



2013/2014

**SOCIO-CULTURAL
WORKING GROUP
UPDATE**

TAHLTAN
Central Council

SOCIO-CULTURAL WORKING GROUP



Feddie Louie

Band Manager and Socio-Cultural Working Group Lead

Feddie Louie is Tahltan/Kaska from the Carlick and Quock families. She was born and raised in the Cassiar area, and attended residential school until 1976. She relocated to Iskut in 1977, where she married and raised three children.

Feddie has worked for the Iskut Band for 27 years between 1984 and 2014. Her career has focused on administration and management, with many years of experience in social programs and services (including health, education and youth camps). She also has 15 years of experience working with the School Board (including seven years as Chair) and has spent 14 years (also including seven years as Chair) on the Board of Directors for the Northwest Inter-Nation Family and Community Service Society.

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Annita McPhee

Marie Quock

Rick McLean

Rob McPhee

Peter Cunningham

TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Ramona Quock

Feddie Louie

Ryan Franke

Pamela Millar

AREA LEADS

Language &
Culture
- Judy Thompson

Education
- TBD

Training &
Employment
- Rob McPhee

Community
Development
- SWWG

Health
- Feddie Louie

Infrastructure
- Rick McLean

ABOUT SOCIO-CULTURAL WORKING GROUP

The Socio-Cultural Working Group (SCWG) is a component of the Framework Agreement, a partnership between BC and Tahltan. The SCWG mandate is two-fold:

- Implement BC Jobs Plan for Tahltan to maximize employment opportunities.
- To mitigate negative social impacts from rapid development while protecting Tahltan culture and identity.

The SCWG identified five key components of social-cultural aspects that require direct planning and implementation to minimize the negative impacts of rapid development, with a sixth crossing all sectors:

- Education

- Language and Culture
- Employment and Training
- Family and Community Development
- Health
- Infrastructure - across all sectors

Planning

Each component has a strategy, workplan and implementation strategy being developed and where possible, activities are being carried out in order to maximize all opportunities as they arise.

The SCWG has two levels of operations: the leadership and technical groups. The SCWG leadership group, Tahltans and Province ADM,

meet quarterly to review, revise, approve and receive reports from the SCWG technical group. The technical group meets weekly, via teleconference, face-to-face at least quarterly or as needed, to plan, and to implement and revise workplans.

Feedback

The SCWG also coordinates an Annual Leadership Forum to report to get feedback and input from Tahltan leaders, front-line workers, management, Elders, community members and their partners to guide the work of the SCWG.

The table below shows the 2014/15 workplan. ■

Sector/ category	Mandate/vision	Who	Potential partners	Proposed activity	Infrastructure needs
SCWG Partnership	Protect Tahltan culture & society from potential negative effects of rapid development. Ensure Tahltan members are ready for the employment opportunities.	Technical working group of minimum two provincial members & three Tahltan members plus anyone that can help to meet goals.	Tahltans/ Province of BC	Minimum 4 face-to-face meetings of the SCWG. Technical group meets at minimum weekly via teleconference.	
Annual Leadership Forum	Have an annual two-day meeting of leaders, front-line workers, service providers, partners & community members to review & revise annual plans, receive reports and direct SCWG.	Province & Tahltan members.	Local businesses & resource developers	Annual leadership forum in territory.	
Employment & Training	A self-reliant, self-sufficient Tahltan Nation with Tahltan-based policy and curriculum for employment & training in the territory implemented by the Nation: "Our voice. Our choice. We decide."	Full-time coordinator & task group; task group of Tahltan representatives, provincial & federal government, industry and training Institutions.	JTST, WD, Tricorp	Implement medium- & long-term employment & training plan.	Local training centre, Internet connectivity, simulators
Education	Strong, proud Tahltan who live & succeed in both worlds.	Working group Tahltan & Province members & a consultant.	Ministry of Education, FNESC, AANDC, SD #87	Education activities have been postponed until the First Nation Education Act is finalized. Begin communications with MOEd to discuss Tahltan students' academic success.	
Language & Culture	Di dene e kune me hō di hi (All Tahltan people are living the Tahltan way of life).	Tahltan Language Authority.	FPCL, SWWG, Uvic	Language nests for 3 communities, digitizing analogue tapes, children's books, dictionary development, training & professional development, implement governance structure.	Building & space for language nests & computer labs.
Health	Our families & communities are healthy, holistically balanced & have strong identity rooted in Tahltan culture, traditions, values & language.	Tahltan Health Working Group.	FNHA, NHA, AANDC, CMHC	Negotiate & finalize partnership with FNHA and NHA, Feasibility of LTC, MH strategy including men's health, develop strategy for transient workforce health services.	Feasibility study for long-term care facility.
Family & Community Development	Our families & communities are healthy, holistically balanced & have strong identity rooted in Tahltan culture, traditions, values & language.	Stikine Wholistic Working Group.	SWWG, MCFD, SX6, Tricorp	Actions in accordance with the SWWG annual work plan.	Satellite RCMP detachment in Iskut.
Infrastructure	As needed by each category.	Each category will identify its own infrastructure needs.	WD, AANDC, CMHC	Identify & access the feasibility infrastructure needs such as a training centre, long-term care facility, Internet connectivity, housing, transportation.	

SOCIO-CULTURAL WORKING GROUP UPDATE

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

Development of major energy projects in the Dease Lake region over the next 10 to 15 years and beyond will require an estimated 3,000 workers. After the construction of major projects, including the Northwest Transmission Line and run-of-river projects, an expected 2,000 jobs will exist by 2021.

In order to ensure Tahltans are prepared to take advantage of this tremendous opportunity for employment, an effective strategy is being developed to ensure the Tahltan labour force receives the skills training necessary to meet the imminent labour demand.

The Employment and Training Strategy is a core component of the Tahltan Central Council's (TCC) Socio-Cultural Working Group (SCWG). Overall, the objective of the effort is to create a

comprehensive local employment and training effort to help build a highly skilled trained workforce for the region.

Aims of the Employment and Training Strategy are to:

- Establish a mandate and create Tahltans' own employment and training strategy so that Tahltan information and strategic goals are in position when large economic development opportunities and training initiatives present themselves.
- Establish the governance and infrastructure to support long-term employment and training for Tahltan people.
- Create an ongoing sustainable employment and training program that is funded and resourced appropriately and is charged with implementing the strategic goals of the Tahltan Nation as they relate to employment and training.

Achievements this year:

- 1** Initiated the Employment and Training roundtable dialogue series. This series is intended to improve Tahltan people's understanding of employment and training needs in the region in order to develop an effective strategy to prepare the Tahltan labour force to meet market demand. The series includes three sessions:
 - A Resource Development Roundtable with Tahltans, government and industry was held on March 25, 2014 in Terrace, BC.
 - A Local Employers' Roundtable with employers from Dease Lake, Iskut, and Telegraph Creek was held on May 26, 2014 in Dease Lake, BC.
 - An Education and Training Infrastructure and Programming Roundtable with representatives from education and training bodies, the Tahltan Nation, government and industry will take place in July.

The Employment and Training Task Group was created out of the first roundtable event. It is made up of:

Sandia Wu (Western Diversification)

Steve Robertson (Vice President, Imperial Metals)

John Miller (Vice President, AltaGas)

Jay Layman (President, Seabridge Gold)

Jolene Louie (Iskut First Nation)

Garry Merkel (President, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation)

Isabelle Reid (Tahltan Band)

Northwest Community College Representative

Rob McPhee (Co-Chair, SCWG)

Otis Jasper (Project Manager, Employment and Training)

- 2** Conducted a survey about the Dease Lake Job Fair for a survey report: the survey reached out to those who attended the job fair (employers and community members seeking work/training) to gain insights about employment and training needs and opportunities in the region. Overall, 79 people completed the survey.
- 3** Tahltanworks.ca has been developed and will be tested by Iskut staff over the coming weeks. Tahltanworks.ca will be a central online hub to connect the Tahltan workforce with employment opportunities in the region. Stay tuned for the launch of this website in the near future!

EDUCATION

Education work is on hold for the time being until a final decision is made with regard to the Aboriginal Education Act, as this act has potential implications for the Tahltan Nations' ability to oversee education for Tahltan students.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Stikine Wholistic Working Group (SWWG) is the continuing partnership and success story of the Kaska, Tahltan and Tlingit Nations. The SWWG is a child-centred “bloodlines, not borderlines” approach that utilizes Tahltan relations, friendships, and pride in Tahltan children to strengthen Tahltan families, communities, and Nations.

Declaration: “We will honour and celebrate our children by keeping them IN THE CENTRE of all decisions we make.”

Ultimate Vision: “What was lost will return.”

The SWWG has from its beginning turned community direction into tangible services and benefits. It is crucial that families and communities see changes immediately and not just a prolonged planning process.

A small sample of this past year’s activities include:

- The Tahltan Welcoming Home Gathering
- Language and culture programming
- Culture- and land-based camps
- Healing workshops
- Baby welcoming ceremonies
- Supporting hockey and sport initiatives

The SWWG’s community-based model, and its Tahltan members, continue to get

provincial recognition and requests to help other Nations develop a wholistic approach.

“The Kaska, Tahltan and Tlingit inspire me to try something similar in our Nation.”

~ First Nation Leader

“The SWWG is a model that other Nations can learn from and should be able to utilize.” ~ MCFD Executive

“The Province recognizes the work of the Stikine Wholistic Working Group, and its partnerships developed with government and industry. These partnerships contribute to social and economic development within the northern First Nations.”

~ Minister John Rustad, Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

This past year the SWWG was evaluated by the International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD). The evaluation recommends the SWWG approach/success as a best practice model for other Nations and jurisdictions. Here is an excerpt from IICRD evaluator Dr. Cook:

“The SWWG has provided tangible evidence of successful prevention and early intervention programs leading to a decreasing incidence of children being taken into care and open family case files. In particular, the SWWG’s unique

community-led programs have brought significant positive change to families in the northwest.

“The SWWG’s child, family and community interventions had a positive economic knock-on effect in which poverty reduction resulted in better coping with life challenges, buffering vulnerable families from some of the negative effects of social change from increased mining. This represents a promising model of social protection combining social and economic well-being.

“In conclusion, I feel as a researcher with approximately 25 years of experience conducting research on child protection systems change, that the work of the SWWG and the Tahltan, Tlingit and Kaska communities stands to make a significant impact on the safety, development and well-being of children and families.

“The good work of the SWWG presents elements of good practice that should be shared with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families and practitioners in BC, across Canada and around the world.”
~ Dr. Philip Cook, IICRD Executive Director

Great appreciation goes out to all members, families, SWWG leads across the Nations, Tahltan leaders and Elders. Congratulations on all of your incredible success.

HEALTH

The Tahltan Health Working Group meets regularly to discuss implementation of the Tahltan Nation Health Plan and its priorities.

The priorities for this year include:

- Determine feasibility of long-term care facility, centrally located and assisted-living units in three communities, supported by homecare services.
- Negotiate and finalize a partnership with Northern Health Authority to ensure Tahltans are participating in the planning and development of health services in the Stikine.
- Improve transportation services in the north.
- Recruit and retain health care professionals.

LANGUAGE & CULTURE

Tahltan Language and Culture Governance

Governance structure

The Dah Dzahge Nodesidē/Tahltan Language and Culture Council has been created to provide guidance in the creation of short- and long-term language and culture revitalization plans, to serve as the decision-making body for Tahltan language and culture revitalization, and to act as a language authority in the certification of Tahltan language teachers for the BC Teacher regulation branch. The council is made up of a Tahltan speaker from each community, a TCC representative, the language teacher from each community, and members of the Tahltan Language Revitalization Team.

Research

The Tahltan Nation is participating, with 21 other community-based First Nations groups and Simon Fraser University, in a federal grant that is focusing on maintaining and revitalizing First Nations languages. As part of a post-doctoral fellowship, Judy Thompson will be working with linguist John Alderete on a print and online dictionary that will build on the Children's Dictionary.

Communication

The Tahltan Language Revitalization Team promoted language efforts in both television and radio interviews (i.e., CFNR three-part radio series, August 2013; CFTK-TV "The Journey" episode on Tahltan Language Revitalization, November 2013).

Language Programs

Children and youth

The Dzimēs Chō T'oh/Iskut Language Nest opened in May 2014. Currently, five children are participating in an immersion home-like setting in which only the Tahltan language is spoken. Plans are in place to open a language nest in Dease Lake in the fall of 2014 and one in Telegraph Creek in 2015.

The Tahltan Language and Culture Council is working towards developing an Integrated Resource Package for the Tahltan Language for K-12, along with developing materials and resources for use in the classroom.

Parents and adults

The Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP) is a method that provides a way for individuals to learn their Indigenous language from a fluent speaker. Through the First Peoples' Cultural Council, one MAP team is in their third year, and another team is starting out this year.

All ages

In the summer of 2013, members of the Language Revitalization Team participated in language and culture camps hosted by the Tahltan Health and Social Services Authority and Iskut Valley Health Services. The team will continue to participate in language and culture camps this summer.

Documentation

Recordings

The Language and Culture Council received funding from UBC to purchase equipment and take part in workshops to learn how

to digitize audio-cassettes. Members of the Tahltan Revitalization Team will soon be able to digitize audiotapes for Tahltan organizations and Tahltan individuals. Team members are recording speech and conversations with fluent speakers on a continual basis.

Language learning materials

The team is currently working on children's books featuring stories told by Tahltan ancestors. Once the books are printed, copies will be given out to all members of the Tahltan Nation as well as the organizations and institutions within the Nation that work with children.

Training and Professional Development

Teaching training

The team is in the planning stages of bringing the University of Victoria's Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization to Dease Lake. Several Tahltan educators will be taking part in UVic's Master of Arts in Indigenous Language Revitalization starting in July 2014.

Networking

Members of the Tahltan Language Revitalization Team will be presenting at the Dene Languages Conference in Prince George from June 18 to 20, 2014.

INFRASTRUCTURE

New and improved infrastructure will be critical to managing the social impacts of development on the Tahltan Nation. Infrastructure will create an important buffer against the social problems that can sometimes arise with the sudden influx of higher incomes in small communities.

The following represent key infrastructure priorities:

- Long-term care facility
- Assisted-living units in three communities
- Internet connectivity and reliability
- Daycare in both Dease Lake and Telegraph Creek
- More and affordable housing for each community
- Tahltan Training Centre
- Airport improvement

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