

"...as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow..."

June, 2006
Newsletter



Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta

PROMISES AS REMEMBERED BY OUR ELDERS:

Education

Healthcare

Hunting & Fishing

Exemption From Taxes & War Participation

Natural Resources

Agricultural Provisions

Justice

Treaty Annuity Payment of \$5

640 Acres of Land per family of 5 or 160 Acres of
land for each person not living with a band

A new suit of clothes for the Chief & Council every
three years

TREATY NO. 8 GUARANTEED THESE PROMISES
FOR:

"...as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the
rivers flow..."

THE TREATY BASED BILATERAL PROCESS

The Current Mandate & Objectives

Mandated by motion of the Treaty 8 Executive Board on October 7, 2005, that the Bilateral Process Chiefs Committee will provide direction to the Bilateral Process. On March 10, 2006, the Bilateral Chiefs Committee (Chief Archie Cyprien; Chief Rose Laboucan and Chief Bernie Meneen) made the decision to include the Technical Advisory Committee (Tribal Council/Bigstone CEO's) to be part of the Bilateral Process Management Committee. On April 27, 2006 the Treaty 8 Executive Board passes a motion to add Chief Roland Twinn to the Bilateral Chiefs Committee.

See more on page 2

Coming Events

Elders' Council Meeting

At Stony Plain, Alberta
Ramada Inn
July 24, 2006

Honouring Our Treaty Gathering

At Driftpile First Nation
August 8-10, 2006

Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta Annual General Meeting

At Grand Prairie, Alberta
Quality Inn
August 16-18, 2006

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THE MANDATE

The mandate of this body is to honour the Inherent Rights of the Treaty 8 people and their First Nations as the basis for entering Treaty that lead to the Declaration of Intent of 1998. The Declaration of Intent becomes the founding document to guide the work that will lead to Treaty implementation under any of the crown 's policies. Currently, the Bilateral Process work is being done under the federal policies of the “ Inherent Right to Self-Government ” and “ Treaty Discussions” . The Chiefs and Elders approved “ Practical Measures ” which are designed as incremental building block initiatives that will provide more immediate results to improve the well being of the people, while providing examples of the direction of Treaty guided Self-Government.

TREATY BASED BILATERAL PROCESS OBJECTIVES

- **Assure that the Bilateral Process reflects and responds to the community interests and approaches to Treaty Implementation and Governance in addition to any contractual adherence to agreements under federal policy.**
- **Provide overall direction to the Treaty 8 Bilateral Process for Treaty based governance and Treaty Implementation.**
- **Resolve issues relevant to the Bilateral Process that may arise from time to time.**
- **Advocate on behalf of and support the Bilateral Process.**
- **Provide connection to all the Practical Measures into this process without interfering with their day to day ability to address the needs of the member First Nations.**
- **As an overall consideration, liaise with First Nations and Tribal Council's to ensure consistency and provide support to their activities as necessary in assuring that the work of the Bilateral Process is consistent with all the initiatives within Treaty 8.**
- **Make recommendations for final approval of products to the Treaty 8 Chiefs.**

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ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chiefs Representatives Will :

- Represent Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta as a co-chair at the Joint Senior Officials Committee (JSOC); meetings with the Alberta Government and other political representatives as required.
- Provide political advocacy on key issues relevant to the Bilateral Process.

The Treaty Based Bilateral Board Will:

- Approve the organizational structure of the Bilateral Process;
- Appoint Senior Personnel;
- Approve annual work plans and budgets;
- Oversee and direct the development of the Agreement in Principle (AIP), the Treaty Principles, the Treaty 8 Constitution and all other activities of the Bilateral Process;
- Assure written reports are provided on the Bilateral Process to the Executive Board and/or the Chiefs Annual General Assembly; and
- Review, monitor and evaluate the progress of all activities of the Bilateral Process.

The Technical Secretariat Is Responsible To:

- Provide regular updates to the Treaty Based Bilateral Board on the progress of all activities; and
- Provide technical assistance to the Bilateral Process as directed by the Treaty Based Bilateral Board.; and
- Provide technical assistance to the Bilateral Process as directed by the Treaty Based Bilateral Board.

ABOUT THE PRACTICAL MEASURES

The “Practical Measures” include the work of the Chiefs’ Consultation Policy Committee, the Economic Development Commission, the Alberta Treaty 8 Health Authority, the Education Commission and the Children’s Agenda that are all working to improve these key concern areas in support of the member First Nations as immediate priorities of the Elders and Chiefs.

The “Practical Measures” are essential building blocks upon which to build and demonstrate to the people and all other governments how First Nations’ Governments can work. They are guided by the Treaty and will guide these key areas in building an Agreement-In-Principle that could form the basis of Self-Determining First Nations Governments in Treaty 8 (Alberta).

The people need to know what any future government is capable of doing and the federal government needs to be informed what authority, jurisdiction and resources those governments will need to assure the future generations.

The driving force are the member First Nations and the final decisions will be made by the people.

All of this includes the needs and concerns of off reserve members.

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ELDERS' COUNCIL

The Elders' Council consists of two Elder's from each of our member First Nations.

The Elders are essential to assuring that the work of the Bilateral Process is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Treaty.

As the traditional storehouse of essential knowledge and usually the senior members of virtually all families they provide priceless guidance to all the work being done.

This we consider a “reality” check on our work that can assure we both follow the Treaty and at the same time be reasonably assured that what we are doing will make sense for the future of their respective families.

It was our Elders who guided the Chiefs to setting the priorities around Health, Livelihood (Consultation, Economic Development and the Environment), Education and Justice (based on “Natural Law”).

They not only bring their understanding of Treaty, they also bring their vital concerns about the needs of the membership both on and off reserve.

We are truly privileged to have them as a vital part of our work.

We look forward to providing you with coverage of their meeting with us at Stony Plain, Alberta being held on July 24, 2006 in our next edition along with a final approved version of their Treaty Based Bilateral Terms of Reference.

We echo their words of assuring the well being of the next seven generations.

ALBERTA WILL JOIN AS A PARTICIPANT

The Chiefs' Consultation Policy Committee lead by its Chairperson, Grand chief Arthur Noskey took the lead role to have Alberta change its status as an observer to the Bilateral Process to become an active participant.

In June 2005, the Alberta Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Pearl Calahasen along with some of her fellow Ministers made a commitment for that to happen.

At a recent meeting of the main table of the Bilateral Process, the Alberta Government “Observer” announced that permission was given to proceed to make the change happen.

We hope that by the next edition to have the information on what that will be in more specific terms.

It is important to have Alberta participate and contribute to these efforts as Canada has delegated jurisdiction on vital matters such as Education and Health to the provinces. While the relationship with Canada that flows from the Treaty and the Constitution is a nation-to nation basis, the relationship with Alberta is a government-to government basis where overlapping interests need to be dealt with to assure our First Nations that what they want to accomplish can be done.

This is all part of bringing the Treaty to life through the means at hand and in no way is it a negotiation of the Treaty.

DID YOU KNOW THAT TREATY 8 FIRST NATIONS OF ALBERTA ENCOMPASSES A LAND MASS OF APPROXIMATELY 840,000 SQUARE KILOMETERS?

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TREATY PRINCIPLES CONNECTIONS

Canada is now in the process of developing policy for Treaty Implementation and Treaty 8 (Alberta) and our Bilateral Process is being given the opportunity to be directly involved as a demonstration site.

What that means is that we may be specifically funded to consult with each of our member First Nations on how that will be done and provide it as direct input toward the making of the new policy once there is progress that gains support of the federal cabinet that we expect to review a submission this fall. The new policy will likely take a minimum of one year to be developed and approved.

In the meantime we have the opportunity to reshape our efforts more specifically in our Bilateral Process toward making a transition to Treaty Implementation. What that means is that while we have to work within the current policy of Treaty Discussions and the Inherent Right to Self-Government we can more formally base our work from the spirit and intent of our Treaty. So, when we work toward giving life to the Treaty through the current policy we can insist every part of it must relate the Treaty relationship intended by the Treaty.

We have been recognized as somewhat unique in our approach to build any future form of governing by First nations on the building blocks of “Practical Measures”, the basic concerns of people such as “Livelihood”, Education, Health, the Needs of Children (The Children’s Agenda), as examples. We chose that way because the work done must demonstrate to the people that their lives will be improved through these efforts in real terms that they can see and sometimes touch and feel. We are talking about well being through better health, greater job and business opportunities, housing and education and training opportunity and success as specific examples.

We will be working with the Elders’ Council to begin the process of bringing principles forward that represent Treaty 8 (Alberta) to reach agreement with Canada that will assist the work going on in the “Practical Measures” and the “Agreement-In-Principle” all dedicated to the well being of all of the citizens of Treaty 8 (Alberta).

To give one general example of the type of discussion that will take place we offer the following:

Mutual Recognition

By virtue of the Crown taking the steps to enter into Treaty with the First Nations of the territory that would become known as Treaty 8 there was recognition of their individual and collective inherent right to self-government. This is so as Treaty is a Nation to Nation process. This also signified the recognition of the Treaty 8 representatives of the Crown and its government.

As we make progress we will be providing the information through future newsletters, the new Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta website, information sessions with First Nations and Tribal Councils and Bulletins.

We welcome input from any member of Treaty 8 (Alberta) as we believe this is an excellent way to guide the progress of our work to assure the mandate and objectives and the success of our First Nations Governments.

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WATCH FOR THE WEBSITE

Before the Annual General Meeting we will be part of launching a new Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta website that will include the specifics of the Treaty Based Bilateral Process, the “Livelihood” components of the practical measures that includes Consultation, Economic Development and Environmental Protection. It will be linked to all other aspects of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta activities including Health, Education and the Children’s Agenda that operate currently through their own or to be developed dedicated websites. So look for our website and share your comments by the middle of August by clicking on: <http://www.treaty8.ca>

FOR THE NEXT EDITION

Here are some of the items that will be included in the next newsletter that is scheduled to be out in early September:

- Reports and pictures of :

Elders’ Council Meeting

At Stony Plain, Alberta
Ramada Inn
July 24, 2006

Honouring Our Treaty Gathering

At Driftpile First Nation
August 8-10, 2006

**Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
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- Progress on Bilateral activities.
- An insert on “Livelihood” matters including Consultation, Economic Development and Environmental Protection.
- We also hope to include a “Feedback” Section from any we receive from the members.

NEW BILATERAL STAFF

We would like to welcome DUSTIN TWIN as our Elders Co-ordinator and,

FRANCIS GLADUE JR.. as our Technical Assistant to the Elders’ Co-ordinator and the Treaty Co-ordinator.

Look for their pictures in our next edition

NEWS & NOTES

The Assembly of Alberta Treaty Chiefs held at Lake Louise on May 15-16, 2006 passed a resolution to:

That the necessary steps be taken by the appropriate officers of the three respective Treaty Areas to activate the authority without prejudice to any existing Treaty related funding of the three respective treaty organizations; and

That each respective Treaty area reserve the right to opt out of the Treaty Commission should that respective Treaty area find that the Treaty Commission is not meeting the expectations and anticipated results in relation to their specific agreements.

This section is also open to contributions by the membership.

This newsletter is a product of the Treaty Based Bilateral Process and is produced under the direction of the Director, Marlene Poitras assisted by Gwen Crichton, Francis Gladue Jr., Dustin Twin and Michael Stern.

The materials contained herein is based on approved reports and actual events. For further information contact us at 780-444-9366 or find us on our new website.

