

Stó:lō Tribal Council
ANNUAL REPORT
2008/09

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Message from the President

Another year has come and gone for the Tribal Council, and we would like to reflect back and highlight some of the accomplishments during the past year, as well, identifying key priorities for 2009/10.

One highlight of the Stó:lō Tribal Council work this past year included the development of our consultation and accommodation policy. Within this framework, we are also designing the procedures as it relates to referrals to deal with developments in our traditional territories. We (all Stó:lō)have to protect our land and resources and ensure the province of BC and industry is held accountable. The province must be accountable to the New Relationship and fulfill its mandate of this agreement and begin accommodating our interests in our traditional territories. Most important, there has to be meaningful consultation and joint decision mechanisms.

Stó:lō Tribal Council has also engaged in the environmental process of the Interior to Lower Mainland Transmission project. Stó:lō Tribal Council secured funding from BC hydro to carry out this work in partnership with Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre. In addition, a traditional use study was completed to complement the environmental assessment. Due to a recent court case, the project is under reconsideration by the BC Utilities commission. The courts indicated that there has to be meaningful consultation and accommodation.

Stó:lō Tribal Council is also conducting research into hydro magnetic lines and how this impacts health to individuals who live close to power lines. Stó:lō Tribal Council made an application to Health Canada which sponsored our application which enabled us to hire Robyn Heaslip, coordinator of the project.

We also had our annual drug forum, which was well attended in February. Together with education and awareness, strong support from our communities and our leadership, we can continue to fight drugs and alcohol in our communities. The younger generation has an opportunity to lead the way and be positive role models in our communities.

There is a lot of important work to be done in the coming year and Stó:lō Tribal Council will continue to advocate positive change to assist our communities to become self reliant, independent, healthy and prosperous.

Thank you for support in the last year.

Sincerely,



Grand Chief Clarence "Hiyolemtel" Pennier , President

Stó:lō Tribal Council Board of Directors



Left to right: Clarence “kat”Pennier- President, Vice-President Tyrone Mcneil, Chris Gosselin, Chief Betty Henry –Director, Chris Thomas-Director, Doug Kelly- Treasurer, Tim Peters Jr.- Director, Chief Ron John-Director and Maggie Pettis (standing in for Wayne Bobb).

As another year has passed, we would like to thank leadership from our respective communities, our Elders, our youth, for their insight and guidance for our work. We would also like to thank community and Stó:lō Tribal Council staff for the work they do.

Over the past year, we have been busy within various political arenas to address various issues. We held a rally outside of Chuck Strahl’s office, we continue to fight for our children and family agency, we attempt to change policy as it relates to fisheries management as Doug sits on the provincial aboriginal fisheries committee, Tyrone McNeil advocates change both within our education and language portfolios as he is the current President of FNEESC, Chris Thomas and Betty Henry promoting and practicing our customs and traditions through various ceremonies throughout the year. Doug is also a member of the political executive of the First Nations Summit, which allows us to bring political matters to the provincial and national level.

A major highlight included honoring our former national Chief Phil Fontaine who decided not to run for re-election. Another highlight included the brushing of the new Aboriginal RCMP office in Chilliwack. This event was well attended and it demonstrated to the non-aboriginal members of the force the importance of this type of work.

We also coordinated a ceremony at Cheam to recognize the work of our former Board members Chief Ron John, Tim Peters Jr. and Chief Wayne Bobb. We also stood up Chris Gosselin for the good work he is doing in our communities.

We would like to thank you for your support in the last year and look forward to working with our communities in the upcoming year. There is a lot of important work ahead of us and as “Letsemot”, we can achieve more successes.

Aboriginal Rights and Title

Stó:lō Tribal Council continues to advocate for our rights on behalf our member bands. This includes the five mile fishery, Yale Treaty, fishing in general, and any developments in our territories that may infringe on our Aboriginal Rights.

In terms of the five mile fishery, many families have history in the canyon with their various fishing sites. For generations, families have enjoyed the use of these sites. Research has confirmed, Yale was a common place for our people to migrate to during the spring and summer months to harvest fish. This tradition continues to this day. When Yale joined the BC treaty process, the territory became an issue as Yale is attempting to claim exclusive rights to this area if the treaty is ratified.

In 2006, we met with Yale First Nation, Federal and provincial governments to inform them of our position regarding the process. Since that meeting, there has been no consultation regarding their treaty. The government is claiming that it is the responsibility of Yale and Stó:lō to resolve any outstanding issues. We also have to be aware that Stó:lō Nation Society is also in the treaty process and how this will impact other Stó:lō communities.

Shxw'owhamel First Nation was successful in claiming "Kutlath " (Shxwowhamel #3) from Yale First Nation. Regrettably they had to achieve this through litigation. Yale was claiming this area within their traditional territory.

The Stó:lō people have a vast history to the territory, and it is very important for our younger generation to learn this history. As new leaders evolve in Stó:lō territory, it is very important that they understand and respect the work of our predecessors. Stó:lō has conducted research and has documented many of the stories, legends, family and community history. Stó:lō recognizes and respects each of our own communities autonomy, however, our customs, traditions, language, and lifestyles remain the same. We are all connected by one way or another and we have to recognize, acknowledge and respect we are all Stó:lō.

Consultation and Accommodation

The province of BC and the federal government are required to consult and accommodate our interests and the Tribal Council has developed a consultation and accommodation policy to protect our community interests. This was done with the assistance of Dave Joe, a lawyer who has worked with Stó:lo previously. As we know, there are many referrals that come into our communities. Industry is attempting to obtain various licenses and permits to carry out work in our traditional territories. This policy will assist in the regulation of these referrals.

To assist in ensuring that our rights are not infringed upon, Stó:lō Tribal Council will implement the policy to hold industry accountable. Stó:lō Tribal Council has also reviewed work from other First Nations who have developed processes to deal with industry referrals. This includes work completed by the Tsleil-Waututh and Shishalh Nations. Both communities have done good work to develop infrastructure to protect their traditional lands. The next step within our policy is to develop procedures that will include establishing fees for industry to make applications. These fees will assist with costs of doing the necessary environmental work within specific projects. Frank Andrew has been working on this project and we appreciate his insight, efforts and good work on this project.

Fisheries

Stó:lō Tribal Council continues to try influence change in terms of management of our fisheries with DFO. As we are aware, fish resources are dwindling in our rivers and we must make an effort to protect our fish resources otherwise there will be no more fish for future generations. Stó:lō Tribal Council made an application to establish a comprehensive approach to fisheries and aquatic management. Stó:lō Tribal Council would like to continue engaging our communities to develop a comprehensive fisheries strategy that will support conservation, enhancement, and potential commercial opportunities. Stó:lō Tribal Council would like to facilitate positive change in fisheries management by taking on the necessary research, engage our communities and approach fisheries collectively to influence DFO to change their way of managing our fisheries. The courts have concluded that only conservation comes before aboriginal fisheries for food and ceremonial, yet we continue to see other groups in the river. This is an infringement of our right and we would like to hold DFO accountable as the courts have indicated that we must be consulted and accommodated. Status quo is not acceptable, and we must begin to working together with all stakeholders within our common watershed. Ernie Crey continues to write editorials within various media to provide awareness to issues regarding fisheries as well as other issues.

Regional/National Priorities

There are regional and national organizations that have the capacity to move aboriginal interests forward, however, independent First Nations, Tribal Councils, have their own priorities and their autonomy must be respected. There are communities in the province seeking resolution to the land question through the treaty process and there are communities fighting the cause through the courts, either way, both are at a significant cost to the communities. The First Nations Summit, Union of BC Chiefs, and BC Assembly of First Nations are provincial political bodies that could make movement on regional and national issues. In order for this to happen, we must have unity with 203 First Nations in BC.

Challenges

Stó:lō Tribal Council believes that Aboriginal Rights and Title issues are the cornerstone of our existence. The courts have supported First Nations rights which are affirmed and protected in the constitution and recognize title, however, only in the instance where a community can prove title. Title must be proven and it is very costly to go to court and there are no guarantees in this process. Over the years, nothing has really changed, despite recent court decisions that support Aboriginal Rights and Title issues. The

various judges in these court cases only recommend that the province act in good faith and live up to the principles of the crown. In most instances, there are no consequences to their breaches.

We also have to deal with limited mandates from both the Provincial and Federal governments for those Bands in the treaty process. For example, communities in the treaty process must give up their Aboriginal Rights once they sign the treaty. For example, community members lose their tax exempt privileges after twelve years the treaty is in place. Both governments indicate they are making positive change with Aboriginal people, especially the BC government who promotes their accomplishments on the BC website. However, the public need to realize that benefit agreements are only provided because certain Bands force the issue through litigation. For example, the Musqueam Indian Band settlement of \$20,000,000 was accomplished because the BC government did not provide meaningful consultation before selling the UBC property and the community proved title to the area. In terms of the Federal government regarding specific claims, the new process has not provided any new results to resolving the 702 files in Ottawa.

Interior Lower Mainland Transmission Line

Stó:lō Tribal Council Aboriginal Rights & Title department has been involved in activities related to a proposed new transmission line in S'olh Temexw called the "Interior to Lower Mainland Transmission Project "(ILM Project). Stó:lō Tribal Council engaged in the environmental assessment process for this project. This work included a technical review of all BC Transmission Corporation's research on the potential impacts of this line. In addition, in conjunction with researchers from the Sto:lo Research & Resource Management Centre, a Traditional Use Study was completed that included interviews with community members. Many concerns about impacts from transmission lines were brought forward in these interviews including potential impacts on health. As a result, Stó:lō Tribal Council submitted a proposal to Health Canada to study the potential health effects. This proposal was successful and researchers started early into our new fiscal year. We would like to welcome our newest employee, Robyn Heaslip who joins Otis Jasper and Frank Andrew. Otis has been instrumental in securing funds for this project and others. Robyn is our researcher who also will be working on the Health Canada project.

The ILM project is undergoing reconsideration by the BC Utilities Commission as a result of a recent court case which recognized the need for meaningful consultation and accommodation at the earliest stages of the project. Stó:lō Tribal Council is participating in this reconsideration process, which will continue into 2010.

Social Development

STC provides Financial Assistance for Soowahlie, Kwaw Kwaw Apilt and Shxw'owhamel. Our client case load on a monthly basis is approximately 70 Clients.

The vision of the Social Development department is to reduce its client caseload which will reduce poverty in our communities. In 2005, 45 employable clients were in need of financial assistance and now it is currently reduced to 20 employable clients seeking financial assistance. Successful programs such as the home- to- work transition program, provided clients with valuable work experience. Nikki Silver and Sandra Joe had the privilege of working in this program and are now currently working full-time elsewhere. They also learn job search skills such as preparing cover letters and resumes and participate in various personal development workshops.

Stó:lō Tribal Council is planning to conduct a Labour market initiative in the upcoming year. With this project, we will be able identify barriers to employment and develop strategies to alleviate high unemployment rates in our communities. STC would like to thank Norma George, Martha Fredette, Nikki Silver, and Sandra Joe for their hard work and dedication in 2008-09.

Forums

Stó:lō Tribal Council hosted its annual drug forum in February 2009 at the Ramada in Abbotsford. Despite the snow and cold weather, there was a great turnout for the forum. The goal of the forum was to educate, network and to develop strategies to deal with growing drug use and trade in our communities.



Above: Left to right - Back Row: Chris Gosselin, Wendy Colman, Helena Paul, Alice Stein, Melissa Sam, Dianne Garner. Front row: Lori Kelly, Eleanor Joe, Grand Chief Stewart Phillip.

Some of the key note speakers included Grand Chief Stewart Phillip of Penticton, Chief Willie Charlie of Chehalis, Corporal Chris Gosselin of the RCMP, and Chief Nelson Leon of Adams Lake Band. We also had delegates from city council of Abbotsford, Hope, and Chilliwack. We would like to thank leadership, community staff, and community members who attended this forum as it was a huge success.

Our communities are dealing with same issues and we have to continue to implement comprehensive strategies to make positive change. We have to continue to engage both our youth and young parents to make good choices so they have an opportunity in life. Some of our youth engaging in illegal activities and in turn get a criminal record which means it is difficult to get a job in the future.

Collectively, we have to abolish drug dealers from our communities. We have to implement restorative practices so that our youth realize and understand that it is not acceptable for this type of behavior.



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip addressing Forum

Education

Through the assistance of funds sponsored by FNEESC, Stó:lō Tribal Council partnered with Seabird Island First Nation to host a career fair in Seabird.



The day was full of activities and was successful with 180 students participating in the Career Fair. We had students from all the local schools attending the career fair. Students had the opportunity to learn about various trade Industries and program entrance requirements for post secondary education . There were 23 exhibitors setup in the gymnasium to choose from. The career fair allows our students to think about their future and what credentials may be required to enter into a specific field of study. It also allowed students to network with each other and get to know key contact people in various industries.



Our in-school k-12 program provides financial assistance for support services for students for school fees and projects, field trips, and hot lunches. Each student sponsored must be registered on the nominal roll and the amount of assistance depends on the grade level. In addition, students in high school receive an allowance for attendance. Stó:lō Tribal Council pays a substantial amount of student tuition for our children attending both public and private schools.

Stó:lō Tribal Council continues to advocate for our children in school and plays a key role within various school district levels, in particular, school district 75, 78 and 33. Vice President Tyrone McNeil has been instrumental in facilitating change within our school districts as it relates to programming and holding the districts accountable for the funds they receive. Also, he played a key role in the development of education enhancement agreements for aboriginal students, standardized Local education agreements and education jurisdiction.

Our post secondary program also provides sponsorship to eligible students seeking a post secondary education. STC spends approximately \$234,000 per year on post secondary education. STC would like to continue see the trend of our high school graduates enroll in post secondary institutions. There are a number of credible education institutions to choose from and the opportunities are endless.

The Stó:lō Tribal Council would like to acknowledge Laura Commodore from the Soowahlie Indian Band, who received her Master's Degree in Psychology and Lorna Andrews from the Shxw'owhamel First Nation, who received her Master's Degree in Education.

Finance/Administration

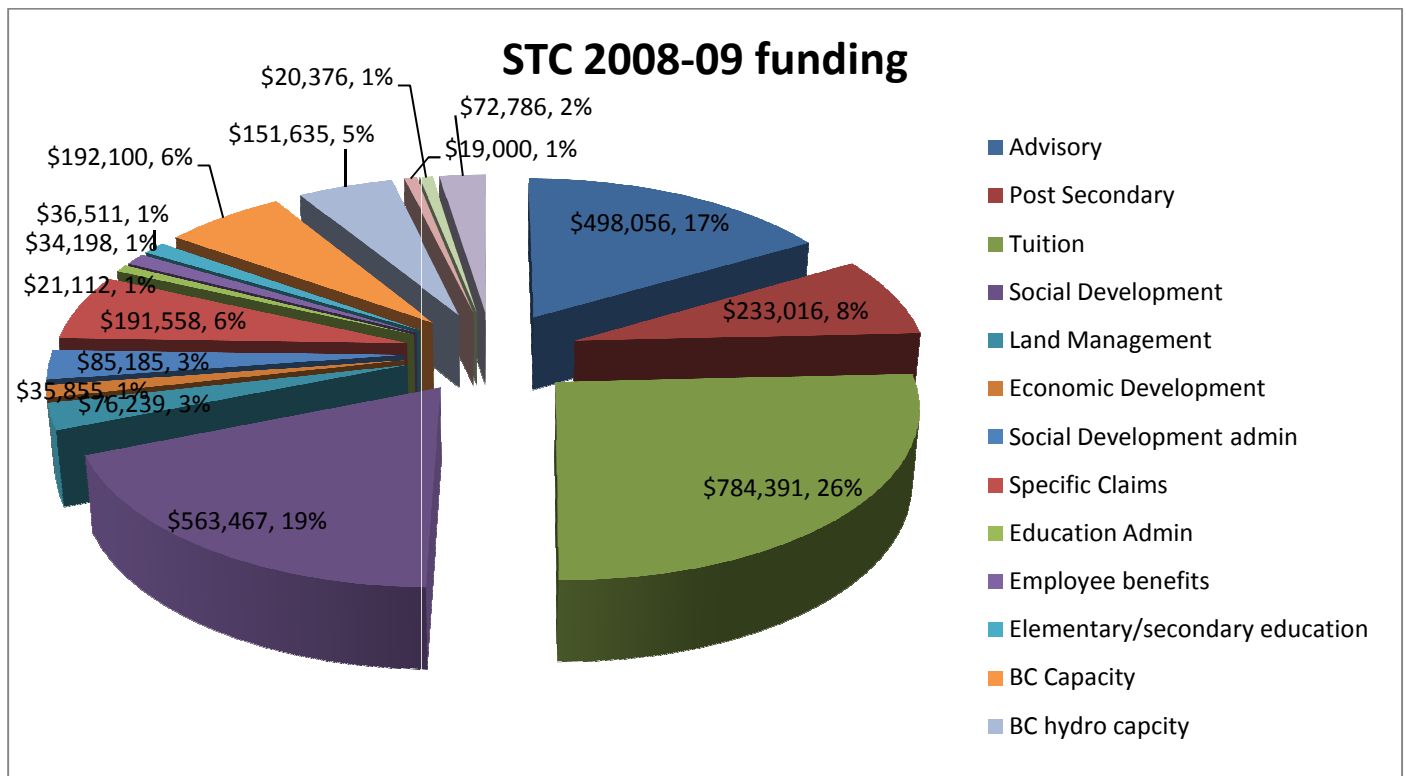
Stó:lō Tribal Council had a very good year financially and ended with a consolidated surplus of \$281,539. As with many First Nations, majority of Stó:lō Tribal Council funding is flow through such as education tuition which totaled \$784,391, Social Development \$ 563,467, specific claims \$191,558(Alliance of Tribal Nations), and Post Secondary \$233,016.

Advisory funding totaled \$498,056, employee benefits \$34,198, Education Administration \$21,112, Social development administration \$80,185, economic development \$35,855, and Land management \$76,239.

Secondary funding sources included \$19,000 for the Drug Forum, \$192,100 from the BC Capacity initiative, and \$151,635 from BC Hydro, 72,786 from Stó:lō Training & Employment Project and \$20,376 from DFO.

Total revenues for Stó:lō Tribal Council in 2008-09 totaled \$3,370,550 with expenses of \$3,164,444 for a surplus of \$206,106. Previous year surplus was \$75,433.

Please refer to the following graph as to a breakdown of funds. In addition, please find more information within our attached 2008-09 audit.



2008-09 funding

New Administration office

Stó:lō Tribal Council also moved into a new office located in the community of Seabird Island. Stó:lō Tribal Council bought the building from Britco funded through RBC. The total cost for the new office was \$284,000. The new office has 12 offices, two bathrooms, kitchen, board room, mail room and general reception area.

