

Ken Watts(Wahmeesh): Election Profile
November 24th,2017 Tseshaht First Nation by-election

My name is Wahmeesh(Ken Watts) and I am the eldest son of the late George Watts and Matilda Atleo (now married to Cliff Atleo). I was born and raised in Port Alberni in our Tseshaht community and have lived here for most of life. I am married to Priscilla Watts and we have three lovely children Tristan, Noelani and Kailand.

In 2007 I completed my Bachelor of Arts Degree with a Major in First Nations Studies. After attending Vancouver Island University I worked in Victoria for the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres and the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN). I was also the BCAFN Male Youth Representative for three years and a member and co-chair of the AFN National Youth Council. Upon returning home in 2009 I was employed with West Coast Aquatic managing 14 staff and then moving to Operations Manager for Tseshaht.

As the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Vice-President, it was my job to lobby and advocate on behalf of our 14 First Nations and over 10,000 citizens. I have committed my life and career to improving the quality of life of our people. Throughout my career I have met with various Ministers, Premiers and the Prime Minister to raise awareness and to help create change for our people. In the past several years I have provided Tseshaht with networking opportunities and potential business partners and I would continue to do so by utilizing and building upon my professional networks.

Priorities

1. Economic Development

Tseshaht is in one of the most unique geographical areas amongst Nuu-chah-nulth with over 1 million people a year driving directly through our community. It is our time to expand our opportunities. Our community has raised Economic Development as a priority and we should work to now put words to action.

2. Title and Rights

Tseshaht has made a decision on how it plans to address its Title and Rights. However, we must ensure all plans and preparation are in place. Other opportunities are on the horizon for Tseshaht to create a Nation-to-Nation relationship with the Crown. Financial considerations will need to be kept in mind in how we achieve our desired outcomes.

3. Governance

Regardless of the path we choose to address our Title and Rights, our governance must be in tact and we must marry our modern governance with our Tseshaht historical and hereditary systems. We must also ensure our nation finalizes its Comprehensive Community Plan to help guide our future.

4. Social issues, including mental health and addictions

Our work has to be grounded in who we are as Tseshaht. I believe when I am at my best and most grounded is when I get to sing or dance our songs. To be able to address the above priorities we must address the mental health and addictions in our community. Through empowering and inspiring our people we can achieve our goals.