the 75 recommendations of the Cohen Report will be implemented and acted upon to ensure the preservation of BC's salmon runs?

Most of the recommendations of the Cohen Report require action by the Federal government. A BC Green government would press the Federal government to follow through on its commitments and assist in any way appropriate within Provincial jurisdiction.

First Nations' have existing inherent Aboriginal rights, including title, with respect to the lands and resources throughout the province, which include the right to access, use and benefit from these resources. Transformation in the forest sector requires much needed capital investments in new manufacturing. However, investments are difficult to attract with the increasing uncertainty of the impact of First Nations title and rights in regards to land and resource disputes.

If elected, how will your party fully embrace and support First Nation ownership and participation in, and benefits from, the forest sector and the forest resources of their traditional territories?

The BC Greens will work in collaboration with First Nations and the forest sector, and explore options for supporting First Nation ownership and participation in the forest sector. Specific proposals will be outlined in our platform.

If elected, how will your party balance the decreasing allowable annual harvest levels while accommodating participation of timber harvesting opportunities for First Nations?

A BC Green Government will review forest tenures with a view to promoting innovation, value added, independent regional operations and Indigenous enterprises.

Is your party committed to work with First Nations to undertake legislative reform of the current mineral tenure system, including incorporating the standard of free, prior and informed consent?

A BC Green government would ensure that resource legislation incorporates the standard of free, prior and informed consent.

Will your party commit to legislative and policy reform of the provincial environmental assessment process in full partnership with BC First Nations, and provide resourcing to support First Nations' Environmental Assessment processes?

We will be outlining specific ideas in our platform for involving First Nations in environmental assessment processes.

If elected, will your party ensure the BC Mining Code applies to the placer mining industry?

The BC Greens are committed to ensuring that mining in BC is environmentally sensitive, including that the BC Mining Code applies to all mining.

BC's Indigenous Peoples live in regions of the Province most affected by climate change. BC has just recently harmonized its low-carbon energy and climate change action plan with the new federal Pan- Canadian carbon plan. The Province of BC takes in over a billion dollars in a revenue neutral carbon tax per year, the proceeds of which are given away as tax breaks and not related to climate change. First Nations do not benefit from the carbon tax.

If elected, will your party provide the necessary funds to establish a BC Indigenous Carbon Fund, an Indigenous-led organization, which would catalyze First Nations involvement in the low carbon energy economy?

The BC Green Party's climate action strategy is very much focussed on investing in opportunities associated with dealing with climate change. We recognize that we will be leading a lot of initiatives that will involve First Nations and ensure that they benefit. Adaptation, particularly for regions most affected by climate change, is also essential, and details on the BC Green Party's adaption strategies will be outlined in our platform in the coming weeks. The BC Greens believe it is essential for First Nations to be involved in the low carbon energy economy, and would work in partnership with First Nations to determine the best mechanisms for their involvement.

If elected, how will your party ensure comparable levels of servicing for addressing (ongoing and continuing) critical foundations of Emergency Management, including structural Fire Services and Forest Fuel Management prevention/mitigation? What commitment can be adhered to for First Nations' direct inclusion (partnership) in all agreements related to the provisions of Emergency Management, Forest Enhancement and Fuel Management & Structural Fire Services reporting, and for First Nations Service Organizations to be formally identified in coordination, secretariat and leadership roles?

The BC Greens are committed to working with First Nations on all aspects of resource management in the province.

What will your party do to address the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in care?

BC Greens are fully aware of the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in care, and of the long-term consequences of inadequate supports for vulnerable children, particularly Aboriginal children. We also fully recognize the need to ensure cultural connection for children and youth in care, a need that is not currently being met. We will work in partnership with the Federal government and First Nations to ensure that services to aboriginal children and youth is culturally appropriate, specific to the needs of their communities, and takes into account our history of colonialism and discrimination. Several recommendations of the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission address the problems of Aboriginal children in care. The BC Greens' commitment to implement those recommendations will help to reduce the number of Aboriginal children in care and better support those who remain in care. We will provide detailed information on our approach to these issues in our platform, including long-term social investments to reduce the number of children in care, when it is released.

Many of the systemic causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls and the systems in place to respond to that violence are totally or partially within provincial and municipal government jurisdiction. In order for the federally launched inquiry to result in meaningful change for Indigenous women and girls, the federal government requires the cooperation and involvement of all provincial, territorial and municipal governments. Without commitment to meaningful cooperation and change from all levels of government, the success of the inquiry process will be severely hindered and the ongoing lack of coordination between levels of government will continue to put Indigenous women and girls at risk. On February 13th, 2016, Minister Bennett, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, met with the Coalition on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls and confirmed that Canada wants to have the provinces and territories fully committed to the national inquiry.

If elected will your party support the national inquiry including your formal commitment to being fully involved in the process? This would include a formalized commitment to make changes as a result of the inquiry, as well as a commitment to fund implementation and support participation of family members and impacted communities in conjunction with the government of Canada.

A BC Green Government would fully support the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and make a formal commitment to being fully involved in the process, including making changes shown to be necessary as a result of the inquiry, and funding implementation, and supporting participation of impacted individuals and communities, in conjunction with the Federal government.



A Letter from Premier Christy Clark

April 7, 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the First Nations Leadership Council's 2017 election survey.

The relationship between the Province and First Nations communities has been a priority for my team and me, and will continue to be, as we work towards reconciliation and new opportunities.

We're focused on making sure that First Nations communities share in the benefits of responsible economic development through skills training, job opportunities, and revenue sharing.

And we strongly believe that those projects must achieve a balance between growing our economy and protecting our lands and waters.

I'm grateful to have three remarkable First Nations leaders running as part of the BC Liberal team in this election – Ellis Ross in Skeena, Wanda Good in Stikine, and Dallas Smith in the North Island. You can learn more about them at bclib.ca/SharedFuture. They will be important voices in our party and, if you honour us with your support, in the next BC Liberal government.

Together, we have the opportunity to build a strong BC and a bright future – and I hope that future will be one we can all share.

I look forward to working together in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christy Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Premier Christy Clark

1) Reconciliation, Recognition and Affirmation:

a) In light of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by Canada, and the 94 Calls to Action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), how does your party plan to work to transform the current relationship between First Nations, the Government of Canada, and the Province of BC, in the implementation, negotiation and conclusion of treaties, agreement and other constructive arrangements?

We are proud of the relationships we have built with First Nations over the years, reaching close to 500 economic and reconciliation agreements - nearly 400 of those since 2013. This approach, plus our continued involvement in the Treaty process for those Nations who wish to explore Treaty, provides First Nations with a path forward to reconciliation.

As the federal government works on its commitment to implement the Declaration within existing Canadian law, we will work in partnership with Canada and First Nations on concrete measures to achieve reconciliation.

b) Following the release of the 94 Calls to action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, how will your party implement the recommendations of the TRC in restructuring BC's approach to reconciliation?

In partnership with First Nations, Today's BC Liberals will continue to work towards meaningful reconciliation. In Canada, the BC Liberal government has been leading this work collaboratively with First Nations to improve quality of life for Aboriginal people through new economic partnerships, resource development revenue sharing, and closing gaps in health, education, skills training, and employment. As a result of our collective efforts, the Province and First Nations have achieved close to 500 economic and reconciliation agreements over the last decade; nearly 400 in the past five years. Our strategy aligns with the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action and we remain committed to this collaborative approach.

2) Education

a) The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework (2012) sets out an action plan for systemic change across the post-secondary system to ensure the success of Aboriginal learners. The Framework recognizes the important role of Aboriginal-controlled institutes and community based delivery and yet these institutes continue to struggle with the very limited access to proposal-based resources and no core funding at all. In the Framework, the Province commits to "work with the Federal Government to explore mechanisms to mutually support Aboriginal institutes." If elected, would your party fully implement the Policy Framework and in particular, how would you ensure that Aboriginal-controlled institutes have the funding required to meet the needs of their students and communities?

BC is leading the country in economic growth and we want First Nations to fully participate in and benefit from economic opportunities in our province. Aboriginal youth are the fastest growing demographic in BC and they will play a vital role in continuing our strong economy. Under our Skills for Jobs Blueprint, the BC Liberal government is reaching out to Aboriginal people in their communities to ensure they have the skills required to get good, family-supporting jobs.

With our government's Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework and Action Plan, the goal is to increase the number of credentials awarded to Aboriginal learners by 75% by 2020-21. And we're making progress: in 2014-15, 3,340 credentials were awarded to Aboriginal learners, a 27% increase over 2009-10.

The Action Plan includes programs and supports to help Aboriginal learners succeed, including:

- \$34.7 million in funding for partnerships between Aboriginal communities and public post-secondary institutions to deliver programs in communities that meet local needs and position Aboriginal people to take advantage of economic opportunities. It has supported more than 2,700 Aboriginal learners in more than 70 communities through 110 projects to date.
- Approximately \$4 million annually to 11 public post-secondary institutions to implement Aboriginal Service Plans, supporting programs, activities and services to meet the needs of Aboriginal learners.
- Funding for Elders-in-residence, cultural learning, mentoring, developing partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organizations, and program delivery.
- \$15 million to create 31 Aboriginal Gathering Places at public post-secondary institutions throughout B.C.
- \$4.3 million in one-time funding to establish an Aboriginal Emergency Financial Assistance Fund to provide support for Aboriginal students experiencing a short-term financial crisis.

Additionally, through the Aboriginal Skills Training Development Fund, the BC Liberal government is investing \$30 million over three years to support training focused on First Nations communities and Aboriginal people, which has benefited more than 2,200 people from 45 First Nations since 2015.

If re-elected, the BC Liberal government will continue to implement the Policy Framework and Action Plan, in partnership First Nations, to increase opportunities for Aboriginal learners.

b) The TRC calls on provincial governments to establish senior-level positions at the assist deputy minister level or higher dedicated to Aboriginal content in education. Having an Aboriginal voice at a senior level in the Ministry of Education will ensure that the TRC and

Auditor General's recommendations for Aboriginal education are at the forefront when decisions are being made.

If elected, will you ensure that a senior-level position dedicated to Aboriginal content in education is established?

It is important students learn about the contributions Aboriginal people have made and continue to make to our province and our country - this awareness encourages us all to value diversity, care for each other and stand up for the rights of others and ourselves.

Aboriginal history, culture and perspectives are woven into British Columbia's redesigned curriculum, in every subject and grade. We are ensuring that all students learn about and respect the importance of Aboriginal culture and history, including the ongoing legacy of the residential school system.

To get to this point, the BC Liberal government formed curriculum development teams in 2013 with the First Nations Schools Association, the Federation of Independent School Associations and teachers. The teams used the First Peoples Principles of Learning to embed Aboriginal worldviews, knowledge and content in all curriculum levels. This collaborative approach is furthering the priority of Aboriginal content in our education system. If re-elected, the BC Liberals will ensure that First Nations educational priorities remain a responsibility of our most senior civil servants in the Ministry of Education.

c) The TRC's calls to action call on governments to make age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory education requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.

Will your Party support the inclusion of a mandatory First Peoples Focused course of bundle of credits as part of the graduation program?

As noted above, Today's BC Liberals believe it is important that students learn about the contributions Aboriginal people have made to our province and our country at all curriculum levels. To achieve this, we have committed almost \$70 million this year to support Aboriginal education. Aboriginal content is woven into BC's recently redesigned curriculum.

To help educators, the resource guide, "Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives in the Classroom" was created. This tool supports the revised curriculum being introduced into BC schools by emphasizing the inclusion of relevant, authentic content regarding Aboriginal culture, language and history. In addition, the Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation Teacher Resource Guides complement the curriculum for grades 5, 10,11 and 12.

BC Liberals understand the value of including aboriginal content at all curriculum levels. We would be happy to discuss any proposal the First Nations Leadership Council has to further understanding, diversity and respect for Aboriginal history, cultures and traditions.

d) In November 2016, BC Teachers won a Supreme Court of Canada decision to immediately restore clauses deleted from the teacher's contracts dealing with class size, the number of special needs students who can be in a class and the number of specialist teachers required in schools. Aboriginal students make up 19.4% of the designated special needs population in BC and this ruling is an opportunity to attract and retain more Aboriginal teachers and professionals in the BC public education system.

What is your party's position on this issue and if elected, how would you ensure that more Aboriginal teachers are trained and hired into the system?

Our government's agreement with teachers is great news for parents, students and teachers. It will mean thousands more teachers in our schools. The BC Liberal government and teachers are already working to enhance Aboriginal education, and this negotiated settlement provides another opportunity to build on this priority.

It is incredibly important to increase the number of Aboriginal teachers. The BC Liberal government helps encourage more Aboriginal people to enter the teaching profession by making training more affordable. Through the Irving K Barber Scholarship Society, \$5,000 renewable scholarships are available to eligible First Nations students, Inuit or Metis who are registered in a teacher education program at a BC university, leading to certification by the British Columbia Teachers' Council. This includes programs leading to a Developmental Standard Term Certificate in First Nations Language and culture. In 2016, 20 First Nations students from across British Columbia received this award, part of the more than \$1 million in scholarships distributed to over 300 First Nations students this year.

Universities are also doing their part. For example, the University of British Columbia does excellent work through the Native Indian Teacher Education Program, which aims to increase the number Aboriginal teachers in BC.

If re-elected, the BC Liberal government will continue to find and fund ways for Aboriginal people to become teachers, guiding the next generation of British Columbians through the K-12 system.

3) Fisheries and Aquaculture

a) We have observed significant changes in government approaches to engaging with First Nations as governments become more and more focused on economic growth, at the cost of

infringing Aboriginal rights and reducing environmental protections. For these reasons, it is crucial, now more than ever, that BC First Nations and the Province work together to protect the lands, waters and resources that we hold dear.

If elected, how will your party work with BC First Nations and appropriate agencies to ensure that provincial legislation (Water Sustainability Act, Wildlife Act, etc.) respects First Nations rights, including their inherent jurisdiction and authority for governance of their lands, waters and resources?

The BC Liberal government takes the Crown's obligation to consult and accommodate First Nations on decisions that could affect asserted aboriginal rights and title very seriously. We recognize that it's not just a legal obligation, it's also good governance.

We believe working in partnership is the best way to provide a meaningful role in land and resource management for First Nations, and to provide for benefit sharing and economic opportunities. That's also why we encourage industry proponents to engage with First Nations early to provide better opportunities to address concerns and increase the likelihood of successful and timely consultation results.

b) One needs only to look at BC First Nations' oral and physical history, art, songs and ceremonies to understand that fisheries and aquatic resources are deeply integral to the nutritional, social, economic and cultural well-being of our communities.

If elected, what specific processes or programs would you develop in order to ensure your government is able to collaborate effectively with First Nation communities and organizations on policy development and the management of freshwater fisheries (including steelhead), with particular regard to habitat protection, resident species hatcheries and fish stocking activities for recreational purposes, and tenures for marine aquaculture sites?

Today's BC Liberals are committed to socially and ecologically responsible management of fisheries in our province. We place great emphasis on the health of all wild fisheries, including salmon, and the BC Liberals will continue to make this a priority. As government, we've taken action to support these values, including:

- In July 2015, we announced that no further approvals for salmon aquaculture tenures would be considered until we can ensure that aquaculture operations are socially and ecologically sustainable and can co-exist with our wild fishery resource.
- We formed the Advisory Council on Finfish Aquaculture that includes First Nations representatives to ensure we get the best advice possible.
- \$10 million each year collected from licence fees goes directly to the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC to support research, conservation, stocking, access and educational programs.

If re-elected, the BC Liberals will continue to consult with First Nations to ensure our wild fisheries are responsibly managed to support our communities.

c) Today, we are seeing unprecedented pressures on wild fish stocks and habitats. Competing fisheries interests, such as the commercial and recreational sectors, as well as cumulative impacts from industrial development and extractive resource activities, have impinged on our inherent right to access and manage our resources.

If elected, how will your party use rentals and fees generated through surface and ground water licensing to specifically fund freshwater conservation and protection, including using a portion of these revenues to support First Nations to engage in freshwater planning and governance initiatives over freshwater in their territories?

As part of our long-standing commitment to achieve sustainable, enhanced fish and wildlife populations, the BC Liberal government signed an agreement with the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC to allocate 100 per cent of the revenue generated from fishing licences, about \$3 million a year, directly back into research, conservation and stocking projects. The Society stocks about 800 lakes and streams throughout B.C. every year.

Our government also established the Living Rivers Trust, a \$21 million fund to promote healthy watersheds, sustainable ecosystems and thriving communities. Over the past six years, the fund has enabled 450 projects and leveraged the provincial investment by at least three times through shared funding with other organizations.

In addition, we have created policies and systems, such as the Riparian Areas Regulation, to ensure all development projects near riparian areas undergo a science-based assessment, and the Fisheries Information Summary System which helps safeguard fisheries throughout our province.

Initiatives such as these help support sustainable communities and environment, benefitting all British Columbians. If re-elected, the BC Liberals will continue to engage with First Nations on freshwater conservation and protection.

d) On October 31st, 2012, after 18 months of testimony and over \$26 million, the Cohen Commission's Final Report "The Uncertain Future of the Fraser River Sockeye" was released. The Report was heralded as a blueprint for salmon conservation, providing 75 recommendations to Government.

How will your party ensure that the 75 recommendations of the Cohen Report be implemented and acted upon to ensure the preservation of BC's salmon runs?

BC Liberals believe that the health of all wild fisheries, including salmon, is paramount and we support the growth of an environmentally and socially sustainable seafood industry.

We accept the intent of the eight Cohen Commission recommendations that directly reference the provincial government. We also support the collaborative approach outlined by the federal government regarding action they are taking to respond to Justice Cohen's recommendations. This includes working with First Nations and relevant stakeholders to ensure we have continued sustainable fisheries, which are critical to communities along British Columbia's coast.

If re-elected, we will continue to follow through on our commitments to protect the health of all wild fishers and support a sustainable seafood sector and we will support the federal government's response. The BC Liberals will also continue to contribute scientific results, data and information to the work being done to support wild salmon through the testing and research conducted at our internationally-recognized Animal Health Centre.

4. Forest Resources

a) If elected, how will government fully embrace and support First Nation ownership and participation in, and benefits from, the forest sector and the forest resources of their traditional territories?

First Nations involvement in the forest sector is an important aspect of their spiritual, physical and economic well-being, and a key factor in achieving forest sector competitiveness. Close to 90% of all First Nations in BC have forest tenures or have received offers for licence and harvesting rights from our government, and many provide contract services – everything from tree planting to forest road maintenance to fighting wildfires.

Our BC Liberal government was the first in Canada to share revenue from forestry resources with First Nations. In 2010, we introduced forest consultation and revenue sharing agreements to share economic benefits with First Nations based on harvest activities in their traditional territories. Over the last seven years, we have concluded 240 agreements with more than 150 First Nations. And since 2003, First Nations with revenue sharing agreements have received more than \$420 million. First Nations now hold over 10% of the provincial allowable annual cut – about 8.2 million cubic metres a year.

If re-elected, the BC Liberals will continue to support First Nations' participation in the forestry sector, one of the key drivers of our provincial economy. We believe our forests should be environmentally sustainable so that all British Columbians benefit for generations to come, while respecting First Nations' cultures and traditions. We commit to continue working with First Nations to achieve this vision.

b. If elected, how will government balance the decreasing allowable annual harvest levels while accommodating participation of timber harvesting opportunities for First Nations?

The BC Liberal government is taking action to maintain the forest sector's position as a driving force in British Columbia's economy, particularly in rural communities. The forest sector is a critical economic generator for British Columbia, supporting health, stable communities and providing tens of thousands of jobs for British Columbians.

Significant efforts have been taken to improve the outlook for the forest sector, invest in BC's forest resources and create additional tools to facilitate community stability and First Nations partnerships. These actions support health, resilient forests that provide quality raw materials for a diverse, globally competitive industry that supports stable communities and First Nations partners.

For example, we have encouraged business-to-business relationships between First Nations tenure holders and forestry firms, building capacity and negotiating forest consultation. We have also offered new tools, including \$10 million in strategic forestry funding to help First Nations start new forest businesses.

If re-elected, the BC Liberal government will continue to work closely with First Nations to ensure they share the economic benefits of BC's forest sector.

5. BC has an antiquated mineral tenure system that is more than 100 years old. This system grants mineral exploration rights to private companies. These rights often come in conflict with First Nations' inherent title and rights. Ten years ago, BC exacerbated the issues by allowing mineral explorers to stake mineral claims online. Now anyone in the world with a computer and a credit card can stake a claim on First Nations Land in BC. In the Yukon, the Ross River Dene Council legally challenged and won a case that effectively requires companies to consult prior to staking.

a. Is your party committed to work with First Nations to undertake legislative reform of the current mineral tenure system, including incorporating the standard of free, prior and informed consent?

The BC Liberal government has been consulting with First Nations to improve the mineral-claims system to respect aboriginal land and traditional territories. We are committed to reaching long-term reconciliation of Aboriginal rights and title in ways that work for First Nations and benefit all British Columbians.

If re-elected, we will continue to work closely with the First Nations Energy and Mining Council to develop a greater understanding of First Nations' perspectives on mining.

For example, First Nations had a significant role in recent changes made to the Mining Code. And in May 2015, First Nations with mining in their traditional territories were asked to provide nominations for membership on the Code Review Committee and sub-committees.

BC Liberals believe that working in partnership is the best way to provide a meaningful role in land and resource management for First Nations, and to provide benefit sharing and other economic opportunities.

b) Numerous First Nations in BC developed their own Indigenous Environmental process outside of the dated and ineffective federal and provincial process. Canada has agreed to make legislative changes to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act. BC has agreed only to make “enhancements” within the existing provincial legislative and policy framework. First Nations have long called for an overhaul of the provincial environmental assessment regime, and that such reform is undertaken in full partnership with First Nations.

Will your party commit to legislative and policy reform of the provincial environmental assessment process in full partnership with BC First Nations, and provide resourcing to support First Nations’ Environmental Assessment processes?

BC Liberals believe that when First Nations are treated as partners, we get better projects. Our government is working to enhance the environmental assessment process and provide opportunities for First Nations involvement in compliance oversight activities. The Environmental Assessment Office is finding new ways to involve First Nations at the beginning of an assessment, when project requirements are set; being more involved in permitting, if the project proceeds; and in longer-term monitoring and compliance.

We’ve made significant progress. The Environmental Assessment Office has been working with First Nations on a project-specific basis to develop collaborative approaches to assessments. This includes an agreement with the Stk’emlupsemc te Secwépemc Nation to ensure their information and interests are fully considered during the assessment of the proposed Ajax Mine Project. And we are working with the Tse Keh Nay First Nations to draft an assessment report for the recently approved Kemess Underground Mine that reflects consensus views on the approaches needed to avoid or mitigate potential effects on Aboriginal title, rights and interests.

Placer mining in BC causes massive environmental degradation and is not properly regulated by the government of BC.

c) If elected, will your party ensure the BC Mining Code applies to the placer mining industry?

To engage in placer mining in BC, an individual must register as a free miner and acquire a placer mineral claim. All placer mining in British Columbia must comply with the Mines Act and the Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in British Columbia, including reclamation standards.

The BC Liberal government is currently reviewing placer mining regulation, to be certain that it meets rigorous standards that all British Columbians expect. To this end, our government's oversight of placer mining has increased in recent years – we are ensuring that an appropriate level of inspections occur so that we know what is going on and that there aren't abuses happening.

d) BC's Indigenous Peoples live in regions of the Province most affected by climate change. BC has just recently harmonized its low-carbon energy and climate action plan with the new federal Pan-Canadian carbon plan. The Province of BC takes in over a billion dollars in a revenue neutral carbon tax per year, the proceeds of which are given away as tax breaks and not related to climate change. First Nations do not benefit from the carbon tax.

If elected, will your party provide the necessary funds to establish a BC Indigenous Carbon Fund, an Indigenous-led organization, which would catalyze First Nations involvement in the low carbon energy economy?

The BC Liberal government is recognized as an international leader in the fight against climate change. Under our leadership, British Columbia has the distinction of being the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce a broad-based carbon tax. A core principle of our carbon tax is revenue neutrality. This means that every dollar generated by the tax is returned to British Columbians in the form of tax reductions. In this way, we tax the pollution we don't want and return the money for what we do want - dollars in people's pockets and jobs and opportunity across our province. By adopting innovative policies such as these, our economy remains strong while emissions are decreasing.

Today's BC Liberals know that climate change mitigation and adaptations activities are a priority for First Nations and we will continue to deliver on this priority through our existing programs, including those in the Climate Leadership Plan. Examples of our commitment include:

- The \$150 million investment in reforestation, which will create up to 3,000 jobs over the next five years.
- The First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund, promoting increased Aboriginal community participation in the clean energy sector by providing capacity and equity funding. It also provides revenue sharing agreements between the BC Government and eligible First Nations with funding allocations up to \$2.1 million over three years.
- Working with First Nations on climate change impacts through the Forest Carbon Strategy.
- Atmospheric Benefit Sharing Agreements enable First Nations to sell carbon credits.

If re-elected, the BC Liberals will work with First Nations to find ways that they can continue to benefit from climate action initiatives.

6. Emergency Management

a. Many First Nations are often underserved and lack basic infrastructural amenities, giving rise to risks of injury, death and loss of property during unforeseen emergencies, an unnecessary risk that may be easily mitigated.

If elected, how will your party ensure comparable levels of servicing for addressing (ongoing and continuing) critical foundation of Emergency Management, including structural Fire Services and Forest Fuel Management prevention/mitigation? What commitment can be adhered to for First Nations' direct inclusion (partnership) in all agreements related to the provisions of Emergency Management, Forest Enhancement and Fuel Management & Structural Fire Services reporting, and for First Nations Service Organizations to be formally identified in coordination, secretariat and leadership roles?

Since the BC Liberal government introduced the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative in 2004, \$78 million has been allocated help local governments and First Nations significantly reduce wildfire risks around their communities. To date, 298 Community Wildfire Protection Plans have been completed by local governments and First Nations. Another 56 are in progress. Projects include conventional harvesting; prescribed burning; improving the spacing between live trees; removing dead trees; and cleaning up low branches, needles and wood debris that could potentially fuel a fire. Completed fuel treatments and risk reduction efforts from all projects currently covers about 90,000 hectares of land in and around communities that face a significant wildfire risk.

In March 2017, the BC Liberal government also announced a \$7.5 million commitment to upgrade BC Wildfire Service facilities throughout the province as part of our Rural Economic Development Strategy.

Our government has finalized an agreement with Indigenous & Northern Affairs Canada for Emergency Management BC (EMBC) to deliver emergency planning and preparedness to on reserve communities – the same services non-indigenous local governments receive. To accomplish this, EMBC has hired additional staff focusing on consultation and support for First Nations and complementing our existing operational capacity. We sincerely hope that the First Nations Leadership Council signs this agreement in the near future so this important work can get underway.

In addition, our government has committed to forming a working group with the FNLC and the First Nations Emergency Services Society. When the agreement is in place, the working group will be able to help nations develop Emergency Plans to keep their communities safe. The BC Liberals look forward to establishing equal levels of support for emergency preparedness for all communities throughout BC, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

7. Children & Families

What will your government do to address the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children in care?



Work to improve the lives of Indigenous children is both serious and urgent, and needs to be addressed in partnership with Aboriginal people and the federal government.

Our BC Liberal government initiated a new conversation on Indigenous child welfare by hosting the Children and Family Gathering in May 2016, a direct response to a commitment Premier Christy Clark made to have a province-wide discussion on how to better help support Indigenous children.

In 2014, Grand Chief Ed John of the First Nations Leadership Council was appointed special adviser to the Ministry of Children and Family Development to provide detailed analysis on Indigenous child welfare in B.C. His report, “Indigenous Resilience, Connectedness and Reunification - From Root Causes to Root Solutions” was released in November 2016. Of the 85 recommendations made, approximately 40 are underway and the BC Liberals commit to seeing how the remainder can be actioned.

Additionally, with our partners at the First Nations Leadership Council and the federal government, we have created a working group focused on addressing policy, programs and legislative frameworks related to children and families. We are currently developing a joint terms of reference with our partners to serve as a guiding document. If re-elected, the BC Liberals look forward to continuing this important, collaborative work. All British Columbian children deserve a bright future and it is our collective responsibility to help provide them opportunities to lead healthy, happy lives.

8. Violence Against Indigenous Women & Girls

If elected, will your party support the national inquiry including your formal commitment to being fully involved in the process? This would include a formalized commitment to make changes as a result of the inquiry, as well as a commitment to fund implementation and support for family members and impacted communities in conjunction with the government of Canada.

Today’s BC Liberals commit to leading and supporting actions to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. Our government has been clear that we support a national inquiry, and look forward to sharing the learnings and progress from our own Missing Women Commission of Inquiry.

In British Columbia, work is now substantively completed or underway on all of the major themes of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry final report - compensation, improvements to policing, safety for vulnerable women, supports for missing persons. We have also made significant progress to increase safety along northern highways.

In 2015, our government introduced a new \$6.4 million plan to enhance safety along Highway 16. This followed extensive consultation with more than 80 First Nations and local government leaders and the November 2015 Transportation Symposium in Smithers. The plan includes



dedicated funding for transit along the corridor, community vehicle purchases, First Nations driver training and more webcams & transit shelters. We're also committed to ensuring that existing services are used more efficiently.

The first buses started running on transit routes earlier this year. In March, we doubled the budget for community vehicles and awarded grants to 12 northern BC communities and organizations. Much progress has been made and there is more work ahead to further improve safety along Highway 16.

Additionally, in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside we have:

- Opened a 52-bed, women-only emergency shelter (Powell Place Women's Shelter);
- Increased funding for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre to expand hours;
- Created spaces specifically for women and women with children who are at risk of violence; and
- Ensured priority placement for women fleeing violence to help them establish community, health and educational supports.

BC Liberals are committed to advancing the safety of vulnerable women, in partnership with the anti-violence community sector, in profound ways. If re-elected, we will continue to help ensure that 'missing' never again means 'forsaken' in British Columbia.