

Government-to-Government Forum Newsletter

September 2022

Updates from the Joint-Initiative Working Groups

Protected Areas WG: We continue to explore a collaborative strategy to address permits for cabins and inholdings on the Taku River. A small BC-TRTFN working group will be created to work collaboratively to identify a solution to the permitting challenges. We are also in the beginning stages of drafting the management direction for the Taku Teix' Management Plan to ensure consistency with zoning from the ATLUP.

Fish & Wildlife Management WG: We have been focused on reviewing harvest numbers and allocation of non-category A species such as Thinhorn Sheep. We are also exploring the development of a Fish and Wildlife Management Framework to guide shared decision-making on wildlife harvest allocation.

Minerals Joint WG: BC and TRTFN staff continue to work together in an effort to improve environmental and compliance outcomes. BC has acknowledged that there are serious permitting delays which have caused concerns among local miners and within the local community. Provincial staff are working to process outstanding applications, and TRTFN and BC are in dialogue to address this issue.

Message from the G2G Forum Co-Chairs

For over a decade, the Taku River Tlingit First Nation-BC Government-to-Government Forum (G2GF) has been responsible for overseeing the implementation of the [Wóoshtin Yan Too.Aat Land and Resource Management and Shared Decision Making Agreement](#) and the [Wóoshtin wudidaa Atlin Taku Land Use Plan \(ATLUP\)](#).

The G2GF has provided a venue for dialogue and engagement between BC and the Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN) regarding these agreements and the various topics that they cover.

The G2GF oversees several Joint Initiative Working Groups, each of which address important issues on the land base, including mining and mineral exploration, protected areas, fish and wildlife management, as well as research and monitoring.

After holding all G2G Forums and community engagement events virtually for 2020 and 2021, the G2GF was able to meet again in-person July 12-13, 2022. We were very excited to connect face-to-face and to discuss ways for us to continue moving forward together. This newsletter includes updates on our shared work and highlights of recent G2GF activities. We hope everyone can continue to stay safe and healthy.



Otter Creek Restoration Project



The restoration of the lowest portion of Otter Creek, that drains into Surprise Lake, has been ongoing from planning stages in 2016 to the current and final large-scale revegetation stage. This project has been a collaboration of many partners, from TRTFN, the Province of BC, funding groups such as Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation and the National Wetland Conservation, to local placer mining companies and consultants from the area. Donations from local placer mining companies from 2015 through to 2018 held in trust by TRTFN contributed approximately \$90,000 towards this \$1.5 Million project.

This last major stage of the project consisted of local people working at the site to prepare the ground for planting, transplanting native vegetation and watering the areas during dry, hot weeks. A celebration for this 'Healing of the Land' took place on August 26th, 2022. Footage from the area before, during, and after all stages of the restoration, plus interviews with key members of the project will be included in a media clip that will be posted publicly.

BC-TRTFN Mine Inspections

In June, nine inspectors from the Division of Health, Safety and Enforcement at the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation (EMLI) joined TRTFN staff to conduct a 3-day inspection blitz of local mines and gravel pits. These inspections evaluate whether or not the companies are complying with the conditions of their permits and abiding by provincial laws and regulations. Following each inspection, BC staff produce a report of their findings which must then be addressed by each Mine Manager.

In July, representatives from the Waters Branch of the Ministry of Forests and inspectors from teams within the Mines Competitiveness and Authorizations Division of EMLI including Mineral Titles, Reclamation, and Permitting, joined TRTFN staff to conduct a reclamation/water focused inspection tour. This group spent 4 days touring mines that have undertaken reclamation, asked for a reclamation bond return, or those that have any type of water crossing or concern. BC and TRTFN noted significant progress in reclamation practices on some sites and hope to see others in the area follow these positive examples.

For more information about the G2G Forum please contact:

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Joint Visioning Session September 20-22 in Atlin, BC

BC and TRTFN made a commitment to undertake a Joint Visioning Process in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) completed in August 2021. The intent of the process is to deepen the existing government-to-government relationship and develop recommendations for further cooperation and engagement between the parties, based on an understanding of their respective interests and shared priorities. The federal government recently agreed to join this process as full participants and several members of the Atlin community will also be attending as observers.

Following the Visioning Session, recommendations will be submitted for formal consideration by both governments that are expected to include: the identification of immediate steps that BC and TRTFN can take right now, identification of milestones to be achieved over the short, medium, and long-term, a shared vision for 20+ years into the future, and a commitment to strengthen their relationship.

