Uyaqḥmis

December 2021 Issue 65















PM41913515

Huu-ay-aht confirms 33% of old growth remains and announces preliminary decision on old growth deferals

Tayii Ḥaẇiɬ ƛiišin (Head Hereditary Chief Derek Peters) and Elected Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. announce Huu-ay-aht First Nations has confirmed 33 per cent of old growth remain in their Ḥahuuɬi (Traditional Territory) and TFL 44.

The total productive forested area within the Hahuuli and TFL 44 is 153,773 hectares (ha), of which 51,240 ha, or 33 per cent, is old forest (greater than 250 years old).

Based on a review of maps provided by the provincial government to the Nation, Huu-ay-aht First Nations will continue to uphold our right to old-growth harvesting in four per cent of the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) proposed deferral area in the Huu-ay-aht Ḥahuuɬi and TFL 44. The Nation has decided on a preliminary basis to defer harvesting for a period of two years in areas that make up 96% of the TAP proposal for old growth deferrals, much of which is already protected under existing conservation measures or not planned for harvest in the next two years.

Beginning in 2023, Huu-ay-aht's long-term stewardship decisions will be informed by the outcome of Huu-ay-aht's two-year Hišuk ma c̓awak Integrated Resource Management Planning process.

"As a Modern Treaty Nation, Huu-ay-aht will decide how best to manage our lands and resources guided by our three Sacred Principles of ʔiisaak (utmost respect), ʔuuʔałuk (taking care of), and hišuk ma



c̓awak (everything is one)," said Tayii Ḥaẇiɬ ƛiišin. "We expect broad recognition and respect for our old growth two-year deferral decisions and our long-term forest and resource stewardship decisions."

"We have now confirmed that 33 per cent, not three per cent, of our Ḥahuuɬi and TFL 44 is old growth," said Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. "By approving 96 per cent of the TAP old growth recommendation, much of which is already protected under existing conservation measures or not planned for harvest in the next two years, we are satisfied that sufficient old forest is protected, while we complete our two-year integrated resource management planning process and make our long-term forest and resource stewardship decisions."

For more information, please visit our website at: https://huuayaht.org/whats-happening/our-latest-news/

Huu-ay-aht Citizen Distribution

Huu-ay-aht First Nations announced a specific claims settlement and has issued a citizen distribution of $2,470 per citizen. Minors put in trust.

Distribution Date: Friday, December 10, 2021

If you do not receive your distribution by direct deposit or cheque, please contact the Huu-ay-aht Government Office at 250-723-0100.

Please note: Huu-ay-aht Government Offices are closed December 20, 2021 - January 3, 2022.

huu ay aht

ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

Huu-ay-aht envisons a strong, self-determining, self-reliant and sustainable Nation. ʔiisaak, Hišuk ma c̓awak, and ʔuuʔałuk guide us as we work together to foster a safe, healthy, and sustainable Nation, where our culture, language, spirituality, and economy flourish.

Huu-ay-aht Uyaqḥmis is printed up to six times a year to foster community engagement among a population of more than 800 citizens. Uyaqḥmis promotes the recovery and sharing of the Huu-ay-aht dialect of the Nuu-chah-nulth language, as well as knowledge of Huu-ay-aht culture.

Please send all comments and questions to the Huu-ay-aht Communications Department.

communications@huuayaht.org
Mailing Address:
Huu-ay-aht First Nations
4644 Adelaide Street,
Port Alberni, BC
V9Y 6N4

www.huuayaht.org
for the latest news and events, job postings, and a digital archive of Uyaqḥmis

Keep up to date with Uyaqḥmis on social media:
@HuuayahtFN

FOLLOW US ON twitter

Huu-ay-aht First Nations Facebook page

Like us on Facebook

Huu-ay-aht holds 2021 Annual People's Assembly on December 4, 2021

Huu-ay-aht First Nations held its Annual People's Assembly on December 4. Although everyone was hoping it would be an opportunity to gather, COVID-19 posed too high a risk and the assembly was held virtually for another year.

The one-day assembly marked the 10th year since the five Maa-nulth Nations implemented their modern-day treaty. Holding an annual assembly is just one of the ways the Nations has embraced its Modern Mind, offering its citizens a chance to play an active role in their government.

Quorum of 113 was reached quickly, allowing business to start at 10:30 a.m. All of the citizens who were signed in at 10 a.m. were entered into a draw, and Ashley Johnson was the first winner of $500.

Once the amended agenda was adopted, Councillor Edward Johnson updated citizens on the 2020 Citizen Motions. This was followed by a presentation of the 2020/21 Annual Report (detailed information and minutes from the meeting are available in the People's Assembly section on the website (www.huuayaht.org). Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. highlighted the following successes from the reporting period and allowed each councillor to speak to their portfolios:

- Focus on keeping citizens and community safe during pandemic
- Ensure infrastructure creation and renewal continues
- Revival of language and culture
- Conservation of natural resources
- Promote citizen development
- Create a strong economy
- Remain fiscally responsible
- Ensure government structure serves citizens
- Strengthen communication both internally and externally

Councillor John Jack introduced Paul Fripp from BDO to go over the 2020-21 Audit (available at www.huuayaht.org in the financial reports section). Following a motion to accept the Annual Report, BDO was also appointed as the auditor for the coming year by a motion passed by consensus.

Citizens also heard a summary of the Huu-ay-aht Group of Business' Annual Report, and update on the cultural treasures project with the Royal B.C. Museum, and an update from the Social Services Project.

Holly Johnson was the second lucky winner of the $500 prize that was drawn from the names of the people who were back in the meeting on time at 1:15 p.m.

The final piece of official business on the agenda was addressing the Citizen Motions. The motion brought forward by Hinatinyis (Brittany Coté) was passed by consensus. It recommended that, considering the unmarked graves that may be discovered at the Alberni Indian Residential School now that they have started to look, Huu-ay-aht should be proactive and have a prepared plan to support the community trauma-informed healing. It was resolved that Executive Council have a trauma-formed specialist in place for those that are impacted from the direct and intergenerational trauma of residential school. The Nation will also develop a critical response policy to lay out the delegation of roles and responsibilities of a critical response team, as well as offer communication and support plans.

The second citizen motion was brought forward by Ben Clappis. His motion suggested that with the population growing, Huu-ay-aht should increase the number of Executive Council Members from five to six. Given that this motion requires significant consultation with citizens, it was decided the motion should be tabled to hold community engagements on the subject.

The nation recognized scholarship winners (in newsletter on Page 7) and three citizens of the year:

Elder – Frances Williams

Citizen – Jacquie Dennis

Youth – Cierra Nookemus

The meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m., and Clara Clappis won the final $500 prize. The winners of the cultural prizes were: shawl – Marena Dennis, Drums – Charlene Nookemus and Evan Cook, cedar hat – Molly Lucas, vest – Jeff Cook.

The event wrapped up with a special visit from Santa for the young Huu-ay-aht and a culture night hosted by Wišqii and Cory Howard Sr.

Huu-ay-aht releases Social Services Evaluation

Huu-ay-aht First Nations is pleased to release an independent evaluation of the Social Services Project, launched in 2017, that shows great successes have been achieved in the first three years of the project.

Huu-ay-aht contracted an independent party to conduct an evaluation of the project to determine the effectiveness of the project. The goal in 2016, when the Social Services Panel began its work, was to ensure that all Huu-ay-aht children grow up safe, healthy, and connected to their Huu-ay-aht home, culture, and values.

The report will serve as a benchmark against which future evaluations will be measured. This represents the first evaluation of Huu-ay-aht's Social Services Project since the 30 recommendations were finalized in 2017.

"The results of this evaluation prove that there is a way forward. Huu-ay-aht's vision is coming to fruition through ensuring their vision is acted upon with expertise, planning, and frontline workers," said Kim Baird, Social Services Panel member and advisor. "Of course, another key ingredient for success has been funding assistance from government partners. The reconciliation of Huu-ay-aht families is integral to the future sustainability of Huu-ay-aht First Nations."

Feedback came from 169 Huu-ay-aht citizens, Community Services and Child and Family Wellness team members, directors for Huu-ay-aht's Community Services and Child and Family Wellness department, the acting executive director, and members of Executive Council and Social Services Task Force. The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on the evaluation process, as in-person engagement was not possible and online surveys were conducted instead.

"It is important that we hear what is important to our people and those who are helping to raise our children," explained Councillor Edward R. Johnson, adding how thankful he is to the citizens who participated. "We are pleased to have heard from so many people and this will help us shape the program moving forward to ensure we are meeting the needs of the community so we can achieve our goal of bringing our people home and keeping our children safe and connected to their nation."

As a result of the survey, 26 areas of focus were identified. Highlights include:

- Securing Oomiiqsu (Mother Centre) funding
- Affordable housing
- Equipping staff with the tools they need to do their job in a balanced, healthy way
- Focus on culture, language, and traditional foods
- Communication
- Ensuring all demographics (youth to elders) are being served
- Focus on addressing violence, physical health, mental and emotional health, and the tools needed to ensure citizens can lead a healthy lifestyle
- Increase inclusivity – elders, LGBTQ+, foster parents
- Secure Bill C-92 funding
- Secure wraparound funding for services
- Designate an alternate dispute resolution body

"This interim assessment is an important step in implementing the Huu-ay-aht vision for bringing and keeping children in the fold of family and community love, care, and culture." Maegen Giltrow, Social Services Panel member and legal counsel. "It is very rewarding to see that 64 per cent of Huu-ay-aht citizens who responded said they felt their family's safety had seen some or great improvement from the Huu-ay-aht Social Services Project over the previous year. But the assessment is also an important guide to the substantial work that lies ahead."

Moving forward, the results of this evaluation will guide the program and service delivery to help promote mental health and emotional well-being for Huu-ay-aht citizens of all ages, gender, and sexual orientation. The team will prioritize strengthening families by ensuring all additional parenting and caregiving support is available through Oomiiqsu and other programs and services.

"It is encouraging to see the results of this evaluation as it shows we are on the right track," explained Tayii Ḥaẃiɬ ƛiišin (Head Hereditary Chief Derek Peters). "We have to continue to move forward with our Ancient Spirit and Modern Minds, while honouring our sacred principles of ʔiisaak (utmost respect), ʔuuʔałuk (taking Care of), and Hišuk ma c̓awak (everything is one).

To see the full Social Services Evaluation Report, please visit our website at: https://huuayaht.org/

Community Plan receives a new name selected by Nananiiqsu



OUR COMMUNITY, OUR CIRCLE, OUR VOICE

Thanks to your suggestions and the thoughtfulness of our elders, Our Nation's Plan has a name and is nearing completion! Five names were shortlisted and 75 elders were part of the selection process.

Our Community, Our Circle, Our Voice is the name of our community plan. The plan was created by Huu-ay-aht, for Huu-ay-aht, to guide the continued development of our Nation. Our citizens, Nananiiqsu, Ḥaw̓iiḥ Council and Executive Council all played a part to come up with this name to represent Our Nation's Plan and Huu-ay-aht.

The name is important to set the tone and highlights key parts of the plan. Ultimately, the elders felt it was important to relay that even though many of our citizens live away from the territory, we are still one community. *Our Community, Our Circle, Our Voice* highlights our connectivity as Huu-ay-ahts and shows us that all elements of our community are connected and this plan reflects our voice, our ideas, our dreams for Huu-ay-aht.

The final Summary Report draft is with Executive Council.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Our Nation's Plan project is led by our Senior Management Team and technical support is provided by EcoPlan. For any comments or questions, contact William Trousdale, william@ecoplan.ca. For a record of engagement, reports, and newsletters, visit Our Nation's Plan website: ***huuayaht.org/comprehensive-community-plan-2***

Shovels break ground to mark beginning of road project

Six gold shovels broke the ground October 18 in the territory of Huu-ay-aht First Nations marking the beginning of the physical work for the Bamfield Main Road Surfacing Project.

The project will include significant safety improvements and chipsealing of the 76-kilometre vital link between Bamfield and Port Alberni. It was announced in Victoria in September 2020 and outlined a partnership between the Province of British Columbia, contributing $25.7 million, and Huu-ay-aht First Nations, covering the remaining $5 million.

"Today is an exciting day for our Nation – one we have been working towards for decades," explained Huu-ay-aht Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr., at the event. "We are standing today in an area where our people have lived for centuries, along the Sarita River. It is an important day because we are finally able to use the resources in the best way for our people. When we can say that is always happening, we will have reached true reconciliation."

He acknowledged Premier John Horgan and the Provincial government for their commitment to this project. He also noted how helpful MP Gord Johns and former MLA Scott Fraser were in making this a reality, as well as the constant support from MLA Josie Osborne and Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Director Bob Beckett. Each were present at the event with the exception of the Premier and Fraser, who sent their regrets.

"The only way to achieve the change we want to see for our Nation is through creating an action plan," he said. "That is what the Premier did when he travelled to our community almost two years ago. Because of that, we are partnering in a project that will create a safe, reliable road for travellers."

Huu-ay-aht First Nations is making history in British Columbia as the first Indigenous community to lead a road infrastructure project of this size.

"Public safety is at the heart of community well-being," said Murray Rankin, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. "We partnered with Huu-ay-aht First Nations to invest in upgrades to critical infrastructure in the area, and I applaud the Huu-ay-aht leadership for their steadfast determination to work towards vital road improvements in their territory that will benefit their community and visitors for years to come."

The groundbreaking took place at the gravel pit that Huu-ay-aht is developing for the project through HGB Gravel LP. This is the first physical work to take place in the project. When completed, Blenheim Pit will supply the gravel needed for the surfacing of the road. The pit is in Huu-ay-aht's traditional territory, approximately 30 minutes from its village of Anacla, close to Bamfield on the West Coast of Vancouver Island.

Other strong supporters of the project were also in attendance, including Tseshaht Chief Councillor Waamiiš (Ken Watts), Shannon Janzen from Western Forest Products, and Domenico Lannidinardo from Mosaic. They all spoke of the importance of working together and that this is how true reconciliation can be accomplished.

"It is exciting to see this project moving forward. In 2011 when we signed the Maa-nulth Treaty, we knew it would not work unless we work together as a tribe and build partnerships with others. The partnership we have with the province is an example of true reconciliation," explained Tayii Ḥaẇiłʔ ʔiišin (Head Hereditary Chief Derek Peters). "We have lost too many lives on this essential link to our community. As a nation, we must continue to move forward together with our Ancient Spirit and Modern Minds. Most importantly, we must do it right and honour our sacred principles of ʔiisaak (utmost respect), ʔuuʔałuk (taking Care of), and Hišuk ma c̓awak (everything is one) and the teachings of our ancestors."

The Bamfield Main Road Surfacing Project is a partnership between Huu-ay-aht First Nations ($5 million) and the Province of British Columbia ($25.7 million).

"The work at the Blenheim gravel pit is the first step into a better and safer future in the wake of 2019 tragedy," said Josie Osborne, Minister of Municipal Affairs and MLA for Mid Island-Pacific Rim. "A sincere thank you to Huu-ay-aht First Nations for allowing me to witness this initial important work and I look forward to walking side by side with their community as we build a strong recovery from COVID-19."

Work on the Bamfield Main Road Surfacing Project began earlier this spring when crews carried out a field survey of the 76-kilometre road, culverts, bridges, legal property boundaries, waterline at Fredrick Lake, water courses, and related infrastructure completed. This data is utilized for 3D modeling by the road and drainage design team. An environmental study and road drainage and design has also been completed.

The geotechnical investigation has also been carried. All the data has been processed and the geotechnical team is finalizing the design requirements to achieve the best roadbed construction for the seal coat application to ensure the roadbed is strong, as this determines how long the seal coat will last.

Work began in October of 2020 by HGB Gravel LP to identify potential gravel sources along the route. Since then, numerous pits have been identified and investigated for their potential. Currently numerous pits are gaining permits for further investigation.

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Huu-ay-aht recognizes students of 2020-21

ƛiišin Academic Excellence Award

Huu-ay-aht recognizes academic achievement for students who have completed Grades 5 through 12 with at least a "B" average.

Jerret Anderson
Tehya Anderson
Jordan Bird
Makayla Gilham
Kirsten Heinz
Tyler Lopez
Clinton Nookemus
Mackenzie Parcher
Taylor Parcher
Olivia Peters
Aubrey Rayner-Coad
Raina Saucedo
Anne-Tanisha Seitcher
Daniel Speck
Hanna Speck
George Weir
Victoria White
Vanessa Young

Hišuk ma c̓awak Healthy & Active Award

For Huu-ay-aht students in grades K – 12 who are living healthy and active lives through community connections and extra-curricular activities including sports, clubs, groups, and classes.

Aliza Clappis, Grade 1
Andre Leoncio-Dennis, Grade 1
Levi Cootes, Grade 2

Samantha Cootes, Grade 4
Tehya Anderson, Grade 8
Maliya Eardley, Grade 9
Olivia Peters, Grade 9

Kiixin Chief Louie Award

For Huu-ay-aht students in grades K – 12 who demonstrate and understand "Ancient Spirit, Modern Mind". Applicants will embrace ʔiisaak (respect), Hišuk ma c̓awak (everything is one and all is connected), ʔuuʔałuk (taking care of), huupiistał (teaching others), have good attendance and always try their best.

Jerret Anderson, Grade 10

Kathy Nookemus Memorial Award

For Huu-ay-aht students in grades 1 – 12 who have overcome adversity, try their best at everything, and are a positive role model for other students with personal struggles.

Jerret Anderson, Grade 10

For more information about Student Awards and student applications, visit: https://huuayaht.org/services/education-training-employment/



Road Project to increase the safety of travellers

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The Blenheim Pit is first of the pits to be developed. The gravel production is expected to start within a month and will carry on through the winter to ensure the required quantities for the road are available for the contracts.

The road will be constructed in three contract sections of approximately 25 kilometers each. The contracts will be tendered in January 2022 with work to begin in April 2022 and completed by mid-September. These contracts will carry out the gravel placement, compaction, drainage requirements, and signage. The construction will also raise the road in numerous locations to avoid future flooding issues. New concrete box culverts are to be placed near Fredrick Lake to allow the Western Toad population free movement across the road.

One seal coat contract covering the complete 76.6 km will be tendered in March 2022. The seal coating is expected to be completed by the end of September that allows for weather and other delays. This contract will apply two layers of seal coat and place required barriers. In March 2023, a paving contract will be tendered, this contract will pave the required sections over the previously laid seal coat. The pavement is to be placed on all steep hills, major intersections, and bridge approaches. Along with the pavement, additional barrier sections will be placed to increase the safety in specific locations.

Huu-ay-aht Government Offices closed December 21, 2021 - January 3, 2022 for holidays.

For emergencies, please contact:

Child and Family Wellness
Shannon Zimmerman
250-731-6999

Community Services
Coral Johnson
250-735-3755

Executive Director
Connie Waddell
250-735-3097

Infrastructure Department
Torrance Gilmour
250-735-7837

How to cope with grief and loss

All around us, we see and hear the sights, sounds, and preparations for the upcoming Christmas season and for many of our families, these things are painful reminders of loved ones who have passed. Our Nation has experienced much loss in the past year and many of our people are hurting. The unmarked graves at former residential school sites have triggered feelings of intense sadness, outrage, and deep personal hurt. Collectively, we mourn for those children and their families, as well as grieve our own experiences. COVID-19 has continued to create challenges for families to grieve together and for many, this has increased feelings of isolation and grief.

The empty seat at the table serves as a reminder of our loved ones, and we can feel overwhelmed with grief. Traditional ceremonies and supports, as well as and western information and support services, can provide us with the help we need during this time.

Grieving

When we lose a loved one, our people will put the loved one's name away. This means if anyone of us has the same name in your family as the loved one that person would change their name to their middle name or native name. We also put their picture away for one to four years, depending on your family, allowing us to grieve.

- While grieving, some of us need some culture (singing and dancing)
- We may need a Cedar Brushing Ceremony (letting go any bad energy)
- We may need to light a candle, smudge, or need a sweat lodge ceremony.
- We may want to ushams (river, lake, ocean) - Prayer Ceremony.
- Sometimes just need someone to talk too
- Our teachings encourage people to cry for one to four years, depending upon who the person was.
- Letting your tears dry - after one to four years, we bring back the loved one's name and bring out their pictures (Drying Our Tears Ceremony)

Practising cultural ceremonies and traditions in times of grieving provide healing and support is available to learn how to perform these ceremonies.

Other ideas for coping with grief and loss

Acknowledge and honour your feelings – it is normal to have conflicting emotions during this time. Be kind to yourself.

Ask for help while you are grieving.

- Connect with your supports – family, friends, support groups
- Have realistic expectations for yourself and others
- Talk to your children – let them know it's OK to be both happy and sad
- Remember that crying is OK
- Eat good food, sleep, and limit alcohol and drug use
- Be honest – tell people what you want to do and don't want to do
- Use coping strategies such as being brushed, deep breathing, going for a walk, journaling, listening to music, practising yoga
- Honour old traditions and memories
- Create new traditions
- Visit a loved one's gravesite

How do I help someone who is grieving?

- Culturally, we can help others by:
- Singing and dancing together
- Doing ushams together
- Doing a brushing, smudge, or go to sweat lodge together
- Listening to the grieving person talk about their loved one

When others are hurting, you may be afraid of intruding, saying the wrong thing, or making your loved one feel even worse at such a difficult time. Or maybe you think there's little you can do to make things better. That's understandable. But don't let discomfort prevent you from reaching out to someone who is grieving. Now, more than ever, your loved one needs your support. You don't need to have answers or give advice or say and do all the right things. The most important thing you can do for a grieving person is to simply be there. It's your support and caring presence that will help your loved one cope with the pain and gradually begin to heal." https://www.helpguide.org/articles/grief/helping-someone-who-is-grieving.htm

"It is difficult for many grieving people to ask for help. They might feel guilty about receiving so much attention, fear being a burden to others, or simply be too depressed to reach out.

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You are never alone - supports are available

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"A grieving person may not have the energy or motivation to call you when they need something, so instead of saying, 'Let me know if there's anything I can do,' make it easier for them by making specific suggestions. You could say, 'I'm going to the market this afternoon. What can I bring you from there?' or 'I've made beef stew for dinner. When can I come by and bring you some?" https://www.helpguide.org/articles/grief/helping-someone-who-is-grieving.htm.

Other suggestions for helping people who are grieving include:

- Acknowledge the person's feelings: sit with them, listen, cry with them, offer a hug
- Offering help with shopping, bake, bring a meal, care for their children, help with housecleaning.
- Maintain your support after the funeral

Support services

Huu-ay-aht Cultural support, please contact Cory Howard Sr (250-731-7977) or Melissa (Mel) Edwards at 250-735-7457). Please note staff will not be available during Christmas office closure (December 21, 2021 - January 3, 2022)

Grief and loss support, please contact Simon Dennis at 604-374-2617. Please note that Simon will be available during the Christmas office closure for support.

Quuasa – Cultural support and Residential School Survivor support - Please call (250) 724-5757

Canadian Virtual Hospice offers https://mygrief.ca/, an online resource to help people move through their grief from the comfort of their own home, at their own pace.

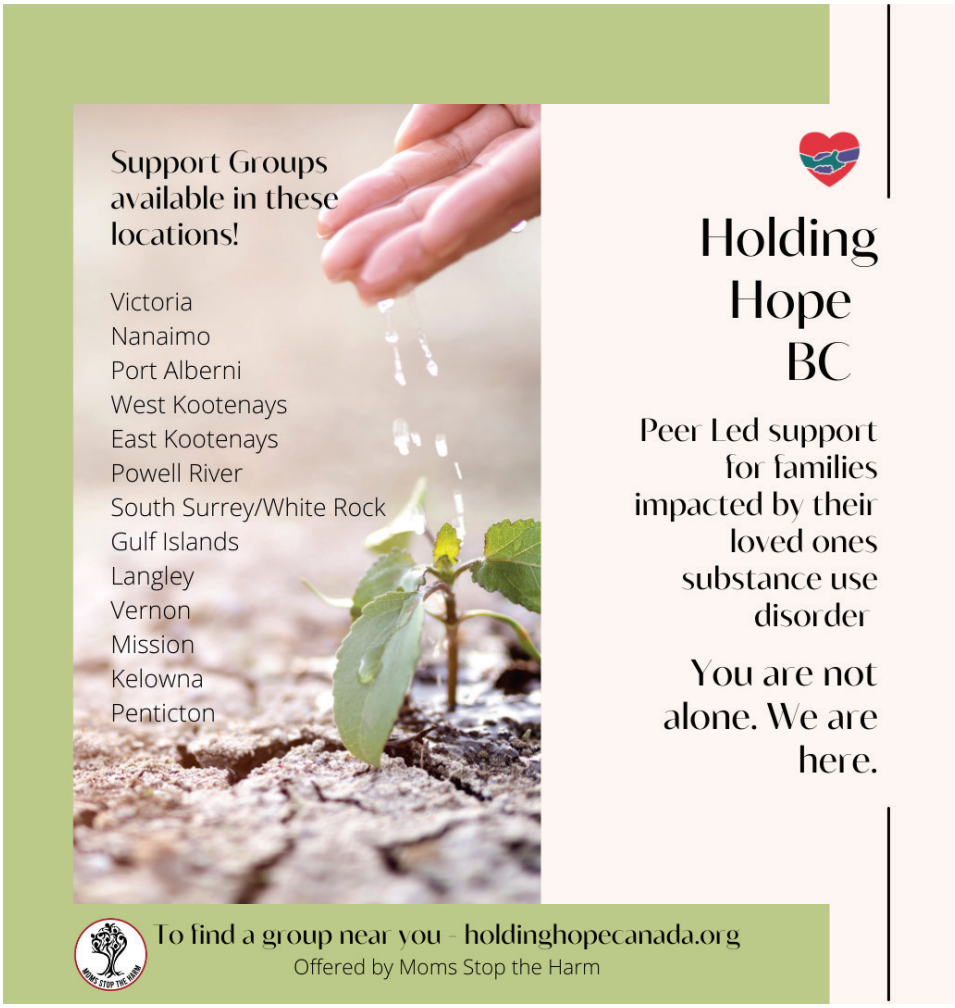
BC Bereavement Helpline 604-738-9950 or Toll-Free: 1-877-779-2223 (mon-fri, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.).

Kids Help Phone offers mental health services, professional counselling and crisis support for children and youth experiencing grief and loss (and other issues). Call 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program provides former Indian Residential School students and their families—regardless of status or place of residence within Canada—with access to counselling, cultural, and emotional support services. Please call 1-877-477-0775

Vancouver Island Crisis Line: provides 24-hour services at 1-888-494-3888. Persons calling from outside of Canada can dial 1-250-754-4447 to reach the Vancouver Island Crisis Line (long distance charges may apply).

Please contact Shannon Zimmerman, Director of Child and Family Wellness, for emergency grief and loss support during the Christmas office closure December 18,2021 – January 3, 2022.



Huu-ay-aht welcomes new government staff to the team



Tanya Rawat

Tanya Rawat is the new Human Resource coordinator at Huu-ay-aht First Nations. Tanya recently graduated with her bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management and Leadership this previous semester from Camosun College. Tanya relocated from Victoria for this position, and she is so happy she did. Tanya graduated as an active CPHR (Chartered Professional in Human Resources) candidate and is passionate about furthering her career at Huu-ay-aht. Before working for Huu-ay-aht, Tanya worked at the Royal Bank of Canada. There she was a client advisor who had human resource functions community wide. Tanya's current five-year plan is to apply what she has learned through her degree at Camosun College to several different focus areas in Human Resources at Huu-ay-aht. Regarding personal goals, Tanya wants to become an official member as a Chartered Professional in Human Resources within the next three years.

Career aside, Tanya spends her weekends cozied up reading a good book, trying new foods, or backpacking through countries that her and her fiancé haven't travelled too yet. In the last few years, Tanya has been able to rack up her country count to 12 countries that she has visited or backpacked. Tanya's last big trip was to India and Sri Lanka, which she backpacked through for six weeks. Tanya is just itching to travel again! A fun fact about Tanya - she has an indescribable fear of deep waters. Just looking at pictures of large bodies of water where you can tell it's dark and deep can make her queasy sometimes.

Tanya looks forward to meeting everyone as she works out of the Port Alberni and Anacla Government Offices.



Melissa Edwards

ʔukɬaamaḥ My name is Melissa (Mel) Edwards, Huuʕiiʔaqsumaḥ I am a Huu-ay-aht woman. I moved away 11 years ago to be with my partner's family. We moved back two years ago to raise our child here. The three of us are proud Huu-ay-aht members and happy to be here close to the community. We look forward to building our connections and deepening our roots in the culture.

While living in Nova Scotia, Mel worked for several years in the Mi'kmaq Community. She worked as the Aboriginal Head Start Teacher. She was also sought after to run workshops as a knowledge keeper. Mel has always had a passion for culture, and when she was asked to do her first workshop, she was nervous, excited and a internal fire was relit from her childhood. Since then, Mel has been on a self-journey to deepen her knowledge in her Indigenous culture.

Mel was raised outside of the Nation. She recalls as a little one, she would soak up indigenous culture from anyone who wanted to teach her. Mel always looked forward to the days her mom would take her to the Friendship Centre for drop-ins, events, and classes.

When Mel and her family moved back, COVID-19 interrupted her plans to make connections with elders and family. However, she didn't let this stop her from seeking her culture. Mel made a digital connection with an Elder who makes "Traditional Medicines", this connection opened a new world to her and this started her journey into medicine making. Mel accepted a mentorship with Uut Uustukyuu (our traditional healing network), her mentor is Ma'tuah, Flying with purpose, George T. Frank.

Mel is excited to continue her cultural journey and work with the Nation in her role as one of the Culture Wellness Workers. Mel is always learning and seeking new skills and knowledge and is thankful for this opportunity.



Alexis Young

Alexis Young has been hired to work as the administrative support worker at the Port Alberni Government Office. Alexis is thrilled to learn about Huu-ay-aht communities, culture, and values.

Alexis comes from the Haida First Nation where her Chini is Chief Gitkun of Tanu.

Having grown up all over British Columbia from Haida Gwaii to Kitimat and Bella Coola. She's happy to settle her family back in Port Alberni.

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Tasiiʔakqin ʔuyaqhmisukqin research project continues to focus on four main priorities

The Tasiiʔakqin ʔuyaqhmisukqin research project is moving forward with excellent guidance from our Research Advisory Committee. We continue to focus our research on the priority areas that were given to us by Huu-ay-aht's Ḥaẇiiḥ and Executive Council in 2019. These four areas are: 1) Land, culture, and heritage; finances under treaty; self-government; and Huu-ay-aht social wellbeing 2) Huu-ay-aht citizens perspectives on what is going well and what needs to be improved under treaty; 3) How Nation-level benefits translate into individual-level benefits; and 4) the relationship Huu- ay-aht First Nations has with treaty partners (e.g., Canada and BC governments) and how these relationships can be improved.

hup in yook (Tom Happynook) recently announced to us that he is moving into retirement and has stepped down from his position as Ḥaẇiiḥ designate on the Research Advisory Committee. On behalf of the Research Advisory Committee and research team, we would like to thank him for all he has contributed to the research project over the years, and we appreciate all the wisdom and insights he has brought to the Committee and the research.

yaalthuu-a (Jeff Cook) was the designated Ḥaẇiiḥ alternate' on the Research Advisory Committee during hup in yook's tenure. He has kindly agreed to permanently move into the role of Ḥaẇiiḥ representative. We warmly welcome yaalthuu-a and thank you for your contributions to moving the research project forward.

Over the last few months, more than 15 interviews with treaty partners from the province of BC, Canada, and Maa-nulth Nations have been conducted, focusing on priority area #4: the relationship Huu-ay-aht has with treaty partners. The interviews continue to yield strong insights into the living nature of modern treaty relationships and the need for a whole-of-government approach to treaty implementation from all sides of the treaty table. We will continue to conduct interviews with Maa-nulth Treaty partners into the new year, and we will continue to report back as we do.

We are also beginning to move forward, with the support of Huu-ay-aht leadership, with interviewing former and current Huu-ay-aht Government employees about Maa-nulth Treaty implementation. The team plans to request interviews with folks who are on the front line of treaty implementation. To be clear, Huu-ay-aht First Nations' Executive Council recognizes the importance of research and learning from staff experience in implementing the Maa-nulth Treaty. If you want to participate in an interview, the research team will keep your responses confidential. As part of this research protocol, Huu-ay-aht First Nations' Government will not be told which (current and former) employees participated, nor will any responses be attributed to you. Thus, you are encouraged to speak candidly about your experiences with treaty implementation.

These interviews are just getting underway and will continue through to the spring. If you are interested in doing an interview, please feel free to reach either research team member. Heather can be reached at: castleden@uvic.ca or (902) 489-2412. Vanessa can be reached at: vanessa.sloanmorgan@ubc.ca or (250) 508-3410.

New government staff look forward to meeting citizens

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Alexis enjoys spending time with her family, raising her four-year-old daughter with her fiancé.

In her free time when she's not chasing after Amelia, she's reading books, having family board game nights, or enjoying a good movie.

Alexis is eager to connect with the community and is the face you will see when you stop by the Port Alberni office. She is excited to work with Huu-ay-aht First Nation bringing her administrative experience to the team.



HFN Group of Businesses



HFN Development Corporation and HFN Group of Businesses Boards, left to right: Patrick Schmidt, Eric Denhoff, Teresa Gagnon, Trevor Cootes, Cynthia Rayner, Colin Doylend, Evan Cook, Marty Eakins, Hazel Cook and Val MacDonald. Missing from photo: Tayii Ḥaẇiɬ ƛiišin (Derek Peters). (Photo by Amanda-Lee Cunningham)

HGB wishes you happy holidays and warm wishes for the New Year

HFN Group of Businesses (HGB) welcomed three new directors to its board in September, after the retirement of three past directors during the summer.

The staff and Board of HGB extends a heartfelt thank you to Cory McIntosh, Karen Haugen, and Angela Wesley for the years of service they have dedicated to laying a strong foundation for HGB. HGB is positioned for great things, and it is due in large measure to their efforts.

The vacant HGB Board positions were filled by Hazel Cook (Huu-ay-aht First Nations Citizen), Evan Cook (Huu-ay-aht First Nations Citizen, and also sits on the HFNDC board) and Eric Denhoff. As well, a vacancy on the HFN Development Corporation Board was filled in September with the addition of Colin Doylend.

These new directors bring a range of personal and professional experience that will be a great asset in the growth of HGB and the further development of a strong Huu-ay-aht economy. There are many exciting projects underway and opportunities for the future.

The HFN Development Corporation Board of Directors acts as a bridge between the businesses and the Government. This allows for a separation of politics and business. The Board is responsible for reporting to the Nation on consolidated operations of the HFN Group of Businesses. The board also appoints the operating board, implements approved business opportunities, approves annual plans of the operating LPs and reviews financial statements of the operating LPs.

The HFN Group of Business Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing management of the business operations, approving operational policies and procedures and setting strategic priorities for HGB that align with the Nation's strategic plan. The board develops annual plans for approval by HFNDC and reports to the HFNDC Board and the Nation as requested by the HFNDC Board.

As HGB begins preparations for the 2022 year, the staff and Boards would like to say thank you to the Citizens for their support over the last year. We wish you all a safe, happy holiday and all the best in 2022!

ƛ̓eekoo ƛ̓eekoo (Thank you)

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