



ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2018 NEWSLETTER

“If we’re not a nation and we’re not powerful will we be able to stand up to other claims on our territory? If we’re a nation only then can we do those things. When you’re old you will have a chance to look back and know you’re a powerful nation. Do it for the sake of the future. That’s what your ancestors want.”

Chief John French



Our theme for this year’s AGA was “Agents of Change,” and based on the great presentations from our councilors, staff, and negotiators we really lived up to the theme.

Takla has had a very difficult year, with deaths in the community affecting everyone. But we came through these tragedies with strength. We have new teams, like the Takla Forest Advisory and Steering Committee that are bringing more and more members into the decision-making process. And our negotiations with the province are

slowly but surely bringing our nation towards total self-determination in our territory.

There are a few things I wanted to highlight at the AGA and in this newsletter for those who couldn’t make it to the meeting.

First, it’s important that we all start thinking about what the future will look like, and how we will become a strong and unified nation. Being one Nation, one voice is not about disrespecting, it’s about strengthening. If we’re not a Nation

“Don’t be shy of who you are. Be proud of who you are! We are First Nations.”

Wally Charlie Sr



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and we're not powerful will we be able to stand up to other claims on our territory? If we're a nation only then can we do those things. When we are old we will have a chance to look back and know we are a powerful nation. This means getting our youth involved in leadership and in administration. I won't be here forever, and my hope is to leave a great thing behind, something that our young people can enter into.

Second, in everything we do we need to keep our traditions and our land at heart. I hear this from our members all the time, and it's the first instruction that I give to our negotiating team every time we meet.

There are problems on our land — there aren't enough salmon, there aren't enough moose — but we are starting to regain the strength we always had to stand up for our lands and our culture.

Third, we need to think about healing. These agreements we are negotiating with the province and with industry are going to give us back our rights to decide what happens here.

Money is going to start flowing into our nation. But if we aren't careful, that money will only poison us. We need to use that money to help us heal our lands and ourselves. Only then will we be well enough to make

Announcing new Takla members! Please welcome Wekeisha, Nyeisha, and Aiden!

Social Development Worker Ann Abraham presented three potential members to the members gathered at the AGA.

A vote was held and Wekeisha Fox-Wesley, Nyeisha French-Cryderman, and Aiden French-Cryderman were all accepted and welcomed as members of Takla Nation.

To keep up to date about all the Nation's news, check out Takla's Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/TaklaLake>

And sign up for the email newsletter at: <http://eepurl.com/dhm46r>



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smart decisions based on our traditions and our ancestors.

The AGA was an opportunity for everyone to come together to share our vision for the future. I am always humbled by the strength of our people. And I know that we are only becoming stronger. I invite you to look over these pages, think about our future, and join me in contributing to the strength of our Nation. There are many ways to get involved — we will

be hosting an evening in Prince George soon.

This summer we will have a gathering at Takla where we can come together, eat dried beaver and salmon, and discuss the most important issues facing us. This fall we will have another Culture Days event. And of course I can always be reached for questions at chief@taklafn.ca

Thank you,
Chief John French



Announcing our new name and logo! You may have noticed our new logo on the front cover of this newsletter.

Chief French and the Takla Nation councilors felt it was time for a new logo to represent the exciting new direction the Nation is forging. And the new name, Takla Nation, allows us all to feel unified — whether you live in the territory or outside of it.

Thanks to **Karen Erickson** for this great design, and to all the entries to the logo contest!



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“As beautiful as those mountains are out there, there is beauty in how we support each other, dealing with historical sexual abuse, mental health.

We are a resilient nation. Takla is always one of the first communities to say Yes! We'll do this! We're the first ones in for pilot projects, which means we're first for much of the funding, which serves our community.

We do our work by looking at who we are, being honest, and now by gathering and tracking data so we can plan for the future.

As a Council we are striving to do things properly, planning for the future. As families, we have a low ratio of children and families involved with the Ministry.”

Deputy Chief Sandra Teegee



“We all have a role to play in this community. It's not his job or her job, it's all of us together as a community.”

Councilor Willy Korolyk



“Maybe we have to come together more often and talk. It's a wonderful feeling to be together with one another, with respect and love.” Elder Frank Willia



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HEALTH AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

We all know that Takla struggles with family violence, sexual abuse, addiction, and mental health. Chief and Council have put healing at the top of their priorities going forward, and Deputy Chief Sandra Teegee and her team are working on new concrete strategies to deal with these issues.

- The Nation has hired two new mental health workers, including one woman. They're running programs in Takla Land-ing for addictions and mental health.
- We have new parent-ing programs and a read-ing club.
- Talking about and

integrating traditional knowledge and skills into public health.

- Building youth and family engagement, es-pecially around making healthier choices.
- Researching emerging issues like the impacts of video gaming and gam-bling.
- More workshops com-ing from our new mental health workers.
- Training staff in trau-ma support.

Health and social development are also strengthening the systems we already have in place, and planning for the future:

- Planning a diagnostic centre with pharmacy, day beds, and chronic disease treatment on-site.



"I feel very good about where we're going today, everyone's voice is being heard. We are very proud of our Nation here. We are going to help ourselves and help other people."
Victor



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- Building consistent policy and procedures that will apply to everyone.
- Continually assessing and improving services for the community.
- Ensuring Takla's voice is heard outside the Nation, to make sure our needs are met.
- Community Health Representatives are work-

ing throughout the community, visiting the school, and checking on buildings with the Environmental Health Officer.

- Family Preservation Worker Flora Abraham is building parenting and responsibility programs, and a reading club to help people deal with the trauma of sexual abuse and family violence.

HEY, BUS RIDER!

A new bus is coming to Takla! Dawn George was successful in getting Highway of Tears funding for the bus, which is being custom built to include wheelchair access and an extra heavyweight frame.

It should be ready by May 2018. The team is working out routes and costs for tickets. The bus route will include other Nations' members, and after 5 years it will become Takla's bus.

"This is where we have to get all the groundwork done, put it in perspective and support what everyone is doing – it's all connected. I commend Chief and Council for their work, for all the resource workers they have put together. It's really something to see, as a Band that we've come this far."

*Michael Teegee,
Takla Forest Advisory
Member*



Housing Committee: A housing committee is being formed! If you're interested in participating, please get in touch with George Richardson: housing@taklafn.ca



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CAPITAL & HOUSING, OPERATION & MAINTENANCE

Takla Nation has complex problems that need cooperation to be solved. That's why the Capital and Housing, and the Operation and Maintenance departments are working together to get the work done. Councilor Wilma Abraham and Operation and Maintenance Manager Ernie French Downey presented on the work those departments are doing, including:

- Completing the solid waste management centre

by July 31 this year. Water and wastewater systems are being maintained and are operating within the national and provincial standards.

- Having a regular schedule for Public Works maintenance.
- Fire prevention activities like installing smoke detectors, carbon dioxide detectors, and fire extinguishers in all homes. The team is also working towards a new fire hall at Takla Landing.
- Capital projects for 2018-19 include three duplexes, a six-plex unit, and new teacherages.



“Our employees in O&M and Housing are building connections to make things easier and make sure the work gets done. This is supported by the rest of Chief and Council, because it's about stability. If we get policies and procedures, and systems in place, nothing should change when the Council changes, or the portfolios change.”

Councilor Wilma Abraham

Information for Students: The post-secondary student handbook is full of information, and can be found on the Takla Nation website: <http://www.taklafn.ca/news-events>



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HOUSING

We all know that housing in Takla Landing needs a lot of work, and thanks to Housing Manager George Richardson and his team that work is happening!

Chief and Council heard from the community, and approved a housing policy in August 2017. New houses will be constructed starting this summer.

- 3 three-bedroom duplexes
- 6 one-bedroom units

The new six-plex units are passive homes: heat from appliances, fixtures, and body heat generates most of the heat required so hydro costs should be very low.

There are 60 families on the waiting list, with various

needs. George noted the community has some questions to grapple with: homes with seasonal occupancy, whether empty homes should be fixed up and occupied, planning to meet changing needs, and generating or assigning funding to cover the Housing shortfall.

George and Housing Assistant Cody Johnny have a housing maintenance strategy in place, which is focused on getting the most critical work done first.

Last year Chief and Council allocated \$200,000 for emergency work, as well as leveraged CMHC and INAC funding. None of this money comes from INAC — the Nation has to come up with the funds ourselves, and thanks to our economic development work we're starting to become self-sufficient.

“In the last year we discovered we were more than 2 million dollars behind in housing maintenance because little was done in previous years. So, we gathered data and focused on emergency issues, which the Band put \$200,000 to.

This summer we will look again and take another step. Remember, there is no funding for housing maintenance from INAC, so we have to become responsible for this ourselves.”

Chief John French

Housing brought out more questions and ideas than any other topic. Watch for the Q&A section at taklafn.ca/AGA2018 for more information!



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EDUCATION

There is exciting news for students in Takla Landing — the College of New Caledonia will be starting an Academic and Career Development Upgrading program. Eleven students will be able to take the program from this spring to February 2020. The program begins with a

student success course, followed by English and math upgrading.

The College is hiring an instructor and program assistant in Takla Landing to ensure everyone's success in the program. And, with stronger Internet services coming to Takla, students will have remote access to College courses.

Takla has formed an Education Advisory Committee, with Terms of Reference being developed. Councillor William Korolyk and Education Coordinator Sheena Teegee have also been visiting Takla students in Prince George high schools, talking about the importance of staying in school, planning

post-secondary studies, and returning to the community to share their skills and knowledge. There are still many challenges for students and families having to leave Takla for high school, though the graduation rate is improving. The Education team continues to work on the INAC policy issues related to high school access.

The Takla Forestry Advisory was developed to support Chief and Council's decision to collaborate with Takla families on lands planning and problem-solving. Involvement of all families ensures that the Lands and Resources Department programming and negotiations fully respect and consider Takla's traditional values. If you have a question about how Takla's forests are being managed, talk to a Forest Advisory member!

"We all have a connection with our lands and resources: it can be controversial because it is so important to all of us." Councillor Chris French



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LANDS & RESOURCES

The Takla Nation is leading the Carrier Sekani First Nations in negotiating to regain our decision-making powers over our lands and resources. Chief and Council have been working hard in these negotiations, and Takla's Lands and Resources Department headed by Lisa Krebs is starting to see results in achieving their overall goal of supporting the title, rights, and economic and cultural development of the Nation.

With another regional land use planning exercise coming, Takla needs to be ready to negotiate about conservation areas and special management. With Takla Nation moving from collaboration

and into full jurisdiction on fish and wildlife we are well ahead of the game. Our current negotiations are about the Nation taking control over how environmental and cultural resources are managed, increasing the revenue we receive from resource development, and changing forestry tenure and practices. All of this is very exciting, and more information will be made available as these negotiations develop.



“We all heard from our families there’s too much logging, too fast. So, we pushed for hard partition. Now, we’ve seen a 50% reduction in the Annual Allowable Cut in our territory. That’s what we’re doing, what we’re trying to do. Come and talk to the Steering Committee, talk within your families about your area, about being on the land and using it, because title and rights fade if we’re not using it. Bring it to us and we’ll push it forward from where we are.”

Elke Lepka, Takla Forest Advisory

“We all have a connection with our lands and resources: it can be controversial because it is so important to all of us.” Councilor Chris French



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SOCIO-CULTURAL INITIATIVES

Part of the Lands & Resources Department, Socio-Cultural makes sure that our values are front and centre in both government and industry negotiations. Manager Sylvia Jack is guided by SpecTakla, a group of Takla members dedicated to strengthening Takla culture and language. There are a lot of amazing new initiatives underway:

- A Takla Carrier language website and dictionary is in development.
- We've had four Takla culture days so far, at different times of year. These bring Takla members together from everywhere to participate in traditional activities. These are being captured in short

documentaries posted to Takla's Facebook page (facebook.com/taklalake/). Culture days in 2018 will incorporate gathering Takla myths.

- Carrier curriculum: Sylvia and her team are creating social studies curriculum using maps; history curriculum, including timelines; and science curriculum.
- Community awareness through technology: a new project using modern tools to promote cultural information collection and usage. The project incorporates skills development for members.



"I want to encourage everyone here, you all have your own traditional territory. Know where you're at in your lands. I want to do my mom and dad's map and identify how much should be protected and how it could be protected. Do your own land use study, use that, and bring it forward. There's a lot of work to be done here, but in order for this to move forward we have to have more meetings within ourselves."

*Dolly Abraham,
Takla Forest Advisory
Steering Committee*

"It is important that every family and traditional territory talk about their lands and bring it up to the Committee, so we can bring it to the table and bring it to governance, so we can be in the same boat and not have disagreement with anyone."

Monique Williams, Takla Forest Advisory Steering Committee



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GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT NEGOTIATIONS

Takla Nation has had huge success in government-to-government negotiations, but all three current agreements are set to expire in April 2018: the Collaboration Agreement, the Environmental Socio-Cultural Initiatives Agreement, and the Interim Pathways Forward Agreement.

The Pathways 2.0 Agreement will replace the current agreements, creating a new relationship for the next five years, leading up to a comprehensive reconciliation agreement.

Takla is now sitting with the Province and collaboratively drafting the language going into approvals. This has really changed the game. Takla was originally excluded from the Mount Milligan table, but because of some of the ethno-historical work that was done we were able



to demonstrate strength of claim in that area; the Province now recognizes Takla has the strongest strength of claim.

“The work you’re doing here at Takla is truly innovative and precedent-setting; a number of folks across Canada are watching. Senior bureaucrats and ministers in Ottawa and Victoria are talking about the work Takla is leading. Provincial bureaucrats are looking at Takla and the team Takla has assembled to lead the way, not just for our negotiations, but more broadly the new sets of agreements being developed between Canada, the province of BC and Indigenous governments. The Takla Forest Advisory Steering Committee is governance in action.”

Scott Smith, Takla Nation’s Lawyer and a member of our negotiating team

Were you in an Indian Day School? If so, contact Scott Smith about a class action lawsuit being put together by his firm Gowlings at Scott.smith@gowlingswlg.com or 604-891-2764



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Both BC and Canada have committed to negotiate a Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement (CRA) with four areas: culture, economic development, stewardship, and governance. Chief and Council want to eventually be able to apply Takla law to Takla territory, and to move to self governance under a CRA. This has never

been done in Canada G2 and is a completely different approach for the federal and provincial governments. CRA is not a treaty. It is not about ceding and surrendering, or modifying, Aboriginal rights. It is based on rights recognition and implementation, through intergovernmental arrangements.

“The vision of Chief and Council is to prepare governance structures necessary to apply Takla law to Takla territory, and to move to self governance under a Comprehensive Reconciliation Agreement over the next 5 years.

The CRA is not a threat. It is not ceding or surrendering or modifying Aboriginal rights. It is based on rights recognition and implementation, through intergovernmental arrangements. Takla and other Carrier Sekani First Nations will negotiate Aboriginal title by agreement in the CRA. This has never been done in Canada before.”

Scott Smith, Takla lawyer

“It’s a really difficult place we’re in, trying to reconcile from the beginning of time and what has happened to our people. As leadership we have put it out there, asked you to come in and help us with this... When we’re making these agreements, we’re getting the best revenue sharing to do what? I hope it is to raise children, with good education, health, clean living. Whatever their potential is, they can achieve that. I hope that we can move away from a 98% dependence on INAC funding... We’re bringing solutions.”

Chief John French

“When you’re on the land, take pictures of that, so you can show continuity of use, which is important for strength of claim and title.” Lisa Krebs, Lands & Resources Manager



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KEMESS UNDERGROUND MINE

Takla consultant Terry Kuzma updated the Assembly on the Kemess Underground Mine three-Nation partnership of Takla, Tsay Keh Dene, and Kwadacha (known as Tse Keh Nay or TKN). Takla will see revenue from this agreement, as well as contracts for services in the mine.

The TKN Amended and Restated Partnership Agreement was signed in 2017, and it states that all decisions must be by consensus between the three Nations.

This Agreement determines which open book contracts will be pursued collectively or by an individual nation. Takla has

succeeded in acquiring the Powerline Brushing Contract and submitted a bid for the Omineca Road Maintenance Contract. Kwadacha is pursuing Air Services Contract and Tsay Keh Dene is pursuing the transportation services contract. Qualified TKN members have first opportunity for employment, including with sub-contracts.

The Impact Benefit Agreement for the mine includes environmental protection, employment and training, contracting opportunities and financial participation. It also protects and preserves Amazay Lake and the lands around it.

The Economic Community Development Agreement outlines how BC will

“We are building our departments; sooner rather than later Council will become leaders, not administrators. We need to get back to the community, and to the politics so we can best represent this Nation.”

Chief John French



“What John Allen has been emphasizing is what some of the more successful Nations north of the border have been doing: are we going to deal as a Nation, or are we going to deal as individuals? We are dealing as a Nation.” Deputy Chief Sandra Teegee



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share 37.5% of future mine royalties with the TKN Nations. We will start to see that revenue flow

when the mine goes into production, estimated in 2023.



“It’s really good to see professionalism coming from all our departments: the cooking staff, health station, in our office. It’s good to see we’re making changes and people are jumping on board. There’s always going to be controversy but at the end of day I think everyone sees it is needed, it is being done, and everyone is accepting it.”

Councillor Chris French

BC RAIL PROPERTY

The BC Rail Property review (3-for-1 land exchange) has been a big money loser for the Nation: since 1999 it has cost Takla \$617,000 to own that property. With both a legal review and environmental assessment showing no issues, the Nation is now considering options for the property. Chief and

Council heard some ideas from members at the AGA on what to do with the land — but since the area is zoned heavy industrial, and there are no services on the site, it doesn’t lend itself to development. The best way forward is likely to sell the land and purchase something else that can provide the Nation with income, not cost more money.



If you are interested in getting involved in an Empowerment Group, contact Frank Alec at taklaadminmanager@taklafn.ca.



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BAND ADMINISTRATION

Band Administration Manager Frank Alec is working hard to set things up for our youth to see a new Takla Nation. He's working to improve member services and administrative systems. The Empowerment Groups he formed last summer for men and women are still active. These groups are helping Takla Members get involved in the governance of our Nation, and two new groups will get started this spring.

On the administrative side, Frank is working with Finance and with managers to consolidate work plans and budgets, so all staff members will know what their budgets are at all times and can make informed decisions. He is focusing on training staff, mentoring young people, and building our use of technology.

Soon, Takla will also have a Human Resources Department to help with the Nation's administration.



The Nation would like to recognize and thank former controller Vivian Pylatiuk, who is retiring at the end of March. Vivian took over the Nation's books at a very difficult time, with a \$10-million deficit.

Thank you for your service, Vivian!



We are building our departments; sooner rather than later Council will become leaders, not administrators. We need to get back to the community, and to the politics so we can best represent this Nation. Chief John French



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AUDIT AND FINANCE

Takla Nation's financial position is getting stronger according to the Nation's auditor Brent Bursey. We have made significant improvements over the past three years, and are now in a solid financial position.

Rick Turgeon, Takla's Director of Finance, noted several things:

- Chief and Council have established an Administration Committee, which includes Wilma Abraham as the Council representative, and Heather Abraham and Edna Agla as appointed community members.
- Managers are going to be preparing their own budgets now and will be accountable to it. This will

take a lot of management time, but provides financial modelling, financial planning, and management control. Membership, Chief and Council set the vision and strategy. Managers identify where they want to go, and how to get there from here.

- Chief and Council want to take the next step in managing the Nation's finances, so we're going to a budget-based system, which will mean administration can get timely and accurate information to Chief and Council, so they can make decisions.
- For the first time, we will have an approved budget for the next fiscal year by March 31st. This is huge progress!

To see all the PowerPoint presentations, the snowshoe-making video, and a video of the children's presentation, go to the 2018 AGA webpage at: www.taklafn.ca/aga2018 Questions left in the Question Box at the AGA have been answered, and that information is also posted on the website.



Get involved with SpecTakla! If you're passionate about our culture, get involved with SpecTakla! Contact Sylvia Jack, Lands and Resources Department at: lands@taklafn.ca



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SASUCHAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

With Sasuchan's first full year behind us, we are seeing some great possibilities opening up for the Nation's economic development, and for training and work opportunities for members and member-owned businesses.

Tom Lewis, CEO of Sasuchan, told the AGA that the goal of the company is to create wealth for Takla Nation, to create employment, to create business development opportunities, in a manner that protects the culture and protects the land.

Sasuchan is not focused on short-term, Band-Aid

wealth creation, but is looking at building relationships and contracts that are long term, and helping people achieve their full capacity and the right set of skills for the jobs available.

Sasuchan is committed to revenue generation for the Nation, employment for qualified members, and supporting business development opportunities for individuals and community-based businesses.

Looking to the next five years, Sasuchan is examining:

- Forestry: field work, forestry planning, road maintenance for both forestry and mining, and all the post-harvest activities

“Right now, we are in the biggest changes that have ever happened, and we as a Tribal Council are at the leading edge. Everyone in Canada is looking at us. This is a totally different thing – we are rewriting history. I want to recognize Council, your Chief – they’ve got the toughest job of anyone. John Allen is an anchor at that table, he holds it all together. He’s got some of the best people in the province working for you. It’s like bringing in Wayne Gretzky of the business world. It’s mind boggling.”

CSTC Deputy Chief Reg Mueller

“What Chief John wanted to do in this term is equip our Nation with education, experience and capacity building. It’s wonderful to see where our young people are developing and returning to the Nation.”

Deputy Chief Sandra Teegee



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like tree planting, brushing, surveying, and environmental assessments.

- Mining: camps, construction, road maintenance, and a safety services company.
- Community based business: community

CHIEF'S CLOSING REMARKS

We're not the only one in this change; other nations are also going through these difficult discussions. I would like to commend Takla for letting us, as Chief and Council, function. Though you keep us on our toes, you continue to move with us. How do we bring this all together? Our need is healing, breaking the

heating, small-scale saw-mill for housing.

- Tourism: working on a feasibility study for construction of a lodge at Takla Landing.
- Business development support for members.

cycle. But we have this infestation of drugs, alcohol, sexual abuse, abuse – trauma. I've been through it, I know what it is. I've been looking at this for 14 years; what would true healing be for our people? It's very complicated, but we are working towards it. I have to thank my Council. Sandra has seen it, tries to protect when she sees something positive going on. With Chris, your growth up to this

Takla Trading Post: Onward and Upward!

The Takla Trading Post is seeing some big improvements! There have been important maintenance and repairs to the building, changes in who is supplying food and other goods, new training for staff, and new management processes. Tom Lewis, the CEO of Sasuchan, told the AGA that the Trading Post historically lost \$250,000 per year, or 40% of revenues. In 2017 it lost about 15%. He noted that this positive change is due to all of the hard work of the staff that has gone into the Trading Post.

Members presented a lot of ideas for the Trading Post, and Tom and his team will be looking into them, including carrying food for diabetics and people with other dietary restrictions.



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point has been so much more; you're starting to understand this whole process. With Wilma, kind of in the back bringing us together, you help our unity piece and do good work in the community trying to fix housing and services in Takla. Willy, I encourage you to be as blunt as you were; at the end of the day people will appreciate that. We have more membership coming on through committees. It is so important because we need you to tell us it's okay. At the end of the day all we want is to know that our people are healing. I need you guys to keep coming in more and more.

I want you to think about: How do we become one nation, as Takla? While still being respected for

our territories. Being one nation, one voice is not about disrespecting, it's about strengthening. But what is going to happen when the money is starting to come in? If we're not a nation and we're not powerful will we be able to stand up to other claims on our territory? If we're a nation only then can we do those things. When you're old you will have a chance to look back and know you're a powerful nation. Do it for the sake of the future. That's what your ancestors want.

Chief John French



“We have our work to do. Everybody in this room, everybody in this community has a part to play in this work, in the future of your community. In each one of our communities we have to get out from under that burden and heaviness that have held us where we are, where we've been excluded from the economy, had our souls torn out of us. They put us in an Indian Act with 2-year terms so that everything gets torn up all the time. We have had to fight for everything we're getting. The only way you're going to do this is if you work together. We're going to have disagreements, it's not going to be pretty. But we don't need lateral violence going on: We're hurting ourselves, we're hurting our community. We need to work together, for the future. Think as a people. And think of your grandchildren, and their children's children. That's who you're working for right now.”

CSTC Deputy Chief Reg Mueller

“For far too long our Nation has existed on feast and famine. John said: this is where it's going to stop. You're going to have to hear our voices. He has been integral at the Tribal Council table. I'm very proud of the fact that these individuals spoke up for our north, as well as our nation.”

Deputy Chief Sandra Teegee