



**Southern Dakeh
Nation Alliance**

Newsletter

Hubulhsooninats'Uhoot'alh: "together we will fix it"

October 2019

SDNA initiates land closures, protects traditional Morel Mushroom harvest

The Southern Dakeh Nation Alliance's Lands and Resources Department worked with the Chiefs and technical experts to develop the first of its kind Indigenous-led land Morel Mushroom closures within the territory this summer, to allow Indigenous people to continue to harvest as per their traditional ways. As part of wildfire recovery efforts following the 2018 wildfires in the Cariboo and West Coast natural resource regions, the Province supported local First Nations, closing specific areas to mushroom harvesting activities from July 8 to Aug. 31, 2019. However, commercial harvesting was excluded

from some fire locations considered sensitive to those member bands. The 2019 SDNA Morel Harvest Program aimed to minimize impacts to sensitive ecosystems and cultural areas, increase public safety and encourage respectful land-use practices. The SDNA has developed environmental and camp standards, as well as social and safety standards, to mitigate impacts to biologically and culturally sensitive areas. Pickers and buyers in certain wildfire areas received safety and educational materials, basic camp services, such as portable toilets, and large, animal-proof waste



Areas were closed to mushroom harvesting this year.

bins. SDNA stewardship guardians also monitored and reported on the impacts of the commercial mushroom harvest in permitted areas.

The British Columbia government and the SDNA continue to work together to enact the Foundation Framework Agreement, signed in July 2018.

SDNA, province, mark first year of framework agreement

The Southern Dakeh Nation Alliance (SDNA) and the Province of British Columbia celebrated their first anniversary of the Hubulhsooninats'Uhoot'alh: Foundation Framework Agreement this summer. Hubulhsooninats'Uhoot'alh — Dakeh for "together we will fix it" — lays out a plan for building comprehensive reconciliation. As part of the three-year agreement, B.C. and the SDNA are working together to address land and resource

management, increase participation in the forest sector, economic development and culture and wellness priorities. A prime intention is to develop a framework for collaborative decision-making, prioritizing key areas in core Southern Dakeh traditional territory. As part of these discussions, B.C. and the SDNA have made progress on key priorities, and are working toward a shared vision for long-term reconciliation, including recognition of

Aboriginal title and rights in a negotiated context. This also involves progress on the apportionment of forest volume in the Quesnel Timber Supply Area, wildlife management and regulation of mushroom harvesting. Both parties, along with the federal government, are working on a proposed concept for a Nation centre in Quesnel and a wellness centre in Ulkatcho to promote governance, nation building, health and culture.

Meet the new faces behind the SDNA

The Southern Dakelh Nation Alliance has several people working behind the scenes. Here we feature two of them:

Justine Correia, M.A; B.A.

Hons, is a Social Scientist working in the Lands and Resources Department.

Justine holds a Master of Arts in Social Anthropology and a combined Honours Bachelor of Arts in Social Anthropology and Environmental Sustainability. Justine works closely with community members to document stories, knowledge, teachings and place-based understandings. Justine said she is inspired by the beautiful landscape and people she works and finds the Southern Dakelh people's understandings and knowledge of history, the land, people, species, and the natural things that make up this amazing territory. Justine is currently working with community members and expert researchers on Land Occupancy and Land Use projects underway with the Member Nations. She is also principal researcher for SDNA's Land Governance research.

New business hours

The office will be open Monday-Thursday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. (closed for lunch) and 1p.m.– 4:30 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Drop by and visit at 59 First Avenue South, Williams Lake, or call (250) 398-3375.



Justine Correia



Nobi Suzuki

Nobi Suzuki, Ph.D; RP Bio is a Registered Professional Biologist in B.C. who previously worked at the University of Northern British Columbia, conducting research on the conservation planning of habitat for large mammals such as caribou, moose, elk, Stone's sheep, mountain goat, wolf, and grizzly bear in the Muskwa-Kechika Management Area (M-KMA). This area, one of North America's largest intact wild lands, has almost no industrial resource

development but has been used by First Nations people in millennia. Nobi moved to B.C. about 10 years ago. He taught at Quest University in Squamish, taking students to the community of Hartley Bay — home of Gitga'at First Nation — in the heart of the Great Bear Rainforest for overnight field trips.

Before that, he was involved in research projects in Oregon to assess effects of forest management practices on birds, mammals, and amphibians, and had taught at the Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. Nobi, who drifted to Oregon from Japan, has a Bachelor of Science in Forestry from Shinshu University in Japan, as well as a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Wildlife Science and Ph.D. in Forest Science from Oregon State University.

SDNA holds community meetings

The Southern Dakelh Nation Alliance is issuing its first official newsletter, following feedback from members during three community meetings this summer.

The meetings, held at Lhtako Dené Hall on July 29, Nazko Community Hall on July 30 and Ulkatcho

Community Hall on August 1, outlined the ongoing work being done to assert rights and title as well as stewardship efforts to protect plants and medicines and the moose and caribou. Executive director Shawn Holte led discussions on negotiations for rights

and title, followed by presentations from other staff. A survey asked the members how they preferred to get their information about SDNA activities. The majority listed newsletter as their top choice, followed by email and the SDNA website.



Guardians monitor, ‘respect the land’

Five First Nations members were hired this year to work as Stewardship Guardians, with duties ranging from rescuing a group of recreationalists on a remote resource road to installing ‘Respect the Land’ signs to remind people when they are in SDNA territory.

The Guardians, under supervision of a consultant, Forest Foods, were also instrumental in addressing land degradation on a recreational site occupied by a tree planting company, installed outhouses in recreational areas and patrolled sites to prevent littering and other damage. They also erected signs for commercial morel mushroom harvesting camps. The Guardians also met with Provincial Natural Resource officers and had a mentorship meeting in Nazko.



Above: Stewardship Guardians dealt with a variety of issues in their first year together. Right: Diana Gerdenits, RPF Operations Forester, SDNA

The program resulted in several learning outcomes and the Stewardship Guardians will likely see expanded duties and responsibilities next year.



SDNA, Province sign Pathways agreement



Signatories to the Pathways agreement

Chief Clifford Lebrun
Chief Stuart Alec, and
Chief Liliane Squinas,
of the Southern Dakelh

Nation Alliance and
Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Crown-Indigenous
Relations, signed a

Pathways Agreement in June committing both parties to move together to advance a lasting reconciliation and make real progress on the issues most important to the Nation Alliance. Building on the July 2018 Hubulhsooninats’ Uhoot’alh: Memorandum of Understanding for Recognition of Rights and Reconciliation, the Pathways Agreement

identifies a number of priorities that would serve as a basis for negotiations of an eventual nation-to-nation incremental reconciliation agreement. Priority topics include: acknowledgement and reconciliation, nation building, stewardship, culture and wellness, economic development, infrastructure and implementation.



Hike and camp draws diverse crowd

Forty-six Ulkatcho community members attended a camp and hike on August 10 on Besbut'a (Anahim Peak) in the traditional territories of the Ulkatcho'Wen First Nation. The community event drew both adults and youth, including three council members, Ulkatcho Chief Lynda Price, four Elders, one NHL goalie, and five hikers who live elsewhere. Thirteen out of 18 climbers made it to the summit – only one had previously made it to the summit. Significant work was required to prepare for the event, including trail clearing, route finding

and campsite preparation. An outhouse was also built and a footbridge constructed. George Warr, clinical counsellor the Carrier Chilcotin Tribal Council, participated in some of this work, aided by local men on a recovery journey to health and sobriety. They were assisted by the BC Wildfire Service, specifically the Vesta Unit crew, Raven's Unit crew, and two CIFAC crews. The weather was cooperative and the event a huge success with hot meals and beverages available at the trailhead and main camp, and transportation to the



Besbut'a (Anahim Peak).

mountain base provided to the Elders. The event resulted in a positive ripple effect throughout the community, with many members energized to do the hike themselves. Benefits of the hike and camp included mental health and wellness through healing on the

land, and a connection to culture and family history. There was also knowledge sharing by the Elders, employment opportunities such as guide, cooks, trail clearing, and teachings about traditional food gathering (berries) and traditional rights and titles.

Community survey focuses on land, resources

During the fall of 2018 to the fall of 2019, the SDNA Stewardship Department developed and conducted a community-level land and resources survey (questionnaire) that Nazko community members completed. The survey focused on getting the people's perspectives about the health of the Territory land and resources. In particular, questions were asked as to whether the Southern Dakelh believe that the health of the land is linked to their own health, if they believe that moose, caribou,

medicinal and food plant populations have declined (or not), and what the cause might be. In addition, we asked if the people wanted the SDNA Stewardship Department to seek protection for remaining native ecosystems and wetlands, moose, caribou and medicinal and food plants. What does this all mean, and what are the implications of this study? First and foremost, it means your voice has been heard. Second, the Southern Dakelh First Nations working together, plans to use

this information to preserve areas within the Territory so that food and medicinal plants are restored on the landscape, and they are sustained for future Southern Dakelh generations. Third, we plan on restoring the moose and caribou habitat through efforts by the SDNA Ungulate Working Group. Finally, we are all working together to ensure that your natural environment is brought back to health while strong economies for the Southern Dakelh people are fully supported.