

BINGWI NEYAASHI ANISHINAABEK (SAND POINT FIRST NATION) WINTER UPDATE



NEWSLETTER
WINTER 2015

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM CHIEF AND COUNCIL

Greetings to the Members of Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek!

Another year has come to a close, and it has been a busy one! We were fortunate to hold two training courses this year for members: another Heavy Equipment Operator course was held at the BNA land, and we held sawmill training in Thunder Bay. This year also saw the start of the construction of the Namewaminikan Hydroelectric Project north of Beardmore, which saw BNA members employed on the Project. We have also carried on with our many projects with our neighbouring communities, and will be updating the members on these developments in 2016. Also this year, BNA became operational with its new Land Code, and overwhelmingly ratified its matrimonial property laws with a community vote. And BNA has again started to hold its language classes in an effort to strengthen its member's culture.

We look forward to another busy year in 2016!
Miigwetch and Merry Christmas!



Welcome Jessica Wilhelm: BNA's New Director of Health

Jessica Wilhelm is an honour roll graduate of the social service worker program, currently enrolled in Honours Bachelor of Psychology through distant education at Athabasca University and a First Nation Wellness Addictions Counsellor Addictions Specialist II. With over 8 years of experience working in the social service sector primarily for First Nation based agencies in management. Of Ojibway heritage, Jessica is a descendant of BNA as her grandmother was

born on Sand Point land before it was recognized as a reserve. Jessica was born and raised in Thunder Bay and has two daughters that are the light of her life. Jessica is excited to announce that she is BNA's new Health Director and Social Services and is looking forward to meeting, talking to and working with all of the members!



Welcome Tracy Gibson: BNA's New Director of Governance

Tracy Gibson is the daughter of Bill Gibson, an Elder of BNA, and the granddaughter of Sophia Legarde, who was also a BNA band member and lost her Indian Status when she married James Gibson. Tracy is a BNA Band Member and was born and raised in Thunder Bay and has worked for the past 16 years in Office Administration. She has 3 children and 3 grandchildren. Tracy is thrilled to announce that she has accepted the position of BNA's Governance Coordinator and is looking forward to working with the Chief, Council, Staff and Band Members.



Energy East Assistant/Cultural Coordinator

The role for Energy East Assistant is to work with Chief and Council and the community, and to act as the liaison between the community and TransCanada pipeline. TransCanada has proposed a Project to convert one of their current gas pipelines to oil. My job is to research and talk to our members and gather information about our First Nation in order to protect and preserve our land from oil spills or damage that might come from a future spill. Our goal is to map areas of interest within the project area and protect them for the future generations.

I have and will be doing interviews with community members to ask them about their concerns regarding this Project. During these meetings, we will be mapping sacred grounds, hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering areas, and cultural heritage sites. I will assist in the completion of Cultural use surveys and interviews related to the community's use within the Project area, and support the development of impact and mitigation options with our members. I have prepared and organized material for community members who may want any information on the proposed Project. TransCanada has also provided BNA with brochures on information regarding this project. If it were to proceed, this proposed project would not be slated to begin until 2020 or beyond, in which we hope to have our lands and waterways mapped and protected. I will do my best to answer the questions and concerns that the members may have about this Project.

Our first report will be sent to TransCanada outlining some of BNA's heritage sites and land and water values on maps. If any member has questions or concerns, please contact me at the office at 807-623-2724, or by email at amandula@bnafn.ca.

Along with my role as Energy East Coordinator, I am also the Cultural Coordinator for BNA. I have started an Ojibwe Language Class to try and preserve our Heritage. I hope to continue to keep this class going in the future upon funding. This year, I also did a Regalia making class. This class dealt with making your own Regalia. We has so much fun doing this class and hope to do another class also in the future for our members. I enjoy working on these projects and have learned about so many different aspects of both positions.



Miigwetch

Audrey Mandula



BNA Holds Sawmill Training For Members

This fall, BNA held sawmill training in Thunder Bay through funding received from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs' Aboriginal Economic Development Fund. It was 5 weeks in duration, and took place both at the Confederation College, and at Wayne Howarth's facility west of Thunder Bay. Through this training, members were taught about the fundamentals of working in a sawmill setting. Trainees were shown different aspects of this work, which included use of Wayne's planer and molder, as well as his kiln. Saw sharpening, front-end loader training, and a chainsaw course were also part of the hands-on education received through this course.



The trainees who participated in the sawmill training program were able to learn a tremendous amount during the short duration. As a result of the training, several items were built by the trainees that will be used to market the skills of our members, and purchase our products. Some of these items include a bus-stop, a bridge, benches, and plant potters. The skills shown by the trainees impressed both the Confederation College and Wayne the trainer, who ended up hiring one of the trainees, Wilfred Potan, to assist him in his operations when he requires an extra hand. Wayne will also be supporting the new sawmill operation by mentoring the new workers for a week once the new facility becomes operational.



BNA partnered with the Confederation College for this training, so as a result all participants received an official Certificate of Completion from the Con College, as well as all additional certifications received though the theory portion of the training.

Trainees: BNA congratulates all successful graduates of the sawmill training program. They include: John McGuire, Doug Perkles, Ian Fullerton, Jack Fullerton, Nathan Koronkiewicz, Michael Lesperance, Rose Antosiak, Wilfred Potan, Cameron Binguis, and Josh Thompson (BZA).

BNA Holds Heavy Equipment Operator Training

Due to the success of last year's HEO training, the Confederation College once again approached BNA to hold a course on our reserve. Trainees spent 8 weeks working with the excavator, dozer, backhoe and grader, and worked on both the BNA and pit roads. Along with Brian Hertz from last year, Robbie Deans, a BNA member, was the secondary trainer for this course. All trainees received amazing hands-on experience.

Trainees: BNA congratulates all successful graduates of the HEO training. They include: Danelle Clarke, Austin Mickelson, Nathan Koronkiewicz, John McGuire, Ian Fullerton, Jack Fullerton, Austyn McGuire (BZA), and Josh Thompson (BZA).



The Namewaminikan Hydroelectric Project: Construction Begins

In June of this year, construction commenced on the 10 MW Namewaminikan (Sturgeon) River Project. Generating stations will be constructed in two sites, Twin Falls and Long Rapids. The 3 First Nation partners in the Project with Groupe Axor, BNA, AZA and BZA, have worked through the Axor Coordinator, Joe Hanlon, on ensuring that the communities benefit throughout the construction stage.

Partnerships with Sub-Contractors

The 3 First Nations have so far partnered with two sub-contractors for this Project. The first contractor, Trifactor, was supported after assurances that there would be profit-sharing with the First Nations, as well as assurances of employment and equipment rentals. Two BNA members, Rob Calder and Luke Hudson, were employed through this contractor.

The second contractor, Gridlink, received support from the First Nations with their assurances of employment, and an apprentice crane position that would work directly for Gridlink going forward, long after the Project's completion. BNA member Mike Lesperance, along with members of AZA and BZA, have received work with Gridlink.

Along with our partners, Axor has employed both members and affiliates of the 3 First Nations. Construction on the Project will continue throughout 2016, with completion expected at the end of next year. BNA will continue to work with its partners and coordinator to ensure that our members benefit from the construction phase of this Project.

Waaskiinaysay Ziibi Inc.

While the Little Jackfish Project is now in deferral, WZI is re-focusing its efforts on developing the transmission line from Kama to Geraldton. This 230 kV line would power Greenstone Gold's Hardrock Project and TransCanada's pumping stations (if these projects were to move ahead). BNA and its fellow First Nations in WZI have hired a consultant, and are currently working with the Matawa communities - LL58, Aroland, Ginoogaming - on this joint initiative. If we can agree to work together, we will approach the companies and the provincial government in an effort to secure the designation of this line. WZI has clearly stated that transmission lines will only go through our territories if the First Nations are equity owners in any development.



Wawasum Pellet Project

BNA and its 50/50 partner AZA have continued to push forward on the funding of our Class 20 and 10 studies with respect to our proposed Pellet Plant development in BNA's Industrial Park. Wawasum will have leveraged over \$150,000 from the Aboriginal Forestry Initiative (NRCan) by the end of this year, which will see the completion of the Class 20 engineering and updating of the business plan. In the meantime, Wawasum is working with the MNR in ensuring that our 113,000 cubic metres of hardwood is available if the two communities decide to proceed with this development. This Project, along with many of BNA's other developments, are long-term in duration, and require significant study prior to deciding whether or not to proceed with the opportunity.



Papasay Management LP

Papasay and Bee-Clean Sign Partnership

Over the last year and a half, the Papasay Board has been meeting with Bee-Clean, Canada's largest industrial cleaning company, in the hopes of forming a partnership. Bee-Clean has a strong history of working with progressive First Nations, like those in the vicinity of the Alberta oilsands. On September 10th, Papasay signed a partnership agreement with Bee-Clean, forming a new, Ab-original-owned cleaning company: Papasay Bee-Clean. The agreement will see a 3% royalty on the gross revenue of all contracts that go through the partnership, and ensures that BNA members receive employment opportunities through Bee-Clean's contracts no matter where they reside across Canada. Along with going after opportunities both large and small in our region - offices, industrial sites, etc., the company will seek out opportunities wherever they lie throughout the province if they make sense for the partnership. We hope that this new initiative will increase employment opportunities for members, and see a revenue stream for the corporation.



New Sawmill Business Plan



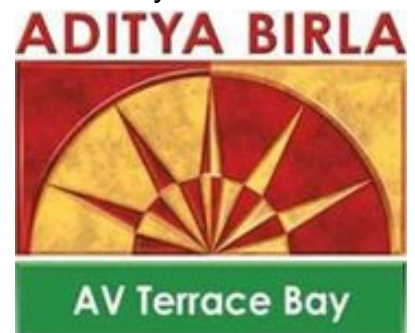
With funding from the Aboriginal Economic Development Fund, Papasay was able to get a revamp on its sawmill business plan. Through the work of gck Consulting, FP Innovations and Campbell Collaborations, a new approach was taken. It looked at a smaller, niche operation which would grow slowly and organically over time. The Papasay Board is working to cautiously plan for the opening of the sawmill facility. However, no operation will commence until all risks associated with this development have been adequately dealt with. Promoting responsible economic development will continue to be an important pillar of this Council, and the membership will continue to be updated as we proceed.

LNFM and the eSFL

The downturn in the forest sector over the last decade has been difficult on the finances of our forest management company. So much so, that our previous General Manager claimed we were nearing bankruptcy. In 2014, the MNR approached the First Nation shareholders of Lake Nipigon Forest Management Inc. (LNFM) regarding bringing on industry and municipalities to the Management of the Lake Nipigon Forest. While it would solve our financial woes, we would lose the first right of refusal with respect to harvesting in our forest. Papasay and its counterparts in the RRIB, AZA and BZA Trusts were approved for funding from NRCAN which provided for a review of the "Enhanced Sustainable Forest Licence" (eSFL) agreement, as well as the LNFM management structure. As a result, the 4 First Nations changed its management team, and have told the MNR that we are not interested in signing the eSFL at this time. It is a true success story that speaks to the power of First Nation unity.

AV Terrace Bay Deal

This past November, Papasay, along with AZA and BZA Trusts, signed a 5-year deal with AV Terrace Bay for the harvesting of fibre on 75% of the Lake Nipigon Forest. In return for their secured access to fibre, LNFM will now be financially solvent for the next 5 years thanks to the up-front payment of Forest Management Fees to the corporation, and each entity will see yearly profits as a result of the harvesting. Through LNFM, the First Nation harvesters will seek out as many opportunities as possible through our deal with AVTB, and see to it that employment opportunities in the forestry sector be incorporated in future forestry operations. It is the start of a new era in the forestry sector.



Governance Coordinator Report

Governance Development

The biggest project within BNA is the completion of the Membership Code. We will be bringing the draft membership code to the community for consultation and input. This ensures that every member has a voice when deciding our path forward. Following this process the next step would be the ratification of the membership code. The document is waiting funding so that the Membership Code can be reviewed and completed by a lawyer.

Membership

A database has been developed to store member's information. This allows BNA to send out mail-outs and email information to all the members in a timely manner. Any changes in addresses or membership are processed through the database. The Governance Coordinator also works with individual members to complete the different applications when applying for status or a new Indian status card (SCIS). The Membership Database is an information hub that allows for quicker recovery of information and organization. If you feel that you are being missed please confirm your address with the Governance Coordinator in case your information has changed. My email address is tgibson@bnafn.ca.



Aerial Spray Committee

As a result of recent public outcry on the issue of aerial spraying, an aerial spray committee has been set up to look at potential alternative tending methods on the Lake Nipigon and Kenogami Forests. Along with looking at other methods like manual tending, the committee is looking to other countries to see what they have done to manage the forest instead of spaying. One of the results of the committee's work will most certainly be increased communication with the First Nations. For further information, speak with Jordan in the office.

Lands & Community Development

Lands Committee

With the Land Code coming into effect this year, Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek was required to enact a Code to establish the procedure for the Lands Committee election, including transitional rules for the election of the first members of the Lands Committee. The Code is called the Lands Committee Election Code and will be used to guide the elections that will be taking place in early 2016. The Lands Committee, which shall be composed of five (5) members, will have four (4) members that will be elected by the membership, and one (1) Committee member whom will be appointed by Council. The committee will serve a term of (4) years and will be aligned with Council elections.

If you or anyone you know is interested in sitting on the BNA Lands Committee, please stay tuned for the Nomination Meeting that will be taking place in early 2016. In order to run in the election, a CPIC (Criminal Reference Check) along with a \$50.00 deposit will be require at the Nomination Meeting. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jeremy Bonhomme at the Band Office.

Lands Advisory Board's Annual General Meeting 2015; T'Sou-ke Nation, British Columbia

With the 5-year funding agreement coming to a close, all operational Land Code communities were required to attend the Annual General Meeting to discuss the LABRC's approach to negotiating the Funding Agreement for the next 5 years. With approval granted from all operational Land Code Communities, the LABRC can now begin negotiations with the Federal Government to make the process fairer for operational communities as many communities were underfunded in the prior funding agreement.



Implementing the BNA Land Code

Following the successful ratification of the BNA Land Code, BNA is required to develop and implement a number of land laws within the initial years of operation, these laws include:

Environmental Laws

Immediately following the Election of the Lands Committee, the Lands Department and the Lands Committee will be working closely together on the development of the Environmental Laws for BNA, which are required within the first three (3) years of operation. The Environmental Laws are among the most important Land Laws to be passed under the Land Code, and due to the complexity of the laws, the development of the Environmental Laws will be a lengthy, and on-going process which will require regular community consultation.

Matrimonial Real Property Laws

The Matrimonial Real Property Law was required within the first 12 months of enacting the BNA Land Code. The MRP Law, or “Spousal” Law, sets out the rules for what happens to private interests in reserve land that are held by one or both spouses, such as Certificates of Possession, or leases, when their relationship breaks down. BNA chose to enact its own Matrimonial Real Property Law as it allows the possibility to amend the law over time, whereas the Federal MRP Law allows no such opportunity. On August 8th, 2015, Members of BNA cast their ballots in a Ratification Vote on the BNA MRP Law, which was developed by the BNA MRP Committee, and by an impressive majority (99% in favour), the community gave a clear message that they accepted the proposed BNA MRP Law.

Land-Use Plan

Under the First Nation Lands Management Act and as part of the Land Code Process, a Land Use Plan is required within a reasonable amount of time following implementation of the Land Code. In efforts of fulfilling this requirement, BNA has utilized its Capital Plan, which was brought to the community for input during its development, to complete surveying work which will ultimately form the Land Use plan. The Land Use Plan will be ratified by the community as a Land Law under the BNA Land Code.



Figure 1: Photo taken following the successful ratification of the BNA MRP Law on August 8th, 2015. Left to right: Deputy Ratification Officer, Jeremy Bonhomme; Ratification Officer, Catherine Banning; Councilor Lillian Calder; and, Scrutineer, Tracey Gibson.



Miigwetch!