

DECEMBER 2021

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# Tseshaht First Nation

## Community Report

Greetings Tseshaht,

As the year comes to an end, we would like to acknowledge the strength and resilience of our Nation. Despite another year of challenges and uncertainties, we have navigated this global pandemic and changing public health measures by putting the safety of our communities first. These times have limited our ability to gather and we have relied on the strength of our cultural values to find innovative ways to maintain connections virtually or in smaller, socially distant in-person settings.

We thank you for your patience as we build structures and processes that will improve communication and reporting to our members. Through focussed and intentional efforts, we have made progress in building a strong foundation for governance and administration. We remain committed to our vision of “a unified, self-determining Nation, rooted in our teachings and ways of being, taking a proactive role to improve the health & well-being of our members and those yet unborn; strengthening our language & culture; and stewarding our hāhāhāhū. Living our culture.”

As we reflect on all we have overcome in 2021, we celebrate the many successes of our Nation. On behalf of Tseshaht Council and Administration we provide you with portfolio and program updates and highlights for the last year.



## OUR PEOPLE

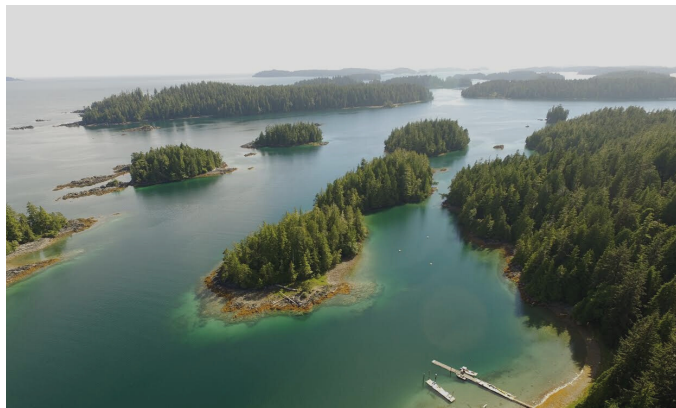
- Communications & Welcome Centre
- Emergency Preparedness
- Membership Services
  - Children & Families
  - Social Development & Health
  - Membership
  - Youth & Elders
- Special Projects - AIRS

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## OUR FUTURE

- Comprehensive Community Plan
- Education, Employment & Training
- Economic Development/Corporate Business
- Finance
- Governance
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## OUR PLACE

- Climate Change
- Fisheries
- Forestry
- Natural Resources
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## COMMUNICATIONS & WELCOME CENTRE

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Supported community events including elections, Covid vaccine clinics, and Orange Shirt Day event.
- Updated current website.
- Created a “members only” website that will be launched soon.
- Created ads and swag to raise profile of Tseshaht
- Continued revisions of Communications Policy

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Provided input into development of formal Communication Policy. This work is ongoing and will resume in the first week of January and will bring it back to Council for feedback.
- Began work with Administration on outlining communications planning. One meeting completed to operationalize the strategic plan.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- From March 2020 to December 2021, supported 37 Tseshaht members living in and out of community who tested positive for Covid 19
- 86% fully vaccinated and 76% first dose in or near community
- Continue to support members who enter isolation due to Covid 19
- Health and Emergency Coordinator hired October 2021
- Training sessions in emergency management open to community members coming soon
- Partnered with ACRD and local fire departments for fire safety and wildfire risk assessments, set up cooling station, provided several AC units to households in need
- Manuals with emergency plans and evacuations will be updated for flood readiness, storm warnings, tsunami warnings, and earthquake preparedness.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Continue to operate under Safe Operating Plans which means facilitates remain closed to outside user groups.
- Working on plan for annual user groups to book times in Maht Mahs starting in January 2022.
- Working with Administration to develop Emergency Response Plans and Manuals.
- Working with Administration to develop an emergency response training plan that would include staff, elected leaders and members from all different backgrounds.
- Working hard to provide training both in person and online and eventually in groups
- Joint meetings with Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, Emergency Management BC, City of Port Alberni and local fire departments.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

### JOINT UPDATE FROM COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATION

- Staff Human Resources Policy Handbook is almost complete. After it is approved, there will be workshops for Managers & Supervisors and then the new policy will be shared with all staff.
- Tseshaht Council and Administration want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the Personnel Committee. Committee members include Deb Foxcroft (chair), Vicky White, Executive Director (technical support), Eunice Joe, alternate, Liz Bos (Schutte), Esther Thomas, Holly McLaughlin, Pam Lang, and Gina Pearson (former member).
- The Personnel Committee has implemented an intentional and strategic effort to interview youth who apply for any TFN job position to provide them experience and to encourage them to pursue their goals.
- Our new hires in 2021 included
  - Membership Clerk,
  - Beach Keeper & 2 Student Beach Keepers,
  - Health & Emergency Response Coordinator,
  - Alberni Residential School Coordinator, Research Lead, Research Assistant, Project Mentor, and Administrative Support.
  - Social Development & Health Manager and Social Assistance & Health Administrative Assistant.
  - Of these 11 positions, 10 of our own members were the successful candidates.
- Will be screening for a new Housing Manager and an Operations Manager in the New Year.

## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES: CHILDREN & FAMILIES

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Attended meetings, events and gatherings with Usma Child & Family to build understanding of services for our people
- Continued working on relationship protocol with Usma Nuu-chah-nulth Child & Family Services
- Explored possibility of protocols with other First Nations and Urban Child & Family service agencies for our children in care and families wherever they live.
- Participated in meetings about federal jurisdiction and new proposed child welfare legislation in BC.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Supported a MOU with Kwumut Lelum to support our off-reserve members in the Nanaimo region for our children in care and families there.
- In the new year, we will develop and finalize a protocol agreement with Usma Child and Family Services to work on a plan to develop and implement our own prevention and cultural services for our children in care and their families including developing our own foster homes, safe homes, or extended family placements for our community.

## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

#### Social Development

- Attended meetings, events and gatherings with the First Nations Health Authority, Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council Health Services, and Island Health to build understanding of what these services provide for our people and to start building positive working relationships
- Began discussions with RCMP to create a citizens on patrol type of community program

#### Membership

- Provided ongoing membership services to Tseshaht.
- Population Update as of October 16, 2021:
- 1,233 total population
- 536 on-reserve
- 697 off-reserve (includes Port Alberni and away).

#### Youth & Elders

- Held small group activities and trips for youth with funding from First Nations Education Steering Committee and Nuuchahnulth Employment and Training Program.
- Supported Elders with breakfast and lunch gatherings, and processed elders' firewood requests and distributions

### COUNCIL UPDATE

#### Social Development

- Completed Social Development file audit for 2020/2021 and provided to Administration for follow up.
- Met with Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council regarding Health Services, mental health services and other health services such as nursing. We are looking at current services to identify needs and gaps.
- Involved in FNHA regional and provincial meetings to identify and advocate for gaps in services and to begin the evaluation of the ten-year tripartite agreement on First Nations health.

#### Membership

- Continued ongoing discussions and revisions of Membership Code which will be recirculated for the committee to review. We will be seeking community guidance on sections that have significant opposing viewpoints and working through recommendations to bring forward to council and community.

#### Youth & Elders

- We are continuing to look for ways to increase youth programs and activities.
- It has been difficult to gather the Elders due to Covid. However, we have had many meetings in the past 6 months.
- The department continues to look for ways to increase programs and activities for Elders.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS: AIRS

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Undertook youth engagement with a focus on supporting youth mental health and wellness.
- Hosted Survivor gatherings including a working group Christmas gathering and weekly brushings available at Administration.
- Completed research framework with an emphasis on confidentiality.
- Began work on website that will feature active links for community members and survivors to increase the AIRS team's ability to share updates.
- Our goal is to do our phase one initial scanning using GPR in the spring of 2022.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Secured over \$1 million to undertake research and scanning of former Indian Residential School Site.
- Worked with survivors to develop funding application and will continue to engage community, hereditary chiefs, staff, council, and survivors.
- Will continue to work with other First Nations who had residential schools in their territories.
- Have fundraised over \$45,000 for memorial/commemoration project. Tseshaht will gather the names of all students who attended the school to ensure we construct a memorial with all their names.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Created contract position for Community Energy Planning Coordinator.
- Worked with Barkley Group to apply and obtain funds to develop a community energy plan.
- Partnered with BC Hydro, Community Energy Association, and Province of BC to begin work on Community Energy Plan by securing over \$70,000 to begin work on a community energy plan and develop a sustainable building policy.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Participated in provincial and national strategic discussions that will help Tseshaht create a plan for adapting to climate change.
- Tseshaht has applied for funds to develop a climate adaptation strategy.

## FISHERIES

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Experienced an improved Area 23 Harvest process compared to 2020.
- Provided substantial increases in allocations based on how the fishery rolled out this year, though this may not be the case next year.
- Distributed food fish to community
  - 30,000 lbs Halibut,
  - 3,000 lbs Bycatch,
  - Totes of shellfish for EOC,
  - 13,000 Sockeye caught and delivered to members,
  - 600 pieces of Chinook, and
  - 400 crab and 2 totes of red urchins.
- Participated in an ongoing reconciliation process regarding Total Allowable Catch.



### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Signed agreement that allowed our fishers to move forward and feed their families in 2021 and will be negotiating an agreement for 2022.
- Secured over \$200,000 from Coast Guard to retain Beach Keepers on into new year.
- Warm water temperatures prevented us from moving ahead with planned fishery and we had to adapt, and families missed fish days. We did our best to get fish into community members' hands.
- Had a significant number of sockeye and one of our better seasons for chinook. Everyone did reasonably well, and we had maximum number of openings. This was significantly different from the previous year.
- Looking forward, we are having meetings to strengthen our rules and enforcement of our rules in a good way to make sure everyone is safe on the water. We are watching over our target escapement and making sure we have fish for future generations. We are working and meeting with DFO to increase our share of the fisheries and move onto an agreement for next year.
- We will pursue more opportunities through negotiations with Canada Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self Determination Table in the new year.

## FORESTRY

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Completed work on significant projects including
  - Tseshaht Bainbridge Woodlot Harvest,
  - Tseshaht Cous Creek First Nations Woodlands License,
  - Various MOUs with industry partners,
  - Interfor/Tseshaht harvest, and
  - Elders firewood.



### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Partnered with Interfor for current logging
- Signed Forest Tenure Opportunity Agreement and now applying for non-renewable forest license (NRFL) valued at \$2 million+
- Will ensure old growth deferrals are based on Tseshaht values and priorities
- Will continue to explore partnership agreements with forestry companies and lobby provincial government as required.
- Seeking compensation for previous infringement by BC.
- Working to remove previously planted poplar trees on fee simple Catalyst/old airport lands.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Continued work on Specific Claims (Iwachis and Tlukwatkweis).
- Continued work on Land Referrals (mapping) and Environmental Referrals (Port Alberni City Sewer, Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Landfill).
- Completed Topaz Cable Project.
- Continued work on Forestry Tenure Opportunity Agreement, BC Timber Sales, and Provincial Harvest Requests.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Many referrals coming in, will be negotiating for compensation for previous infringements with BC and Canada
- Will continue to meet with provincial and federal governments on referrals that could potentially impact Tseshaht.



## PUBLIC WORKS & INFRASTRUCTURE

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Repaired water breaks at the following places:
  - Upper Wattys Road,
  - Old Treaty office,
  - Sproat School,
  - Pacific Rim Highway and
  - Tseshaht Orange Bridge Cannabis.
- Continued work on Sayaichapis sewer and water design
- Completed pump station solar systems install at the pump house. A hydro pole will be installed next.



### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Secured funding for various projects:
  - \$100,000 funding for design of Sayatchapis Road sewer design,
  - over \$150,000 funding for multiplex feasibility and engagement,
  - \$1.5 million toward new gym/multi-plex,
  - funding for docks at Nettle Island and cabin renovations on Keith Island, and
  - construction of new outdoor basketball court.
- Applied for 75% funding (due to application criteria) for a new Somass Hall and 100% funding for a new gym/multi-plex. We are hoping to hear from both funders in 2022.
- Awaiting confirmation of feasibility funding for a new 50+ lot subdivision expansion
- Ongoing efforts to lobby and advocate for funding to bring water to Paper Mill Dam Park and Polly's Point.
- Working with Canada to explore funding to tear down Sproat School and deconstruct AIRS Caldwell Hall/SEEDS building.



## COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN (CCP)

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Edited, redesigned, and formatted 2021 draft.
- Incorporated Tseshaht language, culture and identity in document including finalizing our Values, History and Language sections.
- Worked with VIU on Lands portion of document.
- Updated Elders, Economic Development, Housing and infrastructure section.
- Created a Fisheries, Forestry and Climate Change Section for document.
- Community adopted the Comprehensive Community Plan on November 30, 2021.
- CCP will be reviewed in 18 months and Administration will report out on progress bi-annually.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Tseshaht would like to acknowledge all the previous leadership, council, community reps and all of community for making that possible and giving us direction to achieve our hopes and dreams for the future.
- The CCP is central and integral in guiding the direction of our community when it comes to economic development, education and so much more.
- Tseshaht is committed to regular reporting. Our current strategic plan highlights many areas that are within our CCP. Both documents are available on our website.



## EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Developed proposals to support and assist grade 7 to 12 students, purchased a new bus, arranged Broken Group Island trips including literacy and numeracy, language and culture, and fun, traditional outdoor and adventure-based activities.
- Completed survey for Barriers to Employment.
- Delivered Kayak Training and Basic Security Training.
- Funded Occupational Skills Training requests from members.
- Completed work on a learning hub at the old Seeds building.



### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Tseshah entered discussion with School District 70 to ensure our students have safe place for learning. Looking at plans to ensure safety and wellbeing of our children. Will continue to meet with them in the new year.
- Education Committee working on Education Policy and Procedures. More programming is coming to Tseshah, including a Pathways2Work Program in the new year.
- Tseshah is committed to the ongoing work of education jurisdiction in collaboration with our Tseshah negotiator and Haa Huu Payak School staff and board.



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/CORPORATE BUSINESS

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Received covid funding grants including \$500,338 from Indigenous Services Canada and \$80,000 from Nuuchahnulth Economic Development Corporation.
- Prepared all year-end financial reports for seven corporations and three partnerships.
- Assisted with preparation of Nation's audit
- Attended meetings with International Fidelity & Surety Ltd. Collective and others.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Secured funding to restructure Tseshah First Nation economic development into new corporate structure. Community engagement will occur in 2022.

## FINANCE

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Successfully completed all audits on time despite covid delays.
- Transitioned new Council and Executive Director.
- Continued work on First Nations Financial Administrative Law (FAL).
- Completed review of Group Benefits resulting in significant cost savings.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Tseshaht is excited to enter the First Nations Financial Management Board (FNFB) process as we adopt a Financial Administrative Law (FAL), develop new policies and seek certification from FNFB which will assist in borrowing, economic development and credibility.

## GOVERNANCE

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Revised draft governance manual that will be reviewed by council and then community.
- Committee terms of reference revisions are underway.
- Supported community engagement on committee restructuring.
- Documented processes and strengthen communications to support governance.

## HOUSING

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- New approach to Housing support renovations partially funded through ISC
- Completed CMHC emergency repairs applications for 4 homes. Replacement reserve planning for Section 95 Social Housing funded through CMHC Skills Development.
- Assisted members apply for energy efficient items from BC Hydro Energy Conservation Assistance Program (ECAP). One home was eligible for free energy efficient fridge, housing booth has applications available for on reserve homes. First Nations Emergency Services Society – kitchen fire extinguishers and carbon/smoke alarms
- Procured software to support housing management and inspections.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Council, the Housing Committee, and community have been busy reviewing draft Housing Policies (Individual and Rental) and making recommendations towards a final draft for Tseshaht.
- First drafts of new Housing Policies have been reviewed by Council, community engagement has occurred and Council will now review input and determine next steps.
- Tseshaht will develop a housing strategy in 2022 and look at ways to address condemned homes to secure serviced lots to build new homes for members.
- Will lobby to ensure subdivision expansion becomes a reality.
- Will be exploring potential small home projects in 2022.



## LANGUAGE & CULTURE

### ADMINISTRATION UPDATE

- Grew First Voices online archive adding 130 photos, 1060 words and 96 phrases, 407 audio clips, short learning videos, and updated the categories. Launched the Tseshaht app.
- Created 9 learning videos on FB and YouTube, and self-published “mom and me” and “dad and me” children’s books.
- Immersion program development: hosted a Where Are Your Keys Workshop (language training methodology) for Nuuchahnulth language programs and attended a lesson writing workshop with the Kwak’waka team.
- Facilitated two online drop-in language classes per week. Used our lessons developed with Where Are Your Keys method achieving 85% immersion in our online beginners class.
- Developed language signage for around our community (at the dam and stop signs).
- Launched first two-year Language Intensive. Program – meeting Tuesday to Thursday mornings. We have 5 new learners as part of this intensive program who will also be working on further development of immersion program.

### COUNCIL UPDATE

- Supported implementation of 2020-2030 Language Strategy. Will review the strategy at the beginning of each fiscal year.
- Focused on inclusion to honour our traditions in governance of making sure everyone is included.
- Incorporated culture, songs, language, and protocols wherever possible including during Council meetings and in our everyday work to ensure Tseshaht presence is felt and alive everywhere.
- Worked on a culture and protocols program to empower our hawwath and people by studying rich research.
- Postponed selection of members for the Cultural Protocols Committee due to covid.
- Continued to assert our rights with history and facts based on research in this area.
- Tseshaht will continue to lobby to get long-term, sustainable, and predictable funding for the Tseshaht Language Team.



Tseshaht First Nation is proud of the work we have done together as a team of council, staff, Ha'wiih, and committees in 2021. OUR AGM reports this year highlighted much of our success, our work completed this year, work currently underway and work planned for the future.

We have secured millions of dollars in new funding, we have lobbied and met with more government officials in one year than any other year before us. We have strong and positive working relationships with the private (companies) and public (all levels of government) sectors in our territory and we can be proud of all we have achieved.

As we approach the close of the year, we express gratitude for the generosity and spirit that grounds our collective work in building a strong Nation. On behalf of our Tseshaht Hawi'ih, Council and Administration we wish all of our members, near and far, we wish you and your families a safe and Merry Christmas; and all the best for the New Year.

For more information about any of these program updates, please reach out to Administration or Council.

Special acknowledgements to those who contributed written updates:

Chris Anderson	Lesia Hallasa
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