

JUNE 2022

Tseshaht First Nation

Community Report

Greetings Tseshaht,

We have so much to be grateful for since our last community update. We are especially proud of our students, including our many graduates who will be celebrated in mid-July.

We want to thank and uplift everyone who had a helping hand in the reawakening ceremony at Tluukwatkuuis. We gratefully acknowledge Willard Gallic Jr. whose artwork brought the commemoration to life. We will carry the good energy from the songs and dances we shared with our members and neighbouring nations for many months to come.

Our previous two community reports included side-by-side updates from Council and from Administration. For this one, we chose to do a shared update.

We hope that you are as excited as we are by the good work being done to build capital infrastructure for our nation, support language renewal, and build on education and employment opportunities for our members.





OUR PEOPLE

- Administration
- Membership Services
 - Children & Families
 - Membership
 - Youth & Elders
- Special Projects - AIRS

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OUR PLACE

- Fisheries
- Forestry
- Land Use Planning
- Natural Resources
- Public Works

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OUR FUTURE

- Capital Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Education
- Employment & Training
- Governance
- Language

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ADMINISTRATION

- Tseshaht and neighbouring nations gathered at Tlukwatkuuis Wolf Ritual Beach on National Indigenous Peoples Day for the first time in over a century. We gratefully acknowledge the artwork of Willard Gallic Jr. whose designs brought to life the commemoration of this site. Special thanks to the staff, Council and many people who made the celebration possible.
- The Personnel Committee continues to support Administration to fully staff all departments to ensure optimal service levels for the community.
- Staff continue to support Council to put policies into place in several departments and to implement the Tseshaht First Nation Strategic Plan.
- The Finance Department will be busy working to complete the annual financial audit.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Children & Families

- We have signed a protocol agreement with Kwumut Lelum. This ensures Tseshaht children, youth, and families can access services in the Nanaimo Service Delivery Area. Next steps involve transition planning.

Membership Population Update

- 1,252 total population
- 550 members on-reserve
- 702 members off-reserve (Port Alberni and away)

Elders

- Gina Pearson started as the part-time Elders Coordinator. She will be organizing an Elders Committee Meeting and upcoming island luncheons throughout the summer.



SPECIAL PROJECTS - AIRS

- Scanning will begin this summer and will follow cultural protocols.
- It will take a few months to analyze the scans and write a report on any findings.
- The project team will work with survivors and nations who had members attend AIRS.
- Together, we are working to find answers from the past and bring the truth to the present. We honour our ancestors by taking on this important work as a community.

FISHERIES

- Created and now sitting at a negotiation table with Canada to get more for our fisheries.
- Great role in management from Parks Canada in the Broken Group Island.
- Addressing outstanding infringements.
- Secured over \$200,000 to have the Beach Keepers work all year and now advocating to get them funding for year round work.
- Secured funds from DFO and now building a landing craft to assist fisheries, beach keepers, emergency response and other work in our territory.



FORESTRY

- We signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Mosaic.
- We are doing work with Western Forest Products on TFL 44 LP.
- We continue discussions with the Province of BC on old growth deferrals.
- We negotiated a new forestry opportunity and are applying for the licenses valued at over \$2 million.

HOUSING

- We are excited to explore a band-owned home rental program where Tseshaht First Nation would finance new home construction and rent to members. Rent would cover financing costs, operations and maintenance of the home, and a contingency fund for the home.
- Finding serviceable lots will be our biggest challenge in taking the next steps for this program. We are seeking support of members who have condemned homes to work with us to tear down and let the nation build new homes for those who enter this new program.
- We have only one renovation remaining and two new builds to finish. We begin planning to apply for more renovation funds in the fall.

LAND USE PLANNING



- We started a community committee and are doing engagements with community to develop a Tseshaht Land Use Plan.
- We are planning community family dinner engagements, out of town, and a youth photo contest.
- Check the Tseshaht First Nation Facebook page for a video with information on dates and times for future Tseshaht Land Use Plan Engagement meetings.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- We are proud to share that we have signed an agreement for the Iwachis Specific Claim.
- Thanks to everyone who made the agreement possible and thanks to the community for giving us a clear mandate.
- We will be working with community both in person and online through surveys to come up with a funding plan for the settlement. We hope to complete this work as soon we possible

CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Sproat School

- We were disappointed that the planned deconstruction of the school is delayed until the fall. This was due to a rare bird nesting in and around the site. Please continue to stay away from this area until further notice.

Somass Hall Replacement

- We will find out soon about our funding application for over \$3 million for a new hall. We were pleased to find a new opportunity to fully fund the hall, which would eliminate the need for us to contribute 25% of the building costs.

Maht Mahs

- We have submitted a grant application for a new community health and wellness facility which will include a gym, fitness centre commercial kitchen, office space and more. If we are not successful, we will be looking at other funding opportunities to replace former buildings of AIRS - Caldwell Hall, SEEDS, and Maht Mahs.

Saiyatchapis

- We have secured over \$150,000 and started work to determine if it is feasible to add 50+ lots to the end of Saiyatchapis toward Bell/Hector Road.
- Our engineers and consultants are finishing their studies for the design of a new sewer system that will connect the entire Saiyatchapis subdivision and help get homes off septic systems. This project was over \$150,000 and the full construction of the new sewer system will cost more than \$1.5 million.

Smokehouses

- We hope to have this program ready for community use this summer after facing delays due to COVID-19 and supply chain issues. We are excited for our elders and others to teach our young people how to smoke fish.

New Basketball Court

- Lines are being painted on the new basketball court and we are purchasing benches. We look forward to a grand opening soon.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- We are working with a consultant to restructure our economic development.
- We are working on finding new office space in the community.
- The Keith Island Cabin renovations and building preparations that were planned for this year will be postponed for next year so that we can focus on business planning.

EDUCATION

OST Program Supports

- Energy Therapy Training
- Sound Design for Visual Media
- Holistic Life Coach Program
- Expressive Arts Therapy
- Yoga Practitioner & Integrated Energy Therapy
- Professional Indigenous Lands Management
- Professional Legal Assistant Program
- Allure Spa Training & Education

Graduates

There were six grad ceremonies. Teshshat will be hosting a ceremony for our grade 12 graduates in mid-July.

- 6 Adult Dogwood Graduates
- 1 Leaving Certificate
- 8 Grade 12 Graduates

Scholarships

- 14 K-3 Draw Scholarships
- 9 Artistic Scholarships
- 2 HaHopChu Scholarships
- 1 Community & Human Services Scholarship
- 1 Highest Academic BMO Scholarship
- 2 General Academic Scholarships
- 1 NTC Nursing Scholarship
- 1 Accounting Scholarship



EDUCATION CONTINUED...

- Tseshahat First Nation continues to participate as a negotiating First Nation with interest in continued work to proceed with a second cohort of ratified nations on Education Jurisdiction.
- The Education Jurisdiction Working Group has held individual meetings with BC, First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), and Canada. The key focus of these discussions has been
 - Governance and implementation, including funding for governance.
 - Impact on Independent School status - funding for Haa-huu-payuk may be impacted by a change in jurisdiction status. FNESC is supporting Haa-huu-payuk with a detailed analysis of current funding.
 - Working to ensure that all working group parties are well informed and comfortable moving forward with education jurisdiction.
- The workplan and timelines for engagement and ratification will be updated based on the outcome of the financial review.
- The Education Jurisdiction Working Group will send two representatives to witness the event celebrating the first four ratified Nations who will implement jurisdiction. Travel will be covered by FNESC.

EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING



- Through a partnership with NIC, the Ministry of Advanced Education, and NETP, we are providing a Facilities Maintenance Program on-reserve. This includes hands-on skills in maintaining residential buildings and essential work and life skills.
- Upcoming life skills programs were approved by the Tseshahat Education Committee including hazardous materials and safety training.
- We continue to work on job creation through partnerships with Catalyst, Sans Group, Western Forest Products and many others.

GOVERNANCE

- We continue to work on implementing a new committee structure and finalizing policies, election code, and membership code.
- A consultant was brought on board to develop the governance document for Tseshaht.
- Work will continue on aligning the HR and Finance Policy with the Financial Administrative Law.

LANGUAGE



- We wrapped up the first year of our two-year language intensive program this month. Intensive students completed approximately 150 high-quality, intensive, immersion hours. Congratulations on a fantastic year to our first cohort. They are paving the way for those who will start their part-time immersion journey in the fall as they take on the roles of both student and teacher during their second year. Keep an eye on the facebook page for the call for applications.
- Our FirstVoices team continues working hard to build our FirstVoices portal and documenting our fluent speakers. Our team started a new FirstVoices project year on July 1st with the 2022-2023 Language and Technology Grant we received. Our program is possible because of the support of these funds along with the gaming funds from the nation.
- The Language House has been packed up for the summer as it gets a facelift by the Renovation and Maintenance Program which is a partnership between Tseshaht and North Island College. Wendy Gallic, Education Coordinator received funding to support these updates.



In closing, we wish you health and happiness as we enter the summer months. We are thankful for the guidance of our elders as we make strides to building our nation's economic independence and self governance. We hold our children, youth and adult leaders up as examples of how important it is to always keep trying. Together, we are building a stronger Tseshaht Nation.

Special thanks again to our Council members and staff who work hard every day to achieve our vision of a unified self-determining Nation rooted in our teachings and ways of being, taking a proactive role to improve the health and well-being of our members and those yet unborn; strengthening our language and culture; and stewarding our haahaahuuli. Living our culture.

Kleco, Kleco

Special thanks to the staff and council members who contributed to this community report. Thank you for all that you do to serve our Nation.