

4 - PA - PFN - PARTNERING WITH FIRST NATIONS

PFN - Background

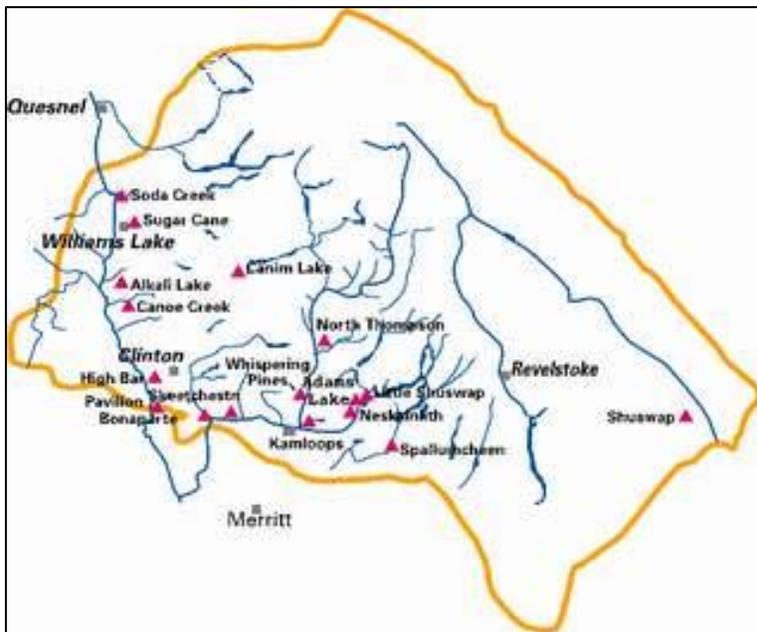
The City of Williams Lake boundary lies within the Secwepemc¹ [pronounced suh-wep-muh] traditional territory and neighbours both the T'exelcenc First Nations (Williams Lake Indian Band) and the Xat'súll First Nation (Soda Creek Indian Band). In addition to the City boundary lying within traditional territory, the City of Williams Lake is home to many Tsilhqot'in (also called the Chilcotin) people. Besides being neighbouring communities, many First Nations from throughout the region choose to live off-reserve and call the city home, making significant contributions to the Williams Lake community. In addition, the city is the commercial, education and service center for on-reserve and off-reserve aboriginals throughout the Chilcotin and Cariboo region.

Williams Lake is also the home to First Nation Tribal Council Offices (Carrier Chilcotin, Northern Shuswap, Tsilhqot'in) and a number of First Nations organizations including: Three Corners Health Society, Cariboo Friendship Society, Knucwentwecw Family Services, Cariboo Chilcotin Métis Association, Denisq'I and Nenqayni Wellness Centre. These organizations provide a variety of services to First Nations communities and individuals and are involved in many of the social planning activities in Williams Lake including Communities That Care, the Social Planning Council of Williams Lake and Area and with School District No. 27 programs.

The Secwepemc Traditional Territory

The Secwepemc territory covers a vast area; approximately 180,000 square kilometres. The territory, traditionally, was an extensive and varied environment, although much of the territory today has been impacted by forestry, mining, mass scale tourism, and other commercial development. The Secwepemc has two levels of tribal council, the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council and the Northern Shuswap Tribal Council.² The City of Williams Lake recognizes that our First Nations Bands are a recognized form of government and in addition to historical significant is why Partnering with First Nations has been singled out as a community priority.

Map to the left: Northern Shuswap Tribal Council Area.



¹ Secwepemc language resources: http://secwepemc.sd73.bc.ca/sec_language/sec_langfs.html or <http://www.secwepemc.org/>

² Secwepemculecw Land of the Shuswap Web Site. Visited December 2010. <http://www.landoftheshuswap.com/msite/land.php>

Shuswap Nation Tribal Council (SNTC) represents ten bands: Sexqeltqin (Adams Lake); Kamloops; Kenpesq't (Shuswap); Quaaout (Little Shuswap); Neskonlith; Splants'in (Spallumcheen); St'uxwtews (Bonaparte); Skeetchestn; Whispering Pines, Clinton (Pelldiq't); Simpew (North Thompson). **Northern Shuswap Tribal Council** (NSTC) is the umbrella for: Tsq'escen' (Canim Lake); Xats'ull, 'Cm'etem' (Soda Creek, Deep Creek); Stswecem'c /Xgat'tem (Canoe Creek, Dog Creek); T'exelc (Williams Lake). Non affiliated bands are: Ts'kw'aylaxw (Pavillion); Esketemc (Alkali Lake); and Llenlney'ten (High Bar).

Below, is a brief outline of the two neighbouring First Nations communities bordering the City:



The T'exelc (Williams Lake Indian Band) are members of the

Secwepemc Nation (Shuswap). Secwepemc lands extend from Shuswap Lake in the south to Quesnel Lake in the north, and from Columbia-Kootenay Range in the east to the Alexis Creek area in the west. As traditional knowledge supports, and as archaeology studies have shown, the Northern Secwepemc culture stretches back for 4,000 years in the Cariboo region. For thousands of years the T'exelc lived in semi-permanent villages in the winter and moved around on the land in the summer to collect fish, game and plant resources. The T'exelc had a rich environment and ceremonial life which continues today.³



The Xat'sull (Soda Creek Indian Band) First Nation is a member of the Great Secwepemc Nation, once known as the people of Xat'sull (on the cliff where the bubbling water comes out). Xat'sull is the northern most Shuswap tribe of the Secwepemc Nation, which is the largest nation within the interior of B.C. The Xat'sull have stewarded territory ranging from the Coast Mountains in the west and east to the Rocky Mountains. Migration and use of the lands brought about contact with neighboring peoples, including the Chilcotin and Shuswap Nations. As with many other First Nations, the Xat'sull Nation traditionally followed a hunting and gathering lifestyle centered in family groups and focused on the Fraser River and the salmon resource.



"Soda Creek Indian Reserve," 25 July 1914.
Photo: BC Archives

Census statistics, 2006, from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada show that there are currently 175 people living on reserve.

³ Williams Lake Indian Band web site. Visited December 2010. <http://www.williamslakeband.ca/>

The goal of First Nations Partnerships is to celebrate our cultural diversity and resiliency, and in so doing, honouring and respecting the long history, traditional knowledge and unique contributions of First Nations to our way of life in Williams Lake. We support the preservation and cultivation of First Nations' cultures, traditions, resources and land for all generations.

From the Imagine Our Future ICSP, in 2035, we know we will have achieved this goal when:

... **leadership roles** are filled by First Nations people in our communities, from municipal officials, to business leaders, to artists and entrepreneurs.

... **First Nations youth** are actively engaged in the community, and have the opportunity to learn and apply leadership skills.

... **respectful and harmonious relationships and open communications** predominate in all areas of collaborative planning and decision-making by local governments (City and First Nations).

... **First Nations culture, history, traditional knowledge and way of life are valued** and integral to our community and identity in Williams Lake.

... **the best place in B.C. to experience diverse First Nations culture and traditions is Williams Lake**, drawing visitors and contributing to the success of First Nations businesses.

...we have, in dialogue with federal and provincial governments, **completed treaties that are satisfactory to all parties** and result in lasting, harmonious relations with our First Nations partners.

Specific Objectives for Partnering with First Nations from previous plans and policies that are consistent with the input from the Imagine Our Future process include:

1. Continue to build and enhance working relationships with First Nations in the OCP Area, recognizing that respectful and enduring relationships with aboriginal communities provide a foundation for constructive dialogue.
2. Acknowledge that any statements, objectives and policies regarding First Nations in this OCP are without prejudice to treaty negotiations, aboriginal title and rights, or other negotiations with senior governments.
3. Recognize that local government and First Nations have a common interest in a sustainable future.
4. Protect archaeological and heritage sites from damage in accordance with the *Heritage Conservation Act*.

PFN - Specific Policy Directions

Partnering with First Nations policies have been grouped into three policy directions being:

- [Facilitation and Coordination](#);
- [Community Inclusion](#); and
- [Economic Development](#).

Additional policies relating to Partnering with First Nations can be found in the following policy sections; World Class Recreation, Cherished Local Ecosystems, Social Well-Being, Resilient Economy, and Arts, Culture, and Heritage.

Facilitation and Coordination

The following policies can assist in the establishment of mechanisms that ensure an open and comprehensive exchange of ideas and information to promote a common understanding of issues.

- PFN.1** Recognize and address local First Nation government interests in the municipal decision-making processes.
- PFN.2** Revisit existing policies, programs, and strategies to ensure that First Nations needs, ideas, and opportunities are identified.
- PFN.3** Collaborate with the T'exelcenc and Xat-sùll bands, and other governmental and community partners, to support the social and economic well-being of First Nations living in Williams Lake.
- PFN.4** Continue and enhance information sharing with First Nation communities.
- PFN.5** Engage in a process to develop an archaeological overview map for all undeveloped land in the City of Williams Lake that will be classify land as low, medium and high risk. This process will be done in partnership with the Williams Lake Indian Band.

Community Inclusion

The following policies support programs, institutions and activities that create a climate of inclusion and a sense of belonging in the City and region, for both First Nations and non-First Nations residents.

- PFN.6** Recognize and address cultural issues that may be serving as barriers to inclusion in community life.
- PFN.7** Over time work to incorporate local First Nations language into appropriate City signs, public buildings and informational materials.

- PFN.8** Over time work to incorporate local First Nations art into City Hall and other public facilities.
- PFN.9** Encourage First Nations involvement in local government activities.
- PFN.10** Adopt a policy of recognizing the traditional territory of the Secwepemc in community events and official functions.
- PFN.11** Support First Nations efforts to showcase and promote a better understanding of traditional culture and heritage.
- PFN.12** All new development is to comply with the *Heritage Conservation Act* and demonstrate that any archaeological site has been properly identified and negative impacts mitigated, including limiting the intrusion of development into identified sites and adequate buffering and landscaping in site design. New developments will be assessed against the Provincial Archaeological Sites database to determine if there is direct overlap or within an area of significant potential of a known archaeological site or that there is no overlap and mitigation measures will be required.
- PFN.13** In partnership with the local First Nations bands, support the development of a traditional arbour in the Stampede grounds.
- PFN.14** In partnership with the School District and TRU encourage the development of local aboriginal language classes for non-aboriginal people.

Economic Development

The following policies will help create a healthy and diversified regional economy, building on the strengths of both First Nations and non-First Nations.

- PFN.15** Continue to work with the Williams Lake Indian Band on the development of the Community Forest initiative.
- PFN.16** Collaborate with the local First Nations on economic development initiatives that are mutually beneficial.
- PFN.17** Encourage the provision of services that support business development and employment training opportunities for First Nations, including internship programs, secondments and work experience.