



*Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond*  
**February 26 – March 4, 2016**

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# Aboriginal Arts & Culture

## Precious links to Nunavut's past head to Winnipeg gallery

**"One of the most significant public collections in the world"**

STEVE DUCHARME, February 25, 2016 - 1:05 pm



Winnipeg Art Gallery CEO and director Stephen Borys in Iqaluit putting the finishing touches on a deal that will transfer about 8,000 historic artifacts from their current storage place in Yellowknife to the WAG. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)



Some of the Inuit art and artifacts currently being housed at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. (PHOTO BY STEVE DUCHARME)

The Winnipeg Art Gallery will soon house a priceless collection of Nunavut artworks.

But museum officials there say they are merely caretakers until Nunavut creates a facility capable of housing them on its own.

The collection, some 8,000 pieces of Nunavut art spanning roughly 70 years, is en route this month to Winnipeg from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife.

“It’s truly an honour and a privilege to be working with the people of Nunavut and the government on this,” WAG director and CEO Stephen Borys recently told *Nunatsiaq News*.

“The fact they have entrusted us to care for their collection... it’s opened up a whole new set of options and ways for us to engage the North.”

The transfer south is part of [a deal](#) negotiated between the governments of Manitoba and Nunavut to store, exhibit and document the collection.

The dream, Borys said, is to see that art return to Nunavut one day. But until the Government of Nunavut builds a heritage facility of its own, the repatriation date for the artifacts remains unclear.

Both the Manitoba and Nunavut governments each contributed \$500,000 to move the GN collection to the WAG, under a five-year contract that will probably be extended, according to Borys.

“It’s more likely we will be extending that term. At the last meeting with the premier [Peter Taptuna], they looked at that. Five years seems like a long time but its really not,” he said.

A proper Nunavut heritage centre, complete with temperature and humidity control, storage capacity and the security necessary to preserve historical artifacts would take years to develop, Borys said.

Meanwhile, this deal with the WAG should save the GN some money.

Nunavut currently pays about \$1 million a year to rent facilities in Yellowknife and Ottawa to store its vast collection of 150,000 cultural and historical artifacts.

A proposed \$120-million dollar homegrown heritage facility, [raised in Nunavut’s legislature](#) in 2012, shows no actual sign of implementation.

Borys said Taptuna did not indicate when a Nunavut heritage centre could be built.

“He certainly gave an idea of the many perspectives that will go into defining what is a heritage Inuit cultural centre. They thought it would happen and 16 or 17 years later [it hasn’t],” Borys explained.

While Nunavummiut wait for spades in the ground, the current collection on its way to Winnipeg will undergo the first ever extensive modern cataloging in their history.

And even at first glance, the collection is already providing priceless insights into the early era of commercial Inuit artwork for gallery curators.

“This collection has significant holdings in Rankin Inlet ceramics and there’s really no public institution that has them [extensively],” he said.

A distinct green glaze discovered on some early ceramics from Rankin Inlet is already rewriting the history books in terms of what historians thought Kivallirmiut were producing in the mid-twentieth century.

“We didn’t think they were doing glazes until the nineties. But they were, thirty years before,” Borys indicated.

WAG curators have an unprecedented opportunity to compare the new art with more than 14,000 Inuit artifacts already in their archive.

That comparison, said Borys, will give researchers more room to explore individual communities and the local issues and themes expressed in the art.

“I pulled open drawers where I’ve seen some thematic overlaps... but there’s really no theme that’s connected to Inuit cultures that’s not been explored [in the GN collection],” he said.

Borys expects the GN collection to take centre stage once the new [Inuit Art Centre](#) is completed adjacent to the WAG in downtown Winnipeg.

The \$65-million project has faced several delays since 2010, but WAG directors are confident that construction of the building will get underway by 2017.

“At the stage we’re at with our fundraiser, I feel confident it’s going to happen. I don’t see it as delays but more as a chance for us to refine the program,” Borys said.

The new facility will allow more outreach to Indigenous students and scholars who want to study Inuit art in a modern facility.

And with the addition of the GN collection, the WAG is already looking into training students for work in Nunavut.

“We expect that through Canada Works and work-study programs, and some of the GN programs, that over the next year, beginning as early as next summer, we would be bringing some [Indigenous students] in,” Borys said.

“It’s going to benefit the next generation of people [in Nunavut].”

Although the GN collection hasn’t fully arrived in its new southern home, Borys isn’t ruling out augmenting current exhibits with the new artifacts.

And new international exhibits in France scheduled for November may also contain some of the GN collection.

Inuit art deserves to take its rightful place on the international stage and the WAG is happy to facilitate that, Borys said.

“[The artwork] represents what I’d like to think is one of the most significant public collections in the world,” he said.

The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre said in a background document that after the transfer of artwork to Winnipeg, the facility will continue to house many Nunavut artifacts.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674precious\\_links\\_to\\_nunavuts\\_past\\_heading\\_to\\_winnipeg\\_gallery/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674precious_links_to_nunavuts_past_heading_to_winnipeg_gallery/)

## **Peterborough’s Canadian Canoe Museum helps aboriginal youth connect to their heritage**

### **Students display hand-crafted canoe paddles at museum's Silver Canoe Dinner in Winnipeg**

by Bruce Head

Published February 27, 2016



A detailed look at some of the paddles hand-crafted by Manitoba aboriginal students and displayed at the Canadian Canoe Museum’s first Silver Canoe Dinner in Winnipeg (photo: Canadian Canoe Museum)

Nine aboriginal youth from Manitoba proudly displayed their hand-crafted canoe paddles and photographs at the Canadian Canoe Museum’s first Silver Canoe Dinner, held in Winnipeg on Friday, February 19th.

This was a great experience for us ... Making these character paddles got us more in touch with ourselves.

The youth, all students from Lockport Junior High School in Manitoba, had participated in a week-long paddle making and photography workshop in January sponsored by the Canadian Canoe Museum, Sony Canada, and the [International Sustainability Education Foundation](#) (ISEF).

At the workshop, the students learned the basics of photography (using cameras supplied by Sony Canada) and learned how to carve, decorate, and finish a canoe paddle.

The workshop was led by Mark Blieske, a retired media teacher who's also a woodworker and paddle maker.



Instructor Mark Blieske with seven of the nine students from Lockport Junior High School displaying their paddles at the Silver Canoe Dinner (photo: Canadian Canoe Museum)

William Miller, one of the workshop participants, spoke at the sold-out Silver Canoe Dinner and described how the workshop helped him connect to his aboriginal heritage.

“Children are the future. They are the ones we pass our knowledge to. If that knowledge does not get passed down, where does it go?” Miller said. “That is why I believe that programs that teach aboriginal youth about their culture and history are very much needed, not just in Manitoba but all over Canada.”

The Silver Canoe Dinner in Winnipeg is one of a series of dinners the Canadian Canoe Museum is hosting across Canada to engage Canadians in their canoe heritage and to share the museum's plans for a new facility.



The Canadian Canoe Museum is hosting a series of dinners across Canada to engage Canadians in their canoe heritage and to share the museum's plans for a new facility (photo: Canadian Canoe Museum)



The Silver Canoe Dinners are named after one of the most popular exhibits at the museum: a 38-centimetre canoe made of pure silver from the 19th century (photo: Canadian Canoe Museum)

The dinners are named after one of the most popular canoes at the museum: a 38-centimetre canoe made of pure silver — made in the 19th century by Garrard & Co. of London, silversmith to the Queen — that belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company governor Sir George Simpson. Future dinners are planned for Calgary, Vancouver, Quebec City, and St. John's in Newfoundland.

The nine students at the Winnipeg dinner displayed the paddles and photographs they created as a result of the January workshop, part of two programs to build the confidence of youth (especially those who self identify as First Nations, Inuit, and Metis) by providing them with practical skills and unique experiences.

Both the Paddles Across Canada program and the [Tillikum Lens Project](#) — a multi-partner program that empowers indigenous youth by enabling them to tell their stories through images — are developed and delivered by ISEF.

“We have to start giving power back to these youth,” says Jonathon Reynolds, ISEF’s Executive Director. “I’ve noticed over and over again if we give that to them, they meet us way more than halfway.”



15-year-old student William Miller, who spoke at the Silver Canoe Dinner on February 19, working on his paddle at the January workshop (photo: JT Austin / Sony Canada)



The January paddle-making and photography workshop was led by retired media teacher Mark Blieske, who’s also a woodworker, paddle maker, and wilderness guide (photo: JT Austin / Sony Canada)



Students also learned the basics of photography during the workshop, using cameras provided by Sony Canada (photo: JT Austin / Sony Canada)



Jonathon Reynolds, Executive Director of the International Sustainability Education Foundation (ISEF), examines the work of one of the students; ISEF developed and delivers the workshops with the support of partners like Sony Canada and the Canadian Canoe Museum (photo: JT Austin / Sony Canada)



The workshops help connect aboriginal youth with their heritage while providing them with practical skills and unique experiences (photo: JT Austin / Sony Canada)

Future paddle-making and photography workshops are being planned in Vancouver (participants at that workshop will attend at the Silver Canoe Dinner in Vancouver on May 13, 2016, where they'll display their finished paddles and photography) as well as at the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough in June 2016 (participants will be aboriginal youth identified by Peterborough's Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre).

“Through programs like these, the Canadian Canoe Museum is connecting with youth and especially with First Nations, Inuit and Metis youth whose heritage is so closely tied to the canoe and paddle heritage in Canada,” says Richard Tucker, Executive Director of the Canadian Canoe Museum.

Through programs like these, the Canadian Canoe Museum is connecting with youth and especially with First Nations, Inuit and Metis youth whose heritage is so closely tied to the canoe and paddle heritage in Canada.

“It is hoped that through these programs the students will feel empowered to tell their story through photography and explore new opportunities and passions related to photography, woodworking, and paddling.”

“This was a great experience for us,” Miller said when speaking to attendees at the Winnipeg dinner. “Making these character paddles got us more in touch with ourselves. The paddles were made by our own personality. Their flaws are our flaws. And the beauty within these paddles is the beauty within us.”

In the spring, Miller and the other students who participated in the first workshop will take their paddles on a canoe day trip with instructor Blieske, who’s also an experienced wilderness guide.

“I know that learning and understanding about my heritage is important,” Miller said at the dinner. “And it makes me feel proud of myself and where I come from.”

For more information about the Silver Canoe Dinner Series and to reserve tickets, visit [www.canoemuseum.ca/silver-canoe-dinner/](http://www.canoemuseum.ca/silver-canoe-dinner/).

Read more: <http://www.kawarthanow.com/kawarthanowguide/2016/02/27/canoemuseum-paddle-workshop/#ixzz41a2vcliT>

## Art project symbolizes pipeline pact

[Frank Peebles](#) / Prince George Citizen  
February 26, 2016 11:19 PM



Dignitaries surround the new work of aboriginal art created by carver George Hemeon, far right, to commemorate the signing of an agreement between TransCanada Pipelines and the Nadleh Whut'en First Nation. - Citizen photo by Frank Peebles

It has become the habit of TransCanada Pipelines to seal their aboriginal deals with a piece of original art.

Each time the company reaches an arrangement with one of the First Nations along its proposed Coastal GasLink route for liquefied natural gas, it marks the occasion with something original and aboriginal. The walls of their Prince George boardroom so far have items carved or painted by such creators as Susan Point, Henry Reese, Terry Star, Wilfred Sampson, and, as of Friday, a large circle of cedar has been added, carved and painted by Squamish First Nation artist George Hemeon.

It was presented at the ceremonial signing of the Nadleh Whut'en First Nation's agreement with the pipeline company.

Not only is Hemeon a noted B.C. aboriginal artist, he is one of the central people on TransCanada's staff in the company's efforts to negotiate fair deals for First Nations as the pipeline makes its theoretical way across northern B.C.

He thinks, long and hard, every day, about what this pipeline could mean to the affected First Nations, and how industry in general has had to change its conversation with communities, and become more inclusive in the profits and meaningful in the consultation about how and where and who will be involved in any given business idea.

That ponderance is reflected in the cedar wheel.

"The dominant figure is the raven, which in a lot of aboriginal cultures represents the bringer of the sun which means the bringer of life, so there is also the sun represented here," Hemeon said, walking viewers through the new artwork. "The smaller figure in its mouth is the human figure. It symbolizes the beginning of this relationship, a transformation of the relationship, going forward. There is a connection to the relationship, and a trust we are putting in each other, and it is like a new life being born, a new way forward together."

Hemeon has art pieces on display or in collections as far away as Japan, but has so much responsibility on the negotiation team that he has had little time for new creations. He carves regularly to keep the skills as sharp as the knives, but it isn't as much as he'd like. Therefore, a commemorative gift like this imposed on him a feeling of particular responsibility to say something meaningful with the wood.

The skills of art and the human side of business came to Hemeon through dedicated study. He graduated from the University of the Fraser Valley with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in criminal justice and minoring in applied ethics and political philosophy. He now sits on the UFV board of governors and was named to the school's Top 40 Alumni list.

After obtaining a Master's degree from Dalhousie University, he went to work for BC Hydro where he played a role in creating the Crown corporation's aboriginal procurement

policy. He worked also for the Abbotsford school district with a focus on aboriginal curriculum, and it was there that his carving took off, as he and students worked on wood together. He kept at it to the point his work was featured at the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver.

- See more at: <http://www.princegeorgecitizen.com/entertainment/local-a-e/art-project-symbolizes-pipeline-pact-1.2185791#sthash.4paS3Mmx.dpuf>

## The Revenant's Duane Howard outfitted by Haida designer for Academy Awards red carpet

**Dorothy Grant had one week to stitch outfit that could be seen by millions at Oscars**

By Stephanie Cram, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 28, 2016 10:45 AM ET Last Updated: Feb 29, 2016 10:01 AM ET



The Revenant actor Duane Howard commissioned Dorothy Grant to design his Academy Awards tuxedo. (Dorothy Grant/Facebook)

It's a designer's dream to dress a celebrity for the Academy Awards, but most designers couldn't step up to the challenge of stitching together an outfit on one week's notice.

That's exactly what happened to Haida designer Dorothy Grant, who was asked to outfit *The Revenant* actor, Duane Howard.

The opportunity to design for Howard came as a surprise, since six weeks ago he wasn't even invited to the event. Howard told Grant that he approached Leonardo DiCaprio to demand an invite, arguing the need to have indigenous representation at the Oscars.

"He said [to Leonardo], 'I'm sharing this award with First Nations, Native Americans and the indigenous people of the world.'" Grant recalled Howard telling her.

"Lo and behold only a week ago he was invited to the Oscars," said Grant.

## **'I'm so happy he chose to wear my tuxedo'**

Before becoming a fashion designer, Grant was a fabric artist, regalia maker, and Haida artist. In the 1980s she turned heads when she started incorporating her Haida art with her clothing designs. In 2015 the Vancouver-based designer received an Order of Canada, and she continues to be a role model for young indigenous designers and entrepreneurs.

With only a week to design an outfit for Howard, Grant is proud of her accomplishment.

"It was a lot of work. We had to fast kick into action, and make it up for him really, really quickly. Believe me that was record time, but I did it."



Nuu-chah-nulth actor Duane Howard with Haida fashion designer Dorothy Grant, who is designing his tuxedo for the Academy Awards. (Dorothy Grant/Facebook)

The final look will be revealed on the Oscars red carpet, but Grant said Howard will be wearing a tuxedo that boasts his Nuu-chah-nulth heritage with eagle and raven artwork on the lapel.

"The whole final look on him is absolutely exquisite, ... with a white arrow point tuxedo shirt, fine pleats in the front, with really nice black jeweled buttons on the tuxedo shirt, and nice cufflinks," said Grant.

"I just fitted the suit to him impeccably."

With the outfit complete, Grant hopes the world will get a chance to see her design, but is skeptical Howard will receive the airtime he deserves.

"Hollywood can be a very fickle place, like the fashion world is — they could choose to showcase him or they could choose not to," said Grant.

If *The Revenant* does win the award for best picture, Grant and Howard have a plan that will guarantee her design will be seen. As the crew is running to the stage to accept the award, Grant instructed Howard to "make sure you wiggle your way right to the front."

'The final fitting... was very emotional for me, because it was a realization he was representing all the First Nations and they're so proud of him, and it was an accumulation of a lot of years.'-*Dorothy Grant, Haida clothing designer*

Behind the glitz and glam, Grant said Howard's presence at the Oscars means a lot more about the role of indigenous people in cinema.

"The final fitting... was very emotional for me, because it was a realization he was representing all the First Nations and they're so proud of him, and it was an accumulation of a lot of years."

"How far we've come, as First Nations people to arrive at a success, and here I am dressing him, and my name will be with him, so I felt like I was collaborating on the largest platform I've ever been on — I'm so proud of him, I'm so happy he chose to wear my tuxedo," said Grant.

Over the years Grant has designed for other well-known clients, including Wes Studi, Rita Coolidge, Mary Louise Parker and Michael Horse.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/haida-designer-dresses-duane-howard-for-academy-awards-1.3466490>

## **Tracey Lindberg draws inspiration from aunties for Canada Reads novel**

**Aboriginal law professor's first book to be championed on CBC competition**

By Radio Active, CBC News Posted: Mar 01, 2016 6:23 PM MT| Last Updated: Mar 01, 2016 6:23 PM MT

Not a bad way to make a debut.

Tracey Lindberg's first novel *Birdie* is competing in CBC's annual book competition Canada Reads for 2016.

*Birdie* is the story of Bernice, a woman who leaves her home in northern Alberta and travels to the west coast B.C. On her journey she processes earlier tragedies and learns more about her past and her history.

"It's like a love letter to my mom and my aunties," Lindberg said.

Lindberg, an Edmonton-based law professor, hails from the Kelly Lake Cree nation west of Grande Prairie.

The book draws inspiration in part from her own experiences, with Lindberg going as far as transcribing pieces of conversations to include in the novel.

"There's so much beauty hidden in the everyday that I think we just take for granted."

Fiction as truth

Sticking to the facts is essential to Lindberg's work as a lawyer, but she found that the law can also be limiting when getting at the truth of things.

"As a lawyer and a law professor, when you do your best work you're able to amplify people's voices and tell their stories," she said.

But "there is so much that the law can't see and the law can't give voice to," she added.

"Fiction allowed me to be able to look around me," she said, "and amplify it in ways that laws just couldn't recognize or understand."

She listened to stories from the women around her while she was working on the book, including her family in Northern B.C. as well as Cree and Metis women in Edmonton.

Lindberg was at times worried about offending people with the representations in the novel, but said that her family put her at ease and she realized the connections were more hidden than she previously assumed.

"There's so much beauty hidden in the everyday that I think we just take for granted."

- Tracey Lindberg, author

"My aunties would say, or my mom would say, 'Don't worry. It's fiction. People will know that'.

"But there are pieces transcribed directly from my experience in interacting when them, so not even they recognize it."

Starting over

The novel tackles difficult subjects of sexual assault and rape. In the novel, Bernice begins to reevaluate her relationships on her journey and she starts over by not only looking back at her own history, but the history of her people.

"For her to be able to go on and look at possible futures she has to examine what happened to turn her into the person she is," she said.

"Within this story Bernice does start over and she makes the choice to visit that past."

One of the decisions Bernice makes is befriending and informally adopting as an auntie, Lola, a baker she meets along the way.

The relationship develops despite the problematic presence of Lola as a racializing force and a person "who has not really figured out how indigenous and non-indigenous people can get along."

Lindberg said she an important part of the plot in terms of understanding reconciliation and exploring those broader themes in the novel.

"If we're going to talk about reconciliation and starting over as relatives and indigenous and nonindigenous, it's going to start that way."

Lindberg-birdie-TNC-620

Tracey Lindberg's first novel, *Birdie*, is one of five books in the running for CBC's Canada Reads 2016. (HarperCollins Canada)

The road to Canada Reads

Ahead of the Canada Reads competition, Lindberg will be going on a journey of her own. She will be bringing her Canada Reads defender, entrepreneur Bruce Poon Tip, to visit the Kelly Lake Cree Nation to meet elders and other members of the community.

Lindberg said the trip was planned for personal reasons, but it's also connected to her work as an advocate and writer.

"There is, I think, an important story about land, disconnect, connection and making your family that is embedded in Birdie," she said, "but which comes from this land, specifically."

Beyond travelling north together, Tip describes reading Lindberg's novel as a journey in itself.

"For all of us who care about reconciliation, and frankly we all should, this book opens that path," Tip said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/tracey-lindberg-draws-inspiration-from-aunties-for-canada-reads-novel-1.3471760>

## Akunnittinni: A Kinngait Family Portrait

Alex Jacobs

3/3/16

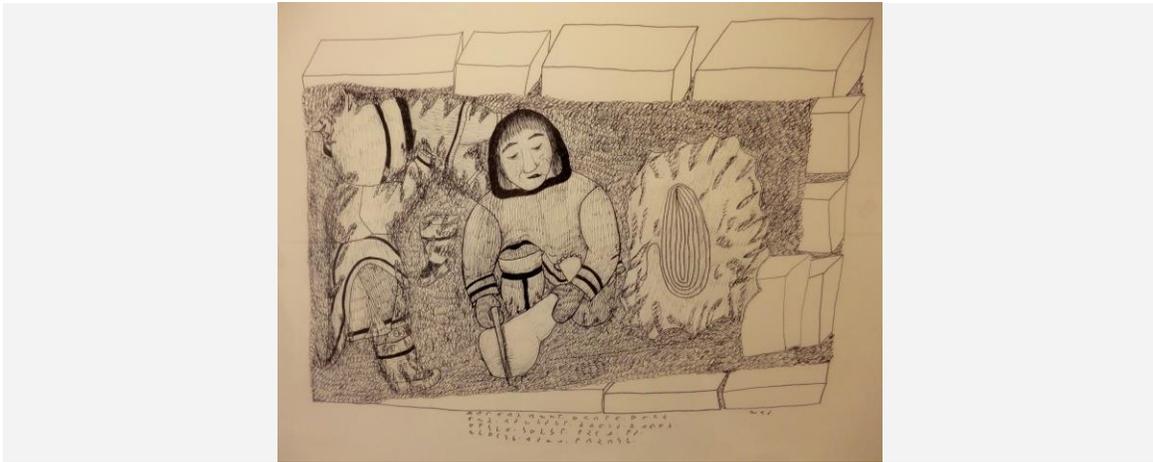
The Inuktitut word “akunnittinni” basically means “between us” and the “us” is the family of Pitseolak Ashoona, a famous Inuk artist and printmaker, her daughter Napachie Pootoogook and grand-daughter Annie Pootoogook. Kinngait is the Inuktitut word for Cape Dorset in Nunavut. Cape Dorset became a settlement in 1913 after the Hudson’s Bay Company established a trading post, whites moved in to make the settlement permanent and Inuit culture slowly changed as caribou hunting declined.



“The captain from the bowhead whale hunting ship is trading materials and supplies for women. As usual the man agrees without hesitation.” (Napachie Pootoogook, Trading Women for Supplies, 1997, ink)

The arts and crafts were promoted as an income as it was thought the subsistence life would fade and be replaced by Christianity and industry. In the 1960’s artist James

Houston opened a print-making co-op in Cape Dorset/Kinngait to develop the creative arts and crafts that the Inuit had been encouraged to produce. Pitseolak Ashoona became one of the more famous artists producing 9000 drawings and prints until she died in 1983. She bore 17 children, some who went on to become artists, printmakers and sculptors. Her husband died in an epidemic and Ashoona raised her family on the income of her art at Kinngait, which she produced until she could no longer could. She won numerous awards, [her work was collected and catalogued](#), and she published a book which the National Film Board of Canada made into a documentary.



“He is chopping up and eating his mother’s rump before leaving. He is also preparing to take human remains by wrapping them in seal skin and using rope to bind it.” (Napachie Pootoogook, Eating His Mother’s Remains, 1999, ink)

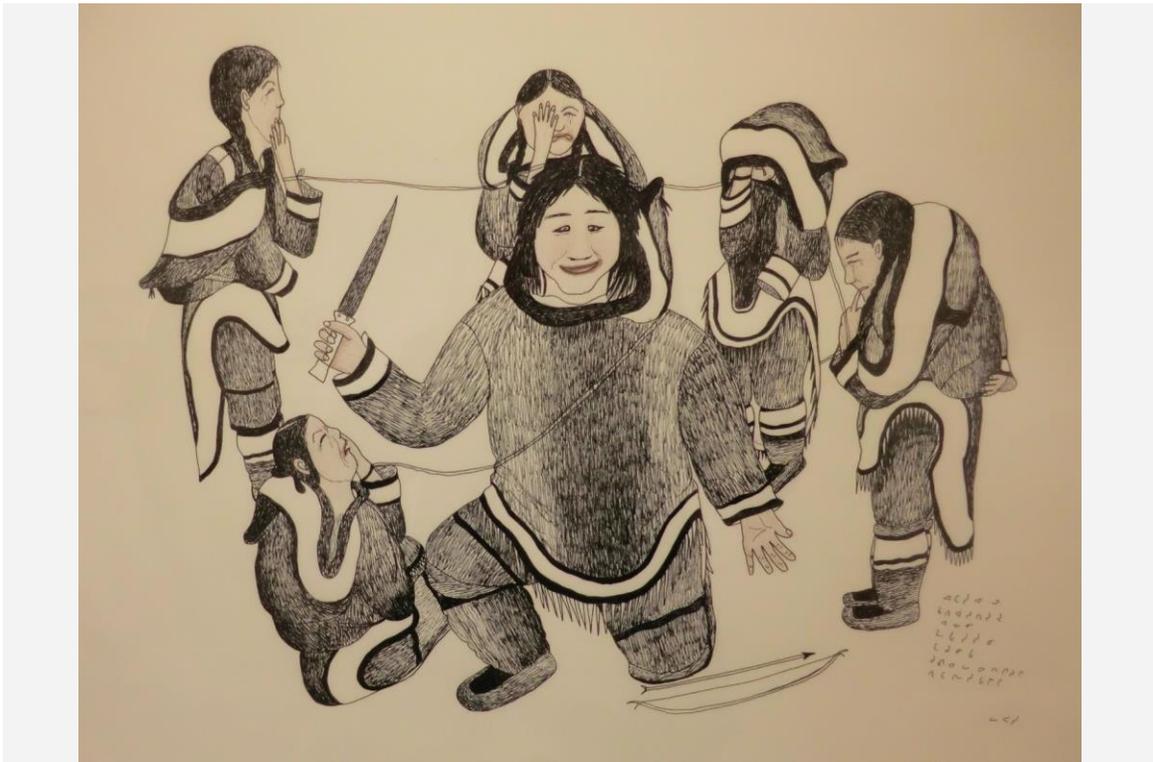
Ashoona’s daughter Napachie Pootoogook married, started a family and moved to Cape Dorset to continue the family tradition of printmaking at the Kinngait Studios (West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative). She participated in the acrylic painting/drawing workshops established by Co-operative in 1976. There, she became interested in landscape, western notions of composition and life drawing. Like her mother, Napachie produced until her passing in 2002, working directly in the lithographic medium.



Napachie Pootoogook, Alcohol, 1994, pencil crayon ink

Napachie's daughter, Annie Pootoogook began drawing in 1997, becoming a prolific graphic artist and quickly rising up to become one of Canada's top artists and the leading contemporary Inuit graphic artist. She documented her modern times like Ashoona did those old Inuit days, but that meant there were no arctic animals or scenes of nomadic existence, her art wasn't about life on the ice and old legends. Annie depicted all aspects of the modern life that surrounded her. From 2003 she quickly made waves, a major solo exhibit at The Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery (in Toronto's Harbourfront Centre), winning the Sobey Art Prize for Canada's top young artist, and a solo show in 2010 at the National Museum of the American Indian in New York. When Annie was invited to Documenta 2007 in Kassel Germany, she participated as a modern artist and not as an Inuit artist which was unprecedented.

All this success in a short time affected Annie Pootoogook and although the media was quick to describe her rise and fall, her life story has become a recounting of issues like violence, trauma and addiction that are prevalent in modern indigenous communities. There are at least 4 books on her art and a short film documentary ["Annie Pootoogook"](#) when she was at her peak but there is so much unsaid on how artists can be exploited and how success is truly relative. The system in place now with northern Cooperatives producing and southern Galleries marketing can develop and nurture talented artists, but critics point out it started as a paternalistic system to replace the old subsistence culture with jobs and income but that social problems soon followed.



"Aatachalick is scaring women to ensure his domination, before he claims them as his wives, after slaying his male enemies. He did this to hide his soft side" (Napachie Pootoogook, Male Dominance, ink, colored pencil)

First Nations curator (now with Documenta 14) Candice Hopkins said that she still considers Annie one of the best modern Native Artists, that she is touch with her and Annie is still drawing and misses her northern home. Ms. Hopkins explained, “When she won the Sobey Award I don’t think that they were aware of the pressures that this would put on her life living in the small community of Cape Dorset and the need to also use these funds to support her extended family. As a very private person I don’t think that she appreciated all of the attention that comes with success, which is part of the reason that she moved to Ottawa.”



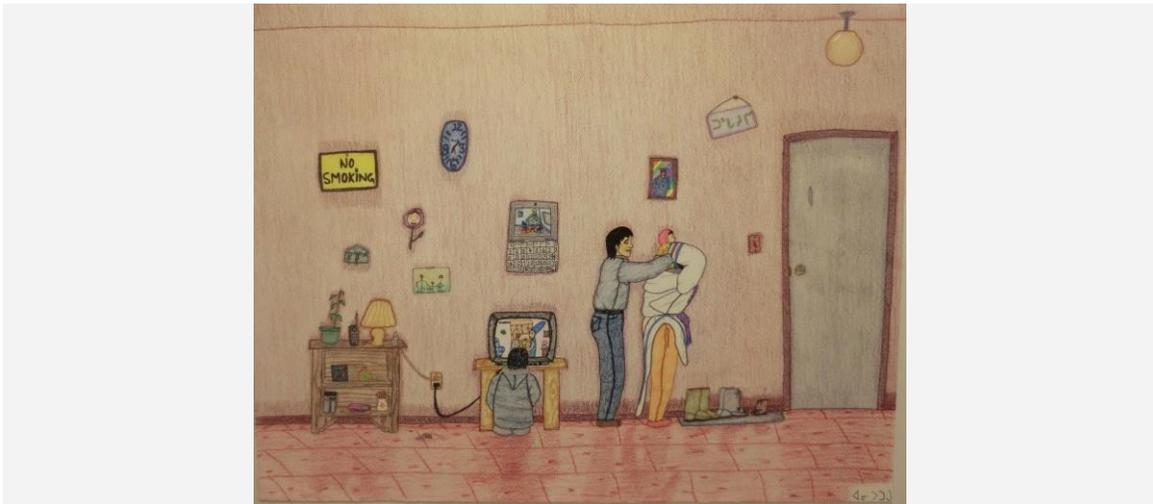
Art piece entitled "Making Tea"

It is amazing but to be totally expected that a family of Native Inuit women became artists and visionaries and were able to fully exploit resources available to them. Each of them had seen firsthand how common and brutal the issues of domestic violence were among their families and communities. This came out especially in the art of [Napachie Pootoogook](#), who covered topics not usually seen in the “commercial Native art” that was being promoted by the cultural agencies of Canada. Things like men dominating and

abusing women, men loaning their wives in exchange for white trader supplies, infanticide, cannibalism, some things were witnessed while some were passed on as stories.

Andrea Hanley, is Membership and Program Manager for IAIA's Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, and curated "Akunnittinni: A Kinngait Family Portrait".

"To me as the curator, this exhibition serves as a reflection on the role of narrative between three generations of Indigenous women, all from one family. I am drawn to this strong family voice within a tribal context. It truly is contemporary Indigenous feminist discourse at its finest. Standing in the gallery allows the visitor to really feel the conversation between these women, the grandmother, the mother and daughter. Regarding Annie's work, it really captures a very contemporary moment in time. I love her pop references and items like her grandmother's glasses which stand alone in beautiful elegance."



Art piece entitled: "Watching Simpsons on TV"

Amber-Dawn Bear Robe is a Visiting Faculty in Art History and Cinematic Arts at the Institute of American Indian Arts. I asked her how Inuit Art became popular, and marketed to the point of commodification. "James Houston with the support of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild of Canada, the Canadian government and the Hudson Bay Company developed a Native art program, the West Baffin Island Co-operative. A large market for Inuit Art (soapstone carving and prints) was developed and controlled, as never before seen. Kristen K Potter coined the term "Armchair Tourism" - an individual can make a narrative and collect Inuit art while objectifying a culture, having an "authentic" experience of the North and imagined encounter with the Inuit experience without ever leaving comfort of one's home."

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/03/03/akunnittinni-kinngait-family-portrait-163623>

# Metis artist believes art can provide people with a voice

[Kerry Benjoe](#)

Published on: February 26, 2016 | Last Updated: February 26, 2016 4:58 PM CST



Christi Belcourt, Metis artist, is part of the Sakewewak Indigenous Artist's Symposium held at the First Nations University of Canada on Friday. TROY FLEECE / Regina Leader-Post

Metis leader Louis Riel once said, “My people will sleep for 100 years and when they wake it will be the artists who give them their spirit back.”

Metis artist Christi Belcourt is proof of that.

“I see art as contributing to the collective voice of indigenous people who are calling for justice,” she said.

Belcourt believes there is a massive awakening taking place among First Nation, Metis and Inuit people — and art is playing a role. “I think art is a vehicle and it is powerful in its ability to communicate what, sometimes, plain words cannot,” she said.

“Art can be used to seek justice and raise awareness so that change can happen. So the role of the artist is not only as an artist, but as a leader.”

She believes artists can provide the voice needed to help move indigenous people forward while preserving Mother Earth for future generations.

“The role of the artist is being overlooked,” said Belcourt. “A long time ago, there was not a specific category of an artist. The artists were thinkers. The artists were philosophers. The artists were the lodge leaders. The artists were the traditional ceremonial people. So it’s not doing us any favours to keep artists confined to the production of art.”

She’s best known for incorporating traditional Metis floral designs in her art.

Her work caught the attention of Italian designers at Valentino and was featured in a clothing line.

“Working with Valentino was a great experience,” said Belcourt. “It provided me with an opportunity to speak about the waters and to advocate against cultural appropriation.”

She supports the idea of indigenous people reclaiming their identity and one way is through clothing and jewelry. “We need to wear who we are,” she told a small crowd on Friday at the First Nations University of Canada.

Belcourt was part of a panel of artists who spoke about the importance of art and artist collectives at Sakewewak’s Indigenous Artists Symposium.

She is also the creator of the Walking With Our Sisters travelling exhibit, which pays tribute to Canada’s missing and murdered indigenous women.

“The main thing with Walking with Our Sisters is the act of honouring,” she said. “It is ceremony. It is through that act we are honouring the lives of the sisters and the children who were murdered or had died in residential school.”

The display of the moccasin vamps, which is only the top part of a moccasin, is always evolving.



Walking with our Sisters exhibit November 2013 at the First Nations University of Canada in Regina.  
Bryan Schlosser / Regina Leader-Post

Each community decides how the nearly 2,000 vamps are displayed.

“The community takes ownership of it,” said Belcourt. “When the bundle of Walking with Our Sisters arrives in each community, it’s kept by the grandmothers and the traditional teachers and they care for it while it’s there.”



Walking with Our Sisters exhibit at Wamuskewin, October 2014. Greg Pender / The StarPhoenix

She is in awe of all the people who have stepped forward and expressed interest in Walking with Our Sisters.

**Direct Link:** <http://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/metis-artist-believes-art-can-provide-people-with-a-voice>

## Aboriginal Business & Finance

### Plenty of reporting on First Nations' finances

Tuesday, March 1, 2016 2:31:58 MST PM

Dear Editor:

The Wetaskiwin Times, Feb. 3, 2016 published a column by Todd MacKay of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) that portrays the Stephen Harper First Nations Transparency Act as necessary. The column makes a number of erroneous assumptions.

First, there is an assumption the “monies are tax dollars when, in fact, these monies are voted by Treasury board based on a legal obligation — treaties.” Treaties made at the request of the British Crown to allow settlers to live in our territories.

Second, there is an extensive reporting handbook, which the First Nations audits must comply with in order to continue to receive funds. Canada’s own Auditor General’s report from December 2006 questioned by “the unnecessary reporting burden placed on First Nations communities needed to be reduced, and noted that AANDC (Indian Affairs) alone obtains more than 60,000 reports a year from over 600 First nations.”

If anyone reads the list of materials that are required by Indian Affairs, it will see First Nations must disclose their revenues and funding from all sources, including “private enterprises”. This has been a part of the reporting guide for many years.

There is a schedule to the audits that lists the Chief and Council salaries and expenses. The government of Canada has had this information for years, as it was part of the reporting handbook and a requirement of the consolidated audit. Any member of a band can go to the office of the band and ask to look at the audit. There is also the option of going to the nearest Indian Affairs office and looking at the audit. It is not a secret to the members of the band.

However, this information is not available to the World Wide Web. It was only the Federal Court of Canada decision in the Montana case that prohibited the federal government from releasing this “private and confidential” information. It was a federal court decision that prohibited the release of the information — C27 was used to get around the court decision.

The Federal Court Justice questioned the government’s unilateral decisions on “non-essential” dollars. What are non-essential dollars? In October 2014, Minister Valcourt indicated there were seven categories of non-essential dollars out of the contract that were going to be stopped. In January 2015, the list was down to four. There were no discussions with First Nations contrary to the clauses in the legislation, which required the Minister to discuss alternatives. It was unilateral in violation of the contract for the funds.

In addition, the legislation took away the right of privacy that all other people living in Canada have an automatic right to. Ermineskin Cree Nation requested, through an access to information request, the legal justification to exclude our peoples from the protection of the privacy legislation. Initially, we were denied any information. Following the process, we appealed. In the end, Ermineskin received a large envelope: all the pages released were blacked out except at the bottom of one sheet had the words: “have a nice weekend.” To this day, Ermineskin Cree does not know why our people were singled out for special treatment to deny us our right of privacy.

First Nations are just one of several categories of collectives in Canada. It is not uncommon for such collectives to run businesses, hold assets and invest them. How about making Hutterite colonies publish their financial data online?

Yes. Online. If a member of these collective businesses want to know business details, they can join the rest of the world and see them all laid out in detail. A relative in a private family business wants to know how much uncle is making? Put it online. A co-op competing with other businesses has a member who wants to know how much the CEO is making? Put it online, together with all the other business details.

To impose such a requirement on certain categories and not others is clearly discriminatory. It provides others who can keep their financial data away from the eyes of their competitors with an unfair advantage.

The unanswered question is how can it be fair to require only First Nation owners to publish online details of their business holdings and not require non-First Nation owners to publish same details.

The CTF does not know the number of schemes and carpet baggers who approached First Nations who have had materials on the World Wide Web. Schemes from across the world have floated around Indian Country as a result of those postings. Who is protecting the First Nations against this exposure? Not to mention the racism directed at the members of our nations on the misinformation campaigns waged against us.

Particularly with First Nations, the true issue is the Indian Act, which for nearly a century-and-a-half since Confederation has been imposed on a people whose rights to government themselves without the paternalistic oversight of Ottawa is not only recognized internationally, but is recognized and affirmed in Canada's Constitution. If failure to be transparent to members of a First Nation is the issue, that can be dealt with easily without draconian measures.

If we're talking about First Nations and "disclosure of finances", how about a law requiring governments to reveal online how much compensation has been paid for First Nations lands and resources over the years? None? Really? And to maintain the honour of the Crown, publish online for what was the value of the land or resource which was appropriated. Only makes common sense that Canadians have these facts. Those bills were paid by Ottawa and the people have become rich on other people's resources.

What's really at play here is the CTF being upset about some First Nations having our own income which Ottawa can't control.

Minister Bennett knows the failure of the legislation. She was in Parliament when closure was forced in the House of Commons to stop debate. She did the right thing. The decision was designed to bring a measure of reconciliation to the process. The Minister knows the onerous reporting required for those funds. In addition, she read the decision of Mr. Justice Barnes. The Federal Court clearly saw that rights were violated and provided a stay to the Conservative Minister's actions. This is justice. We have supported the Minister's decision in this case because it is the right decision.

There are no members in the dark — they can ask to see the audits. It is the organization writing letters who are maliciously in the dark.

Chief Randy Ermineskin

Ermineskin Cree Nation

**Direct Link:** <http://www.wetaskiwintimes.com/2016/03/01/plenty-of-reporting-on-first-nations-finances>

# **Bombardier, Air Inuit to launch new cargo-friendly aircraft**

## **Air Inuit to get three new large cargo door freighters**

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, March 02, 2016 - 4:00 pm



Air Inuit will be the launch customer for Bombardier's new passenger-to-freighter conversion of the Q300. (IMAGE COURTESY OF AIR INUIT)

Quebec aircraft manufacturer Bombardier has teamed up with Nunavik's Air Inuit to develop a passenger-to-freighter version of the Q300 turboprop.

The Makivik Corp.-owned Air Inuit, which flies between all 14 Nunavik communities, is a long-time operator of the Q300 aircraft.

Now the Montreal-based airline will be the launch customer for the new conversion, the airlines said in a joint March 1 release.

“With its excellent airfield performance — especially on gravel runways — the Q300 aircraft is well adapted for remote operations like those required to support Canada's resource industries and northern communities,” said Air Inuit's vice president and chief operating officer, Christian Busch.

“The Q300 aircraft has served us well in our passenger, charter and cargo operations in Nunavik and other markets for many years, and we look forward to enhancing our cargo services.”

Under the new partnership, Air Inuit says it will expand its cargo services with three of the new large cargo door freighters.

The freighter will include a door large enough to accommodate palletized and free load cargo, the airlines said. The converted Q300 is expected to have a cargo capacity of 12,500 pounds.

Air Inuit currently operates a fleet of 25 aircraft, which includes two Bombardier Q100 models and 10 Q300 turboprops.

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674bombardier-air-inuit-to-launch-new-cargo-friendly-aircraft/>

## **Nunavut left out of \$35M aboriginal fisheries strategy funding again**

**'We're getting short changed on this funding program,' says NTI's James Eetoolook**

By Sima Sahar Zerehi, [CBC News](#) Posted: Mar 03, 2016 4:30 AM CT Last Updated: Mar 03, 2016 1:10 PM CT



Workers at Pangnirtung's fish processing plant. Nunavut's Inuit fisheries want to access the \$35 million annual federal Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, which is restricted to groups without settled land claims.

Nunavut's Inuit fisheries are once again left out of the \$35 million annual federal Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, but Fisheries and Oceans Minister Hunter Tootoo says his staff is looking at other funding avenues for the industry in the territory.

"We're getting short changed on this funding program," said James Eetoolook, vice-president of Nunavut Tunngavik.

Between federal aboriginal fisheries development funding programs and the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor), nearly \$1.68 billion has been spent by the federal government in the last 21 years for aboriginal fisheries. Eetoolook says Nunavut has received only 0.2 per cent of this funding support.

"Nunavut does not qualify due to a DFO policy position that does not allow aboriginal groups in Canada with settled land claims access to the funds," said Eetoolook.

## 'More of a First Nations fisheries strategy'

"We clearly have been left out of this process," said Jerry Ward, chair of the Nunavut Offshore Allocation Holders Association, which represents Nunavut's offshore fishing industry.



'Even though it's called an aboriginal fisheries strategy, it really has been more of a first nations fisheries strategy,' said Jerry Ward, the chair of the NOAHA. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

"Even though it's called an Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy, it really has been more of a First Nations fisheries strategy because the Inuit in particular in the land claims agreement haven't been part of it."

Nunavut fisheries say they are at a disadvantage when it comes to competing with other aboriginal groups who can use these federal funds to purchase fishing licences.

Nunavut has access to 38 per cent of its adjacent northern shrimp resources and about 67 per cent of its adjacent turbot resources.

"This is still a far cry from the 80 to 90 per cent enjoyed by other jurisdictions in Canada," said Eetoolook.

Ward said Nunavut fisheries are underdeveloped because they face environmental and geographic challenges and higher operating and transportation costs.

"We have an aged fishing fleet, we have inadequate shore facilities and so on. We need to bring our industry forward," said Ward.

He said additional federal funds would go a long way to remedy these problems.

## A stroke of a pen

Stakeholders say the federal government has the power to easily change the eligibility criteria for these funds.



'I'm looking at different options of how we can find ways to address the inequity that's out there,' said federal fisheries minister Hunter Tootoo. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

"These are just policy issues, they are not entered in legislation, so it is our view if the minister and or senior bureaucrats in Ottawa want to do something about it, this could be done," said Ward.

Hunter Tootoo said the problem is complex.

"I wish it was that easy as a stroke of a pen," he said. "If it was just that, it would be a piece of cake.

"It's not just Nunavut that's cut out of it. I heard these concerns from coast to coast to coast and I've been listening."

He said he has directed his staff to look at other possible funding avenues.

"I'm looking at different options of how we can find ways to address the inequity that's out there,' said Tootoo.

Ward said he welcomes the minister's willingness to work on this funding problems and looks forward to collaborating with DFO, but he said "it needs to be done sooner than later."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-left-out-of-35m-aboriginal-fisheries-strategy-funding-again-1.3473488>

# Aboriginal Community Development

## Sask. aboriginal community welcomes refugees with round dance

Events happening in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Moose Jaw

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 26, 2016 2:59 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 27, 2016 10:48 AM CT



Saskatchewan has welcomed hundreds of refugees since December. (Brian Rodgers/CBC)

It's a welcome from the province's first peoples to some of its newest citizens.

Events taking place this week across the province are introducing refugees to Indigenous culture.

It's part of the bridges program — which was created to develop a stronger relationship between indigenous people and newcomers.

Beulah Gana is with the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA), an organization that helps settle and integrate immigrants.

According to Gana, it's important to build bridges between the two communities early.

"[Newcomers] don't know there are the people who have been on the land first. You have this impression that this is all white Caucasians," she said.

A grand entry, round dance and an opportunity for the two groups to share elements of their cultures are all part of the events.

Something special happened organically after the round dance at Saskatoon's event on Wednesday, said Brad Bird with the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Saskatchewan.

"At first they were a little hesitant and shy and then once they got in there you could see the joy on their face and also they did a dance performance for us as well and I thought that that was really special that they felt open enough to share that with us," said Bird.

Regina's event is taking place on Friday afternoon at Evraz Place.

Moose Jaw will host an event at Holy Family Cathedral Hall on Monday.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/sask-aboriginal-community-welcomes-refugees-1.3465991>

## **Evacuation at Alberta First Nation prepares Dene Tha' for possible disaster**

### **Volunteer band members flee their homes in first of it's kind emergency exercise**

By Gareth Hampshire, [CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 26, 2016 6:00 AM MT Last Updated: Feb 26, 2016 6:08 AM MT



RCMP officer and volunteer band member tell people to leave their homes as part of an emergency exercise (Supplied by Alberta Municipal Affairs)

Outside a small home in Chateh, a RCMP vehicle has its lights flashing and a school bus waits with the doors open and the engine running.

They're there to evacuate members of the Dene Tha' First Nation to a safe reception centre set up at the local school.

A police officer knocks on the door and tells people inside to pack their bags and leave because of a gas leak.

Participants already know its part of an emergency exercise, and have volunteered to take part.



Emergency exercise road block in Chateh

They pile onto the bus and make their way through a roadblock, before registering at the centre.

The exercise, in partnership with Alberta's Emergency Management Agency, is the first of its kind on an Alberta First Nation.

Chateh is near High Level, more than 800 kilometres northwest of Edmonton.

The Dene Tha' know all about emergencies, after being hit by several in recent years.

"Fire, water, they don't wait for anybody," said Dene Tha' chief Joe Pastion. "So it is a key that every part of our management need to play a role in our efforts to evacuate everybody safely."

He said the First Nation's experiences in recent years are part of the reason the band wanted this training, to better prepare for possible future disasters.

"The challenges with evacuating 1,500 to 1,600 people is the confusion," said Pastion, referring to last year's forest fires that came close to the Dene community of Meander River.

People had to leave their homes quickly when the community was blanketed by smoke.

Widespread floods forced people out a few years ago as well, with many forced to stay in nearby High Level for a time.

In such a rural setting, it's challenging to get people out fast, especially when some live far apart from each other.

## **Model for other Alberta First Nations**

Alberta is the only province that has a federal funding agreement to provide emergency management training on First Nations.

"This is going to be a model to all First Nations in Alberta, for the importance of planning and having your chief and council behind your emergency planning to allow things like this to happen," said Fran Byers, manager of First Nation field operations for the Alberta Emergency Management Agency.

Byers said the province now has an emergency plan in place for every First Nations community, but this hands-on, real-time exercise is so far unique, and one provincial officials see as a significant step.



First Nation Field Officer Winston Delorme examines map with RCMP officer

This exercise brings together government officials, the First Nation, police and energy companies set up in an emergency co-ordination centre at the Chateh health centre.

They're working together on the scenario, pinpointing where the mock gas leak is on maps, and where roadblocks should be put up to keep people away from the danger zone.

The scenario is for a gas leak from a pipeline two to three kilometres from the Chateh band office. The pipeline doesn't exist, but in the exercise it carries the risk of an explosion.

Volunteers involved in the drill relay messages using hand-held radios.

In the reception centre, people are asked to register when they enter, as they would in a real emergency, so officials know who is accounted for.



People register at reception centre

## **Incident called down and people go back home**

Inside the centre, tables and chairs are set up in the gym and food and water is available.

That's where Pastion and other leaders update the band members on the situation, first speaking in Dene then in English.

Eventually, after updates from officials, the incident is called down. Roadblocks are dismantled and people are allowed to go home.

With nearly 70 band members inside the reception centre, the chief is impressed with the way his community reacted to the scenario.

"We've come away with a real good learning exercise in a real true setting, so I'm glad we have that under our belt," Pastion said.



Chief Pastion speaks to band members in reception centre gym

The Dene Tha' are one of six communities participating in exercises across the province as part of a government commitment to improve disaster response.

## **Wildfire season starting early this year**

A key recommendation from the review of the 2013 floods encouraged more such drills to better prepare communities for emergencies.

Because of dry conditions this year, the province has already announced that wildfire season will begin on March 1, a month early. It's a recommendation that stems from another report that followed the devastating fires that swept through Slave Lake five years ago.

Alberta's emergency management agency thinks the Dene Tha' exercise has provided invaluable hands-on experience for the First Nation.

"It definitely could be preparing them for fire season, I mean that's around the corner, and there's not a whole lot of moisture in the ground or on top of the ground," said Winston Delorme, a First Nations field officer for Alberta's emergency management agency.

The agency hopes other First Nations in the province will ask for the training.

It wants all to benefit from the same kind of exercise the Dene Tha' received, so as many communities as possible can prepare for emergencies.

Whether that be a gas leak, forest fire or any other kind of disaster.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/evacuation-at-alberta-first-nation-prepares-dene-tha-for-possible-disaster-1.3464632>

# Gull Bay First Nation files claim to fix 166-year-old error in size of reserve

**Northern Ontario community asking for \$150M in damages for years of lost mineral extraction, forestry**

By Stephanie Cram, [CBC News](#) Posted: Mar 01, 2016 5:00 AM ET Last Updated: Mar 01, 2016 5:00 AM ET



Chief Wilfred King says Gull Lake First Nation did not have their reserve expanded because the Crown deemed it "too far, too remote." (Nokiiwin Tribal Council)

Gull Bay First Nation, Ont., has filed a lawsuit to remedy a 166-year-old error in the size of their reserve. The First Nation is claiming \$150 million in damages to compensate for the years of lost mineral extraction, forestry and any other infrastructure conducted on the land that should have been part of Gull Bay First Nation.

"We've been trying to get the government to the table to hope they'd begin a negotiation process, and it's because of their intransigence that we felt that ... we had to submit a statement of claim," said Gull Bay Chief Wilfred King.

The problem with the size of their reserve is a result of a misunderstanding that occurred when the community originally signed the 1850 Robinson-Superior Treaty. Under the treaty Gull Bay was promised a reserve that was 16 square miles in size. But the treaty signatories were not familiar with the concept of 'miles' and instead assumed their reserve would be 16 square leagues.

The confusion over the measurement stems back to the community's first contact with French fur traders, and adopting the league as the way of measuring distance. And one league is equal to three miles.

"Through historical elders' testimonies throughout the years, there's always been an issue with the size of our reserve," said King.

"And it wasn't until around 2000 we started doing some historical research and sure enough it was confirmed that yes, our reserve should have been much larger than it currently is."

## **Error addressed for other First Nations**

Shortly after the treaty was signed, Gull Bay and other communities under the Robinson-Superior Treaty realized the error and notified the Crown.

Crown surveyors inspected some of the reserves, and both Michipicoten First Nation and Fort William First Nation had the size of their reserves expanded as a result.

But the Crown failed to look into Gull Bay's claim until 1887, at which point the original signatories to the treaty were already dead making it hard to change the terms.

According to King, the survey took 37 years to complete because the Crown said Gull Bay was "too far, too remote."

"Our community, we felt, has been left out of that process, and we just want to get it resolved."

Considering two other communities have resolved a similar issue, King believes precedence has been set.

"I'm at a loss of why they [the Crown] are reluctant to come forward and say let's resolve this matter."

"If the reserve was given to us back in 1850... all the timber, all the minerals, all the aggregates, anything that's developed on those lands, those moneys would have been accrued to the First Nation," said King.

Members of Gull Bay First Nation recently met with representatives from the department of Indigenous and Northern Affairs to discuss the claim, and King remains optimistic it can be settled out of court.

In a statement to CBC, INAC wrote: "Canada remains committed to renewing our relationship with Indigenous peoples based on trust, respect and cooperation."

Gull Bay First Nation filed this claim on February 16, 2016 with the Ontario Superior Court. The Government of Canada prefers negotiated outcomes wherever possible."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/gull-bay-files-claim-to-fix-reserve-size-error-1.3469533>

# Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

## NDP cabinet minister says chief's letter exonerates him of wrongdoing

**Northern chief accused Robinson of breaking an agreement to  
provide jobs in exchange for votes in 2015**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 25, 2016 6:29 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 26, 2016 8:29 AM CT



NDP's Eric Robinson says no deal was made with Opaskwayak Cree Nation to provide jobs in exchange for votes. (CBC)

NDP Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Minister Eric Robinson produced a letter Thursday he says shows he is innocent of any wrongdoing with regards to an alleged agreement with Opaskwayak Cree Nation (OCN).

Manitoba's elections watchdog is currently investigating whether Robinson and OCN Chief Michael Constant struck a deal wherein Robinson would secure jobs on Hydro Manitoba's Bipole III Transmission Line project for the First Nation in return for political support for Premier Greg Selinger.

The alleged deal came to light in after a [letter dated April 21, 2015](#) surfaced from Constant accusing Robinson of failing to fulfil his end of the bargain when no jobs were awarded to the band.

Robinson denies any such deal was made and presented a letter dated Feb. 24, 2016, written by Chief Constant, which Robinson says fully exonerates him.

Constant's letter states "overzealous staff members" were responsible for the 2015 letter sent to Robinson and he was "not given the opportunity to peruse this letter before it went out."

"For the record, Minister Robinson did not promise work on Bi-Pole III in exchange for the community's support in Premier Selinger's leadership bid for the NDP party leader or for NDP support in the upcoming election," wrote Constant.

Robinson said Constant left a voicemail message for him "in the last couple months" that apologized for any inconvenience his 2015 letter caused.

"I believe that the chief is an honourable and honest leader of his people and I respect him a great deal," said Robinson.

The NDP minister added he expects the conclusion of the commissioner's investigation will confirm no improper agreement was made.

Manitoba Progressive Conservative Leader Brian Pallister, however, questioned why Constant is changing his story now and whether Manitobans will know the full story before they head to the polls April 19.

"I don't know if the government is going to be very forthcoming ... this close to the election," said Pallister.

CBC's calls to Chief Constant were not returned.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/ndp-cabinet-minister-says-chief-s-letter-exonerates-him-of-wrongdoing-1.3464772>

## **ISIL's attempt to recruit First Nations man with brain injury on Twitter displays 'nothing to lose' strategy**

Stewart Bell | February 28, 2016 6:37 PM ET



AFP/AL-FURQAN Media/ Getty ImagesA file picture taken from a video released on January 4, 2014 by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)'s al-Furqan Media allegedly shows ISIL fighters marching at an undisclosed location. A new report finds the group is holding thousands of Iraqis as slaves.

TORONTO—Two days after a terrorist killed a soldier at the National War Memorial and ran into the Parliament Buildings, Dwayne Boissoneau went onto Twitter to offer himself up to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

“Hey brother, I’m ready to fight and support ISIS till death,” Boissoneau, 30, wrote to a Canadian ISIL member in Syria who uses the alias Abu Turaab al-Kanadi. “I’m a Canadian and I’m sick of the face (fake) politics here.”

The ISIL recruiters apparently believed they had found what they were looking for, a Canadian extremist willing to do what Michael Zehaf-Bibeau had done in Ottawa, a simple but headline grabbing strike from within.

They sent him a message on Twitter that said, “Who wants to do something to some top kaffirs (non-believers)?” They said they could get addresses. “Give me Canadian addresses,” Boissoneau responded. “I will ensure something happens.”

The exchange was detected by the RCMP’s Tactical Internet Operational Support Unit and Boissoneau was arrested for uttering a threat. But the judge who heard the case last month found he was not really a terrorist after all.

According to the judge’s decision, the man ISIL was trying to recruit is a low-to-average functioning First Nations man from Longlac, Ont. who suffers from a childhood brain injury, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and did not attend high school.

He has been in trouble with the law since his teens and has a long criminal record linked to alcohol and drug use, according to the court decision, which called his interactions with ISIL naïve, unsophisticated and in keeping with his cognitive abilities.

Talking a certain way shows your willingness to take a risk, get on the radar, risk law enforcement attention, risk Twitter suspension

The incident, which has gone unreported until now, shows how ISIL recruiters have been prowling social media, trying to goad Canadians and citizens of other Western countries into committing acts of terrorism close to home.

Authorities believe that ISIL puts so much emphasis on efforts to incite extremist violence in the West that it has created a cell in Raqqa, Syria devoted to English-language radicalization. They also suspect that within that cell, a desk officer has been assigned specifically to radicalize Canadians.

The Boissoneau case demonstrates how haphazardly the system works. ISIL is not choosy. It will work with anyone who says the right things online. Boissoneau had likely caught their attention by writing things like “Death 2 America” and “I kill infidels.”

“Talking a certain way shows your willingness to take a risk, get on the radar, risk law enforcement attention, risk Twitter suspension,” said Prof. Amarnath Amarasingam, who has been studying Canadian foreign fighters.

“They care about little beyond that in terms of qualifications,” said Amarasingam, a post-doctoral fellow at Dalhousie University’s Resilience Research Centre. “Al-Qaida and other groups used to vet guys for a long time. This new threat is very different. Recruiters overseas have nothing to lose.”

Boissoneau was not exactly a big player online. He has only one follower on Twitter, and he follows just 8 accounts — six of them female pop singers like Taylor Swift, Katy Perry and Ariana Grande, whom he told in a Tweet, “you are very gorgeous.”

His Twitter account shows he began posting extremist-sounding messages in August 2014. On Oct. 13, he wrote: “God willing I will come and fight the cause.” After he wrote to ISIL about joining, another user asked him, “wanna free ticket?” “YEA,” he replied. Later, he added: “If I could afford it I’d be gone by now.”

“Canada and US will suffer wrath of IS,” he wrote to al-Kanadi, whose real name is Mohammad Ali, who lived in the Toronto area before joining ISIL. At the time, al-Kanadi was trying to provoke additional attacks in Canada, Tweeting, “strike them in their lands. Kill a kaffir and secure your place in Jannah (paradise).”

Boissoneau was also exchanging Twitter messages with a British ISIL member named Reyaad Khan, who went by Abu Dujana and had also incite for attacks in Western countries until he was killed in a targeted drone strike last August.

After Boissoneau’s arrest, he told police he’d never actually met a terrorist in person and “wasn’t that serious about going down there.” He said he was going through a rough time and just wanted to “test the system” to find out if the Canadian Security Intelligence Service “can actually detect stuff like that.”

He acknowledged he had looked into the cost of plane tickets to Turkey, and his sister said he was “curious about terrorism” but the judge said it appeared the real motive for was his online posts was to get a free plane ticket to Europe so he could visit his Hungarian girlfriend.

Boissoneau pleaded guilty to threatening to cause death or bodily harm, as well as fraud and theft (his lawyer said he borrowed a friend’s bike and tried to pawn it). He was not charged with any terrorism offences but the Crown argued at sentencing that his actions had to be viewed in the context of global terrorism.

The pre-sentencing report described Boissoneau as “easily led and susceptible to substance abuse.” It said he was impulsive and “was not always able to fully explain his actions.” Nor did he “fully appreciate the gravity of his actions.”

The judge sentenced him to a year, partly because the threat was made at a time of public sensitivity about terrorism. Thunder Bay lawyer Michael Hargadon found that harsh given the facts about Boissoneau. He felt the Oct. 22, 2014 attack in Ottawa had overly influenced the decision. "I think everyone, to an extent, was caught up in what was happening at the time."

Hargadon appealed and on Feb. 1 Justice Helen Pierce of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice cut the sentence in half, noting that his online posts "came only to the attention of a couple of terrorists anxious to recruit him and the police unit tasked with monitoring their conduct."

**Direct Link:** <http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/two-days-after-parliament-attacks-a-first-nations-man-with-a-brain-injury-offered-himself-to-isil-on-twitter>

## Aboriginal People's Court is "long overdue"

Create: 03/02/2016 - 04:35

Author:

[Rick Garrick - Wawatay News](#)



Nishnawbe-Aski Legal Services Corporation's Celina Reitberger and Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre's Rosanna Hudson, Frances Wesley and Charlene Baglien participated in the Aboriginal People's Court forum, held Feb. 19 at Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Specialized Solvent Abuse Treatment Centre in Thunder Bay. Photo by Rick Garrick.

The development of an Aboriginal People's Court was the focus of a recent forum hosted by Nishnawbe-Aski Legal Services Corporation and Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre.

"It's long overdue," says Celina Reitberger, NALSC's executive director. "We see from the room today that there is a will to have this done, and where there is a will, there is a way. I am pretty confident that we are going to move forward on this, and as I predicted, we are going to have a majority of Aboriginal courts in this area because we are the majority of the users."

Frances Wesley, TBIFC's urban judicial partnership coordinator, says Aboriginal people are "far over-represented in the courts."

"We visit the courts quite often to have meetings with the judicial staff, and every courtroom is filled with Aboriginal people," Wesley says. "We are over-represented in our federal prisons, and the current policies certainly have failed us tremendously."

Wesley says it is time to explore alternative justice mechanisms jointly with the courts. Ontario's first Aboriginal People's Court, now named the Indigenous Persons Court, opened in Brantford in 2014.

"We need them, and they need us," Wesley says.

Wesley says the Aboriginal People's Court would be designed by Aboriginal people.

"It is a court that will be culturally appropriate," Wesley says. "It will provide resolutions that will be respectful."

Wesley says the Aboriginal People's Court would also feature a restorative justice approach for sentencing that incorporates Aboriginal culture and traditions.

"We are certainly very excited about moving this initiative forward," says Rosanna Hudson, TBIFC's coordinator of justice services. "I do believe we have the support of the members of the judiciary and I believe this is going to happen. I think this Aboriginal People's Court will save some people, people that need the right help or (need to) get directed in the right direction. They can move forward on their own healing path and decide how they want to do that."

NALSC and TBIFC began working on the Aboriginal People's Court initiative in March 2015.

"We are seeking your input and your leadership and your expertise in helping us to design and help advocate for the change that is needed in the courts and in this community," says Charlene Baglien, TBIFC's executive director. Baglien says the two organizations are currently operating programs out of the new Thunder Bay Court House's Aboriginal Conference Settlement Suite, including TBIFC's

Aboriginal Community Council Program and NALSC's Talking Together program. The Aboriginal Conference Settlement Suite was the first built in Ontario; it was designed to provide First Nations, Inuit and Métis people with a stronger voice in the justice process.

"We want to know how the Aboriginal community, how our agencies can support an Aboriginal People's Court, whether it be a Gladue court or some other form," Baglien says. "We need to know from you, our partners, our sisters and our brothers, what kind of supports you can help us with so that we can see a court room that is responsive and takes into (consideration) our needs."

The forum was held Feb. 19 at Ka-Na-Chi-Hih Specialized Solvent Abuse Treatment Centre in Thunder Bay.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.wawataynews.ca/breaking-news/aboriginal-people%E2%80%99s-court-long-overdue>

## **Girl, 5, returns to remote First Nation after brutal attack**

### **Kasabonika Lake Chief says attack has shaken his northern Ontario community**

By Martha Troian, [CBC News](#) Posted: Mar 02, 2016 8:25 AM ET Last Updated: Mar 02, 2016 4:26 PM ET



Kasabonika First Nation (Supplied)

A five-year-old girl has returned to her home on a northern Ontario First Nation months after a brutal assault in her community that left her hospitalized.

The attack has shaken the community, raising questions of safety for its members.

The attack took place September 16, 2015, on the Kasabonika Lake First Nation, a fly-in community about 500 kilometres north of Sioux Lookout, Ont. The little girl's injuries

were so severe that she had to undergo three surgeries and weeks recovering in a London hospital.

The case is being investigated by the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Police Services, an organization that serves 35 First Nation communities. Although the force's spokesperson stated that it was an incident "involving other youth" no charges have been laid.

"She's doing OK, she's really happy to see the family," said the girl's aunt.

Still, she said the girl isn't attending school. "She never goes out."

The aunt said the incident has left her worried about the safety of her own children.

## **Community shaken**

Kasabonika Lake Chief Eno Anderson said initially many wondered if the little girl was going to recover from her injuries.

Community members are still receiving counseling from a trauma team and Anderson said he will also be receiving counseling in March, along with his council members.

"It's never been done before," said Anderson. "Anything that happens in our community, the leadership never gets counseling. They're the front line people."

When the little girl returned home, she was seen walking and smiling, said Anderson, something that helped the community in a "good way."

## **Funds raised, never received by family**

There are questions, however, about what happened to the thousands of dollars raised for this little girl and her family.

After the attack, a Go Fund Me campaign raised just over \$5,500, which the aunt said was delivered to the girl's mother.

An additional donation drive was also set up by people from several First Nations communities.

That campaign raised a reported \$14,000 before being delivered to the Shibogama Tribal Council, an organization representing four northern Ontario First Nations.

According to the girl's aunt, the family did not receive any of that money.

When CBC asked a director at the tribal council where those funds are, he would not comment, and directed CBC to contact the chief of Kasabonika.

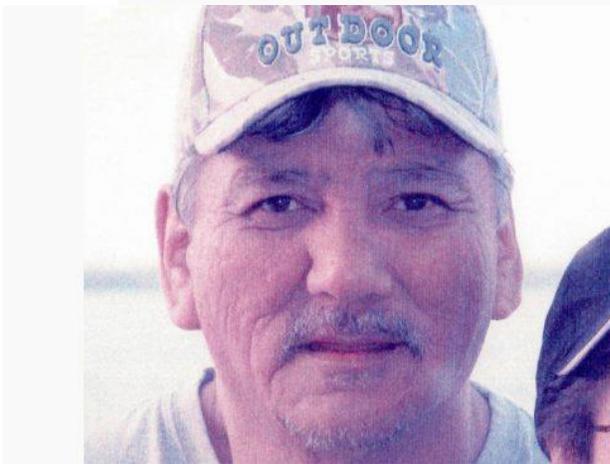
Anderson said he knew the funds were given to the tribal council, but does not know where the money is now.

"I am not quite sure exactly how much was donated," said Chief Anderson.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/girl-5-returns-to-remote-first-nation-after-attack-1.3470682>

## **Inquest into RCMP shooting condones killing indigenous people, chief says**

**Chief Gilbert Andrews of God's Lake First Nation says judge didn't condemn the 2011 shooting of Paul Duck or make any recommendations to prevent a similar tragedy.**



Paul Duck was shot by the RCMP in God's Lake First Nation, about 1,000 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg.

**By:** Chinta Puxley The Canadian Press, Published on Tue Mar 01 2016

WINNIPEG, Man.—The leader of a remote northern Manitoba First Nation says the inquest into the fatal RCMP shooting of a man on his reserve essentially condones killing indigenous people.

Chief Gilbert Andrews of God's Lake First Nation says the inquest judge didn't condemn the 2011 shooting of Paul Duck or make any recommendations to prevent a similar tragedy.

Andrews says his community, 1,000 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg, questions whether the shooting was fuelled by racism, and many fear it could happen again given the officer was never charged or held responsible.

It seems like “this kind of behaviour — to kill an Indian — is condoned by the justice system” and gives people reason “to fear the actions of the RCMP in the future,” Andrews said Tuesday.

“It’s OK in the eyes of the judge for the police to shoot our people,” he said. “It seems that way.”

Early on March 15, 2011, Duck heard his sister’s nearby house being vandalized by a large group of young people. The inquest heard he grabbed his shotgun and fired several rounds to scare the kids off.

He pursued them down a hill where two RCMP constables were guarding the scene of a house fire that had killed two young children and their grandfather the day before. Duck approached the officers, apparently to talk to them about his sister’s home.

The inquest heard Duck was asked three times to drop his gun. He lowered the weapon to his waist but continued walking toward the officers.

He was shot in the arm and lost a life-threatening amount of blood within five minutes. As Duck lay on the ground, he said, “I should have dropped the gun.”

The inquest judge concluded the shooting was an unfortunate misunderstanding.

Duck’s family members said in a statement they feel justice has not been done and they are still searching for closure five years later.

“We still have a lot of unanswered questions and we can’t stress enough that this travesty could have been avoided if the officer had not been so fearful during the line of duty and too quick to use his revolver,” said Duck’s brother, Tom Duck.

“To believe my brother died needlessly because the value of life did not take precedence by the officers involved is beyond my understanding.”

The Duck family never got a chance to face the man who pulled the trigger, Andrews added. The inquest was moved from God’s Lake First Nation to Winnipeg out of concern for the officer’s health and safety, he said.

That decision robbed the community of an important part of the healing process, the chief said.

“They wanted to see a face as to who did the shooting,” he said.

“We felt that this inquest was just going through the motions of satisfying the fatalities act where an inquest has to be automatically called. That’s the way the community felt.”

The First Nation of 1,700 people is slowly trying to rebuild its relationship with the RCMP, Andrews added.

“In time, they’ll forget about it, hopefully, but I don’t think so.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/03/01/inquest-into-rcmp-shooting-condones-killing-indigenous-people-chief-says.html>

## Aboriginal Education & Youth

### Keeping students in northern Manitoba closer to home

It covers a massive territory, but this northern school is designed to make Aboriginal students feel welcome

Anthony A. Davis, February 27, 2016



Small classes help students feel more comfortable (UCN)

It’s not a stereotype: Aboriginal students in northern Manitoba are often shy and uncomfortable in large groups and living away from their communities. As Konrad Jonasson knows, bashfulness can be a barrier to post-secondary education for northern people.

Jonasson, who is half-Cree, is also president of University College of the North (UCN), established in 2004—with help from Aboriginal elders—to specifically serve northern students in a unique way. First Nations leaders, Jonasson explains, recognized many “of our northern students were going south and returning home by October, November,

because supports weren't there. They were being lost in the larger urban post-secondary environments and campuses.”

When Manitoba decided to make university-level education available in the north and converted Keewatin College into UCN, First Nations leaders wanted to make sure classes were small and intimate. They also wanted to establish additional teaching facilities in remote communities across the top of Manitoba so students didn't always have to leave home to further their education.

The catchment area is massive, stretching 280,000 sq. m across the lakes and boreal forests of northern Manitoba, from Churchill in the north to Swan River in the south. Meanwhile, the entire population of that region is a sparse 75,000. The two main campuses are in Thompson and The Pas, but there are 12 regional centres in places such as Churchill, Pukatawagan, St. Theresa Point and Norway House. Some are only accessible by air or winter roads across frozen lakes and muskeg.

For those who must leave their communities for certain UCN programs, a critical element of success is the student and family housing residences in both Thompson and The Pas. “Before, it was said, ‘Our students were last in line for the worst possible housing,’ ” says Jonasson. Since 2012, both main campuses have had 24 units in each residence, including three- and four- bedroom apartments, ranging in rent from \$300 to \$1,000 per month depending on whether a student qualifies for government subsidies.

With more than 95 per cent of UCN's enrolment comprised of “non-sequential” students, meaning many come years after high school and after starting families, daycare is also vital. There are 140 daycare spots divided evenly between The Pas and Thompson.

About 2,500 students go to school at the various campuses each year. And, says Jonasson, emphasizing smallness again, “our faculty know who our students are.” With 68 per cent of its students coming from First Nations, Aboriginal culture is infused in UCN's approach to the 40 degree, diploma and certificate programs it offers, including nursing, midwifery, teaching, law enforcement, business, natural resources management and various trade programs.

There's an Aboriginal centre at both main campuses, each with a full-time elder on staff. A UCN council of elders also provides guidance and support to students, sharing traditional philosophies and knowledge with them regardless of a student's background. Diversity and cross-cultural acceptance are promoted.

“Our elders are really utilized,” says Jonasson, conducting sweat lodges, sweet grass ceremonies and supporting students who may be struggling with classes or personal issues.

David Anderson coordinates the bachelor of education (B.Ed.) program, called *Kenanow*, Cree for “all of us.” It has, he says, a very different way of giving future teachers the skills needed to work in the education system, regardless of where they may end up

teaching. During “culture camps,” *Kenanow* students spend up to four days at a time on the land learning from elders.

“It’s an Aboriginal perspective in teaching,” explains Anderson, one that has made UCN’s B.Ed. grads sought after by superintendents in the provincial school system. The camps include teaching about land and nature, as well as discussions on the impact of residential schools and hydro development on Native people. *Kenanow*, adds Anderson, celebrates student learning. “It’s not just giving them tests. It’s a different kind of approach. It’s about life and about honouring kids. And helping them grow as human beings, whether they are Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.macleans.ca/education/keeping-students-in-northern-manitoba-closer-to-home/>

## Heartfield: Let's shine more light on kids under provincial care

[Kate Heartfield](#)

Published on: February 28, 2016 | Last Updated: February 28, 2016 10:00 AM EST



Irwin Elman, the provincial advocate for children and youth. Clifford Skarstedt / Clifford Skarstedt/The Examiner

It’s becoming harder to pretend that the children and youth in Ontario’s residential-care system are invisible. That’s a beginning.

On Monday, a panel the province convened last July will give the minister of Children and Youth Services its review of foster care, group homes, kinship care and youth justice facilities. A spokesperson for the ministry tells me the report “will be made public as soon as possible” after that.

There are too many problems with the system to even enumerate here, but the province's priority should be providing better, less isolating care for the indigenous youth in its care.

There are a few good reasons to make this the priority. First, for the good of the system itself and the children in it. About one out of every five children in care in this province is indigenous, vastly out of proportion to population. (Black children are also disproportionately in care.)

Second, it will be impossible for this country to meet the historic challenge of truth and reconciliation if the provincial welfare systems don't learn to do better. The histories of residential schools and the "60s scoop" are directly related to the current reality of child welfare.

In 2011, John Beaucage, aboriginal adviser to the ministry, emphasized that connection in his report calling for a major overhaul of the system: "There is now a different kind of assimilation taking place that is referred to as the 'Millennium Scoop.' Let us learn from the past and not continue down the path that will lead to another lost generation."

A recent judgment of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal about the underfunding of child welfare on reserves is one more light shining on the situation.

Ontario's provincial advocate for Children and Youth, Irwin Elman, has been struck by a difference his office hears when it talks to kids in care. Non-aboriginal kids tend to say, "When I came into care ..." Aboriginal kids tend to say, "When I was taken away ..."

His office recently published "Searching for Home: Reimagining Residential Care," based on conversations with young people in care. That report says a sense of being rootless and voiceless is a major concern for all kids in the system but that it's exacerbated for Aboriginal youth because in many cases, they're put into care far away from their families and communities.

"To me, it's incredible that we do that to young people and expect that to lead to healing," Elman says.

Residential care, for many kids, certainly doesn't have to mean a permanent estrangement from family. Sometimes the young person needs treatment, crisis support or counselling, or the parents do. Sometimes the best option is to live with close relatives.

It simply doesn't make sense to base a plan of care on community and family support, then expect that plan to function when you're moving a kid to a distant group home.

Beaucage's report emphasized that some northern and First Nations' organizations are providing good, appropriate services for kids close to their homes – so it is possible, even in remote areas. The facilitation of appropriate care close to home just needs to become the norm, and the best way to work on that is to clear out the tangled jurisdictional vestiges of colonialism and start building on local approaches that work.

Indeed, Elman says that First Nations' successes could provide a model for the rest of Ontario's residential care system. "We can't appropriate traditions but we can certainly learn," he says.

He's eager to see what the panel will say about residential services, once it's made public. The isolation of Aboriginal kids in care is just one area to watch; so is the experience of all kids in care.

"I'm hoping to see a demonstration that the panel has heard from young people about what life is like in that setting," Elman says. "It's certainly important to me that the province accepts responsibility for the experience of young people who are living in the institutions it funds."

*Kate Heartfield is a former Citizen editorial pages editor. [Twitter.com/kateheartfield](https://twitter.com/kateheartfield)*

**Direct Link:** <http://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/heartfield-lets-shine-more-light-on-kids-under-provincial-care>

## **Inuit women continue to play catch-up with Aboriginal peers**

### **"Results highlight the importance of education"**

JANE GEORGE, February 29, 2016 - 10:00 am



Post-secondary education among Inuit women can go along with prosperity, traditional activities and Inuktit language, says a new StatsCan study. Here Nunavut Sivuniksavut students Christine Tootoo (left) and Savannah Angnaluaq (right) throat sing at the 2013 Nunavut Sivuniksavut graduation ceremonies in Ottawa. (FILE PHOTO)

Canadian Inuit women continue to play catch-up with other Aboriginal women in Canada.

That's among the many conclusions from a recently-released chapter on [First Nations, Métis and Inuit Women](#) contained in a Statistics Canada study on women in Canada.

Here's some good news from the study: Inuit women, who live in the Inuit Nunangat regions, engage in more traditional activities than other Aboriginal Canadians and remain more likely to speak their Aboriginal language — Inuktitut.

Nearly all Inuit women living in Nunavik reported being able to speak Inuktitut — 99 per cent — compared with 89 per cent in Nunavut, 25 per cent in Nunatsiavut, and 21 per cent in the Inuvialuit Region.

The StatsCan study also shows that higher education holds the key to Inuit women's prosperity.

An Inuk woman with a university degree living in Inuit Nunangat can look forward to earning an average salary of \$95,058, according to the study, based on data from the 2011 National Household Survey and the Aboriginal Peoples Survey.

Overall, Aboriginal women with higher levels of education enjoyed slightly higher employment rates than non-Aboriginal women in 2011.

And that same employment pattern held true for all three Aboriginal groups, First Nations, Métis and Inuit women, the study found.

“These results highlight the importance of education, especially as Aboriginal women are generally less likely than non-Aboriginal women to have a postsecondary qualification,” StatsCan said.

In 2011, the proportion of Inuit women who held a high school diploma or equivalent as their highest qualification remained the lowest of any Aboriginal group: 17 per cent — or less than one in five — for Inuit women aged 25 to 64, compared to 25 per cent for Métis women and 23 per cent for First Nations women.

The StatsCan study shows Inuit women face other obstacles as well.

The study shows how the living conditions of Inuit women lag behind First Nations and Métis women: Inuit women are the youngest overall of any Aboriginal group, they have more children, are likely not legally married, live in overcrowded substandard houses and often drop out of school due to pregnancies, child caring or other responsibilities.

As well, the study says nearly one in three Inuit women had contemplated suicide in the previous 12 months, two in three were daily smokers, and more than one in three reported heavy drinking.

Roughly one in four Inuit women over 15 years old, living in Inuit Nunangat, also said they lived with a chronic health condition:

- 15 per cent had been diagnosed with arthritis while the same percentage had been diagnosed with high blood pressure;
- about nine per cent were diagnosed with asthma; and,
- roughly eight per cent were diagnosed with a mood disorder and seven per cent were diagnosed with an anxiety disorder.

Inuit women remain in the minority among Aboriginal Canadians: they comprise only four per cent of the population of Aboriginal women in Canada, who, in turn, make up only four per cent of the entire female population of Canada.

The largest proportion of Inuit women live in Nunavut (45 per cent).

Outside Inuit Nunangat, in 2011, the largest female Inuit population could be found in Ottawa-Gatineau, with 550 Inuit women and girls, followed by Edmonton with 535, and 445 in Yellowknife.

In 2011, of the 59,400 Inuit living in Canada, three-quarters of Inuit lived in Inuit Nunangat.

But the proportion of Inuit women and girls living in Inuit Nunangat has declined since 2006, the study said.

In 2006, 77 per cent of Inuit women and girls lived in Inuit Nunangat while 23 per cent lived outside of Inuit Nunangat.

But in 2011, 72 per cent were living in Inuit Nunangat and 28 per cent living outside Inuit Nunangat.

The region with the largest number of Inuit women and girls was Nunavut (13,340), followed by Nunavik (5,335).

**Direct Link:** [http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674statscan\\_takes\\_in-depth\\_look\\_at\\_inuit\\_women/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674statscan_takes_in-depth_look_at_inuit_women/)

## **University of Guelph to increase aboriginal faculty, scholarships in response to TRC**



The University of Guelph campus.

Liam Casey, The Canadian Press

Published Wednesday, March 2, 2016 2:38PM EST

An Ontario university has responded to recommendations made in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with its plan to hire five aboriginal professors and boost graduate scholarships to students who identify as aboriginal.

Charlotte Yates, the provost at the University of Guelph, says the initiative was one of her first priorities after starting at the school last August.

Yates says the hiring and the scholarships won't be limited to any faculty or discipline.

She says the initiative is designed to fill gaps at the professorial level as well as develop a pipeline of researchers who can eventually become fill those roles.

Yates says there is a moral responsibility for universities to respond to the commission's report.

She hopes to have the faculty positions and scholarships filled within six to 18 months.

The idea was one of her first when she moved to the school from McMaster University last summer.

"All groups need to see themselves reflected in educational institutions," she said.

"To go into a lecture and never see yourself reflected is difficult. It's kind of like when I was an undergraduate and there was only one female faculty member. Was that ever a possibility for me? At that time, it wasn't quite clear."

In addition to the five tenure-track faculty positions, she said there will be five graduate scholarships available to aboriginal students in any discipline, two undergraduate research awards, one post-doctoral fellowship and a year-long artist in residence.

Yates said the initiative is a direct response to last summer's Truth and Reconciliation Commission that called on all levels of government to change policies to repair problems caused by residential schools.

The report also recommended that students be taught about the history and current plight of First Nations, Metis and Inuit.

The school is the latest to respond to the commission's findings.

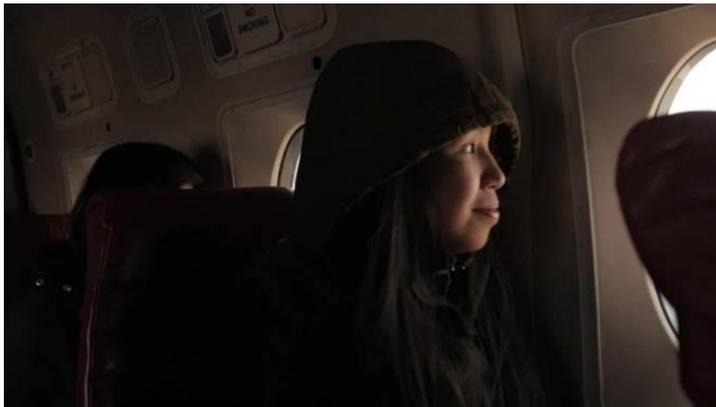
Trent University announced in March that it will offer a new program next fall designed to boost aboriginal numbers among teachers.

The university said it will offer an indigenous bachelor of education degree program with the hopes of having 15 students, all who self-identify as aboriginal, start the first year of the program in September.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/university-of-guelph-to-increase-aboriginal-faculty-scholarships-in-response-to-trc-1.2801078>

## Failing Canada's First Nations children

By [Hannah James](#) Producer 16x9  
March 2, 2016 9:30 am



When Priscilla King's eldest daughter turned 14, she had to send her away to high school, hundreds of kilometres from home. She didn't want it this way, but King had no choice. Her community, Kingfisher Lake First Nation – like many remote First Nations communities – does not have a high school.

King recalls the day she got the letter saying her daughter, Shawnda got accepted to a high school in Thunder Bay.

“She’s only a kid...I just couldn’t picture myself letting her go on her own,” she said. “It was like losing a loved one for me. I can still feel it.”

Currently, there a coroner’s inquest unfolding, in Thunder Bay looking into the deaths of seven First Nations teens, from remote reserves, who had come to the city to attend high school. Six of them went to the same school Shawnda attends – Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School.

“Being here in the city without your family, it’s hard. Like, you’re alone living in a stranger’s house. You’re going to school with a bunch of strangers,” Shawnda Mamakwa said.

Shawnda lives in a boarding home, and attends Dennis Franklin Cromarty High School, which caters exclusively to First Nations students from Treaty 9 communities in northern Ontario.

“Right now we have a hundred students. They are from... 23 First Nations communities,” said Jonathan Kakegamic, the school’s principal. “All of these communities have no high school... so they need to go somewhere.”

The school does its best to make its students feel at home. The school day starts with “Oh, Canada” sung in Ojibway. There’s an elders room where students can go between classes.

“During breaks, I would always go to the elders’ room because usually it reminds me of home, like the tea and the bannock, fried Klik, and fried baloney,” said Shawnda.

Kakegamic, known as “JK” to his students, says it’s a 24/7 job looking after more than a hundred teens living out here on their own. He knows that it’s not easy to be a teen, alone and so far from home.

“You know... we throw the word family around. Sometimes too loosely. But not here. It is a sense of family,” he says.

Comforting students is one thing, keeping them out of trouble is another, and DFC has struggled with this for years.

“With our history where we lost six students, that weighs on us. And that’s where we need to be very diligent in ensuring that we...look after them every day. All day,” Kakegamic said.

The school stays open long after classes are finished for the day. There are many after-school programs to keep the students busy and out of trouble. There are sports, staff versus students hockey games, places to hang out and relax or do crafts.

There are also patrol teams working for DFC that make sure the kids get home safely at night. They call every boarding home and make sure everyone is in by the school’s 10 p.m. curfew. If they’re not, the patrol begins searching for students until they find them.

“You know if my son was missing, whoever is in charge of my son, I would expect them to keep looking. And we do,” said Kakegamic.

One of the things that has come up in the coroner's inquest, is the issue of racism in Thunder Bay – something many of the kids at DFC say they've had to deal with outside the walls of their school. Incidents of name calling, people throwing rocks and food at indigenous students.

Shawnda says she was in line to buy some fries at the mall and was shocked by what she heard come out of a stranger's mouth.

“She told me to move, and then she called me a dirty Indian,” Shawnda said.

Even at a volleyball match against a neighbouring school, Shawnda heard something mid-game that stopped her in her tracks.

“One of the girls on the first line called us savages,” she said. “I was just like ‘What did they just say? Did I hear that correctly?’ To me, I take those words seriously.”

It's this type of incident that causes Shawnda's mom, so far away, to worry.

“The way things are now in the city. The way our people are treated ... it's not easy ... I try not to worry every day. I try not to worry for her. But I do pray for her safety and well being,” Priscilla King said.

King told *16x9* she believes strongly in the importance of getting an education, and wants Shawnda to finish her high school education in Thunder Bay, but if it was possible to educate her closer to home, she would.

King and her husband, Chris, have three younger children and she dreads sending them away to school one day, too.

“Looking at my little ones, I want to raise them in my community, in my home. I don't look forward to sending them out in the city. I don't even want to think about it, about that right now,” she said.

*16x9's “Failing Canada's First Nations Children” airs Saturday, Mar. 5, 2016 at 7 p.m.*

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2552557/failing-canadas-first-nations-children/>

## **First Nations University of Canada implements cost-cutting measures**

[Kerry Benjoe](#)

Published on: March 2, 2016 | Last Updated: March 2, 2016 5:15 PM CST



First Nations University of Canada April 2010. Don Healy / Regina Leader-Post

It was business as usual at the First Nations University of Canada on Wednesday, as high school students toured the building while university students sat at study stations, books in hand, and read between classes.

The university, however, is still looking for ways to cut costs in light of lower revenue and the expectation there will be little increase for the school in the provincial and federal budgets. Currently, FNUniv is offering voluntary buyout packages to staff.

Lynn Wells, FNUniv's vice president of academics, said it's nothing that should concern the students.

"There are lots of people here who have lots of good experience and good knowledge on how we manage, and we rely on all of that expertise every day to make good decisions," she said. "(Students) don't need to focus on those things, and they should focus on their exams and leave the university in the good hands of people who are working hard to make good decisions."

Wells said the university is working on its budget and looking at ways to run more efficiently.

"We had a posted deficit last year, but we have been working very hard to get ourselves into a good situation and we are confident moving forward that we are in good shape," she said. "We are not immune to what's happening in all Canadian universities in terms of pressure around funding."

Wells said the university is waiting to see what's in the provincial and federal budgets, but knows times are tough right now.

“We are doing our best to manage the institution in a sustainable way and keep growing,” she said.

The voluntary retirement incentive packages will go out this month and will likely take a few months to wrap up.

Wells said there is no guarantee of further cutbacks or layoffs until the budgets are announced.

She said it is something the University of Regina did a couple of years ago, as well as other universities across Canada.

In May 2014, the institute said goodbye to its long-time tenant — Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada — taking with them \$1 million that would have otherwise gone to rent. At the time, the university’s acting president downplayed the loss and said project enrolment increases would offset the loss of revenue.

Last summer, the institute implemented cost-cutting measures to address its \$801,000 deficit. It reduced its staff by 10 per cent and underwent some construction to better utilize the space at the Regina campus. The idea was to open up more leasing space for the community.

Wells said the university is still searching for tenants.

Brad Bellegarde, spokesman for the FNUniv Student Association, said students have not expressed any concern over the current state of affairs.

Cadmus Delorme, FNUniv student recruitment officer and former FNUniv student, said the current situation is nothing like it was back when he was a student when funding was pulled from the institution and it faced the real possibility of closing its doors, which led to student protests including a sleep-in.

“It’s growing pains,” he said.

Delorme remains confident those in charge will navigate the institute through the rough patch.

He encourages all students considering post-secondary education to take a good look at FNUniv.

“We are not going anywhere,” he said. “We will be here for them, their children and their children’s children.”

**Direct Link:** <http://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/first-nations-university-of-canada-implements-cost-cutting-measures>

# University of Guelph to hire aboriginal professors, boost student scholarships

University of Guelph provost Charlotte Yates says the hiring initiative is designed to fill gaps at the professorial level as well as develop a pipeline of researchers who can eventually become fill those roles.



Charlotte Yates, the provost at the University of Guelph, says the hiring of aboriginal professors and the boost in graduate scholarships for aboriginal students won't be limited to any faculty or discipline.

**By:** Liam Casey The Canadian Press, Published on Wed Mar 02 2016

The University of Guelph has responded to recommendations made in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with its plan to hire five aboriginal professors and boost graduate scholarships to students who identify as aboriginal.

Charlotte Yates, the provost at the university, says the initiative was one of her first priorities after starting at the school last August.

Yates says the hiring and the scholarships won't be limited to any faculty or discipline.

She says the initiative is designed to fill gaps at the professorial level as well as develop a pipeline of researchers who can eventually become fill those roles.

Yates says there is a moral responsibility for universities to respond to the commission's report.

She hopes to have the faculty positions and scholarships filled within six to 18 months.

The idea was one of her first when she moved to the school from McMaster University last summer.

"All groups need to see themselves [reflected in educational institutions](#)," she said.

“To go into a lecture and never see yourself reflected is difficult. It’s kind of like when I was an undergraduate and there was only one female faculty member. Was that ever a possibility for me? At that time, it wasn’t quite clear.”

In addition to the five tenure-track faculty positions, she said there will be five graduate scholarships available to aboriginal students in any discipline, two undergraduate research awards, one post-doctoral fellowship and a year-long artist in residence.

Yates said the initiative is a direct response to last summer’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission that called on all levels of government to change policies to repair problems caused by residential schools.

The report also recommended that students be taught about the history and current plight of First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

The school is the latest to respond to the commission’s findings.

[Trent University](#) announced in January that it will offer a new program next fall designed to boost aboriginal numbers among teachers.

The university said it will offer an indigenous bachelor of education degree program with the hopes of having 15 students, all who self-identify as aboriginal, start the first year of the program in September.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/03/02/university-of-guelph-to-hire-aboriginal-professors-boost-student-scholarships.html>

## **Foster parents want court to stop B.C. from removing Métis girl**

**Justice Mary Newbury says it seems "very cruel" to uproot the child to Ontario**

By Tamsyn Burgmann, The Canadian Press Posted: Feb 29, 2016 5:55 PM PT Last Updated: Feb 29, 2016 5:56 PM PT



The Métis toddler lives on Vancouver Island and so far has no idea that her life may change forever any day now. (Michael McArthur/CBC)

A couple say they believe social workers in the British Columbia Children's Ministry are carrying out a "personal vendetta" against them for fighting to keep a Métis toddler they've raised as foster parents since birth.

The couple, who cannot be named, were in the B.C. Court of Appeal on Monday asking a judge to temporarily block the ministry from moving the two-and-a-half-year-old girl to Ontario to live with older siblings she has never met.

"They have absolutely zero respect for the child's needs. They're mad at us and they've made it clear," the foster mother said outside court.

The case has raised cultural issues. The child's foster mother is Métis, while the caregivers in Ontario are not.

The child's foster father said they haven't been given a firm deadline when she will be removed from their care on Vancouver Island.

Justice Mary Newbury reserved her decision, but she told the lawyers she found it "puzzling" that the ministry's director was so strongly in favour of the out-of-province family.

"It seems perfect" that the little girl remain in B.C., Newbury said, adding it seems "very cruel" to uproot her.

## **Petition dismissed in B.C. Supreme Court**

Last week, a B.C. Supreme Court judge dismissed the couple's petition to stop the move, finding it was an abuse of process because a similar petition had already been dismissed. The couple has filed an appeal of that decision but it may not be heard for some time, which is why they're asking for the interim order.



The foster parents of a Métis child they have raised since birth are asking a judge to temporarily block the province from moving the girl to Ontario. (Michael McArthur/CBC)

Under the law, the director of the Children's Ministry is the child's sole guardian and has unilateral discretion to determine what is in her best interests.

Jack Hittrich, the foster parents' lawyer, argued the "best interest test" is not being followed by the ministry. A family law principle states that decisions must be child-focused and seek to address interests from a child's perspective, and not that of the government or foster parent, he said.

"Should she be ripped from the only home and the only parents she has every known ... and be traumatized by being moved to total strangers?" he asked the judge.

Hittrich said provincial law contains gaps that act as obstacles to keeping the child in B.C., highlighting a section that says foster parents cannot adopt. The Adoption Act also does not contain any explicit criteria for considering biological siblings as rationale for moving a child, he said.

The girl would experience more upheaval if she was moved and then ordered returned, should the case eventually be decided in the foster couple's favour, Hittrich argued.

## **Foster parents are 'paid caregivers'**

Leah Greathead, a lawyer for the ministry, said the law clearly sets out the role of the foster parent as a paid caregiver who only assumes temporary care.

She disputed Hittrich's characterization of the couple as "de facto parents," saying the situation is analogous to a nanny who is paid to spend time with a child. Just because they bond, does not mean the nanny has a right to assume permanent care, she said.

"They are not a parent in law," she said of the couple.

"They are expected to love and bond with the child in their care and then to assist in transitioning."

Tim Dickson, a lawyer for the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia, said the decision is difficult because there are "two good options" but ultimately the biological ties are the most important.

It was crucial to permanently place the girl as soon as possible, he told the judge, adding that she is too young to likely have memories of her first family.

"On the other side, she has a life ahead of her," said Dickson. "In Ontario she has siblings close to her age, with whom she can bond and grow up."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-foster-parents-metis-girl-1.3470170>

## Aboriginal Health

### **Nunavut MLA wants core funding for treatment centre**

**"We'd like to see them stay open, but there were no alternatives"**

THOMAS ROHNER, February 26, 2016 - 4:00 pm



A morning group therapy session in 2013 at Mamisarvik Healing Centre in Ottawa begins with a prayer. Nunavut's health minister, Paul Okalik, says the GN would like to help Mamisarvik but cannot provide core funding. (FILE PHOTO)

Nunavut's health minister, Paul Okalik, says the territory wants to provide more support to the Ottawa-based Mamisarvik Healing Centre.

But the Government of Nunavut cannot commit to giving the centre what Mamisarvik needs: core funding.

Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI), which runs the Mamisarvik treatment centre — one of only two Inuit-specific residential treatment centres in Canada — announced recently that they will [have to close](#) March 31 due to a lack of funding.

Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet MLA Tom Sammurtok asked Nunavut's health minister about Mamisarvik during question period in the Nunavut Legislature Feb. 25 — because many Nunavummiut with addictions have had successful outcomes after treatment there, he said.

“Can the minister provide an update on what consideration, if any, has been given to accessing core funding to ensure the ongoing operation of the Mamisarvik Healing Centre after March 2016?” Sammurtok asked on the second day of the winter sitting.

Okalik's response did not address the possibility of core funding.

“I met with senior level people [from the healing centre] in November as to how we can provide more support,” Okalik replied.

“We'd like to provide them with more support in the future, but they had to close the centre because they're an independent entity... we'd like to see them stay open, but there were no alternatives,” the minister said.

The 12-bed facility opened in 2003 thanks to federal funding from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

But that funding ended in 2013.

Since then, Mamisarvik has relied on funds-per-client arrangements with the GN and Correctional Services of Canada.

TI infused the centre with \$500,000 of its own money in 2015 to keep the centre's doors open, but the current funding model is simply not sustainable, according to Jason LeBlanc, TI's executive director.

“A residential treatment centre is not financially sustainable exclusively on a pay-as-you-go model,” LeBlanc said earlier this month.

Sammurtok, who said the treatment centre has helped many Nunavummiut deal with trauma and addiction, asked Okalik how many other culturally-appropriate residential treatment centres Nunavummiut can turn to.

“I know of one... there are other treatment centres [not culturally specific] available, if any of our healthcare clients would like to go to one of these treatment centres,” Okalik replied.

The other Inuit-specific residential treatment centre Okalik referred to is likely the Isuarsivik treatment centre in Kuujjuaq.

That facility is looking to [double its capacity](#) to 21 beds, given the high demand for its services, but at present, Isuarsivik is only accepting Nunavik clients.

For his final question in the house Feb. 25, Sammurtok asked Okalik for an update on “efforts, discussions or plans currently underway to establish a residential treatment centre in Nunavut,” — an idea the GN has been considering for years.

Okalik didn’t provide any concrete details or movement on that front.

“Our government has stated that we’d like to move towards this,” Okalik said.

After Nunavut beneficiaries return to their communities from southern treatment centres, Okalik said the government would like to find out what follow-up treatment they require.

“That way we can plan some time in the future to have a treatment facility in Nunavut,” he said.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut\\_health\\_unable\\_to\\_provide\\_core\\_funding\\_to\\_treatment\\_centre/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_health_unable_to_provide_core_funding_to_treatment_centre/)

## **Aboriginal leaders warning of mental health cost of climate change**

**First Nations and Inuit communities are coping with growing despair over climate change, a problem observers are connecting to mental health, social problems.**



A 2010 winter in Rigolet, a coastal Labrador Inuit community that is on the front lines of climate change. The changes are taking a psychological toll on this isolated community.

**By:** Torstar News Service Published on Mon Feb 29 2016

It's mid-February and the ice roads into and out of Deer Lake First Nation still aren't reliable enough to officially open, a reality that weighs heavily on the minds of residents.

"It's very late. It's bad. We want to get our stuff, our supplies, housing materials, fuel. I don't know if we'll be able to get it this year (by road)," said chief Roy Dale Meekis. "You feel isolated."

Anxieties are high in this small Oji-Cree community, located about 700 kilometres northwest of Thunder Bay. An unusually warm winter in Ontario's north — what's expected to become the new norm in a changing climate — has left the roads unstable and unsafe, and kept local road groomers out of work.

More supplies have to come by air, meaning higher costs for food, diesel fuel, medicines and bottled water in a community that has been under a drinking water advisory since 2001. To reduce demand for fuel, Deer Lake recently installed a 624-panel solar system to power the school. It helps, but doesn't address the isolation.

"It is a big concern, but what can we do? There's nothing we can do," said Meekis.

Deer Lake isn't alone. Ontario has roughly 3,100 kilometres of ice roads that keep about 30 remote First Nation communities connected to the rest of the province. Historically, those roads could be relied on for 70 to 80 days during winter months. But shorter and warmer winters have significantly narrowed that window, sometimes to fewer than 30 days.

No community is more aware of the risks than Deer Lake. Meekis' second uncle, former deputy chief Henry Meekis, drowned in late 2012 after the ice-road grooming machine he was driving plunged through the ice.

"There's something definitely wrong in the North," said Isadore Day, Ontario's regional chief for the Assembly of First Nations.

In an interview, Day said he suspects that despair over climate change — its impact on roads, infrastructure, hunting traditions and the surrounding environment — is contributing to mental health and social problems in northern aboriginal communities, possibly even to record-breaking suicide rates.

He has called on the province and federal government to conduct a major climate change impact study for the North, one that would involve extensive consultations with community elders who have lived off the land for decades and can share their traditional ecological knowledge.

"A study of this nature, if done, will have the added effect of short-circuiting the anxiety we have of being left out of this growing national discussion on climate change policy," said Day.

Ashlee Cunsolo Willox, an assistant professor of indigenous studies at Cape Breton University, said the connection between mental health and climate change in Canada's North is growing stronger and in "urgent" need of further investigation.

"There's this dialogue that's just waiting to leap out into the national and international consciousness," she said. "In Canada, we have this active fishing culture, active farming culture, and large Arctic indigenous groups who are on the front lines of climate change, yet we have been really quiet on this topic."

Cunsolo Willox is trying to make some noise. In late 2009, as part of her PhD dissertation, she began interviewing residents of Nunatsiavut, Labrador, to learn how Inuit communities were coping with the effects of climate change.

After conducting and analyzing 85 in-depth interviews and collecting 112 questionnaires, it became clear to her that people were struggling emotionally and psychologically.

Family stress was elevated. Anxiety and depression seemed to be amplified. More people were turning to drugs and alcohol and having suicidal thoughts.

Many appeared to be grieving the changes in the environment — rising temperatures, volatile weather, delayed ice formation, shortened seasons, melting permafrost and shifting habitat, to name a few. Australian philosopher Glenn Albrecht coined the word “solastalgia” in a 2005 paper to describe the feeling.

Cunsolo Willox said she was moved to tears by the deep connection the Inuit she spoke with have to the land, but it only hit her after returning home and listening to the interviews she had recorded.

“It’s so hard to articulate how close they are to it and part of it – their breathing, their skin, their bones, their blood.

So even subtle impacts on the environment can have major impacts on how they feel,” said Cunsolo Willox, who co-produced a 2014 documentary based on her research called Lament for the Land.

“I spent months bearing witness to their pain. It was incredibly hard. I had a complete breakdown.”

Another observation: the people she interviewed weren’t talking to each other about it. Even health professionals in the community were feeling the impact, but didn’t connect the dots. It was only after Cunsolo Willox sparked a community conversation that people realized they weren’t alone – that many others were silently struggling.

“I think people are scared to engage because it’s bloody scary and painful to really think about it,” she said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.metronews.ca/news/canada/2016/02/29/aboriginal-leaders-mental-health-climate-change.html>

## **First Nations man drags oxygen tank 1000 km on a toboggan in health care protest**

**Norman Shewaybick says his wife died after the oxygen supply ran out at the local nursing station**

By Jody Porter, CBC News Posted: Mar 01, 2016 5:00 AM ET| Last Updated: Mar 01, 2016 9:29 PM ET

Norman Shewaybick walked for more than 1,000 kilometres along the winter ice roads north of Thunder Bay, Ont., carrying his grief at the loss of his wife and dragging the oxygen tank he says could have saved her life.

The 17-day journey ended on Monday when Shewaybick arrived home in Webequie First Nation, falling to his knees as he was greeted by family and friends.

"My promise is done. I promised her I would bring it back," he cried as he lifted up the toboggan holding the oxygen tank.

- Nishnawbe Aski Nation declares health emergency over 'atrocious treatment'
- Auditor general finds major problems in First Nations health care
- Bad water in First Nations leads to high rate of invasive infection, doctor says

Shewaybick said his wife died after the oxygen supply ran out at the nursing station in Webequie. He said he made a promise to her that he would make sure no one else suffered in the same way.

Norman Shewaybick

Norman Shewaybick walked for 17 days dragging an oxygen tank home to Webequie First Nation to draw attention to what he sees as health care inequities in northern Ontario First Nations. (Jody Porter/CBC)

"It was my 26th wedding anniversary and that's what Health Canada gave me for an anniversary present — a dead wife," Shewaybick said as he placed the oxygen tank between himself and a Health Canada representative at a community meeting to mark the end of the walk.

Shewaybick's walk has already prompted Health Canada, which operates the nursing stations in northern Ontario's remote First Nations, to promise an oxygen concentrator for every community.

"We are now instituting a whole review of our nursing stations in Ontario," said Keith Conn, the regional director of the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada.

That's something Canada's auditor general called for in a report last year that said Health Canada has no way of assessing if nursing stations meet the needs of First Nations communities they serve.

Norman Shewaybick's oxygen tank

The toboggan that carried the oxygen tank, wrapped in plastic, from Thunder Bay, Ont., more than 500 kilometres north to Webequie First Nation. (Jody Porter/CBC)

"It's a small step, it's only the beginning, there needs to be a lot more work around health and wellness," Conn said during a community meeting in Webequie.

Several people spoke at the meeting about their concerns, listing relatives who they felt died after being ignored or ill-treated by the health care system.

Shawaybick said he's pleased to see that his long journey is breaking the silence about the experiences of First Nations people in the health care system.

"The way it's set up right now, it's killing our people," he said. "Our people are dying."

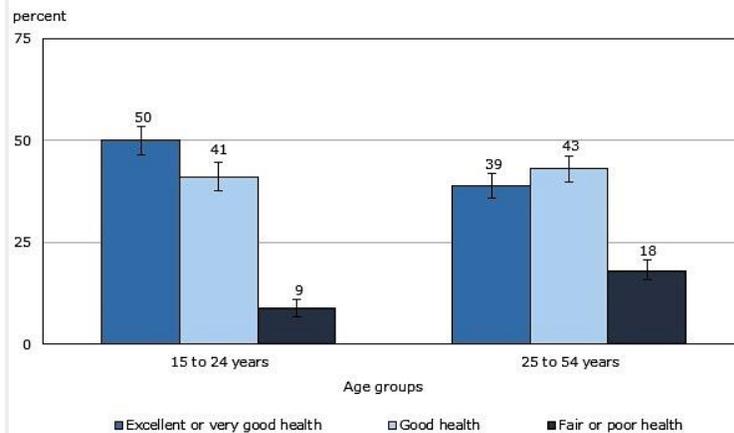
**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-man-drags-oxygen-tank-1000-km-on-a-toboggan-in-health-care-protest-1.3470149>

## Gender, education, smoking, family affect Inuit health: StatsCan

### Inuit women less likely to report excellent or very good health than Inuit men

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, March 03, 2016 - 7:00 am

**Chart 1**  
Self-reported health for Inuit aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 54 years, Inuit Nunangat, 2012



Source: Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2012.

This chart from a recently-released Statistics Canada study shows self-reported health among Inuit in 2012. (GRAPH COURTESY OF STATSCAN)

If you're an Inuk who feels healthy, you're likely an educated, non-smoking, slim young man with a some post-secondary education and a solid family.

That's according to the findings of a [Statistics Canada study on the social determinants of self-reported Inuit health in Inuit Nunangat, 2012](#), released last week.

The study found Inuit women were less likely to report excellent or very good health than men, among those aged 25 to 54 years, “even after controlling for other factors.”

And, among other things, “strong or very strong family ties were associated with higher levels of excellent or very good health, while those with less than a high school education and those who were obese were associated with lower levels of excellent or very good health,” the study said.

Among Inuit, 15 to 24, in Inuit Nunangat regions, more than half of those with “strong or very strong family ties” had excellent or very good health, compared with 43 per cent of those with moderate, weak or very weak family ties.

The same relationship held true for Inuit, 25 to 54 — those with strong or very strong family ties were more likely to be in excellent or very good health (42 per cent) than those with weaker ties (34 per cent.)

The study also found:

- younger Inuit who were daily smokers were less likely to be in excellent or very good health: Less than half (47 per cent) of daily smokers were predicted to be in excellent or very good health compared with 55 per cent of those who smoked occasionally or not at all;
- younger Inuit who lived in a crowded dwelling — defined as living in a dwelling with more than one person per room — had a lower probability of being in excellent or very good health;
- one third of Inuit, 25 to 54, or 33 per cent, who lived in a dwelling that was in need of major repairs were in excellent or very good health compared with 41 per cent of those who lived in a dwelling that only needed regular maintenance or minor repairs; and,
- more than one-third (35 per cent) of Inuit, 25 to 54, who had low or very low food security were predicted to be in excellent or very good health, while the probability for those with high or marginal food security was greater — 43 per cent.

The study used data from the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey to examine relationships between self-reported health and some of the social determinants of health, as identified by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, assessing the relationship between various social, economic and cultural factors and excellent or very good self-reported health.

The analysis looked at two age groups: those aged 15 to 24 and those aged 25 to 54.

To measure self-reported health, the survey asked respondents to report their health as being, in general, “excellent,” “very good,” “good,” “fair” or “poor.”

[Another recent StatsCan report found](#) Canadian Inuit women continue to play catch-up with other Aboriginal women in Canada.

**Direct Link:**

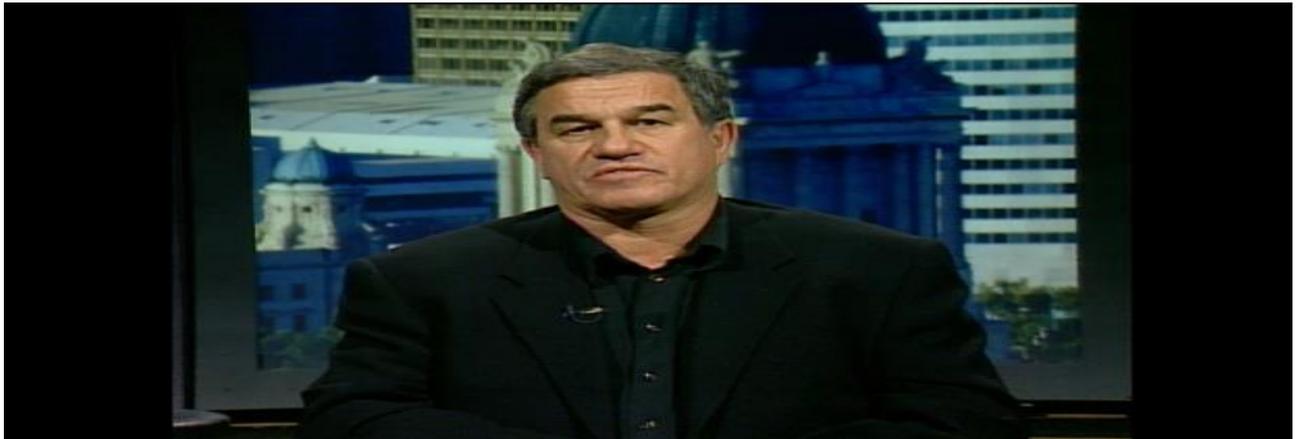
[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674gender\\_education\\_family\\_weight\\_smoking\\_housing\\_affect\\_inuit\\_health/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674gender_education_family_weight_smoking_housing_affect_inuit_health/)

## Aboriginal History

### **20 years since Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, still waiting for change**

**Commission aimed to repair relations between indigenous and non-indigenous people**

By Martha Troian, [CBC News](#) Posted: Mar 03, 2016 5:00 AM ET Last Updated: Mar 03, 2016 11:06 AM ET



Paul Chartrand was one of the original commissioners of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Photo: Still from Home and Native Land, CBC, 1999. (CBC )

When the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) released its final report in 1996, it set out a 20-year agenda for implementing changes to better the lives of Indigenous people in this country.

Those two decades have now come to an end.

"There is a very powerful lesson there, which is that today still, I don't think it's changed much," says Paul Chartrand, 72, one of the original commissioners.

Born of conflict, RCAP was established shortly after a 78-day armed standoff — known as the Oka Crisis — between the Mohawk community of Kanesatake, the Sûreté du Québec, and the Canadian army.

The commission was meant to "help restore justice to the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in Canada, and to propose practical solutions to stubborn problems," according to the final report.

## **4,000 page report, sweeping recommendations**

When the commission released its final five-volume, 4,000-page report, it contained recommendations for dealing with a breadth of issues, including self-governance, treaties, health, housing, the north, economic development and education.

Operating on a reported \$60-million dollar budget, a total of five commissioners had a hand in crafting the report, visiting 96 First Nation communities and holding 178 days of public hearings.

Chartrand, a Métis of St. Laurent, Manitoba, recalls an elderly woman from northern Ontario telling the commission she would not take herself to the hospital if she were to ever get sick.

This woman explained how she lost a friend, who was unilingual, also from the north, and who travelled by air to go to a hospital. The next day, her friend was found frozen to death. There was some kind of miscommunication at the hospital, Chartrand said.



Viola Robinson, a Mi'kmaq from Nova Scotia, now in her 70's, also sat on the commission.

"[The] most alarming thing to me was almost every community that we went to, the issue of residential schools was brought up," says Robinson.

"The stories and the presentations were so heart wrenching and moving ... we knew that there was no way that we as a royal commission could deal with it."

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission ended its six-year mandate last year, tasked with unraveling the history and wrongdoings of the Indian residential schools system.

"[The TRC] was really one of the biggest recommendations that came out [of RCAP] and I was happy to see that it was carried out."

## **A long wait for change**

The TRC's final report included 94 recommendations or 'calls to action' for not only commemorating what happened in the schools, but also fostering reconciliation.

Canada's new Liberal government has vowed to act on every single one.



Canada's new Liberal government has vowed to act on all of TRC's 94 calls to action. Don Rusnak, Thunder Bay-Rainy River Liberal MP, believes this promise will be fulfilled. (Heather Kitching/CBC)

Don Rusnak , Thunder Bay-Rainy River Liberal MP believes this will be fulfilled.

"These are two separate governments, we have a different prime minister now, [with] different times, different commitments," said Rusnak referring to the lack of action from the RCAP recommendations.

"I am not so naive as to think it will be done within a year or two years ... it's going to take a prime minister with courage and an Indigenous Affairs minister with courage to get the issues with indigenous peoples in this country solved and get the relationship moving on the right path."

Rusnak said he would look at the RCAP recommendation and bring it forward to their indigenous caucus.

There's been talk among indigenous leaders that if positive changes are to happen, they could begin under this new government.

It's been a long wait for many, including for Paul Chartrand.

"It's a great relief that we have been liberated from the stranglehold of the Harper government, I have never seen anything like it," said Chartrand.

Since the election, a long-awaited federal inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls has been called and a two percent cap on First Nation funding has been lifted.

Two key cabinet members are indigenous: Jody Wilson-Raybould, now Minister for Justice and Attorney General, and Hunter Tootoo, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Carolyn Bennett, long-time advocate for indigenous issues, became minister of the renamed Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

'Here's a template for you to consider when you're making your decisions.'" - *Paul Chartrand, RCAO commissioner*

So far, these steps taken are being regarded as a 'new era' for reconciliation with indigenous people.

But to move forward, one must simply look back, Chartrand said.

"As a Royal Commission we never thought, 'We're telling you what to do' but the idea was, here's a template for you to consider when you're making your decisions.'"

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/aboriginal/20-year-anniversary-of-rcap-report-1.3469759>

## **Filmmaker hopes indigenous documentary will spur change**

By Jason Bain, The Peterborough Examiner  
Thursday, March 3, 2016 1:09:43 EST AM

Film director Alex Williams poses for a photograph on Wednesday March 2, 2016 at Trent University's Wenjack Theatre in Peterborough, Ont. Trent University presented his film screening titled **The Pass System** that illuminates Canada's hidden history of racial segregation. For over 60 years, the Canadian government often denied Indigenous peoples the basic freedom to leave their reserves without a pass. Cree, Soto, Dene, Ojibwe and Blackfoot elders of the prairie land where this took place tell their stories of living under and resisting the system, and link their experiences to today. Acclaimed Cree actor and activist Tantoo Cardinal (*Dances with Wolves*, *Legends of the Fall*) narrates this investigative look into a little-known Canada. Clifford Skarstedt/Peterborough Examiner/Postmedia Network

Film director Alex Williams poses for a photograph on Wednesday March 2, 2016 at Trent University's Wenjack Theatre in Peterborough, Ont. Trent University presented his film screening titled **The Pass System** that illuminates Canada's hidden history of racial segregation. For over 60 years, the Canadian government often denied Indigenous

peoples the basic freedom to leave their reserves without a pass. Cree, Soto, Dene, Ojibwe and Blackfoot elders of the prairie land where this took place tell their stories of living under and resisting the system, and link their experiences to today. Acclaimed Cree actor and activist Tantoo Cardinal (*Dances with Wolves*, *Legends of the Fall*) narrates this investigative look into a little-known Canada. Clifford Skarstedt/Peterborough Examiner/Postmedia Network

Alex Williams says he's just a kid from the west side of Saskatoon who got mad and wanted to do something about the issue.

That's why he directed and produced the documentary *The Pass System*, which spotlights Canada's history of racial segregation – a period of 60 years where the government often denied aboriginal peoples to leave their reserves without a pass.

In the film, screened at Trent University's Peter Gzowski College Wednesday night, Cree, Saulteaux, Dene, Ojibwe and Blackfoot elders of the prairie land where this took place tell their stories of living under and resisting the system and link their experiences to today.

The film may talk about the past, but it's really about the present, Williams said at Otonabee College prior to the screening, noting how it addresses the legacy that part of history created.

The pass system intended to keep aboriginals out of towns and cities – which, with no base in law, was a breach of aboriginal treaties and basic human rights, he said.

It was one of the “levers of cohesion” used by the government, with others including the permit system that controlled First Nations' ability to sell products and residential schools that assimilated native culture and religion.

The *Pass System* documentary looks back at when the Canadian government often denied native people from leaving their reserves without a pass like this.

Taking indigenous children was a powerful move. “If they had my kids, I would resist, but probably eventually comply,” Williams said.

Asked why he made the film, the Guelph-area native said it's difficult to talk about this aspect of our history, what our government did to secure land for settlement.

It's also really hard to find information about it. Information about the pass system just doesn't exist in any archives – much of it was destroyed.

However, much of what has been learned is because the government found documents that were supposed to be destroyed, but weren't.

“We come back to how important it is to listen to individual people and listen to their stories, because of that,” said the filmmaker, who began work on the project, his first medium-length documentary, about six years ago.

He became particularly interested when someone referred to Canada's aboriginal relations as its own version of apartheid.

Williams consulted with Trent professor John Jennings, who was among the first to draw that comparison in a Ph.D thesis, as well as indigenous and non-indigenous historians from across the country.

Williams refers to the film as building a case, because he presents evidence in the form of expert testimony and hears from witnesses, including aboriginal elders, who spoke about how they have been affected personally.

Ultimately, Williams' goal was to create a common, emotional understanding of what happened and he hopes viewers will come away from the film with a feeling they can't “unsee” or “unhear” the voices of the interview subjects.

Hopefully, it will leave them wanting to do something about it, he said.

Williams said he grew up in a racially-divided society that only acknowledged a “very selected version of events” in our history.

He spoke passionately about how the project better helped him understand who set plans like the pass system in motion. Government made the decisions – but it was ultimately society and the culture of the time that re-inforced those prejudices.

Now, it's again up to society to decide if we want to change things, he said.

Williams noted the words of Murray Sinclair, a First Nations lawyer and current chair of the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission who said “Education got us into this mess and hopefully, it will get us out.”

Change may or may not come from the government, Williams notes, pointing out how the commission was the result of a lawsuit. “It has to come from deep in people, that we don't want to do what was done before ... and it's going to take time.”

That will mean a prolonged, sustained, kind approach, that could cross generations. “We have to be prepared to make sacrifices.”

Williams is screening the film across Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta. He was in Ottawa and Waterloo earlier this week, and planned to screen The Pass System at McMaster University in Hamilton on Thursday.

The film, which premiered at the Vancouver International Film Festival on Sept. 30 and Oct. 2, 2015 and was an official selection at the Yellowknife International Film Festival on Oct. 3, 2015, is narrated by acclaimed Cree actor and activist Tantoo Cardinal (Dances with Wolves, Legends of the Fall).

To see a trailer for The Pass System, visit <https://vimeo.com/awilliams/thepasssystemtrailer>.

It's also available from vtape.org and will be aired at a yet-unknown date on the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network and CBC.

For more information, visit [www.tamarackproductions.com/the-pass-system/](http://www.tamarackproductions.com/the-pass-system/) or <https://www.facebook.com/thepasssystem/>

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/2016/03/03/filmmaker-hopes-native-documentary-will-spur-change>

## Aboriginal Identity & Representation

### Dsquared2 apologizes to indigenous peoples for '.dsquaw' collection

**'We are sad that our collection ... might have caused hurt through our inappropriate use of words'**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 26, 2016 3:14 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 26, 2016 4:23 PM CT



Dsquared2 designers Dean and Dan Caten came under fire last year for their collection called #Dsquaw. The designers sent a letter of apology to CBC North on Thursday morning. (Left: Facebook, Right: Twitter/Hudson's Bay)

The company chosen to design Team Canada's Olympic clothing has sent a letter to CBC North apologizing to indigenous peoples of Canada for a collection last year it marketed under the name ".dsquaw."

The line, unveiled in March 2015, featured stereotypical aboriginal outfits and was criticized for appropriating aboriginal culture. The company has since removed all references to .dsquaw from its website and its Twitter, Instagram and Facebook accounts.

[Another round of criticism began last month](#) when Dsquared2 was selected by the Hudson's Bay Company to design Team Canada's clothing for the 2016 Rio Olympics.

[Some Indigenous former Olympians said the choice could bring negative connotations](#) and serve as a distraction to athletes who are mandated to wear the clothing over the course of the Games.

The letter is signed by the company's founders, Dan and Dean Caten.

"Our Dsquared2 Women's Fall-Winter 2015 collection paid homage to the beauty and strength of the indigenous peoples of Canada, who have shaped our country's cultural identity," the letter states.

"We are sad that our collection, which was meant to be a celebration of cultures, might have caused hurt through our inappropriate use of words.

"Our intentions were in good faith but we now understand how this terminology is offensive. We are truly sorry, and apologize for the disrespect this may have caused."

The letter goes on to say they hoped that by making the mistake they drew attention to the issue.

"We will continue this journey, learning and educating ourselves about the diversity of the indigenous cultures of Canada: First Nations, Inuit and Métis."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/dsquared2-dsquaw-apology-letter-1.3466472>

## **Throwing food at First Nations youth 'not okay', says Thunder Bay city manager**

Lawyer at inquest asks what can be done to stop 'deep-rooted practice' in Thunder Bay

By Jody Porter, CBC News Posted: Mar 03, 2016 7:01 AM ET| Last Updated: Mar 03, 2016 11:51 AM ET

The City of Thunder Bay, Ont., is working toward solutions to the "deep-rooted practice" of throwing food and racial slurs at indigenous youth in the city, according to testimony on Wednesday at an inquest into the deaths of seven First Nations students.

Jethro Anderson, Paul Panacheese, Curran Strang, Robyn Harper, Reggie Bushie, Kyle Morriseau and Jordan Wabasse died between 2000 and 2011. All of them had travelled to Thunder Bay from remote communities to attend high school.

Several of their classmates have testified at the inquest about having racial slurs hurled at them from passing cars along with eggs, bottles or full take-out cups of pop.

"It appears to be a deep-rooted practice among some people in Thunder Bay," said Jonathan Rudin, the lawyer for the families of children who died.

"It's nice to have the word respect," Rudin said, referring to the 'Respect' campaign, an anti-racism initiative in Thunder Bay, "but I wonder if there's something more."

The city is developing a system where people who have experienced a racist incident could call the 211 phone line and report it, said Karen Lewis, the manager of corporate strategic services, during her testimony at the inquest.

The incidents will be reported and tracked, she said.

A plan to build a "grand" youth centre is still in the works, according to city manager Norm Gale.

"Hearing these tales of food being thrown, abuse being hurled, racism directed at our youth or adults is simply not okay," Gale said in an interview. "Youth centres can play a pivotal role in helping people be together and to deal with racism."

A 2014 attempt by the city to create a youth centre, in partnership with the Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre, failed when the federal government refused to help fund it.

Watch live streaming video from the First Nation student deaths inquest [here](#).

Follow CBC Thunder Bay reporter Jody Porter as she tweets from the inquest.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-youth-thunder-bay-1.3473381>

## Aboriginal Politics

### **Crowley: How conservatives can talk to Aboriginals**

[Brian Lee Crowley](#)

Published on: February 26, 2016 | Last Updated: February 26, 2016 11:45 AM EST



British Prime Minister David Cameron and his Conservative party overcame the label of the 'mean' party.  
WPA Pool / Getty Images

If Canadian Conservatives wanted to steal a page from British Prime Minister David Cameron's playbook to reinvent themselves, I would nominate the one entitled Compassionate Conservatism.

Rightly or wrongly, the Stephen Harper government was seen as hard and mean, which clashes with Canadians' self-image. No electorate will go on giving the nod to a party the sense is out of step with their values.

The British Conservatives faced a similar challenge. Facing an opposition known popularly as the mean party helped give Tony Blair a record run as Labour prime minister.

To recover from such brand damage is not easy, but the Tories achieved it, in part under the leadership of a former party leader, Iain Duncan Smith, who founded a think-tank called the Centre for Social Justice to lay the groundwork for a constructive but distinctively Tory response to social challenges such as poverty, housing and social mobility. The political payoff has been tremendous. The Tories are now able to articulate and put into practice intelligent ideas about how to use the power of markets and the state to improve the lot of the least well-off.

If Canadian Tories wanted to achieve such a rebranding, how would they do it, especially given that so much social policy falls under provincial jurisdiction? By embracing Aboriginal Canada.

I did not say it would be easy. On the other hand, a party wishing to burnish its compassion credentials might well want to start with a burning social issue that most

Canadians regard as a stain on the conscience of the country, namely the shocking conditions in which far too many Aboriginal citizens live.

It is also an issue that lends itself increasingly well to a small-c conservative narrative. The Canadian Left sees the issue as largely one of victimhood, something to be put right by inquisitions into the past that will underline yet again the poor treatment meted out to Aboriginal Canadians, with compensation, apologies and increased transfers the solution.

A conservative narrative, however, might take an entirely different tack, noting that victimhood focuses on the past, which cannot be changed, and disempowers the victims, who must go cap in hand to the authorities for restitution. In its place can be put a narrative of opportunity and legitimate Aboriginal power that must now be accommodated in modern Canada.

To date the subtext of Conservative policy has been a grudging admission Aboriginal people have gained power thanks to the courts and the constitutionalization of treaties and Aboriginal rights in 1982, but that this power is illegitimate and cannot be embraced for fear of alienating the Conservative base. This attitude has been overtaken by events. The rising generation of young Indigenous Canadians wants jobs and opportunity on the reserve as well as in the cities, and the natural resource frontier now runs through many of those communities, juxtaposing legitimate Aboriginal power and real opportunity in a way not seen before in our history.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit are now striking deals for development of those resources with hundreds of developers and realizing major opportunities as a result. They are an increasingly vocal and articulate voice in favour of the natural resource development the Tories see as key to Canada's future, just as they hold the power to obstruct that development. Significantly, polling shows that when local Aboriginal groups support development, extreme environmental opposition has difficulty gaining traction.

Within a few years, several Aboriginal development corporations will be among the largest corporations in Canada, with billions in assets. The evidence shows when Aboriginals negotiate benefits with developers, those benefits stay in the local community, benefiting Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike.

A pro-opportunity Conservative Party that embraced Aboriginal Canada as a respected, necessary and welcome partner in unlocking prosperity would find a growing audience in the Indigenous world. And it would have the foundation of that distinctive Tory narrative on social issues that Canadians are looking for.

***Brian Lee Crowley** ([twitter.com/brianleecrowley](https://twitter.com/brianleecrowley)) is the managing director of the Macdonald-Laurier Institute, an independent non-partisan public policy think-tank in Ottawa.*

**Direct Link:** <http://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/crowley-how-conservatives-can-talk-to-aboriginals>

# RAW:almond setting a table for premier, First Nations leaders at The Forks

Dishes to be served will include bison carpaccio, pickled mussels

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 25, 2016 5:44 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 25, 2016 5:44 PM CT



Winnipeggers bundled up for five-course tasting menus during the 2013 edition of RAW:almond, the outdoor pop-up restaurant that usually takes place on the frozen Assiniboine River at The Forks. (Robin Summerfield)

Organizers of RAW:almond, the outdoor winter pop-up restaurant at The Forks, are setting a special table tonight for Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger, several First Nations leaders and other guests.

The leaders are in Winnipeg for a national roundtable on missing and murdered indigenous women.

"It's pretty exciting. It's kind of a coup to be asked to host all these people ... I thought it was pretty cool," RAW:almond co-owner Joe Kaltornyk told CBC News.

"It was a request from Federal and Provincial Affairs — like, a liaison department — and they wished to host a dinner for all the premiers and grand chiefs at RAW:almond; give them sort of a kind of a true Winnipeg experience."

Kaltornyk said about 40 guests will be served on Thursday evening, and he expects security in the area to be tonight.

While he was tight-lipped about what exactly will be on the menu, he said the dishes will include bison carpaccio with puffed brown rice and pickled mussels.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/raw-almond-winnipeg-premier-chiefs-dinner-1.3464822>

# Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to visit Alberta First Nation

By [Erika Tucker](#) Online Reporter Global News  
February 26, 2016 1:51 pm  
Updated: February 26, 2016 3:35 pm



*THE CANADIAN PRESS/Aaron Vincent Elkaim*

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is set to visit an Alberta's Tsuut'ina Nation March 4, in what band members are calling a "monumental" event for the First Nation.

Chief Roy Whitney said Trudeau accepted an invitation to formally meet with Tsuut'ina members to be briefed on First Nations issues. Tsuut'ina chief and council spokesperson Kevin Littlelight said the visit will set the foundation for future engagement in areas of education and business that will have a positive impact on the community.

“It was an idea coming out to the Tsuut’ina Nation to bestow a feather hat on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau because he was a real leader in terms of taking a concern on aboriginal issues,” Littlelight said.

“To our surprise, the prime minister agreed...it’s an honour that works both ways. He’s coming here to accept, we’re honouring him, and for us—out of the 600 nations—to have this privilege is astronomical.”

Trudeau will receive a ceremonial headdress, as will Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde.

He said the headdress, or war bonnet, that will be presented to Trudeau symbolizes accomplishment, respect, bravery and peace building.

“Because Prime Minister Trudeau is watched enthusiastically around the world, this is putting Tsuut’ina on a world stage,” he said. “It reaffirms the relations with aboriginal peoples in Canada.”

Littlelight said there will be a “light” agenda for the talks, including topics such as missing and murdered aboriginal women, adequate water, social programming and economic development.

**Direct Link:** <http://globalnews.ca/news/2543416/prime-minister-justin-trudeau-to-visit-alberta-first-nation/>

## **Manitoba NDP promises training for civil servants on indigenous rights, history**

**Courses would be based on subjects the TRC recommended for civil servants, NDP candidate says**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 26, 2016 2:47 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 26, 2016 5:57 PM CT



Wab Kinew, NDP candidate for Fort Rouge, announces the party will train civil servants on indigenous histories and rights if re-elected. (CBC)

The Manitoba NDP announced Friday that it will give civil servants mandatory training on indigenous histories and rights based on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, if the party is re-elected in April.

"By learning more about each other, we can really move forward together in a strong and a robust way and create the

'We do know training dollars are important and often they are quite scarce, so then our hope is that actually there will be new money'- *Michelle Gawronsky, President of the MGEU*

type of future for Manitobans that we all want," said Wab Kinew, NDP candidate for Fort Rouge. "We are going to use the TRC calls to action and the specific subject areas that they recommend civil servants learn."

Topics would include the history and legacy of residential schools, treaties and aboriginal rights, indigenous law and aboriginal-Crown relations, economic development, protecting traditional land and resources, healing and reconciliation, new technologies and new beginnings.

The training would be "cost neutral" and would be funded by rearranging existing training dollars, some of which fund existing optional aboriginal training, Kinew said.

"The TRC has reminded all of us of how much work remains to be done on reconciliation," he said.

Kinew said the government will decide how training will be rolled out if it's re-elected when Manitobans go to the polls on April 19.

## **Union raises concern**

The Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU) represents the 14,000 civil servants impacted by this promise.

While the union said it supports measures that help to improve the work of its members, it has some concern the money would come from existing training budgets.

"We don't have any of the details about how money is going to be allocated," said the president of the MGEU, Michelle Gawronsky. "We do know training dollars are important and often they are quite scarce, so then our hope is that actually there will be new money that the government will be adding to this and we plan on sending that message to them."

Gawronsky said other than being sent a copy of the press release from the NDP, she had not yet had any conversations with the party about how this promise would impact training budgets.

"I'd be concerned on exactly what they would be doing with it, and I'd certainly be hoping to see some details on how that would affect our members," she said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/ndp-mandatory-indigenous-training-1.3466340>

## Wallace Fox bows out of electoral race early

By [James Wood](#), Lloydminster Meridian Booster

Monday, February 29, 2016 3:10:52 MST PM



Chief Wallace Fox, of Onion Lake Cree Nation, is pictured in this file photo dated Monday, Feb. 29, 2016 at the Onion Lake Cree Nation Administration Office in Onion Lake, Sask. Eric Healey/Lloydminster Meridian Booster/Postmedia Network

Wallace Fox will not be seeking the position of Chief in the upcoming Onion Lake Cree Nation (OLCN) elections, which take place on June 15.

In an exclusive interview with the *Meridian Booster*, Fox said the move is being undertaken in response to concerns from some of the OLCN membership, and it is a personal decision he made after many years of service to the community. He also made it clear the move was not to be seen as a resignation.

“At this point in my life, right now, I don’t want to see myself as an old, old man, sitting in leadership and politics, when there is a personal life that you can live,” said Fox.

“In the public eye, you’re always under scrutiny; you can’t really be able to have your own life.”

Fox has been the subject of international news coverage in recent years, with moves such as leading the challenge against the First Nations Financial Transparency Act, and more recently leading OLCN in partnership with Poundmaker First Nation in a class-action

lawsuit against the federal government for failing to protect First Nation's oil resources from outside drilling.

Fox has also recently faced troubles on-reserve, with a letter asking for his resignation being sent to council in November 2015, following charges being laid against the chief, involving allegations of domestic violence. A trial date for the charges has been set for June 29-30, at Lloydminster Provincial Court.

Following the interview, a video was played focused on the community profile of OLCN. When footage and imagery focused in on Fox's leadership in the attempted entry of Parliament Hill in 2013 during an Idle No More protest, Fox said "I wish I had never done that."

The chief also spoke about how the duties of his role have worn on him over the years, despite his enjoyment of the position. He also put forward examples of how he has cared for OLCN band members, in comparison to members of the provincial and federal governments and their constituents, singling out Premier Brad Wall.

"Do people drive up to Premier Brad Wall's house on Sunday morning at 9 a.m., when he is out getting ready to go golfing? No," said Fox.

"When I'm at home, cutting wood or fixing my chainsaw to go cut wood, on Saturday morning, people drive up, and as part of my role to help our community I go to the house, offer them tea or coffee, and I listen to them. Does the leadership do that? Do the MLA's do that? The MP's do that? No."

In addition, Fox spoke about what he plans to do, if he does not become chief once more.

"Word spreads around," said Fox.

"I was in Vancouver for the AFN (Assembly of First Nations) meeting that they had over there, people have offered me employment. Ottawa, I've got calls, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, to work, so I will not be out of employment. Other First Nations have asked me, 'well now that you're not going to be chief, why don't you consider coming to help us,' the opportunities are there, and I'm not terribly concerned as to where I'll get my paycheque from."

As for the legacy Fox leaves behind after his many years of working for OLCN, he said he saw himself as a servant, and did not speak to any specific ways he has impacted the community.

Dunlop Muskego, director of operations for OLCN, said he disagrees with the move, and hopes Fox re-thinks his position.

"I don't speak for all the membership, but at this point in time, we don't support that," said Muskego.

“I agree with the fact he has put a lot of years and effort into leading the nation, but he has done more for this community than most people have ever realized, and for that alone I would suggest and recommend he re-think his position.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.meridianbooster.com/2016/02/29/wallace-fox-bows-out-of-electoral-race-early>

## Thomas Mulcair: Trudeau Should Apologize To 2 Excluded Aboriginal Groups

CP | By Kristy Kirkup, The Canadian Press

Posted: 02/29/2016 2:47 pm EST Updated: 02/29/2016 4:59 pm EST

THE CANADIAN PRESS 🇨🇦

OTTAWA — Prime Minister Justin Trudeau should apologize to a pair of national aboriginal organizations excluded from upcoming discussions on climate change in Vancouver, says NDP Leader Tom Mulcair.

Both the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and the Native Women's Association of Canada have written to the prime minister and the premiers to complain about being excluded from the meetings, which start Wednesday.



NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair speaks in the House of Commons. (Photo: Sean Kilpatrick/CP)

Trudeau should ensure the groups are at the table, Mulcair said in an interview with The Canadian Press.

"There's really no excuse for it," he said. "It is a slight. He should apologize and just do the right thing and invite the two remaining groups."

Trudeau promised to engage with all five nationally recognized aboriginal organizations, so there is no reason to exclude two of them this week, Mulcair added.

"It is incomprehensible that he would try and pick and choose which groups get to sit at the table when he promised that all five national groups would be there," he said.

### **Chief of Congress of Aboriginal Peoples is coming, anyway**

Dwight Dorey, the national chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, said he has a flight booked to Vancouver, despite the lack of an invitation.

Dorey is confused why the government paid for him to attend the COP21 climate change discussions in Paris, but now he can't have a seat at the Vancouver discussions.

"I don't see why I'd be excluded now," he said. "I'm just going (to Vancouver) with the understanding that I would expect to be there."

Trudeau has also faced similar pressure from the premiers ahead of the meeting.

### **Premiers apply pressure**

Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger said all five groups should be able to attend.

"We've had that tradition in the past when they meet with the Council of the Federation," Selinger said in an interview. "We meet with all five organizations and we're supportive of continuing that practice."

In a statement released last week, the Prime Minister's Office said Trudeau would meet the premiers, the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Metis National Council ahead of the first ministers meeting in the context of a renewed nation-to-nation relationship.

The meetings do not in any way preclude ongoing discussions with all five national aboriginal organizations, as committed to by the prime minister late last year, the statement said.

"The government of Canada has committed to working and meeting regularly with the national aboriginal organizations, and will continue to engage in robust bilateral discussions with all five ... on issues of importance to their members," said spokesperson Andree-Lyne Halle.

This explanation does not hold weight, Mulcair said.

"The best way we start getting to solutions is to have all five at the table ... otherwise any nation-to-nation approach risks becoming an empty shell because they've promised that they'd all be there," he said. "You can't be respectful and you can't have a nation-to-nation approach if you're deciding to exclude some."

**Direct Link:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/29/trudeau-s-should-apologize-to-two-excluded-aboriginal-organizations-mulcair\\_n\\_9349442.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/29/trudeau-s-should-apologize-to-two-excluded-aboriginal-organizations-mulcair_n_9349442.html)

## **Wynne urges national agreement on safe drinking water for First Nations**

TORONTO — The Canadian Press

Published Tuesday, Mar. 01, 2016 1:34PM EST

Last updated Tuesday, Mar. 01, 2016 1:36PM EST

Ontario will push for a national agreement at this week's First Ministers' meeting in Vancouver to ensure First Nations communities have safe, clean drinking water, Premier Kathleen Wynne said Tuesday.

There are more than 150 boil water advisories or do not consume advisories in about 112 First Nations communities across Canada, some more than 15 years old.

"It's unacceptable to me that we have boil water orders in First Nations communities in Ontario, and that is the case across the country," said Wynne.

"If we don't find a way for the federal government, the provincial government and indigenous leadership to work together better on something as fundamental as provision of clean water, then I think that we should be very ashamed of ourselves."

First Nations' leaders from northern Ontario declared a public-health emergency last week, asking for a detailed intervention plan to ensure communities have access to safe, clean drinking water. A dire shortage of basic medical supplies and an epidemic of suicides among young people were other reasons for issuing their plea for help.

Wynne said she'll raise the drinking water issue when she meets Wednesday with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, provincial and territorial premiers and First Nations, Inuit and Metis leaders in Vancouver.

Indigenous leaders will be consulted for their input on Canada's approach to climate change, but Wynne said she knows they have other pressing issues to deal with.

“Climate change is an immediate issue, but there are other immediate issues that I know there will be a conversation about, things like clean water and how do we work together to make sure that we have a strategy for providing clean water across all of the country,” she said. “That’s one of the issues that I’ll certainly be pushing.”

David Zimmer, Ontario’s minister of aboriginal affairs, said the previous federal government virtually refused to work with the province on First Nations issues, and only agreed last year to co-operate with Ontario on drinking water for reserves.

“The new federal government has a renewed interest in this,” said Zimmer. “It’s inexcusable that some of these boil water advisories have been there 10 year or 15 years. There’s even one that’s almost 20 years old.”

Zimmer called it “crazy” to have to fly in large bottles of water for remote First Nations communities that used to be able to literally drink untreated water from nearby lakes and rivers, especially when Ontario has over 20 per cent of the world’s supply of fresh water.

New water treatment technology that’s easier to use may be a key in resolving the long-standing problem with safe drinking water, added Zimmer.

“The federal government put in water treatment plants 15 or 20 years ago, but it was a complicated technology, difficult to operate and need a couple of people,” he said.

“We’re hoping to implement that newer technology, which is more reliable and simpler to operate and in terms of training people to operate it.”

Ontario’s opposition Progressive Conservatives said the province’s Liberal government has been in power for 13 years, and there have been boil water advisories in First Nations communities for every one of those years.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/wynne-urges-national-agreement-on-safe-drinking-water-for-first-nations/article28966659/>

## **Nunavut Legislative Assembly talks devolution, Inuit writing**

**'Residents of Grise Fiord feel forgotten,' said MLA Isaac Shooyook in his plea for a full-time social worker**

By Elyse Skura, [CBC News](#) Posted: Mar 02, 2016 5:00 AM CT Last Updated: Mar 02, 2016 8:56 AM CT



Nunavut MLAs wanted to know about changes to public housing designs, plans to standardize Inuit language writing in schools and devolution talks during question period Tuesday. (Shaun Malley/CBC)  
8 shares

The Nunavut Legislative Assembly covered a wide variety of issues on Tuesday — from the future of devolution negotiations to the safety of new public housing building designs.

Here's a look at what you may have missed.

## **Devolution talks still stalled**

Nunavut's premier faced renewed questions about the territory's devolution efforts, with Iqaluit-Niaqunnguut MLA Pat Angnakak pointing out the Finance Minister's reference to "renewing our negotiations with the federal government and NTI," in his budget address last week.

Last year, negotiations were stalled when the federal election was called. Earlier in 2015, Premier Peter Taptuna had [indicated that negotiations were going well](#) and a pact might be in place before the end of that year.

Now, the territory is still waiting to renew those talks.



Nunavut Premier Peter Taptuna says the territory's devolution talks are still on hold, as federal government has not yet announced a new chief negotiator. (CBC)

"We await the naming of the chief negotiator on the federal side. We look forward to that and we want to continue negotiating towards a good devolution agreement for Nunavut," said Taptuna.

Angnakak asked the government for information about how many formal sessions of negotiations were held over the past year — Taptuna could not provide a number — quipping that she was "just checking if it's still on the table or not."

When the N.W.T. and Yukon completed their own devolution agreements a "central feature" was the transfer of federal positions to the territorial public services, said Angnakak.

"Using the information that was done in the Northwest Territories during their negotiation, a number had been put out there of 138," said Taptuna.

But the premier said a cookie cutter approach designed after the agreements reached by the other two territories will not work because of Nunavut's many differences.

He added that the negotiations are not far enough along to provide a specific number on the transfer of jobs.

## **Social needs of Grise Fiord 'forgotten'**

Isaac Shooyook, the MLA representing the Quttiktuq constituency, had one main issue to speak about in the legislature Tuesday, bringing up his desire for Grise Fiord to have a full-time social worker in both his member's statement and during question period.

"The residents of Grise Fiord feel forgotten and neglected," Shooyook said in Inuktitut, saying that the position has been vacant for years.

Shooyook said that for the entire time the position has gone unfilled, a public housing unit designated for a full-time social worker has also sat empty.

Shooyook said every now and then a social worker visits the community, but it's often not the same person who was there last.



MLA Isaac Shooyook says the lack of a full-time social worker has made people in Grise Fiord feel neglected. (Courtesy Isaac Shooyook)

"Handling these kinds of issues is a lot of work," he said.

Johnny Mike, who was acting as the Minister of Family Services since George Kuksuk is absent for medical reasons, said it can be difficult to fill positions in Grise Fiord, Canada's northernmost community.

Shooyook pushed for a commitment from the government to fill this position, but Mike would only say he will look into the issue.

## **Creating a unified Inuktitut writing system**

The Nunavut government's controversial plans to establish a unified writing system at Nunavut schools was once again discussed in the legislative assembly.

MLA Pauloosie Keyootak said people in his Uqqummiut constituency are concerned they will lose a significant part of Inuit culture if syllabics are no longer taught in schools.

"My constituents have raised a strong concern that roman orthography is very important, as it identifies and connects who we are as Inuit, our language, culture and identity," Keyootak said in Inuktitut.

In his response, Education Minister Paul Quassa emphasized that the government has not yet made any changes and, as of now, schools are still teaching both Inuktitut writing systems — syllabics and roman orthography — to students from Grade 4 on.

"We have not told the schools, 'here's how you have to do it,'" Quassa said in Inuktitut. "We have not gone that far."



Children in Nunavut schools are still learning to write using both roman orthography and syllabics. (CBC)

When Quassa first announced the government's plans to have schools [teach a unified writing system](#) last March, he indicated that his department would first collect research.

He said at this point, the government is reviewing studies on the subject and awaiting formal opinions from groups including Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, the Inuit language authority.

## Safe as houses

Two MLAs told Minister George Hickes, who is responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, their constituents are concerned about new designs for public housing.

On Monday, Hudson Bay South MLA Allan Rumbolt said the housing corporation recently said it had revised the design of its five-plex housing units, which resulted in a \$700,000 savings for each building.

But Rumbolt said he is concerned about the implications of removing the units' back porch.

"I can certainly say from personal experience that that this was a major concern in my community of Sanikiluaq," he said.

"From what I can see with my own eyes, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's multiplex units in Sanikiluaq only have one exit."

On Tuesday, Hickes came prepared with an explanation from the corporation, saying the new designs, while removing the alternate exit in units, comply with the fire code.

South Baffin MLA David Joanasie added his dissent to the changes on behalf of residents in Kimmirut, asking Hickes why plans for a communal room to prepare and store country food was removed.

Given Nunavut's housing shortage, Hickes suggested the desire to save money — and potentially build more units — outweighed the need to have this area.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-legislative-assembly-march-1-2016-1.3471766>

## Kenora riding results defy Liberals' claim on First Nations voters

[CBC News](#) Posted: Mar 02, 2016 9:00 AM ET Last Updated: Mar 02, 2016 3:25 PM ET



Liberal MP Bob Nault won five of 40 polls on First Nations in the riding of Kenora. (Jody Porter/CBC)

The poll-by-poll results are out from last fall's federal election, and they show a significant increase in First Nations voter turnout in the Kenora riding.

The turnout was up by more than 200 per cent but most of those votes went to the NDP.



Howard Hampton won 35 of the 40 polls on First Nations in the riding, while the Liberal's Bob Nault won the other five.

The majority of Nault's 500-vote victory over Hampton came in advance polls in Dryden, Kenora, Sioux Lookout and Red Lake.

The Liberals have claimed the increased voter turn-out in the last election fuelled their win, but Thunder Bay-Superior North was the only riding in the northwest where the Liberals won the First Nations polls.

The handful of First Nations in the Thunder Bay Rainy-River riding also mainly voted NDP.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/poll-by-poll-results-kenora-1.3472144>

## Proposed changes to ward boundaries stirs strong emotions

By [Cullen Bird](#), Today staff

Thursday, February 25, 2016 7:12:16 MST PM



Ron Quintal, president of Fort McKay Metis, watches as representatives from Metis communities in Fort Chipewyan, Conklin and Fort McMurray congratulate each other after signing a memorandum of understanding at the McMurray Metis lodge on Thursday September 3, 2015. Vincent McDermott/Fort McMurray Today/Postmedia Network

A motion by Councillor Keith McGrath to redraw the ward boundaries, and change the balance of urban and rural representation on council is stirring up strong emotions and frustration about a lack of consultation.

As written, McGrath's motion increases the amount of urban representatives at the expense of rural representation. The number of Ward 2 councillors would be reduced from two to one. Ward 2 currently represents Fort Chipewyan, Fort McKay, and Fort Fitzgerald.

The motion also dictates the boundaries of Ward 2 would be contracted into a "northern rural ward" extending "from the border of the Northwest Territories to a line bisecting the Province at the same latitude as the southern border of Wood Buffalo National Park." This implies Fort McKay would be cut off from Ward 2, becoming part of Ward 3.

The communities of Draper and Sapræ Creek, currently part of Ward 3, will be absorbed into Ward 1, which encompasses Fort McMurray. The number of Ward 1 councillors would increase from six to seven and Ward 3 would become a "central rural ward," with one councillor.

Also included in the motion are provisions for creating an executive committee, three full-time councillor positions, and a deputy mayor position.

In previous interviews McGrath has said the changes would help reduce "rural vs urban" debate.

"In government what I learned is you can't have silos in your organization," he told the *Today* shortly after tabling the motion. "The less silos you have, the easier it is to govern."

In an interview with *Mix 103.7 FM*, McGrath said his changes were prompted in part by the disproportionate amount of representation for the rural wards, compared to their population.

He also suggested Ward 2 or Ward 4 could have full-time councillors. He has not publicly confirmed what communities Ward 3 would contain.

*The Today* offered McGrath multiple opportunities to offer further comment on his motion's impact on the ward boundaries, but was unable to get a response.

The net result of the motion is the number of rural councillors would decrease from four to three, while the number of urban councillors would increase from six to seven.

"My concern with that motion is that it would deviate from the principles of the amalgamation," said ward 4 councillor Jane Stroud.

The 1995 amalgamation agreement stipulated there would be four rural councillors, six urban councillors and one regionally elected mayor.

The amount of representatives for the rural areas was lopsided on a population basis, but reflected the immense importance of their tax bases.

Almost 90 per cent of the municipality's revenue comes from taxing oilsands projects.

"A lot of newer people in Fort McMurray don't realize this, but when amalgamation took place, the improvement districts north and south [gave up] their tax base," said Ron Quintal, president of the Fort McKay Métis Local.

"Which in today's day, is basically where all oilsands are being developed," he added.

There is also frustration and anger from rural community leaders who were not consulted prior to McGrath introducing his motion.

"I think it's a ridiculous proposal," said Chief Allan Adam of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation on Tuesday, adding this was the first he had heard of the motion.

"I think they've got it backwards. I think they just got to re-evaluate their situation, but I don't think that getting rid of one councillor from Ward 2 would make any sense."

Quintal said he agrees with the need to re-examine the municipality's governance structure, but is unhappy with how McGrath approached the issue.

"I think in terms of how the motion came about, well it was flawed. There was no consultation, there was no discussion prior," Quintal said.

Quintal prefaced his comments by saying he has "nothing but respect" for McGrath.

The back-and-forth should not be restricted to community leaders and councillors, said Fred Fraser, president of the Fort Chipewyan Metis local.

“Everybody should have a say,” he said. “They should come in here and have a public meeting. They should go to Fort McKay and have a public meeting, it should go all over. Sapræ Creek right up to Conklin, everybody should know what they’re trying to do.

McGrath’s motion will be brought before council on March 8.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.fortmcmurraytoday.com/2016/02/25/proposed-changes-to-ward-boundaries-stirs-strong-emotions>

## Aboriginal Sports

### Battle Of Little Big Puck Is 'Testimony' To Strong First Nations Relations In Prairie Town

Posted: 02/25/2016 5:55 pm EST Updated: 02/25/2016 5:59 pm EST



For 34 years, the residents of Maple Creek, Sask. and the Nekaneet First Nation put on cowboy hats and aboriginal headdresses for an annual “battle” on hockey ice. And in all its years, there hasn’t been a single fight in between teams.

On Saturday, residents came together once again for another friendly game, cheering on local “old timers and youngsters.”

The Battle of the Little Big Puck literally pits cowboys against Indians.



*Battle of Little Big Puck players line up and shake hands with each other. (Photo: Katie Willis)*

“It’s an event that I think a lot of outsiders would perceive as politically incorrect,” Katie Willis, a masters student studying the cultural phenomenon and spectacle of event that has become a symbol of co-operation between the communities.

“This event probably wouldn’t happen in many other parts of Canada.”

Organizers estimate approximately 1,000 people showed up to this month's game — a significant draw considering the town’s population hovers 2,500.

Money raised from the event goes back into the community. This year, organizers collected \$6,200 — which will go toward buying equipment for a nearby hospital.

“This event probably wouldn’t happen in many other parts of Canada.”

Planning has always included an aboriginal voice and perspective, the University of Saskatchewan student explained.

This year, she was invited inside the Nekaneet locker room after the third period — when players change into their regalia.



*Audience members watch Battle of Little Big Puck players duke it out on ice on Feb. 20, 2016. (Photo: Katie Willis)*

“It was a locker room for sure,” Willis said in an interview with The Huffington Post Canada. She added “it smelled like a locker room, it sounded like a locker room.”

Willis described the scene, with players as young as 20 sitting alongside elders, as a family affair.

“I saw a lot of women, sisters and wives, going back there to get everyone ready and they had brought outfits they had sewn themselves,” she said.

Three band councillors and a former chief laced up their skates for this year’s game.

Fred Sasakamoose, the NHL’s first aboriginal player, was also on hand to drop the ceremonial first puck.



*Maple Creek players lean on the boards during the 34th annual Battle of Little Big Puck game last weekend. (Photo: Katie Willis)*

The Battle of Little Big Puck has become “instrumental” in keeping the relationship between aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities beyond the spectacle of the third period. The game gives space to each group to retain and accept their unique identities together, Willis said.

Originally from Iowa, she was drawn to study aboriginal and non-aboriginal relations in Maple Creek because of the area’s “long history of co-operation” and “very unique” openness between communities because of its ranching and farming past.

“I always have this idea, I think a lot of Americans do, of Canada having more equality,” she said. But after visiting the country for the first time a few years ago, she learned that “wasn’t the case.”

“There were issues with equality and discrimination toward aboriginal people and it something I really wanted to explore ... if it was like that everywhere.”

### **Watch clip of a game from 2013:**

There's more to the event than hockey players wearing rodeo cowboy costumes and First Nations regalia, Willis said.

“It's more about bringing the whole community together.”

The town's manager of community and economic development agrees.

“Although relations between Maple Creek and Nekaneet have had their ups and downs over the past century, the area has never really lost the sense of community,” Royce E. W. Pettyjohn wrote in an email.



*Battle of Little Big Puck players gather for a group photo earlier this month. (Photo: Katie Willis)*

He called the game a “testimony to the positive and healthy cultural relationships” that exist in the area.

The tradition began over three decades ago when a “good-hearted” conversation between local rodeo cowboys and Nekaneet band members evolved over drinks into a decision to play a friendly hockey game.

Now, a new generation is embracing the tradition.

“The rest, as they say, is history,” he said.

**Direct Link:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/25/battle-of-little-big-puck\\_n\\_9318362.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/02/25/battle-of-little-big-puck_n_9318362.html)

## **Jets hit the ice with young players from Manitoba First Nations**

## Thorburn, Lowry, Scheifele skate with young players from Sagkeeng, Swan Lake First Nation

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 29, 2016 9:40 PM CT Last Updated: Feb 29, 2016 10:39 PM CT



Three players from the Jets took a team of youngsters from two Manitoba First Nations through a few drills in Winnipeg Monday.

Forwards Chris Thorburn, Adam Lowry and Mark Scheifele skated with a group of players from Sagkeeng First Nation and Swan Lake First Nation at the MTS Iceplex as part of an event sponsored by the NHL Players Association.

Reinie Courchene, head coach of the team from Sagkeeng, said getting to lace up and play with NHLers will have a big impact on the young players.

"For them to see NHL players is probably amazing, for some of them maybe even a dream come true," he said.

"I think it's really going to brighten their eyes and, you know, really focus their goals in life ... really see this is a reality."

Players from the two teams ranged between the ages of nine and 11.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/jets-skate-with-young-sagkeeng-first-nation-players-in-winnipeg-1.3470230>

## Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources

# Nunavut filmmaker screens climate change doc in Berlin

## Award-winning director Zacharias Kunuk hobnobs with the stars

LISA GREGOIRE, February 26, 2016 - 10:00 am



Zacharias Kunuk, left, and fellow filmmaker Ian Mauro, pose in front of a bombed out church in Berlin, cameras in hand. (PHOTO COURTESY ZACHARIAS KUNUK)



Igloolik filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk takes questions from the audience following the screening in Berlin of his 2010 documentary Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change. (PHOTO COURTESY ZACHARIAS KUNUK)

It seemed fitting that when Zacharias Kunuk was in Berlin last week to screen a film about elders' knowledge and climate change, the capital city of Germany was experiencing particularly warm winter weather.

The people who came to see his documentary were apparently keen to hear what he had to say.

Kunuk was in Berlin with Ian Mauro, the Winnipeg-based researcher and filmmaker with whom Kunuk made the climate change documentary. Mauro joined Kunuk on stage after the screening.

"Ian was talking really loud, but people just kept applauding. They asked a lot of questions," said Kunuk, who runs Kinguliit Productions out of his hometown, Igloodik.

"The Berlin film festival is one of the oldest festivals and it's a big competition. We were in the native category, small fish," he added, to ensure he didn't sound boastful.

Kunuk, who won the Camera d'Or prize at the prestigious Cannes film festival for *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, was screening his 2010 documentary *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*, at Berlinale, Berlin's annual film festival.

He spent a week in the city, screening his own film, attending other screenings, getting lost, playing tourist and attending a few fancy functions.

At an invitation-only dinner, Kunuk rubbed elbows with a couple of A-list movie stars including John Cusack and Emma Thompson.

Last summer, Thompson, a climate change activist, [brought star power](#) to Greenpeace's fight against seismic testing off the coast of the Nunavut community of Clyde River.

Dinner began with a cocktail party but Kunuk said he only drank water because events like that tend to get loud, with everyone trying to talk over everyone else.

"I was the only Inuk, as usual," Kunuk said.

"Everyone's talking and the room sounds like walruses, a herd of walrus. You can't make out what anybody's saying," he said, laughing. "That's how it felt, like I'd heard it before. All the mumbling."

At one point, a festival host asked if he wanted to chat with Thompson, the Oscar-winning star of many Hollywood films including the popular Harry Potter series.

"We had a quick chat," Kunuk said, adding that she seemed sincere, knew a lot about climate change in the North and asked him good questions.

But while hobnobbing with movie stars and film industry types is part of the job, he's more comfortable shooting footage or talking about the elders' observations in his film — two things he enjoyed most about his first trip to Berlin.

Kunuk said the theatre was packed for the screening of *Qapirangajuq* and it unfolded in the usual way — with him introducing the film in advance and then talking about his work afterwards in front of the audience.

The hour-long documentary, shot when changing weather and diminishing sea ice in the Arctic started to dominate the news, features observations of elders from four Nunavut communities: Resolute, Igloolik, Pangnirtung and Iqaluit.

Inuktitut voices narrate a story of growing up on the land, of camping, hunting and playing, and of unsettling changes to the environment, all against the backdrop of Kunuk's footage of those four communities. For English speakers, there are subtitles.

Kunuk said he found the elders' environmental observations fascinating.

In the film, they talk about changing animal migration and plants, about wind, clouds and precipitation, and about slumping permafrost, shrinking ice and growing melt water on the tundra.

"Making a documentary is like being a detective, trying to find out proofs," Kunuk said. "That's the fun part."

He also filmed some scientists but they got edited out.

"Because they've gone to school, they know everything. But the Inuit are talking from experience, from what they see," Kunuk said. They know intimately how the environment has changed because they grew up on the land, he said.

Most elders who appear in the film have passed away now and Kunuk is grateful he managed to capture so much knowledge before it disappeared with them.

Kunuk said that while in Berlin, he enjoyed taking his video camera around the city during the day and shooting scenes at the remnants of the Berlin Wall and the bombed-out remains of the "zoo" where Inuk Abraham Ulrikab and his family were kept as curiosities in the 1880s.

He's hoping to put some of that footage up on the IsumaTV website.

Kunuk said he got lost only once on his way to see an Alaskan film featured in the festival. After taking a wrong turn, and ending up nowhere near the theatre, he returned to his hotel and went to bed instead.

"I had a nice one-hour walk though," he said, laughing.

Kunuk, and producer Jonathan Franz are currently working on their next feature film — [Maliglutit](#) — an all-Inuk film based on the plotline of a 1956 John Wayne western called *The Searchers*. They're hoping to complete it this year.

You can stream *Qapirangajuj: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* for free [here](#), on the IsumaTV website.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut\\_filmmaker\\_screens\\_climate\\_change\\_doc\\_in\\_berlin/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nunavut_filmmaker_screens_climate_change_doc_in_berlin/)

## Wikwemikong's Josephine Mandamin honoured for conservation excellence

[CBC News](#) Posted: Feb 26, 2016 5:11 PM ET Last Updated: Feb 26, 2016 5:11 PM ET



Elder Josephine Mandamin has walked countless miles, dedicated to carrying the copper vessel of water with her, in an effort to raise "awareness about pollution, laws, fracking, and the selling of the water."

A First Nations elder who has "walked the equivalent of half the earth's circumference" to build awareness about pollution, laws, fracking, and the selling of the water, is being honoured today in Toronto.

Josephine Mandamin received the [Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award](#) for Excellence in Conservation at a ceremony held at Queen's Park.

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee said Mandamin, who hails from Wikwemkoong Unceded Territory [also known as Wikwemikong First Nation], has walked the shorelines of five Great Lakes as well as in all four directions of Turtle Island.

"She takes care of the Lifeblood of Mother Earth – water."

Mandamin herself said she "will go to any lengths to and direction to carry the water to the people."

"As women, we are carriers of the water. We carry life for the people," she stated in a news release.

"So when we carry that water, we are telling people that we will go any lengths for the water. We'll probably even give our lives for the water if we have to."

Mandamin is one of seven recipients of the award for volunteer contributions to the conservation of community heritage over a period of 25 years or more.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/josephine-mandamin-ontario-award-1.3465895>

## **Opinion: Clean energy for the heartland**

By Paul Kariya February 28, 2016



File: Alterra's Dokie wind project in northeastern B.C.

In B.C., we have an amazing blueprint for climate action pulled together for us by the Climate Action Leadership Team, which was appointed by the provincial government. The leadership team represents a broad segment of society — urban and rural local governments, First Nations, LNG and forestry industrial sectors, not-for-profits and academics — and came up with a unique consensus around 32 recommendations.

One central message we should glean from the recommendations is that for our collective future energy plans, we need to use more electricity from clean and renewable sources. This is an evolution that is underway throughout the world. While natural gas has a role

as a transition fuel and this transition may take some time to achieve, the era of fossil fuels is over — it has to be.

The good news in B.C. is that we have a great start on reliable, responsible, affordable clean and renewable electricity from hydro, wind, biofuels, and solar sources.

First Nations want more clean energy opportunities. While natural resource development appears to be synonymous in B.C. with conflict, clean energy projects are embraced because they resonate with aboriginal values of protecting the environment, building legacy infrastructure, and enabling sustainable economic development.

Anchored by long-term, power-purchase agreements, clean energy projects are not subject to the vagaries of the commodity markets.

With the renewable fuels distributed throughout B.C., the only limitation today is perhaps transmission and distribution line limitations, however, local smart grid development and distributed generation is obviating the need for traditional grid build out.

The northeast, known until recently for oil and gas and large hydroelectricity, is now home to a cluster of wind projects, which are the envy of the world. When the Meikle Wind project starts up later this year, it and three other operating wind farms will contribute 500 MWs of generation to BC Hydro's system. In B.C., an innovation has been to perfect the placement of these facilities in cold climate mountainous ridge tops. The beneficiaries include First Nations and local residents as these projects together pay over \$2 million in annual property taxes to local governments.

In the Fraser Canyon, the Kanaka Bar Indian Band, working in partnership with Innergex Renewable Power, have built a 50 MW hydro facility that has low impact on the natural environment but high positive impact on the First Nation community. Annual revenues that are paid to this community is in excess of \$1 million per year from royalties and revenue sharing, and this will continue for 40 years.

The economy in northwestern B.C. has already been transformed by clean energy, and the Tahltan, Taku Tlingit, Nisga'a and Kitselas have been recent beneficiaries, as have the towns of Stewart, Dease Lake and Terrace. Projects like the Northwest Transmission Line, Forrest Kerr, McLymont Creek, Volcano Creek, Atlin and Long Lake are generating clean and renewable power and also anchoring economic development.

The biomass plant now under construction is transforming the town and First Nations around Merritt. More of this new economy is possible and necessary; it is an economy that will help save our planet.

This is the lens through which I view the clean energy sector in B.C. and our societal needs post-Paris Climate Accord. The circumstances regarding a warming climate and myriad impacts are getting worse, it still remains a challenge. But amazingly, we have the

model, the will and plan to do something about it — taking responsibility in our cities and also our small communities, including First Nations.

Climate action has galvanized a lot of people to have hope.

During Globe 2016 in Vancouver this week, let's show the world what we are doing in B.C. with clean and renewable energy. It works.

Paul Kariya is executive director of Clean Energy B.C.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Opinion+Clean+energy+heartland/11750174/story.html?\\_lsa=aff3-653b](http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Opinion+Clean+energy+heartland/11750174/story.html?_lsa=aff3-653b)

## **Donald Arseneault says shale gas industry must change approach**

**Energy minister says there is a lot of work to do before a fracking moratorium is lifted in New Brunswick**

CBC News Posted: Feb 29, 2016 12:06 PM AT| Last Updated: Feb 29, 2016 12:33 PM AT

Energy Minister Donald Arseneault says a recent report by the Liberal-appointed New Brunswick Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing shows that government and industry must take a different approach if shale gas development is ever going to move ahead.

"We need to rebuild our relationship with First Nations to regain that trust, as well we have to put communities in the middle of this process," he said on Information Morning Moncton on Monday.

The three-person commission set out a detailed plan for the province to follow if it wants to lift its moratorium on shale gas exploration.

It included the recommendation of an independent regulator and a rethink of how the government consults citizens, including aboriginal people, on resource development.

"We have to include First Nations at the forefront," Arseneault said.

"Not after, when all hell breaks loose and then people feel we have to talk to them ... that's not right, that's not the way to go," he said referring to the fracking protests of 2013 that ended in five police vehicles burned and 40 people arrested.

Arseneault pointed to the Trevali Mine, west of Bathurst and the controversial Sisson Mine, north of Fredericton, as examples of how industry can work with First Nations to provide training and employment to members.

"When I go visit Trevali Mine now I see First Nations actually working in the mine. To me that's a success story that we need to replicate," he said.

Industry must change approach

SWN Resources was the oil and gas company at the centre of the protests in southeastern New Brunswick and Arseneault called out the company specifically on Monday, saying SWN must change the way it does business.

"They've been very clear to me, they feel that in terms of First Nations they say that's not their job. They say that's the government's job to consult with First Nations," he said.

"I told SWN that is everybody's job including SWN, so if you do want to do business in New Brunswick ... these are issues that are very important and you're going to have to work with it and if you don't want to work with it chances are you're not going to have operations here."

In early 2015, SWN told the provincial government it was moving its resources out of New Brunswick because of the moratorium.

CBC News has contacted SWN Resources Canada for a response to Arseneault's comments.

As for lifting the moratorium, Arseneault says "time will tell."

"If industry and everybody around the table wants to really change the way we do things then I think we can see some positive outlook but do I think it's there today? No," he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/donald-arseneault-fracking-report-1.3468789>

## **Include indigenous peoples in climate change plan: national chief**

**Bellegarde said in addition to feeling the immediate effects of global warming, indigenous communities are also looking to build green infrastructure as a way to have more energy security.**



Assembly of First Nations National Chief Perry Bellegarde said indigenous peoples had responsibilities to protect the land and water.

By: [Joanna Smith](#) Ottawa Bureau reporter, Published on Tue Mar 01 2016

VANCOUVER—Indigenous peoples should be included in the design, development and delivery of any plans to combat climate change because they are among the first to feel its effects, says the head of the Assembly of First Nations.

“We’ve always maintained we have rights as indigenous peoples, but we also have responsibilities to protect the land and water,” said AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde.

The [Assembly of First Nations](#), the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council were invited to meet Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Wednesday ahead of the First Ministers Meeting in Vancouver.

Bellegarde said in addition to feeling the immediate effects of global warming — such as losing access to goods and services when it is not cold enough to open an ice road — indigenous communities are also looking to build green infrastructure as a way to have more energy security.

“We still have communities that are run by diesel generators,” Bellegarde said.

Meanwhile, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples and the Native Women’s Association of Canada were not invited to the meeting and are pushing to be included.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/03/01/include-indigenous-peoples-in-climate-change-plan-national-chief.html>

## Indigenous leaders meet ahead of climate talks with Prime Minister

National News | March 2, 2016 by [Brandi Morin](#)



(Athabasca Chipewyan Chief Allan Adam who was not invited to the meeting with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau pleads his case to AFN National Chief Perry Bellegarde. Photo: Brandi Morin)

***Brandi Morin***

***APTN National News***

Chiefs from across Canada, the Metis National Council and the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami met in Vancouver Monday, ahead of a scheduled meeting with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and premiers to discuss climate change.

A delegation ten from each organization will sit down Wednesday afternoon.

It is an issue that chiefs need to form a collective position on in order to survive, said Assembly of First Nation Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day.

“We need to send a very strong message because this is about life and death right now,” said Day. “Let us not lax. Let us not be weak in our resolve about this meeting that’s going to be happening.”

Some First Nation communities in Northern Ontario are feeling the repercussions of climate change via the early melting of winter ice roads leaving them cut off from the outside world.

The problem will only continue to get worse as the planet warms, said Day who is recommending that the AFN develop a Climate Change Accord that will see First Nations, federal and provincial governments sign off on.

Day said the meeting will be a test as to the nation to nation building promises made by the Trudeau government.

National Chief Perry Bellegarde thinks the meeting is a good start, but he’s more concerned about what will come out of it.

“It’s more important now to have Indigenous Peoples at every decision making table going forward so that our worldview and our respect for the land and water is front and foremost so that we leave and protect things for future generations,” said Bellegarde.

He said the government is caught between a rock and a hard place.

The conflict between working to cut greenhouse gas emissions while continuing to push for oil and gas developments is a result of a global over dependence on fossil fuels.

“We know we can’t immediately put a stop to oil and gas development but we sure as heck can put in a plan and strategies to transition,” said Bellegarde. “We have to start moving very rapidly to strategies that look at clean energy – solar, wind, geo-thermal, hydro. And those jobs that are lost from the economy, from oil and gas, those can be picked up in other sectors. Let’s put our minds and heads and hearts together and find the common ground so that future generations will have something left.”

Bellegarde called climate change an international issue and said Indigenous voices need to play a role in finding the solutions.

“We need to get the whole world to understand that Indigenous Peoples are affected first and foremost by climate change,” said Bellegarde. We haven’t been part of the problem, but I know we are and will be a part of the solution to this huge international issue.”

Representatives from the Metis National Council also met in Vancouver to prepare for the meeting.

MNC President Clement Chartier said climate change impacts are critical to the livelihood of the Metis Nation.

Even though Metis have unique challenges with governments recognizing rights due to being dispossessed from lands and resources, many live in their traditional territories which makes them have every right to be at the table.

“It’s not a matter of some governments coming to the table talking about dollars and cents and the economy and so forth, but it’s that they’re actually taking seriously Indigenous Peoples,” he said.

“But they’re also following through with the international community on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which recognizes the role that Indigenous Peoples and governments must play in terms of climate change and other matters,” said Chartier. “I respect the Trudeau government for inviting us here to be a part of this conversation.”

The meeting takes place Wednesday afternoon following a speech by Trudeau at the 2016 Globe conference on sustainability and economic development.

**Direct Link:** <http://aptn.ca/news/2016/03/02/indigenous-leaders-meet-ahead-of-climate-talks-with-prime-minister/>

**Aboriginal leaders push for climate role;  
‘It’s like we’re standing at the doorway’**

## **Indigenous leaders tell Trudeau they want a seat at the table, as the PM, premiers sit down to discuss new national climate change policies this week.**



Aboriginal leaders Natan Obed, Perry Bellegarde and Clement Chartier speak to media after the opening of the first ministers' meeting in Vancouver on Wednesday. "Whatever strategies being developed going forward, that we need to be at the table. We have responsibilities to protect the land and water," Bellegarde said.

**By:** Bob Weber The Canadian Press, Published on Thu Mar 03 2016

VANCOUVER—Indigenous leaders told Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the premiers Wednesday that they want a role in developing climate change policy.

"It's like we're standing at the doorway," said Clement Chartier of the Métis National Council. "What happens next, we'll get to see. It's always good words, this government right now is offering us an opportunity to sit at the table. We'll see in the action what happens next.

Chartier was among three national aboriginal leaders invited to meet with Trudeau and the premiers in advance of their scheduled meeting Thursday on climate change.

Perry Bellegarde of the Assembly of First Nations and Natan Obed of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami agreed that indigenous people need to have a hand in designing Canada's response to the issue.

"Nothing about us, without us," said Bellegarde.

“We echoed our tasks to the prime minister and the premiers, that whatever strategies being developed going forward, that we need to be at the table. We have responsibilities to protect the land and water.”

Obed said the leaders were assured they’d be part of the policy process.

“Our perceptions, our positions and our realities will be an integral part of the way Canada moves forward,” he said. “The provinces and territories fully expect and appreciate that nuance as well.”

Trudeau promised First Nations would be heard.

“We will work collaboratively with First Nations, Inuit and Métis across the country,” he said in a news release.

Bellegarde said Trudeau should call a first ministers meeting on aboriginal rights.

Although the three national leaders all referred to the meeting as a good start, not all those present as members of provincial delegations agreed.

“(There was) no discussions of tangible agreements, no discussions of commitments, no discussions about coming back and when,” said Allan Adam of Alberta’s Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation.

Not everything is possible in a two-hour meeting, said Bellegarde.

But Adam’s comment underlined a challenge for indigenous people. While many are deeply suspicious about development on their lands, others welcome carefully managed resource projects.

Two territorial premiers — Peter Taptuna of Nunavut and Yukon’s Darrell Pasloski — are cautious about any kind of a national carbon tax. Both men represent substantial aboriginal populations and Taptuna himself is Inuit.

The prime minister was defending himself even before the talks began over the decision not to include the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, which represents non-status aboriginals, and the Native Women’s Association of Canada.

“The federal government saw fit to invite me to go to Paris for the UN meeting on climate change,” said the Dwight Dorey, chief of the congress.

“If I was good enough to go there why would I not be at this one? It just doesn’t make sense.”

Dawn Lavell-Harvard of the Native Women’s Association called it an issue of respect.

“Choosing to exclude the Native Women’s Association of Canada from the first ministers meeting was unfair, and speaks volumes to the ongoing lack of respect for indigenous women’s and girls’ voices in Canada,” she said.

Trudeau said there will be plenty of chances for those groups to make their opinions known at future conferences.

“I have had over the past months many meetings both with the national aboriginal organizations together but also individually with leaders and communities and the activists from the indigenous community to talk about the issues facing them,” he told reporters.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/03/03/its-like-were-standing-at-the-doorway-aboriginal-leaders-push-for-climate-role.html>

## Land Claims & Treaty Rights

### First Nations negotiating settlement

Millions on line in flooding case that has dragged on since 1992



By: [Mary Agnes Welch](#)

Posted: **02/26/2016 3:00 AM** | Last Modified: 02/26/2016 7:25 AM

Negotiations could soon trump a court case that has dragged on for nearly a quarter-century in obscurity, one that could see three Cree bands get millions in flood compensation.

Last month, lawyers for the three First Nations proposed a settlement process to Canada’s lawyers. Lawyers for Justice Canada are considering the settlement process proposal, and, according to court documents, both sides could offer an update to the Federal Court next month.



Three First Nations were displaced by the construction of a hydro dam at Grand Rapids in the 1960s.

That could put an end to a case marked by long procedural delays, little public interest and a battle over piles of documents Canada sought to keep secret. It began in 1992 when three Cree bands — Misipawistik, Chemawawin and Opaskwayak — sued Ottawa for failing in its duty to protect them in the early 1960s when Manitoba Hydro and the province built the Grand Rapids dam. The bands allege Ottawa shirked its duty to protect them from flooding that destroyed their hunting, fishing and burial grounds, forced hundreds to relocate to substandard reserves and shattered local economies and social structures. Hardest hit was Chemawawin, which was relocated to the rocky outcrops of Easterville when its old reserve, including ancestral burial grounds, were inundated by about 15 metres of water.

In 1985, a Winnipeg consulting firm was tasked with preparing a report for the federal government about what happened to the Cree in the 1960s. The 135-page report, which the Cree hoped to rely on in their court case, details how the Manitoba government wanted to build the dam as fast and cheaply as possible, stifling even internal dissent from staff who feared the economic future of the Cree would be severely harmed. The researchers found the Cree were on their own, with no provincial organization to aid them, no lawyers or consultants of their own and limited English. After one 1962 meeting where no band members asked any questions, one Indian Affairs field representative said he "left with the distinct feeling that no one could care less as to whether the people sink or swim."

Six years ago, as the court case was heating up, First Nations leaders, including then-Misipawistik chief Ovide Mercredi, went to Ottawa to lobby MPs and senators asking for a negotiated settlement to the lawsuit.

At about the same time, the federal government began a battle to keep secret hundreds of documents — ministerial briefing notes, internal correspondence, legal opinions — the First Nations believed would prove the federal government knew for years it had failed to protect three Cree bands from hydro-dam flooding and might be liable for millions in compensation. Canada argued the documents should be covered by solicitor-client privilege. The Federal Court of Appeal ultimately sided with the First Nations. Last fall,

Canada turned over hundreds of documents to the First Nations, but they have yet to be made public.

Misipawistik Cree Nation Chief Harold Turner said this week he discussed the case with Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould during the Assembly of First Nations annual gathering in Gatineau, Que., before Christmas.

"I delivered the court case and history of our lawsuit to the minister of justice and requested that the (federal government) negotiate a settlement with us," said Turner.

That, combined with the minister's mandate to review all outstanding litigation to ensure it's consistent with Liberal pledges, gives Turner hope the Hydro court case could be set aside in favour of settlement talks.

"It helps when both parties would rather negotiate their differences than fight it out in court," he said.

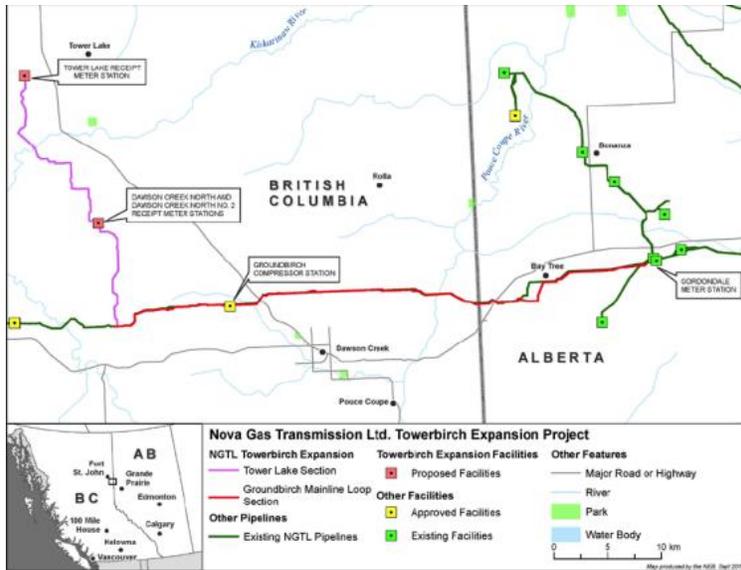
Officials from Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada would not confirm Canada is moving toward negotiations in the case. Officials said the new Liberal government "remains committed to renewing our relationship with indigenous peoples based on trust, respect and co-operation.

"The minister of justice has been tasked with reviewing the government's litigation strategy, and is working with her cabinet colleagues to do so," said a spokeswoman in an email. "It would be premature to speculate on the outcome of that review."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/first-nations-negotiating-settlement-370229961.html>

## **Blueberry River First Nation granted intervenor status on Towerbirch expansion project**

Mike Carter / Alaska Highway News  
February 26, 2016 07:50 AM



A 15-month hearing on the proposed Towerbirch expansion project will begin in the new year.

The Blueberry River First Nation will be allowed to submit evidence on the impacts of an 88-kilometre pipeline project on its traditional territories when the National Energy Board holds a hearing on the project this spring.

The NEB granted the First Nation intervenor status Thursday, noting that it has demonstrated that it is "directly affected" by the project.

Blueberry River had previously missed a November deadline to submit an application to participate because of "significant human resource and capacity challenges," and because it was in the midst of an election.

The project proponent, NOVA Gas Transmission Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of TransCanada Corp., said it did not object to the late submission of evidence as long as it did not delay the project.

The First Nation will submit written evidence to the board in March, along with information to NOVA and other intervenors in April.

Officials at Blueberry River couldn't be reached for comment.

The Fort St. John Métis Society, Métis Nation of British Columbia, Saulteau First Nations and West Moberly First Nations are also listed as intervenors.

Several energy companies have also applied and have been granted intervenor status, including Cenovus Energy Inc., ConocoPhillips Canada, the Cutbank Ridge Partnership, Progress Energy, and Talisman Energy Inc.

The hearing could last as long as 15 months, after which a three-member panel will make recommendations and a decision on whether the project should proceed and under what conditions.

The board has said it will submit its report no later than March 22, 2017.

The proposed pipeline would begin in Saddle Hills County, Alta., and continue west north of Dawson Creek to the Groundbirch area, where it will then be extended north to Tower Lake, west of Highway 97 between the communities of Farmington and Taylor.

TransCanada says the project would allow it to accommodate new customers who want to transport natural gas on the existing NOVA Gas Transmission system.

The NEB says it believes the project is "likely" to affect four species listed on Schedule 1 of the federal Species at Risk Act. These include the Canada warbler, olive-sided flycatcher, yellow rail, and the Western toad, all of which are listed as either "threatened" or of "special concern."

- See more at: <http://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/regional-news/blueberry-river-first-nation-granted-intervenor-status-on-towerbirch-expansion-project-1.2185147#sthash.uOLSDw1G.dpuf>

## **Athletic students find a home away from home**

An academic bridging program helps Indigenous students excel on the field and in the classroom

Wawmeesh Hamilton, February 28, 2016



**On the pitch:** First Nations in the area are a hotbed for sports, VIU athletic director notes (Brent Dunlop)

There are two things you need to know about [Vancouver Island University](#), which overlooks Nanaimo and the Georgia Strait: not only do 1,500 Indigenous students attend classes there, Indigenous athletes have also long had a strong presence on the VIU intramural teams. “There are a lot of First Nations in our catchment area, and many of them are hotbeds of basketball and soccer. We often scout their tournaments,” says athletic director Bruce Hunter. Indigenous athletes tend to be polite, quiet, bordering on shy, Hunter says. But they are aggressive, competitive athletes. “Some of the best players throughout our teams’ histories have been Aboriginal.”

Nine Indigenous students play on VIU basketball, volleyball and soccer teams this year, including Mateo Kostering. He’s wanted to play collegiate soccer “likely since I started walking,” he says. He and his father Doug used to kick the soccer ball around in their backyard on the Namgis First Nation. Today, the 24-year-old fourth-year physical education student is a midfield centre for the VIU Mariners, the men’s soccer team.

Key to this is the Aboriginal University Bridging Program, a one-year prep course that combines prerequisites, tutoring, support and life-skills training to help Indigenous students transfer into various programs, including physical education, providing the student meets entry requirements. Bridging Aboriginal students into university-level courses was identified as a need in 2001. Two Indigenous athletes are in the bridging program this year, in addition to 24 Indigenous students from other vocations.

Kostering is from the tiny village of Alert Bay—a four-hour drive north of Nanaimo. Forget the archetype of lacrosse—soccer is huge on Namgis, as on many other First Nations, likely introduced by Indigenous kids who were taught in church-run residential schools and then brought it home. Alert Bay hosts open tournaments, where Indigenous and non-Indigenous teams compete, in addition to a range of other game levels. Growing up, Kostering’s hero was Matt Mehrassa, who played with the Baha’i Twin Arrows. Mehrassa was also a member of the VIU men’s team, and later played in the 2012 CCAA national championship.

“He was an incredible soccer player to watch—just really talented. He set an example I wanted to follow,” says Kostering, who began to yearn for more. “I wasn’t happy when I wasn’t playing . . . and soccer is the only thing that brought that out in me.” So he headed to university in 2012.

When he got there, he struggled with isolation, missing his close-knit family and culture. College staff referred him to the bridging program, where he received help with academics and managing college life and learned to maintain VIU’s athletic academic standard. (He failed two classes in his first year but later made them up.) “It was tough for me to reach out for that, but I did,” he says. “The [staff] really made a difference and helped me through that lonely period. I never forgot that.”

After university, Kostering wants to return to Namgis and work with children at the local recreation centre. “All it took for me to succeed was for one person to give me that opportunity when I was younger, and I want to be that person in another kid’s life.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.macleans.ca/education/athletic-students-find-a-home-away-from-home/>

## **Judge grants BC Hydro injunction to remove Site C protesters**



An artists rendering depicts the proposed Site C dam and hydroelectric generating station on B.C.'s Peace River. (BCHydro.com)

The Canadian Press

Published Monday, February 29, 2016 11:51AM PST

Last Updated Monday, February 29, 2016 12:08PM PST

VANCOUVER - A judge has granted BC Hydro an injunction to remove people protesting the Site C dam project at a tent camp near Fort St. John.

The ruling means demonstrators have no right to obstruct the hydroelectric project, which has regulatory approval from both the federal and provincial governments.

The utility argued last week that the actions of a group of Peace Valley farmers and First Nations were illegal and could cost millions of dollars.

BC Hydro lawyers told court the protesters set up camp in late December and have prevented workers from clearing the area for construction, even building camp fires near tree-felling and excavation operations.

Yvonne Tupper of the Saulneau First Nations said outside court that BC Hydro is violating Treaty 8 Tribal Association's rights and that the project should be put on hold while legal challenges make their way through the courts.

The \$8.8-billion dam will flood agricultural land and First Nations archeological sites, as well as hunting and fishing areas.

**Direct Link:** <http://bc.ctvnews.ca/judge-grants-bc-hydro-injunction-to-remove-site-c-protesters-1.2797737>

## Many indigenous people lack title to land where they live, research shows



*By Chris Arsenault 22 hours ago*

TORONTO (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Indigenous people formally own just one-tenth of the world's land, according to research released on Wednesday as part of a campaign that aims to expand legal rights to land globally.

Between half and two-thirds of the world's land is held by indigenous people and communities under informal or customary ownership systems, often not legally recognized by governments, said the report by Oxfam, the International Land Coalition and the Rights and Resources Initiative.

Communities without formal title to lands where they may have lived for generations can be displaced by large-scale resource extraction projects, said the report.

"People who don't have formal ownership are in a situation of vulnerability," said Gonzalo Oviedo, senior advisor to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, one of several groups lobbying governments to double the amount of property formally owned by indigenous people by 2020.

"They can't get a loan, can't develop the land and can't get legal or technical support activities for better land management," he said.

His group and others are urging states to change laws and enforce existing mechanisms to protect indigenous land claims.

Expanding land rights can improve food production, reduce conflicts and promote environmental sustainability, as local residents have more incentive to protect land they formally own, the report said.

Globally, an estimated 2.5 billion people lack formal title to the lands where they live, the report said.

To determine how much land is held by indigenous people and communities, researchers of "Common Ground: Securing Land Rights and Safeguarding the Earth" went country-by-country calculating how much property was privately owned, held by the state or classified as protected areas.

All the rest was considered community lands, the researchers said.

For example, most land in Africa is held collectively but not legally, they said.

(Reporting by Chris Arsenault, Editing by Ellen Wulforst. Please credit the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, women's rights, trafficking, corruption and climate change. Visit <http://news.trust.org>)

**Direct Link:** <http://news.yahoo.com/many-indigenous-people-lack-title-land-where-live-002403081.html>

## **First Nations have no relationship with N.B. government, 2 chiefs say**

**Chiefs want Premier Brian Gallant to sit down with them and 'have a conversation' about fracking, pipeline**

CBC News Posted: Mar 02, 2016 1:53 PM AT| Last Updated: Mar 02, 2016 5:07 PM AT

The New Brunswick Commission on Hydraulic Fracturing report's recommendation that the province rebuild its relationship with aboriginal people has at least two chiefs asking, what relationship?

Candace Paul, chief of St. Mary's First Nation, said there is nothing to rebuild, as there is no relationship at the moment.

"I don't believe, as long as I've been in politics, that there was a relationship so I'm not sure about rebuilding. I think we need to establish or begin [a relationship]," she said on Information Morning Fredericton.

Ron Tremblay, chief of the Wolastoq Grand Council, said he agrees with Paul.

"If you want to start a relationship, the first thing you do is you start to have a conversation and dialogue," Tremblay said.

The fracking report points out Aboriginal communities have a deep distrust of government, something the chiefs said could only be resolved through face-to-face meetings with the premier of New Brunswick.

Paul said it's time for Brian Gallant to sit down at the table with the First Nations of New Brunswick, that "it has to be the premier."

It's not a matter of being anti-development, she said, whether it's fracking, the Energy East pipeline, or the Sisson Brook tungsten mine.

"We're saying it's based on facts. Based on our, you know, concern for our environment and concerns for our water ... we have scientists, we have proof," said Paul.

Possible court challenge

When asked how far she would be prepared to go to challenge the government, said "I guess the only other thing would be ... court action," something she's not ruling out at this point.

"It's 2016, you know, this is very disturbing. But to me, this is a pattern of the way our people have been treated for generations and ... it needs to stop," said Paul.

Tremblay said First Nations need more time to inform their members about the science behind fracking, the pipeline and the mine, and feels they are being rushed on what he said are decisions that will affect the future for many generations.

"We're the original stewards of this land and we want it safe and pure for our children," said Tremblay.

If the government wants to build a relationship, said Paul, they have to make the first move.

"Come to the table," she said.

Ed Doherty, minister responsible for the province's aboriginal affairs secretariat, said in part in a statement the government welcomes meetings with chiefs and elected representatives and communities.

"I have had the privilege of meeting with Chiefs and councils on many occasions to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest. We value our relationship with First Nations and are interested in hearing from First Nations on issues of importance to them," said Doherty.

Paul agreed that she has had a "great relationship" with Doherty, "but he can only do so much. It has to be the premier."

CBC News contacted the office of Premier Brian Gallant, who is in Vancouver for meetings, but has not yet received a reply.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/first-nations-fracking-pipeline-1.3472409>

## Get off your land for the dam, Canadian orders

BY JOEL CONNELLY, SEATTLEPI.COM

Updated 3:25 pm, Tuesday, March 1, 2016



This rendering shows the planned Site C Dam in the Peace River valley in Northeast British Columbia.

Peace River landowners and Aboriginal First Nations protesters have until midnight to vacate a camp and make way for an \$8.8 billion dam on the Peace River, according to a ruling by the British Columbia Supreme Court.

The Canadian court ruled that the protest camp is costing BC Hydro millions of dollars in delays to its Site C dam project in the Peace River valley of northeast British Columbia.

"BC Hydro has the legal authority to do what it is doing and the defendants have no legal rights to obstruct it," an attorney for the province-owned utility told the court on Monday.

The dam is a pet project of B.C. Premier Christy Clark, who opted for the "megaproject" over the proposed alternative of wind and solar energy and biofuels development.

Site C will generate electricity required to liquify natural gas at big LNG export terminals planned along the British Columbia coast.

But the project would inundate thousands of acres of agricultural land, destroy fish and river valley game habitat, and flood Aboriginal First Nations archeological sites.

The protesters had set up camp in an area where BC Hydro will dump its waste rock.

The court ruling came as Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau gets ready for this week's meeting with provincial premiers in Vancouver. Trudeau is expected to unveil a green energy initiative.

"Mr. Trudeau, will you write an honorable history for Canada? Stop the damn dam," Joe Foy, a leader in the Wilderness Committee, the province's most venerable environmental group, wrote on his Facebook page.

Tamo Campos, a native filmmaker, athlete and B.C.'s most high-profile young environmentalist wrote on Tuesday:

"The colonial stains of the courts and the status quo remain unchanged. The pillage, the displacement of all in the name of 'development' continues aided by the public's pacifism, our tax dollars in Hydro's lawyers, and our ignorance of the sacredness of the Peace valley."

Not surprisingly, BC Hydro saw the ruling differently.

"The most important thing is to be able to work safely for everyone's concern, and to be able to move forward and keep the project on time and on budget," CEO Jessica McDonald said in a statement.

Site C is a throwback to dam-building days of B.C. Premier W.A.C. "Wacky" Bennett.

A huge dam upstream on the Peace River bears Bennett's name. It flooded hundreds of miles in the Peace and Parsnip River valleys. The valleys' forests were not even logged before they were inundated.

Up the upper Columbia Dam, Bennett had built the 600-foot tall Mica Dam, which flooded a 90-mile long reservoir and killed thousands of moose, deer and black bear. Its forests were not logged, leaving canoeists on the reservoir facing the danger of a tree far below breaking loose.

The Mica Dam has held back water used to power the great third powerhouse at Grand Coulee Dam downstream in the United States. Another dam on the Columbia River turned B.C.'s beautiful Arrow Lakes into a fluctuating reservoir knock for clouds of dust when the water is drawn down.

The province has at least promised to log areas to be inundated by the Site C project.

The Site C dam has received provincial and federal approval. It is still under legal challenge from Aboriginal First Nations groups.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.seattlepi.com/local/politics/article/Vacate-your-land-for-the-dam-Canadian-court-6863878.php>

## **Saanich Inlet First Nations united in fight against proposed LNG plant**

Andrew Duffy / Times Colonist  
March 2, 2016 06:00 AM



From left, Tom Sampson of the Tsartlip Nation speaks at a news conference with Tsartlip Chief Don Tom, Pauquachin Chief Rebecca David and Tsawout Chief Harvey Underwood, who vowed to fight an LNG plan by the neighbouring Malahat First Nation

The Saanich Peninsula First Nations are promising a battle on the land, the sea and in the courtroom if Steelhead LNG plans to go ahead with a liquefied natural gas plant on the former Bamberton development lands.

Standing on Tsartlip First Nation land looking across Saanich Inlet at the site of the former cement factory where Steelhead envisions its project, the chiefs of the Saanich Peninsula nations — Tsartlip, Tsawout, Tseycum and Pauquachin, known collectively as WSANEC — made it clear they are united in opposition.

“We wanted to make a strong impact statement to make sure our statement is heard ... we are making it well known that we oppose LNG in our territory,” said Chief Rebecca David of the Pauquachin First Nation. “The decisions and choices we make today affect the next seven generations. We are trying to protect the water and the lands of our future children.”

David said opposition to the project seems to have fallen on deaf ears at the Steelhead offices.

But now that the Saanich Peninsula First Nations have come together to speak as one against the project, she hopes to get some traction.

“Hopefully, after today, they will be getting a clear statement that we are not going to allow this to come into our inlet,” David said. She added they are also united in their stance that there’s nothing Steelhead could offer to get them to support the project.

“There is no price you can put on the land and water ... we won’t be bought out at any time,” said David.

“They can keep raising the ante, but this land and water is not for sale and we are not about to jeopardize the future of our environment.”

Steelhead LNG, which has partnered with the Malahat First Nation for the project, is planning a floating facility capable of producing six million tonnes of LNG a year.

The facility, which is still in the design phase, is to be fuelled by a 128-kilometre natural gas pipeline. Most of the pipeline will run underwater and along the sea bed of the Saanich Inlet.

That’s a non-starter as far as Chief Don Tom of the Tsartlip First Nation is concerned.

Tom said the plant, the pipeline and shipping through the inlet threaten the environment and the First Nations’ way of life as they are a source of food, recreation and spiritual connectivity to the land and their ancestors.

“Our Douglas Treaty protects our right to live as we did formerly, to hunt and fish,” Tom said. He noted the fishing rights extend to anything that would infringe upon the nation’s ability to fish, gather prawns and use the water.

Tom said any government that approves such a project would trigger further protest action and likely a legal challenge.

“Douglas Treaty rights are not a myth and we are very good at winning court cases,” Tom said. “We are planning politically, legally — and determining what we can do on the ground and water.”

In a statement, the four Peninsula First Nations noted they are putting the province on notice that it cannot interfere in their treaty right. If the province provides permits and authorizes the project without the First Nations’ consent, it will be held liable.

Central Saanich Mayor Ryan Windsor said he fears seeing a repeat of the mistakes of the past by establishing a new industrial site at Bamberton.

“There is a very real risk of destroying this place,” he said.

In a joint statement emailed to the Times Colonist, the Malahat Nation and Steelhead said that like the WSANEC, they are committed to the health of the Saanich Inlet and its protection for future generations.

“It’s important to note the proposed Malahat LNG Project is a still at its earliest stages and that safety and environmental stewardship of the proposed project is our No. 1 priority,” they wrote.

The partnership added that it is committed to evaluating the project in a way that is respectful, transparent and science-based. “We are also fully committed to ongoing engagement with the WSANEC communities and other potentially affected First Nations, and will continue to reach out to meet with them to discuss any concerns they may have and work together to find ways to address them.”

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/business/saanich-inlet-first-nations-united-in-fight-against-proposed-lng-plant-1.2188114#sthash.mhXme4Eu.dpuf>

## **Special Topic: Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women**

### **Legislation introduced to promote reconciliation with indigenous Manitobans**



By: [Larry Kusch](#)

Posted: **02/25/2016 4:41 PM** |

The Selinger government has introduced legislation promoting reconciliation with indigenous peoples and laying out a framework for implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The Path to Reconciliation Act (Bill 18) was tabled Thursday in the dying days of the legislative session in advance of the April 19 general election. Only 10 sitting days remain.



National Chief Perry Bellegarde, greets Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger Thursday as part of the second national roundtable on missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Winnipeg. The provincial government has introduced a bill that sets forth principles of reconciliation with indigenous people.

However, the government still expressed optimism that the five-page bill -- more a statement of principles than a collection of concrete measures -- will become law.

Bill 18 says that reconciliation of indigenous and non-indigenous peoples is to be guided by the principles of respect, engagement, understanding and action.

The bill sets out the government's commitment to advancing reconciliation and calls for the development of a strategic path to that end. One member of cabinet would be designated to lead the process, but all cabinet members would promote measures to advance reconciliation through their departments and across government. The proposed law also calls for an annual progress report to be drafted and made public.

Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Minister Eric Robison said he will lay out the government's vision on the issue when the bill reaches the debate stage in second reading, and he's also looking forward to public input.

"We're going to be calling on some of the leadership from the indigenous community, (TRC) commissioner (Murray) Sinclair -- certainly we want him to be in the audience," Robison said.

While much of the responsibility for reconciliation rests with the federal government, "the provincial government definitely has a role to play in the advancement of indigenous peoples," the minister said.

Opposition Leader Brian Pallister was non-committal Thursday about whether the Tories were inclined to allow quick passage of the bill. But he expressed support for the TRC and its goals.

"I think that Justice Sinclair did a tremendous amount of honourable work, and I'm very, very interested in working with the federal government in seeing things actually come from that work," Pallister said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/legislation-introduced-to-promote-reconciliation-with-indigenous-manitobans-370181851.html>

## **Provinces commit to help inquiry into missing, murdered aboriginal women**

Aboriginal leaders said they were pleased with the meeting's outcome, but were waiting to see concrete results

[The Canadian Press](#)

February 26, 2016

WINNIPEG – The provinces agreed Friday to co-operate with and support a national inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women.

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett called the commitment an important step forward, as she emerged from a two-day meeting involving federal and provincial ministers as well as aboriginal leaders and victims' families.

“This is something that has worried a lot of the indigenous leadership ... and all the people who were worried that we could end up with a jurisdictional squabble that meant that really important issues like policing and child welfare would not be able to be properly dealt with.”

The commitment means child welfare, policing, education and other areas that are fully or partly under provincial jurisdiction will be examined when the inquiry starts up.

“The (agreement) is to co-operate on providing access to all of our information, to our organizations, to our institutions,” Manitoba Premier Greg Selinger said.

Details of the inquiry such as its scope, cost and who will lead it have yet to be worked out.

The governments also issued a joint four-page document that, in broad terms, commits them to improve the social and economic conditions faced by aboriginals. The agreement contains 20 commitments including:

- supporting the development of anti-racism training programs for civil servants.
- implementing a Canada-wide awareness campaign to change public perceptions about violence against indigenous women.
- acting on Truth and Reconciliation report recommendations such as giving First Nations more of a say in child welfare.
- creating a common set of performance measurements to track the socio-economic gap between Indigenous persons and non-aboriginals.

“Whether it’s high-school leaving, or whether it’s shelter-occupancy or poverty indicators, there’s many things we know we need to get going on,” Bennett said.

Aboriginal leaders said they were pleased with the meeting’s outcome, but were waiting to see concrete results.

“Efforts to prevent and address violence against indigenous women and girls do not start and should not end with a national inquiry,” Shane Gottfriedson, a regional chief with the Assembly of First Nations, said in a written statement.

“Today is an example of political commitment and now we must see that commitment turn into action.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/provinces-commit-to-help-inquiry-into-missing-murdered-aboriginal-women/>

## **Inuit committed to helping end violence against women and girls**

**“It’s a huge responsibility. I don’t think we can think of it as just another day in the office”**

LISA GREGOIRE, March 01, 2016 - 11:45 am



Family members of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls pose for a photo at a national roundtable on the issue in Winnipeg Feb. 24 to Feb. 26. (PHOTO COURTESY ITK)

It will take efforts from all levels of government and individual Nunavummiut if Nunavut ever hopes to lower the high rate of violence against women in the country, says the territory’s Status of Women minister.

Monica Ell-Kanayuk, who attended the murdered and missing women [roundtable in Winnipeg](#) last week, said Feb. 29 that she plans to speak to her legislative colleagues about freeing up resources to address high rates of violence against women in Nunavut, adding it must be a priority in the territory.

“We now come back and look at what we can do as a territory, how we can move forward, with the resources we have, to end violence against women and girls in Nunavut,” said Ell-Kanayuk.

The Winnipeg MMIW roundtable ran from Feb. 24 to Feb. 26 and included elected officials, civil servants, Aboriginal leaders and victims’ family members from every province and territory including Minister Ell-Kanayuk, Natan Obed, president of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and Rebecca Kudloo, president of Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada.

The [first MMIW roundtable in Ottawa](#) in February 2015 was organized in response to the previous federal government’s refusal to call a national inquiry into the problem.

And, although the new Liberal government under Justin Trudeau has promised an inquiry will go forward this year, roundtable participants plan to continue meeting anyway.

Ell-Kanayuk said that’s partly because an inquiry, and subsequent recommendations, will take time and many are unprepared to wait years to make changes — in areas such as policing, justice and social supports — that they already know are needed.

“The work we need to do cannot wait until inquiry recommendations come out. Some of them we need to do now, to make changes. That’s why we have the roundtable,” Ell-Kanayuk said.

Some of those potential action items were contained in a list of 20 outcomes and priorities released by the group at the end of the meeting. These include:

- improving safety for indigenous women and girls, including access to emergency shelters and strategies that engage men and boys;
- building awareness including developing Indigenous cultural competency and anti-racism training for civil servants, police and justice professionals;
- reconciliation efforts such as implementing the recommendations of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#); and,
- improving community safety for Indigenous populations.

Natan Obed, ITK’s president, said he feels a sense of responsibility to see that change actually happens in some of these areas.

But that change requires co-ordinated action from all levels of government along with Aboriginal organizations such as ITK.

“It is very difficult to ensure consistent and meaningful implementation across all those jurisdictions, but it is the best we can hope for within the framework we’re in,” said Obed, on the phone from Ottawa.

“And I still find it very meaningful to be in a room where all we are talking about is murdered and missing Indigenous women, and to a greater extent, the inequalities, and the need to overcome them, for our women and girls.”

The problem of violence against Inuit women involves a host of factors including overcrowded housing, a lack of mental health services and safe shelters, addictions, and potential racism in policing and justice.

That makes problem-solving complex, but you have to start somewhere, he said.

“It’s something we can do something about, as Inuit, as individuals. We can make our lives better. We can make constructive choices. We can choose to follow the paths that lead us to a better society. But we also need the governmental and structural support for social change.”

Obed said ITK, for its part, will continue to push for results in the areas outlined by roundtable participants. He said he owes it to the families whose mothers, sisters and daughters have been wounded or killed, some of whom attended the Winnipeg roundtable.

“There was a rawness of emotion and anger but also hope that this would be the turning point, or one of the turning points toward a better future,” said Obed of family participants.

“It’s a huge responsibility. I don’t think we can think of it as just another day in the office.”

“I would hope that as a politician, and as somebody who is a part of this process, that my record will be judged on whether I did all I could to implement that outcomes document, and all I could on this particular issue over time.”

Ell-Kanayuk said the territory is prepared to do its part in this partnership to reduce violence against Inuit women but could not elaborate yet as she needs to talk to her cabinet colleagues first.

She cautioned, however, that Nunavut can only do so much with many competing needs and limited financial resources.

“We need to involve a lot of people. It’s not just government that can do this alone. It’s also individuals and families,” Ell-Kanayuk said. “They also have to not accept that violence is acceptable. Everyone needs to have a role in this.”

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit\\_committed\\_to\\_helping\\_end\\_violence\\_against\\_women\\_and\\_girls/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_committed_to_helping_end_violence_against_women_and_girls/)

# Were Thousands of Indigenous Women Murdered In Canada?

03.02.16 10:01 PM ET

After years of stalling, Canada finally prepares to launch a national inquiry into the cold cases of thousands of murdered and missing indigenous women.

Shauna Taylor spent her teenage years hustling on the streets of Winnipeg—struggling with an addiction to hard drugs, and alcohol from the time she was 13. One night, she took a call to a client’s home. When she arrived, he shoved a shotgun in her face and said, “You’re gonna die tonight, bitch.”

It was a stroke of dumb luck that the shotgun was not loaded, and Taylor was able to run away. When she showed up alive, but without money, her pimp—who routinely took most of her and the other girls’ earnings—beat her senseless.

Taylor managed to live another day—but one of her fellow sex workers did not.

“One girl who went out that night was murdered, and it made a hole in my heart,” she said.

“We weren’t friends—we were family. Blood is not always thicker than water, and a lot of them were murdered or missing.”

Now in her 40s, Taylor has managed to get clean, graduate from a local college, and start mentoring children and youth in her community. However, most indigenous women in her situation are not as lucky. According to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), 1,800 indigenous women in Canada have been murdered or gone missing since the 1980s. However, advocates—and survivors like Taylor—estimate that the actual number is closer to 4,000 due to a hesitancy to report cases to the police, and the large amount of homicide or missing-persons cases that never receive closure.

“There are a lot of cold cases out here in Winnipeg,” Taylor said.

Now, those cases may finally receive some political attention.

Last week marked the beginning of a series of roundtable discussions in preparation of a national inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women in Canada. While advocates have demanded a national inquiry for years, former Prime Minister Stephen Harper repeatedly dismissed the issue, saying it should be dealt with within the jurisdiction of the native reservations—even though a large amount of the violence occurred in major Canadian cities with large indigenous populations, such as Winnipeg.

But Canada’s new prime minister, Justin Trudeau, has made the inquiry a “priority”—stating that in addition to the need for justice and answers for the victims and their families, ending violence against women and repairing the relationship with the indigenous population is crucial to the future of the country. More than 25 percent of Canadian youth are indigenous.

“I know renewing our relationship [with the indigenous community] is an ambitious goal, but I am equally certain it is one that we can—and will—achieve if we work together,” Trudeau recently said, as he announced the beginning of the national inquiry.

Advocates hope that the inquiry will re-open previously abandoned cases, and help families seek answers about their loved ones.

“There is a feeling among many that if women of other backgrounds were being murdered and going missing at the same rate, it would be treated as a national crisis,” Meghan Rhoad, a researcher at Human Rights Watch, told The Daily Beast. “The government’s decision to establish this inquiry is a sign that it finally is being treated as a national crisis.”

While 84 percent of homicide cases in Canada have been resolved, almost half of the cases involving indigenous women remain unsolved—leaving the families, friends, and loved ones of the missing and murdered with unanswered questions.

“Sometimes it seems like they’re forgotten, but they’re always in my heart,” Taylor said about the friends she has lost to unsolved murders, whom she calls sisters.

However, Taylor said she remains skeptical of the scope of the inquiry, and wished that there were more voices of survivors, like herself, included in the discussion.

“We need more safe houses for these children and these youth, we need more programs run by someone who lived through it—not necessarily someone with more education,” she said, commenting on what she sees when she mentors children in her own community.

“They won’t know what they’re feeling—and they’ll just prescribe drugs, and after drugs.”

Taylor also felt that—in order to succeed—the inquiry shouldn’t only address the issue of missing women, but also men, in addition to marginalized populations such as transgendered people and sex workers.

“We all matter—no one is more important than the other. We all have to come together in order for this to work.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/03/03/were-thousands-of-indigenous-women-murdered-in-canada.html>

## **Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations**

### **The stereotype is dead: Researchers show that Native Americans drink less than whites**

Kristen Gwynne, The Influence  
25 Feb 2016 at 18:45 ET



San Manuel Band of Indians Hold Their Annual Pow Wow On Oct. 13, 2012 In San Bernardino, California.

*This article was originally published by The Influence, a news site that covers the full spectrum of human relationships with drugs. Follow The Influence on Facebook or Twitter.*

The stereotype of the Native American alcoholic dates all the way back to colonialism, but a new study may help to debunk that myth. Most Native Americans actually abstain from alcohol, and those who do drink are on average lighter drinkers than whites, finds the study, published in the journal *Drug and Alcohol Drug Dependence*.

Researchers from the University of Arizona used nationwide survey data to compare the drinking habits of more than 4,000 Native Americans to 170,000 white people. They found that about 60 percent of Native Americans did not drink, compared to 43 percent of whites. Native Americans were also more likely than whites to be “light/moderately-only” drinkers. Both groups showed similar binge drinking habits, with around 17 percent of each population reporting to have consumed five or more drinks one-to-four times over the previous month.

The study helps to shatter the notion that Native Americans are genetically more susceptible to alcoholism than other groups. In a 2015 article explaining how the violent colonial occupation of North America contributed to alcoholism among Native Americans, Influence columnist Maia Szalavitz dissected the popular narrative that European colonizers introduced indigenous people to booze and widespread alcoholism followed, due to their supposed genetic susceptibility.

“The apogee of victim-blaming, the idea that genetic ‘inferiority’ causes native peoples to be particularly susceptible to addiction was not falsifiable when it was initially spread,” Szalavitz wrote. “But even now that it has been disproven, the myth obscures the real causes of addiction and the starring roles that trauma and the multiple stresses of inequality can play in creating it.”

The latest study adds to the evidence against this tenacious fallacy and the harmful stereotype it generates.

*This article was originally published by The Influence, a news site that covers the full spectrum of human relationships with drugs. Follow The Influence on Facebook or Twitter.*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.rawstory.com/2016/02/the-stereotype-is-dead-researchers-show-that-native-americans-drink-less-than-whites/>

# Family's life time of Native American artifact finds on auction block

Friday, February 26, 2016 9:16 a.m. CST by Don Haney



Photo's Helbling Auctioneers



Photo's: Helbling Auctioneers



Photo's: Helbling Auctioneers



Photo's Helbling Auctioneers

KINDRED, N.D (KFGO-AM) - A lot of history, some of it thousands of years old, goes on the auction block in Kindred Saturday.

Auctioneer Bob Helbling has become an expert on the sale of Native American artifacts over the past 20 years. This one is large. The collection consists of thousands of artifacts found by one family on private land in North Dakota and South Dakota between 1930 and 1960.

He says during that time, farmers and ranchers could find the artifacts easily, many times while plowing fields or after heavy rains or strong winds eroded soils. Many of the artifacts were found at old campsites used as plains tribes hunted for food.

Besides arrow points, there are hundreds of extra fine bone tools, pottery shards, bison skulls, a large selection of rock hammers and axes, plus more than 50 frames of points, knives and other items. Helbling says some of the items are rare and will likely draw serious collectors. Other material should be of interest to the general public.

The auction starts at 10 a.m. Saturday at the Kindred Memorial Building.

**Direct Link:** <http://kfgo.com/news/articles/2016/feb/26/familys-life-time-of-native-american-artifact-finds-on-auction-block/>

## Amazing historical map shows languages of Native Americans

Anne Stegen , KPNX 2:33 PM. MST February 25, 2016



(Photo: John Wesley Powell, via Library of Congress)



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An amazing map from 1890 shows the languages of Native Americans at the time in the location they were contacted by white explorers and settlers.

The map was [produced](#) by John Wesley Powell, explorer and researcher, and certified "Most Interesting Man in the World."

Powell's research came from [a famous 1869 expedition](#) down the Colorado River and through the Grand Canyon. With one arm, 11 men and four boats, Powell and his crew faced rushing rapids, near-starvation, and more. They charted land previously unexplored by white settlers.

While the [main objective](#) of the Powell Expedition was mapping the geography of the southwest, it was [important](#) to Powell to get to know the people who already lived there. He became the leading researcher on Native American cultures and languages.

See the map that was one product of that research:



(Photo: John Wesley Powell, via Library of Congress)  
Copyright 2016 KPNX

**Direct Link:** <http://www.12news.com/opinion/talker/amazing-historical-map-shows-languages-of-native-americans/50739727>

## **New Mexico judge approves \$1 bln agreement between US government, Native American Tribes**

By [Staff Writer](#)

Feb 26, 2016 10:19 AM EST



JAN 31 1973, FEB 2 1973; Indian Navajo; Announcer Sam Henio talks with a reservation woman who has come to station KTDB to ask the reason for school bus not showing up for her children. The radio station is the only source of information for many in the tribe on the Ramah-Navajo reservation.

A New Mexico Federal Judge has approved almost \$1 billion settlement between the Obama Administration and Native American Tribes. The approval was given five months after the US Interior Department and Tribal leaders confirmed that they have agreed on a \$940 million settlement.

The tribes took to court claiming that the US government has underfunded contract costs for federal services such as education, law enforcement, and others. They claimed that the underfunded contracts from the US government has begun from way back in 1970.

According to [New York Times](#), a judge in Albuquerque has approved the agreement. Almost 700 tribes and tribal agencies are expected to receive compensation of different amounts ranging from \$8,000 for some Alaska Native villages to \$58 million for the Navajo Nation.

As reported by [ABC News](#), a lawsuit was first filed by Ramah Navajo Chapter in 1990 and became the case' lead plaintiff along with South Dakota's Oglala Sioux Tribe and

Zuni Pueblo. The case moved forward in 2012 when the US Supreme Court sided with the tribes and brought the case back to the lower courts.

The agreement between the government and the tribes also included \$1.2 million for the reimbursement of cash that was incurred by the plaintiff, as per [Jurist](#). The attorneys in the case are also expected to get 8.5 percent of the total amount of the settlement.

"The end result was there were no objections to the settlement and no objections to the fee request," the tribes' attorney, Michael Gross stated. "This showed a unity among Indian tribes that is absolutely astounding."

The settlement is the latest agreements between US Interior Department and the tribes. The former previously agreed to pay \$3.4 billion over the royalties owed to generations of landowners. It has also provided hundreds of millions to fund contract support costs for the tribes.

Read more at <http://www.lawyerherald.com/articles/36095/20160226/new-mexico-judge-approves-1-1bn-agreement-between-government-native.htm#w5v6BFwkDr1lpLQ.99>

## **Cutting among Native American youth a growing problem**

February 26, 2016 5:00 pm • BLAIR EMERSON Bismarck Tribune

Cutting, or self-harm, is practiced by people of all ages and races, but anecdotal evidence suggests that cutting is becoming more prevalent among Native American youth.

"It's a behavior that's growing," said Cheryl Kary, the director of Sacred Pipe Resource Center, a small nonprofit in Mandan that works with Native Americans and non-Native American service providers in the area.

On Friday, the organization held an event to discuss a Native American perspective on cutting, which is part of a year-long "cultural competency" series on wide-ranging topics.

Nearly 30 social workers, teachers, principals, school counselors and a police officer attended the event, which discussed the historical context of cutting among Native Americans, why people self-injure and what health professionals can do to intervene.

Linda Stenberg, who's worked as a middle school and high school counselor for the McLaughlin Public School District for 16 years, said she's noticed an increase in students of all ages who are cutting, a majority of whom are Native American.

It's hard to understand how many people are cutting, said Kary, pointing out the difficulty in tracking people who are doing it.

Self-injury can stem from a history of physical or sexual abuse. According to data from the Sacred Pipe Resource Center, a high number of Native Americans of all ages in the Bismarck-Mandan area have experienced sexual assault and domestic violence in their lifetimes.

Rape and sexual assault rates were "astronomical," Kary said.

"It was really alarming," she said. "They tell a story about how much grief and trauma is in our community."

Cutting was once practiced by Lakota, Dakota and other tribes as a way to demonstrate grief and help people deal with trauma or loss, said Kary, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe.

Traditionally, cutting was a socially acceptable coping mechanism in Native American communities. Tribal members would gather in groups to cut their hair, and in some cases their fingertips, to mourn the loss of a loved one.

"It was done in a very ceremonial manner," Kary said. "It wasn't viewed as a bad thing to do; it was a way of honoring."

Cutting is no longer viewed as a healthy way of grieving in these communities and, instead, is practiced as an unhealthy coping mechanism.

Cutting itself doesn't heal any pain or trauma, it just eases it temporarily, Kary said.

Many Native Americans suppress grief and trauma, which can result in forming bad habits, such as cutting.

Kary and her mother Marilyn Kary, a licensed social worker at the Community Grant High School in Fort Yates, presented ways social workers, counselors and others who work with Native American youth can intervene.

It's important for youth to understand why they cut and understand it comes from trauma, grief and other strong feelings, Kary said.

It's also important for them to understand these feelings are nothing to feel bad about, she said.

Health professionals can encourage youth to express their feelings vocally and offer healthy alternatives to cutting, including crying or wailing, physical activity, talking with older relatives and "iya," when a person is advised to develop a positive habit while grieving.

“There are traditional grieving mechanisms that we can call back into practice and tell our youth to do,” Kary said.

**Direct Link:** [http://bismarcktribune.com/news/local/bismarck/cutting-among-native-american-youth-a-growing-problem/article\\_17bcafd-a1d9-5166-b05b-e492f832178d.html](http://bismarcktribune.com/news/local/bismarck/cutting-among-native-american-youth-a-growing-problem/article_17bcafd-a1d9-5166-b05b-e492f832178d.html)

## **A Grim How-To Manual Steps In to Help Native American Women Where the Government Won't**

The book offers practical guidance and the comfort of community in the wake of sexual violence.



Feb 27, 2016

*Rebecca McCray is a staff writer covering social justice. She is based in New York.*

Two years ago, a young mother sat across from Charon Asetoyer in her office in Lake Andes, South Dakota. The mother had arrived at the shelter for battered women where Asetoyer worked. She lived on the Yankton Sioux Reservation and was seeking refuge for herself and her 11-year-old daughter. Asetoyer, a Native woman herself, had been working on behalf of Native girls and women for more than two decades. In spite of her years of

experience, one question the mother asked caught her off guard: “What should I tell my daughter when she’s raped?”

“It just got to me, it was so matter of fact: I have a daughter and she will be raped,” Asetoyer told TakePart.

Though the question was blunt, it made sense to her: [One in three](#) Native women report being raped in their lifetime, according to the Department of Justice. For Native girls and women, Asetoyer says, [sexual assault](#) and rape is considered almost inevitable. And because of complicated jurisdictional laws that divide [tribal and federal law](#), prosecuting non-Native perpetrators is so rare as to be almost nonexistent.

To support girls and women who survive sexual assault and rape, Asetoyer and her colleagues at the Native American Women’s Health Education Resource Center on the Yankton Sioux Reservation have published an illustrated book called *What to Do When You’re Raped: An ABC Handbook for Native Girls*.

“We can’t wait for the federal government to come to the rescue or to do what they should have been doing all along,” Asetoyer told TakePart. “Because we have so little equal protection under the law, we need a community response, and to provide some information that can be shared woman to woman, girl to girl.”

Asetoyer concedes that there are perpetrators within the Native community as well, but assaults by non-Native people are more common because of the lack of legal consequences.

“There are communities of commerce on our reservations, banks, supermarkets, bars, and casinos, and [non-Native] people come in,” Asetoyer said. “Farmers, truckers, ranchers, and sportsmen—they just feel they have a right to indulge in anything in any way they want to. These men can’t be arrested by tribal law enforcement.”

Federal prosecutors rarely take up such cases, as evidenced by *Dollar General v. Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians*, a case now before the Supreme Court. The suit was brought after the U.S. attorney’s office in the state declined to press charges on behalf of a

13-year-old Choctaw boy who was allegedly assaulted by the non-Native manager of a Dollar General store on tribal land.

“We have young women who are afraid to report because they’re afraid of retaliation. They know no one will be arrested, no one will be convicted,” Asetoyer said.

That fear contributes to a culture of silence that NAWHERC hopes the book will break. The book’s main message to girls is that they are not alone, and that a community of Native women understands and is waiting to help. But it’s also a practical guide, offering information on the emergency contraceptive Plan B and how to get it from Indian Health Service clinics.

“We have too many young women who experience sexual assault and feel it is their fault,” said Asetoyer. “This is a community response, a matriarchal approach. Women need to step in and support each other.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.takepart.com/article/2016/02/27/native-women-sexual-assault-book>

## **These Native Americans Might Be the Country's First Climate Change Refugees**

By [Matt Smith](#)

February 27, 2016 | 7:25 am

Sometime in the next few years, the remaining two dozen or so families of Louisiana's Isle de Jean Charles will pack up their stuff and leave for good.

They'll leave behind homes that some of the Native American residents have lived in for generations, and they'll watch from afar as what's left of the island gets swallowed by the surrounding waters.

"All of our history, all of our ancestral line — that's where our people are buried. That's where our family members were born," island native Chantel Coverdelle said. "They were raised there, and they raised their kids and grandkids. We've been there forever."

The Isle de Jean Charles band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw tribe has lived on the island since the 1820s. Nearly all still speak Cajun French at home, said Coverdelle, the community's tribal secretary. But as the marshes of southeastern Louisiana shrivel and

settle into a rising sea, the island has been eaten away to a bare stub of what it was in the mid-1950s. Once 11 miles long, it's barely two miles long and a quarter of a mile wide today — a roughly 98 percent loss of land area.

And so by 2019, if current plans hold, the people of Isle de Jean Charles are likely to be the first community displaced wholesale by the slow-motion ecological disaster inflicted on southeastern Louisiana over the last century.

"We're trying to be hopeful that we can pull together enough resources to get this accomplished quickly, for the safety of our people," Coverdelle said.

The wetlands below New Orleans have been shrinking since the early 20th century, when the levees that protect cities up the Mississippi River corralled the floods that once refreshed the land with fresh sediment. Oil companies and government agencies dredged thousands of miles of canals through the wetlands, funneling salt water into the marshes, killing native plants whose roots held the soil in place.

Nearly 1,900 square miles of coastal Louisiana disappeared underwater between 1932 and 2010, according to the US Geological Survey. The area is losing more than 16 square miles a year — the equivalent of a football field every hour — and as if that weren't bad enough, the rise of sea levels in a warming world is expected to compound the problem.

"Not only are we losing land that provides a valuable buffer, we are gaining elevation of water, and the land we do have is subsiding," said Corey Miller, the community engagement manager for the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.

Isle de Jean Charles's tribal leaders have been trying to find a new home for more than a decade. Their project has now drawn the support of the White House, which in January pledged \$48 million to help the remaining households move to "a resilient and historically significant community."

The hope is to find someplace within the surrounding Terrebonne Parish and resettle there by 2019, Coverdelle said. But no proposals have been put together, and no site has been acquired, she said. The money the White House pledged in January won't cover the full cost, but "it will give us a great start," she added.

Many of the island's families have already relocated on their own. Coverdelle and her parents moved to nearby Houma after Hurricane Danny destroyed their own home in the 1990s — but her grandparents still live on the island, and she and her family visited every weekend as she grew up. Many other families have resettled in Houma as well.

"It's very saddening to me, personally," Coverdelle said. "But it's sad not just for us, but for all the other communities that are facing this. There are lots of other communities facing the same issue, and it's very disheartening to see."

After Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana developed an extensive master plan aimed at restoring its wetlands, which serve as a natural buffer against storm surges. That includes controlled releases of water from the Mississippi River in hopes of spreading fresh sediment on the sinking land, while rebuilding and extending levees to protect other portions of the coast.

More than 1,000 projects are aimed at restoring marshes, or building new ones, Miller said. South of New Orleans, new cypress trees are being planted several times a year in fresh earth delivered by the river diversions.

But the world's oceans rose faster in the past 100 years than they did in nearly all the preceding 3,000, and they could go up another two feet or more this century, scientists from Rutgers University and several other institutions reported this week. And an analysis by the Princeton-based research consortium Climate Central concluded that most of the increase in coastal flooding can be laid at the foot of human-caused climate change.

For communities like Isle de Jean Charles and several others that lie outside the planned levees, the emphasis is on "non-structural" protections, Miller said. Sometimes that means raising homes above projected floods, or buying flood insurance — and sometimes, it means families decide to move.

"It's never an easy conversation," Miller said. "You're talking about people's livelihoods, generations of culture. Coastal Louisiana is very much a place-based, community-based culture and environment. Most people do not want to leave. People live in these places for very attached reasons." In some cases, he said, older residents may stay, while their children move to higher elevations.

Some accounts have described the people of Isle de Jean Charles as America's first "climate refugees." But Coverdelle calls that too harsh. She prefers to think of it as adaptation.

"If your land is eroded away, you have to adapt to it," she said. "You're not being a refugee, you're just adapting to the changes."

Besides, she added, "this isn't the first time a native community has had to move, for whatever reason."

**Direct Link:** <https://news.vice.com/article/these-native-americans-might-be-the-countrys-first-climate-change-refugees>

## **Today's Remaining Native American Boarding Schools Are A Far Cry From Their History**

By AARON SCHRANK · FEB 26, 2016



*Credit Courtesy Sherman Indian High School*

*This is part two of a series. Listen to part one [here](#).*

At the start of his senior year at Wyoming Indian High School, Tim O’Neal was struggling.

“I was just drinking, partying, trying to be cool,” says O’Neal. “It messed with my schoolwork. My whole class schedule—all seven classes—I was failing and there was no way I could make up the grades, so I just asked my parents if I would be able to go to a boarding school.”

O’Neal ended up at Chemawa Indian School in Salem, Oregon. The school has been there since 1880 and is one of the four remaining boarding high schools run by the Bureau of Indian Education.

“My experience was good there,” says O’Neal. They allowed me to catch up on some schoolwork, and when I caught up, I found out I was top of the class.”

O’Neal went from dropout to valedictorian for Chemawa’s class of ’09. In his year there, he says he learned to take care of himself.

“The best thing was meeting all the new people, other Native Americans, and making lifelong friends,” O’Neal says.

A century ago, children were stolen from their parents and taken to federal boarding schools, where they were abused and stripped of their tribal cultures. In the past several decades, most of those schools were closed or handed over to tribes—as the U.S. shifted away from its policy of forced assimilation. Those remaining, like Chemawa, look much different today, and they’re a popular destination for students from Wyoming’s Wind River Reservation.

“I really liked it,” says Rebecca Bell, who attended Chemawa in the 1980s. “It opened up a new world for me. I got to see the ocean, and I got to do a lot of things that kids back here didn’t even get to do yet.”

Bell’s husband, Lionel, enjoyed his time at South Dakota’s Flandreau boarding school in the 1970s. Bell says what they experienced was much different than what she’s heard of her grandmother’s time at boarding school.

“They had a lot things happen to them—where they cut their hair, and they were told not to speak their language,” says Bell. “But to us, it was just another option for high school.”

She and her husband valued that option enough to send three of their four children off to boarding schools. Bell says the horrors that older generations experienced at these schools never figured into her decision-making, mostly because she didn’t hear much about it.

“They didn’t really talk about it then, but they do talk about it now,” she says.

Back in the 1928, The Meriam Report—produced by the group now known as the Brookings Institution, concluded that children at Native American boarding schools were malnourished, abused and poorly educated.

“The boarding school era began under a military philosophy that was seriously steeped in genocide,” says Sergio Maldonado, the state liaison for the Northern Arapahoe Tribe.

He says that the assimilationist policy of “Kill the Indian, save the man” continued at boarding schools until about the 1970s. More negative reports on Indian education—and the spread of Civil Rights era consciousness—led their gradual shutdown.

Maldonado says the schools still standing today take a different approach.

“Of maintaining one’s cultural identity,” says Maldonado. “So it’s a complete philosophical change—we’re talking about polar opposites here.”

He says today’s remaining boarding schools are an option for Native students looking for independence or a change of scenery, but that doesn’t mean he’s glad they exist.

“Glad they exist? No,” says Maldonado. “Because it is simply the marginalizing of children from tribal communities and families. No, I’m not glad at all. They should have done away with 50, 70 years ago. Maybe even more. But we can’t change history.”

Those who run the existing boarding schools say there’s plenty of reason to keep them around.

“It would be inappropriate to try to remedy some horrible mistakes from the past by eliminating an institution now that is a hopeful place,” says Tripp Doepner, principal of Sherman Indian High School in Riverside, California—another one of the remaining boarding schools many Wyoming kids go to.

Things have changed a lot at Sherman in Doepner’s lifetime. He says a Navajo woman who went there in the 1960s and was forbidden from speaking her language now teaches that language at Sherman.

“I believe that those efforts over the past 35 or 40 years have helped transform the nature of what BIE schools have tried to do which is to celebrate the culture of the students, of their families, of their ancestors,” Doepner says.

Some Wyoming students who’ve attended Sherman agree.

“They have a beading class,” says Scottie Nez, a junior at Fort Washakie High School who spent his first two years at Sherman. “And pottery—ceramics class. They have a basket-weaving class. And they have a Navajo language class.”

Fort Washakie freshman Alyssa Whiteplume spent just one semester at Sherman.

“At Sherman, we would do projects on how far back they made the school, and how they were treated there, and how they got taken away from their homes,” Whiteplume says.

Tim O’Neal from Chemawa says knowing that history—and its impact on Native people today—is important, but it shouldn’t discourage students from attending boarding schools.

“Compared to what boarding schools were in the past, they’ve changed a lot—from killing the Indian and saving the man, it’s a lot different these days,” O’Neal says.

O’Neal says if the boarding schools exist when his one-year-old son comes of age, he’d certainly allow him to attend.

*These reports are part of ‘The American Graduate: Let’s Make It Happen’—a public media initiative to address the dropout crisis. Supported by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.*

**Direct Link:** <http://wyomingpublicmedia.org/post/todays-remaining-native-american-boarding-schools-are-far-cry-their-history>

## **Native Hawaiian group adopts constitution at convention**

Posted: Saturday, February 27, 2016 1:55 pm | *Updated: 6:03 pm, Sat Feb 27, 2016.*

## **Native Hawaiian group adopts constitution at convention Associated Press |**

HONOLULU (AP) — A constitutional convention of Native Hawaiians has adopted a governing document that will go out to a vote for ratification, the organization behind the gathering announced.

The proposed constitution, approved Friday by an 88 to 30 vote with one abstention, allows room for recognition by the U.S. government while holding out for the possibility of independence, said Na'I Aupuni, an organization that says on its website it's dedicated to "establish a path for Hawaiian self-determination."

The U.S. Interior Department is giving Native Hawaiians an option to have a government-to-government relationship with the United States. The plan would extend to Native Hawaiians recognition similar to what many Native American tribes have had for generations. However, the department stresses that the Native Hawaiian government won't automatically be eligible for federal American Indian programs, services and benefits unless Congress allows it.

Under the proposed constitution, citizens of the Hawaiian nation would be any descendants of the indigenous people who lived in Hawaii before 1778, when the first Europeans made contact with the islands. It also says citizenship in the Native Hawaiian nation shall not affect U.S. citizenship. The government would be led by a president and vice president and advised by an island council, plus a legislature with 43 members representing the islands and Native Hawaiians, as well as a judicial authority.

The delegates to the convention were brought in by Na'i Aupuni. The proposed constitution will be presented to a vote by Hawaiians, Na'i Aupuni has said.

The Interior Department will negotiate the issue of recognizing Native Hawaiians as a nation with representatives of the community.

Opponents of the push for recognition by the U.S. government say it's a move to make Native Hawaiians like American Indians. They also say the

effort does nothing to correct the wrongs of the overthrow of the Native Hawaiian government by a group of American businessmen in 1893.

"The attempt to establish a single race-based nation violates the Aloha Spirit and goes against the will of the majority of Hawaiians," said Keli Akina, president of public policy think-tank Grassroot Institute of Hawaii.

Money being used in this political process should be redirected to advance Native Hawaiians through education, housing, commerce, and health care, Akina said.

Until the 1893 overthrow, the United States recognized the Hawaiian nation's independence, extended full diplomatic recognition to the Hawaiian government and entered into several treaties with the Hawaiian monarch.

The United States annexed Hawaii five years after the overthrow. Hawaii became a state in 1959.

**Direct Link:** [http://www.dailyamerican.com/news/nation/native-hawaiian-group-adopts-constitution-at-convention/article\\_ba64fc4c-c2d4-5a1e-884e-60d9b5314ed6.html](http://www.dailyamerican.com/news/nation/native-hawaiian-group-adopts-constitution-at-convention/article_ba64fc4c-c2d4-5a1e-884e-60d9b5314ed6.html)

## **Op-ed: Herbert is wrong about Bears Ears monument, and it's not just Navajos who know it**

**By Herman Daniels Jr.**

First Published Feb 27 2016 03:09PM • Last Updated Feb 27 2016 03:09 pm

Gov. Gary Herbert recently delivered a letter to President Obama urging him to refrain from designating a new national monument in the state.

The governor raised the specter of the controversial Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument designated under the Clinton administration and warned that "history shows this sort of action will only exacerbate an already tense situation and will further perpetuate the longstanding public lands conflict."

In so doing, Herbert chose to conveniently ignore longstanding efforts by Native Americans, including Utah Navajos, to protect the Bears Ears.

Herbert's assessment of the repercussions of a possible Bears Ears National Monument is both biased and inaccurate. While national monuments do impact local communities, studies and experience show that most monuments spur economic growth, create jobs for locals and are a positive addition to communities. A Bears Ears National Monument would benefit local Native and non-Native American residents of San Juan County financially and practically, to say nothing of the natural and cultural resources it would protect. Additionally, the Bears Ears landscape is deserving of attention for the immense role it plays in the social, cultural and spiritual lives of Native American people in the region.

The Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition — a partnership of Zuni, Navajo, Hopi, Uintah and Ouray Ute and Ute Mountain Ute Tribes — is seeking national monument status to protect the natural and cultural resources of the Bears Ears, including cliff dwellings, rock art and the gravesites of our ancestors, for generations of Americans to come. The Public Lands Initiative, unfortunately, fails to satisfactorily protect the region and does not respect Native American connections to the Bears Ears. Rather than including meaningful input from tribes, the PLI process has, on the whole, actively excluded the valuable opinions of Native Americans whose ancestral ties to this land date back thousands of years.

Despite false statements that seek to minimize the strong popular support for a Bears Ears National Monument, as a Navajo Nation council delegate who represents Utah Navajos, I know that we are not divided. The other tribes represented in the coalition are also firm in their support.

While a small handful of local Utahns oppose a national monument designation, we cannot ignore the large majority that supports one.

The Bears Ears region is already public land, and it should remain public for all Utahns and Americans to enjoy. This is a people's movement at its heart. The goal is to heal the land and people, to mend rifts between all, not to divide.

Presidential use of the 1906 Antiquities Act has been criticized for a century, primarily by those who wish to develop public lands instead of protect them. However, throughout the past century challenges have failed. The reality is that the Antiquities Act is an invaluable tool in the protection of public lands for the future.

These "longstanding public lands conflicts" are nothing new, and should not discourage the president from designating Bears Ears — the country's most significant unprotected cultural landscape — a national monument.

Herbert's views do not represent the majority of Utah's Navajos, who overwhelmingly support a Bears Ears National Monument. And with two out of three Utahns supporting permanent protection of a Bears Ears National Monument, according to the 2016 State of the Rockies poll, it seems the governor is out of touch with what most Utahns want, too.

Herman Daniels Jr. is a Navajo Nation Council Delegate representing Shonto, Naa'tsis'Áán, Oljato and Ts'ah Bii Kin.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.sltrib.com/opinion/3586236-155/op-ed-herbert-is-wrong-about-bears>

## **Native Lives Matter activists' march in St. Paul breaks up before downtown**

Group protested police shooting of Philip Quinn and dispersed near Crashed Ice event.

By Eric Roper and Liz Sawyer Star Tribune

February 27, 2016 — 10:53pm

A group of Native Lives Matter movement supporters rallied against police brutality in St. Paul on Saturday night, briefly disrupting traffic as they marched down Mounds Boulevard.

A sizable contingent of St. Paul police, who had been clearing traffic, halted the march before it entered downtown. Earlier plans to stage a protest with Black Lives Matter at the Red Bull Crashed Ice Championship, also occurring Saturday night, were called off after many of the group's demands were met.

The rally at Indian Mounds Park highlighted a number of American Indians who have been killed by police, including the fatal shooting of Philip Quinn last year. A Ramsey County grand jury cleared the two officers involved last week, ruling that their actions were justified.

“Something's gotta change. The grand jury process is a joke,” Darleen Tareeq, Quinn's fiancée, told the crowd. Tareeq said the state should require officers to carry their own liability insurance.

“I think that could change the grand jury process a lot,” Tareeq said. “Because then the county attorney's office wouldn't be worried about protecting their pockets and the city's pockets.”

Saturday's march in St. Paul reached police and a stopping point at 7th Street and Mound Avenue.

Quinn died last September in the city's West End during what his family called a mental health crisis. The officers, who were responding to a report of a suicidal man cutting himself, say Quinn ignored commands to drop a screwdriver and charged until the officer had his back against a fence and could retreat no further.

“A lot of times [families] knew that they were dealing with a mental issue,” said Mike Forcia, a prominent activist with the American Indian Movement. “And the last thing they wanted to see was their loved one being shot and killed right in front of them because the police came to help.”

About 35 people marched from the park down Mounds Boulevard, stopping at 7th Street. Chants included “Whose land? Native land,” and “Justice for Phil. Fire McGuire,” a reference to the officer involved in the shooting. No arrests were apparent.

Crashed Ice was expected to attract as many as 140,000 visitors. Mayor Chris Coleman said a large protest there would have “created a volatile situation,” and though he respected the right to free speech, there was a need to protect public safety, so he was grateful the protest was called off.

BLM-St. Paul said Friday that their demands had been addressed sincerely. “We want them to hear us and I feel like they’re listening,” the group’s leader, Rashad Turner, told Saturday’s rally. “So let’s keep doing this, let’s stick together.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.startribune.com/native-lives-matter-to-march-to-crashed-ice-event/370379611/>

## The Fight for Sovereignty

Lex Talamo 8:37 p.m. CST February 27, 2016



Above: The AC Woodland group from the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe in Livingston, Texas, drummed during the Choctaw-Apache Veterans Powwow. From left are tribal members Bryan Torres, Herb Johnson, Delbert Johnson, Dave Johnson, Jackson Langley.(Photo: Lex Talamo/Gannett Louisiana)

In wartime, many Native American tribes would conduct rituals and prayers to prepare their warriors for battle. They also would tell stories to instill in the next generation values like courage, honor, bravery and respect.

Current American Indian leaders are summoning up these ancestral values for a modern day fight: the fight for federal recognition.

Official federal recognition of a tribe opens the door to funding and resources for the tribe, many of which struggle with crushing poverty and stark social statistics. Across the country, American Indian people face higher rates of trauma, addiction, suicide and poverty than other racial groups, according to the [National Indian Education Association](#). Yet because government resources are limited, tribes who want federal acknowledgment have to go through a multi-step process that can take [decades](#) to prove they exist as a people.

Albert Naquin, chief of the [Isle de Jean Charles band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw](#), remembered facing racism and discrimination growing up as an American Indian child. His heritage, however, is not currently recognized by the federal government.

“When I was a child, I was an Indian,” Naquin said. “Now, as a man, I’m not an Indian unless I prove it.”

Several Louisiana tribes have been jumping over [technical hurdles](#) for years in an attempt to [gain federal recognition](#). Tribes that have successfully completed the process say it’s worth the hassle, but several other tribes — well aware of the federal government’s sordid treatment of Native people in the past— voiced concern over the potential repercussions of a relationship with the federal government.

### **Louisiana’s tribal landscape**

Of the 16 tribes present in Louisiana, four tribes — the Chitimacha, Choctaw, Coushatta and Tunica-Biloxi tribes — are federally recognized. Louisiana recognizes 10 tribes, while a handful of other tribes are not acknowledged at either the state or federal level.

John Barbry, director of development and programming for the [Tunica Biloxi](#) Language and Culture Revitalization Program, said the resources that came with federal recognition greatly improved the quality of life for the tribe’s people.

“When you’re getting funding, you always have to answer to someone, but I think it has overall been good for our tribe,” Barbry said.

The tribe maintains its own police force, casino and cultural center on the tribe’s reservation land near Marksville.

Linda Langley, a tribal historical preservation officer for the Coushatta Tribe, said federal funding didn’t just help the economic situation of the tribe. Coushatta culture is thriving with continued traditions like cane basketry, moccasin-making, language classes and an annual pow wow.

“Most people would agree there has been an economic and a social benefit,” Langley said. “The most vital aspects of the official recognition is that they have the right to be where they are, how they are, who they are.”

But the tribe’s history with the federal government has been sour-sweet. The tribe started [receiving assistance from the government in 1935](#), but the Bureau of Indian Affairs terminated all services in 1953. The Coushatta made efforts to regain federal recognition in 1965, and it took seven years to be recognized again officially in 1972.

Langley said the tribe’s fluctuating status has caused concern that the government could change its mind again.

“We had recognition once. It was taken away by the stroke of a pen,” Langley said. “They went for a very long time without services, and it made them kind of closed off. But it taught them to rely on themselves and helped them preserve their culture. They were never forced into boarding schools.”

American Indian children were herded into [boarding schools](#) throughout the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries, where they often received harsh punishment if they spoke their languages or practiced their religions or cultures.

The boarding school days are just one incident in the country’s history that bred general mistrust of the federal government. John Mayeux, chief of the Bear Clan of the [Avogel Tribe](#), said federal recognition is not something he plans on pursuing.

“Once you start taking money from the government, they want to tell you how to run the tribe, and we want to stay with our traditions, our language, our culture,” Mayeux said. “We would prefer to take care of our own, like we’ve done from the beginning.”

### **Seeking recognition**

Among the [seven criteria required for acknowledgment](#), tribes must document they had a continuous community since 1900 and also exerted political authority. The Office of Federal Acknowledgment cites two main barriers tribes face in meeting the documentation criteria. Many tribes are able to show a strong modern community but can’t show through documentation who their ancestors were. Second, some tribes can trace their historic roots but have a majority of members who dispersed to different geographical areas in the modern day.

Chief Rufus Davis of the state-recognized [Adai Caddo tribe](#) said the tribe had been told they needed more documentation of their existence before their petition could be considered.

“Our tribe is very lucky we have the documentation we do have,” Davis said. “It’s hard going back into the archives and finding all the information we were asked for. Doing

that, it would take a lot of money and we don't have the expertise, so we would have to go and hire people.”

But Davis said the tribe will persist despite the strain on its limited resources.

“State recognition gives you identity as an Indian tribe, but until you have federal recognition, you're not an Indian to the federal government,” Davis said. “That's what grates on me and our people. We're not recognized for who we are.”

The [Houma](#) is the largest tribe in Louisiana, with approximately 17,000 enrolled members. They also have one of the strongest cases for acknowledgment, according to Southern Utah University professor Mark Miller, because of their long trail of documented existence.

“Those core records are not that common,” Miller said. “They have really good evidence of their existence in their past.”

But the Houma's initial petition for recognition was rejected by the [BIA in 1994](#). Miller said the BIA argued that the tribe had become extinct through intermarriage and disease and were not an “organized” people according to the regulations. The tribe responded with a rebuttal in 1996, but no further action has been taken.

“There were a lot of good intentions and high hopes when it started, but the devil was in the details,” Miller said about the acknowledgment process. “No one really knew what a quagmire this was going to become.”

Regulations were created in October of 1978 to create a uniform process to review claims.

Since 1978, 356 groups began the acknowledgment process. Of those, 269 petitions were declared not ready for evaluation. Only 55 of the remaining 87 petitions were resolved by the BIA as of 2013: 17 were accepted, 34 were denied and four were decided through other means.

As of July 31, 2015, the BIA adopted a revised set of regulations in which tribes had to track their existence back to 1900, as opposed to “historical” times. According to the Federal Office of Acknowledgment, the revisions are meant to reduce the burden of documented proof placed on the tribes.

Despite the frustrations and waiting, Langley encouraged tribes to keep going through the process.

“There's a saying in the tribe: the struggle has made us stronger,” Langley said. “If this is what you have decided to do as a people, what's right for you, you have to keep going. Don't give up.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thenewsstar.com/story/news/local/2016/02/27/fight-sovereignty/81060580/>

## 10 Native Actors and Films That Should Have ‘Snagged’ the Oscar

Vincent Schilling  
2/27/16

In the midst of a well-warranted controversy about the lack of diversity in Hollywood, and a trending [#OscarsSoWhite](#) hashtag on social media, we thought it fitting to list 10 Native American actors and films that were snubbed at Oscar time.

Admittedly, there are too many worthy candidates to mention all of them. Do you have a favorite Native American film or actor you think got robbed of the little golden statue? Let us know at [@ICTMN\\_Arts](#) or [@VinceSchilling](#) and we will give you a retweet or social media shout during Sunday’s oscars.

*See Related: [Oscars So White: Shocking Stats of Academy’s Voting Demographics - by Lisa J. Ellwood](#)*

This said, here are 10 Native actors and films that should have ‘snagged’ an Oscar.

### **Wes Studi in The Only Good Indian**



Wes Studi, The Only Good Indian (Photo credit: Courtesy Everett Collection)

Wes Studi portrays ‘Sam’ in a The Only Good Indian, a movie set in Kansas during the early 1900s, in which a teen-aged Native American kid (Winter Fox Frank) is taken from his family and forced to attend a distant Indian boarding school to assimilate into white society.

Studi did an awesome job in Avatar too, but didn't get an Oscar nod for that, either.

### **Adam Beach in Flags of Our Fathers**



Adam Beach, *Flags of Our Fathers* (Photo credit: Dreamworks)

Though he has been nominated for a Golden Globe for *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, Adam Beach was seriously robbed for his stellar performance in this film, in which he portrayed Ira Hayes.

### **Will Sampson in One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest**



Will Sampson and Jack Nicholson, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* (Photo credit: Mary Evans/Ronald Grant/Everett Collection)

Perhaps one of the most disregarded and talented Native American actors is Will Sampson, who was constantly overlooked on such films as *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, *The White Buffalo* and much more. His performance as Chief Bromden in “*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*” alongside Jack Nicholson is one of the most iconic acting performances in film history.

### **Tantoo Cardinal in Smoke Signals... and everything else she's done**



Gary Farmer, Tantoo Cardinal, Smoke Signals (Photo credit: (c)Miramax/Courtesy Everett Collection)

Tantoo Cardinal has been bringing beautiful acting to the silver screen for decades. As a brilliant First Nations actress, it is a downright shame that a woman who has been honored as a Member of the Order of Canada, one of Canada's highest civilian awards, recognized for her contributions to the growth and development of Aboriginal performing arts - has never even been nominated by the Academy.

### **Evan Adams as Thomas Builds-The-Fire in Smoke Signals**



Evan Adams and Adam Beach (on left) on the set of Smoke Signals (Photo credit: (c)Miramax/Courtesy Everett Collection)

Perhaps no other acting performance in recent decades has delivered such raw honesty as Evan Adams' portrayal of Thomas Builds-The-Fire in Smoke Signals. Director Chris Eyre has said in interviews that when he asked Evan Adams what he was doing during his performance, Adams said he was channeling the spirit of his own grandmother. He deserved an Oscar just for bringing "Hey Victor" to Indian Country.

Video of Smoke Signals - Trailer

### **A Tie for Gary Farmer and Irene Bedard in Smoke Signals**

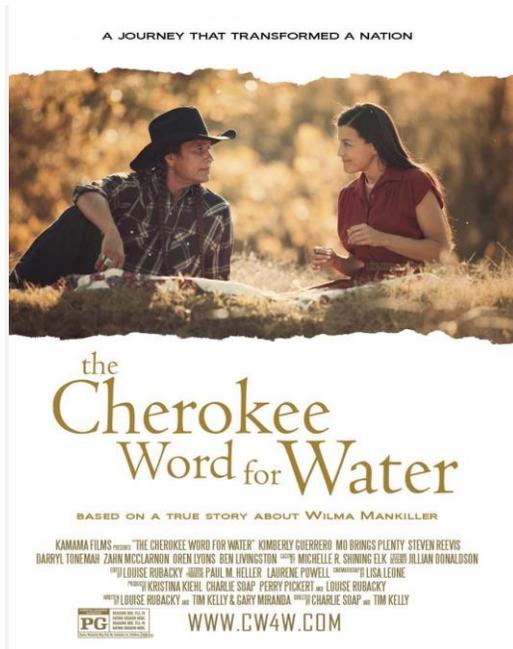


Irene Bedard, *Smoke Signals* (Photo credit: (c)Miramax/Courtesy Everett Collection)

Much like the simple straightforwardness of Evan Adams, Irene Bedard also brought a shining light to Chris Eyre's *Smoke Signals* as Suzy Song. A bit of friendliness and a bit of mystery from Bedard brought Suzy Song to life and should have drawn a nod from the Academy.

Gary Farmer's portrayal of an abusive husband and father Arnold Joseph was gritty, real and certainly deserved the coveted gold statue. Not to mention a big Oscar nod was due to Chris Eyre for directing the film.

### **Best Film / Best Actress: Kimberly Guerrero in *The Cherokee Word for Water***



*Cherokee Word For Water* (Photo credit: Kamama Films)

Based on the work to provide clean water for her people, *The Cherokee Word for Water* portrays Kimberly Guerrero as Wilma Mankiller, the woman who would become the first modern female Chief of the Cherokee Nation. With a 2014 Western Heritage Award, the film and Guerrero deserved the Oscar nod.

### **Best Documentary: Reel Injun**



Neil Diamond, Reel Injun (Photo credit: Lorber Films)

With an all-inclusive and comprehensive look at Native Americans in film, Cree filmmaker Neil Diamond exposes the film industry's stereotypical portrayal of Native people since the inception of moving images. This film which snubbed the Oscars, should have been given one.

### **Best Film: Pow Wow Highway**



Pow Wow Highway (Photo credit: Warner Bros.)

This classic film, which was directed by Jonathan Wacks and starred Gary Farmer and A Martinez, should have a little golden man on its mantel.

### **Honorable Mention for Native Film: Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee**



The late August Schellenberg on the set of Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (Photo credit: HBO)

With a handful of Golden Globe nominations, Emmy awards and a huge helping of other awards and nominations, this non-commercial TV movie, Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee, should have been booked in a theater for a week to receive a well-deserved Oscar.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/02/27/10-native-actors-and-films-should-have-snagged-oscar-163564>

## **DiCaprio, The Revenant Take Home The Oscar, Indigenous People Get Shout-Out (& Full Oscars List)**

ICTMN Staff  
2/29/16

In a not-too-surprising turn of events at the 88th Academy Awards, Leonardo DiCaprio and director Alejandro Iñárritu took home Oscars for The Revenant. In another gesture of respect, DiCaprio didn't forget to give a shout-out to Indigenous people in the making of the film. Additionally, there were cutaways to Native actors Duane Howard, Forrest Goodluck and Arthur RedCloud during the acceptance speeches.



Arthur RedCloud and Forrest Goodluck at the Oscars (Screen capture)



Will Poulter and Duane Howard at the Oscars (Screen capture)

The Revenant received 12 nominations for Oscars and won three; Mad Max: Fury Road had 10 nominations and won six, while Spotlight was named Best Picture, an award many predicted would also go to The Revenant.

"Making The Revenant was about man's relationship with the natural world," said DiCaprio in his acceptance speech for an Oscar that had previously eluded him six times. "Climate change is real, it is happening right now, it is the most urgent threat facing our entire species and we need to work collectively together and stop procrastinating.

"We need to support leaders around the world who do not speak for the big polluters or the big corporations, but who speak for all of humanity, for the indigenous people of the world and for the billions and billions of underprivileged people who will be affected by

all this, for our children's children, for those people out there voices have been drowned out by the politics of greed I thank you all for this amazing award tonight, let us not take this planet for granted, I do not take tonight for granted."

During his acceptance speech, director Alejandro Iñárritu made a reference to all the support across "this continent" for everyone who worked on the film such as "Native Americans and English American cast [members]"

Iñárritu finished his speech by talking about how he hoped we would get to a place where we stopped "tribal thinking."

"There is a line in the film, where Glass says to his mixed-race son, 'They don't listen to you, they just see the color of your skin.' So what a great opportunity to our generation to really liberate ourselves from all prejudice and this tribal thinking - and make sure once and forever that the color of our skin become as irrelevant as the length of our hair."

The entire list of Oscar nominees and winners is as follows:

### **BEST PICTURE**

Spotlight - WINNER

The Big Short  
Bridge of Spies  
Brooklyn  
Mad Max: Fury Road  
The Martian  
The Revenant  
Room

### **ACTOR IN A LEADING ROLE**

Leonardo DiCaprio, The Revenant - WINNER

Bryan Cranston, Trumbo

Matt Damon, The Martian  
Michael Fassbender, Steve Jobs  
Eddie Redmayne, The Danish Girl

### **ACTRESS IN A LEADING ROLE**

Brie Larson, Room - WINNER

Cate Blanchett, Carol  
Jennifer Lawrence, Joy

Charlotte Rampling, 45 Years  
Saoirse Ronan, Brooklyn

### **ACTOR IN A SUPPORTING ROLE**

Mark Rylance, Bridge of Spies - WINNER

Christian Bale, The Big Short  
Tom Hardy, The Revenant  
Mark Ruffalo, Spotlight  
Sylvester Stallone, Creed

### **ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE**

Alicia Vikander, The Danish Girl - WINNER

Jennifer Jason Leigh, The Hateful Eight  
Rooney Mara, Carol  
Rachel McAdams, Spotlight  
Kate Winslet, Steve Jobs

### **ANIMATED FEATURE FILM**

Inside Out - WINNER

Anomalisa  
Boy and the World  
Shaun the Sheep Movie  
When Marnie Was There

### **CINEMATOGRAPHY**

The Revenant - WINNER

Carol  
The Hateful Eight  
Mad Max: Fury Road  
Sicario

### **COSTUME DESIGN**

Mad Max: Fury Road - WINNER

Carol  
Cinderella

The Danish Girl  
The Revenant

### **DIRECTING**

The Revenant - WINNER

The Big Short  
Mad Max: Fury Road  
Room  
Spotlight

### **DOCUMENTARY (FEATURE)**

Amy - WINNER  
Cartel Land  
The Look of Silence  
What Happened, Miss Simone?  
Winter on Fire: Ukraine's Fight for Freedom

### **DOCUMENTARY (SHORT SUBJECT)**

A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness - WINNER

Body Team 12  
Chau, beyond the Lines  
Claude Lanzmann: Spectres of the Shoah  
Last Day of Freedom

### **FILM EDITING**

Mad Max: Fury Road - WINNER

The Big Short  
The Revenant  
Spotlight  
Star Wars: The Force Awakens

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM**

Son of Saul - WINNER  
Embrace of the Serpent  
Mustang  
Theeb  
A War

## **MAKEUP AND HAIRSTYLING**

Mad Max: Fury Road - WINNER  
The 100-Year-Old Man Who Climbed out the Window and Disappeared  
The Revenant

## **MUSIC (ORIGINAL SCORE)**

The Hateful Eight - WINNER

Bridge of Spies  
Carol  
Sicario  
Star Wars: The Force Awakens

## **MUSIC (ORIGINAL SONG)**

“Writing’s On The Wall,” Spectre - WINNER  
“Earned It,” Fifty Shades of Grey  
“Manta Ray,” Racing Extinction  
“Simple Song #3,” Youth  
“Til It Happens To You,” The Hunting Ground

## **PRODUCTION DESIGN**

Mad Max: Fury Road – WINNER

The Danish Girl

The Martian

The Revenant

Bridge of Spies

## **SHORT FILM (ANIMATED)**

Bear Story - WINNER  
Prologue  
Sanjay’s Super Team

We Can’t Live without Cosmos  
World of Tomorrow

## **SHORT FILM (LIVE ACTION)**

Stutterer - WINNER

Ave Maria

Day One

Everything Will Be Okay

Shok

### **SOUND EDITING**

Mad Max: Fury Road - WINNER

The Martian

The Revenant

Sicario

Star Wars: The Force Awakens

### **SOUND MIXING**

Mad Max: Fury Road - WINNER

Bridge of Spies

The Martian

The Revenant

Star Wars: The Force Awakens

### **VISUAL EFFECTS**

Ex Machina - WINNER

Mad Max: Fury Road

The Martian

The Revenant

Star Wars: The Force Awakens

### **WRITING (ADAPTED SCREENPLAY)**

The Big Short - WINNER

Brooklyn

Carol

The Martian

Room

### **WRITING (ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY)**

Spotlight - WINNER

Bridge of Spies

Ex Machina  
Inside Out  
Straight Outta Compton

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2016/02/29/dicaprio-revenant-take-home-oscar-indigenous-people-get-shout-out-full-oscars-list-163571>

## **Utah school district cites 'supportive relationship' with Paiute Tribe after backlash over Native American-themed halftime dance**

By BENJAMIN WOOD | The Salt Lake Tribune

First Published 5 hours ago

A recent halftime performance by the Cedar High School drill team is generating accusations of insensitivity for its depiction of Native American dress and culture.

During a basketball game last Friday at Cedar High — home of the Redmen — the school's drill team wore braided wigs and colorful feathers while dancing to music that included eagle sounds and evoked the traditional singing and drumming of American Indian tribes.

Teyawwna Sanden, a parent of one of the basketball team members, posted a video of the dance on Facebook, saying it was offensive for nonnative students to don wigs and fake feathers for a themed dance.

Her post was shared 235 times as of Tuesday morning, with several other parents criticizing the dance.

"I feel the native/indigenous people are owed a great apology," wrote Carrie Anderson. "Did not one nonnative person think this was wrong before approving this half time show?"

Calls to Cedar High School were directed to Iron County School District Superintendent Shannon Dulaney, who said in a prepared statement that the drill team had approached the Paiute Tribal Council last year seeking support and collaboration for the dance.

She said school administrators and tribal leaders have enjoyed "a long and mutually supportive relationship. It was in this spirit that the leadership of the Cedar High drill

team, Mohey Tawa, first approached the Tribal Counsel [sic] several months ago to seek support and collaboration on a dance to be performed by the drill team.

"Drill team leadership came away from the meeting with the understanding that full support had been given to the dance and the costumes that were intended to portray honor and respect for the Native American culture," Dulaney said.

The controversy comes five months after a similar incident in West Jordan, where cheerleaders from Copper Hills High School dressed as American Indians for a homecoming parade float celebrating the animated Disney film "Pocahontas."

Copper Hills High School Principal Todd Quarnberg apologized for the float and committed to working with American Indian community leaders to educate school staff.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.sltrib.com/news/3601468-155/school-district-cites-supportive-relationship-with>

## How North Dakota Got Stuck Hawking Its Defunct Native American Nickname

March 1, 2016 [Michael Weinreb](#)

It is not often you hear a university president blatantly refer to the National Collegiate Athletic Association as "hypocritical" and "stupid," but the events surrounding the University of North Dakota and its athletic program nickname graduated from the realm of the ordinary many years ago. What's left at this point is a striking legal farce, a Catch-22 so bafflingly weird that even a longtime politician can't help but giggle at the irony. "It is stupid, right?" said Ed Schafer, the interim president at UND and the state's former governor, in a telephone interview with VICE Sports. "At this point, I don't much care what the NCAA says or not."

Here is the background: In 2005, the NCAA placed UND's Fighting Sioux on a list of hostile and abusive nicknames, and threatened sanctions if the school didn't change it. Instead, UND sued to keep its nickname. The two parties reached a settlement in 2007, which outlined a plan for the school to seek approval from the North Dakota Sioux tribes for continued use of the nickname and mark. They didn't get that approval, and so in 2012 [state residents voted to drop the Fighting Sioux nickname](#) that had attended UND's sports programs for a generation.

Now, maybe you agree with this decision, maybe you don't, but the point is, UND thought it was finally moving on from what had been a drawn-out and contentious fight. A new nickname, the Fighting Hawks, has been approved and adopted. A new logo is in the process of being designed. People don't particularly like it yet—at a recent UND

hockey game [the mere mention of "Fighting Hawks"](#) brought on a shower of boos, and chants of "Fighting Sioux Forever"—but that's to be expected, says Schafer, who worked in consumer branding and business before becoming a politician.

It will take years for fans to adapt, and all of this would be fine—if not for the fact that the NCAA settlement has tied the university in knots. That settlement calls for UND to retain sole possession of the rights to the "Fighting Sioux" brand, and in order to prevent other entities from co-opting it, UND has to retain the trademark. And in order to retain the trademark, the school has to *use* that trademark. So [since 2013](#), the university has been selling a limited amount of Sioux merchandise as part of what it called its Dacotah Legacy Collection. The line's latest run—which rolled out last month and included T-shirts, key chains, and hats—was for sale inside a gift shop at the school's hockey arena (UND is a perennial national hockey power).

So Sioux merchandise is openly being sold simply to satisfy the agreement the school made with the NCAA in order to abandon the nickname in the first place.

"UND is in such a horrible position because of this agreement," said Mike McFeely, a columnist for the Fargo-Moorhead *Forum* and local radio host. "There's really nothing else they can do."



*North Dakota's hockey team is now known as the Fighting Hawks. Photo by Winslow Townson-USA TODAY Sports*

The usage laws that guide UND's agreement with the NCAA are so murky and complicated that Schafer says the school probably won't know its limits until someone actually sues them. The intellectual property clause of the settlement states that if UND transitions to a new nickname, "the 'Fighting Sioux' nickname and mark shall remain ... the sole property of UND and shall not be further assigned, released, abandoned, exercised, or otherwise used." The word "abandoned" appears to be key, because it means that UND can't simply let go of the old nickname and logo. Nor can they just manufacture, say, a single Sioux sweatshirt every few months, because they would need to demonstrate in court that they are meeting federal trademark requirements. They can't merely manufacture the merchandise and not sell it, either, because they need to demonstrate that they made a good-faith effort to market the trademark commercially. At least for now, the university has no choice: in order to hold on to the trademark—in order to demonstrate "continuous usage"—they have to sell the very merchandise that the NCAA directed them not to sell.

One possible work-around has been suggested: transfer the trademark to one of the Native American tribes in North Dakota, which is permitted by the terms of the settlement. These tribes had been split over the university's usage of the Fighting Sioux nickname in the first place. One of those tribes, Schafer said, would "dig a hole and bury it." The other would probably manufacture and sell as much merchandise as it could, and then the university would find itself in the unusual position of competing against its old self.

"If you transfer it to a tribe and they exploit it, we would be in a situation where we're trying to transfer loyalty to a new brand and be competitive with the old brand," Schafer said. In other words, the Fighting Hawks would literally be competing against the Fighting Sioux in the marketplace.

I asked Schafer if he'd consulted the NCAA at all about this. (The NCAA didn't respond to [recent requests for comment from the Associated Press](#).) He said he hadn't, and that he had no interest in doing so; he said that the NCAA was the organization "who put the squeeze on" in the first place. I asked him if there were any precedent for a similar case, and he mentioned there were a few in the private sector, but nothing quite like this.



*The Dacotah Legacy Collection features stuff like this. Photo by Brace Hemmelgarn-USA TODAY Sports*

And so the university has to wait it out. It's planning to manufacture another round of Sioux merchandise this summer, in order to (hopefully) satisfy ongoing usage requirements. In the long run, though officials have no real idea what all of this will mean. It was already going to take a generation for fans to get over the name change; the ongoing trademark situation only reopens old wounds, over and over, making moving on that much more difficult.

"There's a group of people who still believe in their heart of hearts that the Fighting Sioux nickname is going to come back," McFeely said. "And the university continues to be dragged down by this group of people who won't give up the ghost. And it continues to this day. There's people who don't want to wrap their mind around this idea that it's over."

For now, at least, the university can't let go, not without potentially making matters worse. The whole mess may be hypocritical, but when it comes to situations involving the NCAA, this is nothing new.

***Correction:** An earlier version of this article paraphrased Schafer describing a campus policy against wearing Fighting Sioux gear in the classroom. Such a policy does not exist, and the piece has been updated to reflect this.*

**Direct Link:** [https://sports.vice.com/en\\_us/article/how-north-dakota-got-stuck-hawking-its-defunct-native-american-nickname](https://sports.vice.com/en_us/article/how-north-dakota-got-stuck-hawking-its-defunct-native-american-nickname)

## 'Native American Student Day' gives high schoolers glimpse into college life

By Ryan Yadao |Monday, February 29th 2016

TOPPENISH, Wash.--Some lower valley high schoolers know more about what college life is like after a special event in Toppenish.

"What's next?" is the question many students ask themselves as they're about to finish high school.

For those thinking about college, Heritage University provided a glimpse into what their future could be through Native American Student Day.

Heritage students say these kids could be the start of a new and growing trend on college campuses.

"I'm first generation college student. Many of these kids we're talking to today will be first generation college students so for many of them, nobody in their families would have done this before them. So I think it's very important in starting a new trend," said Heritage senior Patrick Feller.

The school's Native American Club hosted local native american high schoolers to show them what to expect in higher education.

Tours around campus as well as financial aid workshops and student panels were part of the event.

Jacob Billy came to Heritage after serving as a U.S. Marine.

He says helping the younger generation was always a priority.

"The one place I wanted to succeed and be able to succeed was in higher education was right here in Toppenish and this event today helps us do that. We can highlight information that these students will need," said Billy.

It's a chance to plant seeds in students' heads as Feller said.

Telling his story and connecting with them is an uplifting experience.

"It's very inspiring when I can talk to a young person and they say "thank you, thank you for your time and thank you so much for sharing that with me. You know, I think...it makes me feel good," Feller said.

This was the first event of its kind at Heritage University. Club leaders say they hope to hold more of them in the future.

**Direct Link:** <http://kimatv.com/news/local/native-american-student-day-gives-high-schoolers-glimpse-into-college-life>

## **NY: Agency's lack of controls allowed director to steal from Cayuga Nation kids**



By Charley Hannagan

on March 01, 2016 at 5:16 PM, updated March 01, 2016 at 5:40 PM

Albany, NY—An investigation by the New York State Inspector General found that a lack of control procedures and adequate oversight of a state office that managed trust funds for native American children allowed a state employee to raid the funds.

The investigation found the lack of controls by the State Office of Children and Family Services Native American Services Bureau allowed the then-director to steal nearly \$20,000 from 14 trust funds between 2007 and 2014.

The money was held in trust for children of the Cayuga Nation who do not live with their parents.

The Office of Children and Family Services, through its Buffalo-based Native American Services Bureau, administers trust obligations and a variety of programs for Native Americans in New York State.

The former director of Native American Services, Kim Thomas-Muffoletto, 57, of Getzville, last year pleaded guilty to felony grand larceny for stealing from the trust funds and was ordered to pay full restitution.

She was the only person with authority to deposit or withdraw money from the trust fund accounts.

The administration of the accounts has since been transferred to the Cayuga Nation.

The inspector general found that under the state office there were no internal controls, no audits, and no supervision of Thomas-Muffoletto's management of the money.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.syracuse.com/crime/index.ssf/2016/03/ny\\_finds\\_lack\\_of\\_control\\_led\\_state\\_employee\\_steal\\_from\\_native\\_american\\_children.html](http://www.syracuse.com/crime/index.ssf/2016/03/ny_finds_lack_of_control_led_state_employee_steal_from_native_american_children.html)

## **Senate blocks effort to rename Columbus Day after Indigenous Peoples**

By ROBERT GEHRKE | The Salt Lake Tribune

First Published Mar 01 2016 09:45PM • Updated 7 hours ago

More than 500 years later, Christopher Columbus still defeated the indigenous Americans ----- at least in the Utah Legislature.

The Senate on Tuesday voted 15-10 to kill a proposal to rename Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples Day, making it a state holiday to honor the original Americans.

"It is meant as no disrespect to any holiday or any person, but our history did not start with Pioneer Days and the celebration we have then," said Sen. Jim Dabakis, D-Salt Lake City, the sponsor of SB170. "Before Father Escalante got here, before the LDS pioneers arrived, there weren't just people, there was a thriving, incredible, amazing civilization that was here and we do not pay tribute to that situation."

But senators objected to changing the holiday, calling it a "slap in the face" to Italian-Americans. Sen. Allen Christensen, R-North Ogden, called Columbus a "great American hero."

Sen. Luz Escamilla, D-Salt Lake City, said other states have abandoned Columbus Day to recognize the "genocide" the explorer brought to the native people.

"You may choose to not recognize that and that's up to each individual. But [this says] the state of Utah recognizes the tribes that are here, that we eliminated a lot of them through the process of 'La Conguista,'" Escamilla said. "We need to acknowledge that historical piece. The state may say we're not ready. It won't be the first time. ... We tend to have this history of taking 20 years later to do what's right."

Sen. Todd Weiler, R-Woods Cross, countered that it is "inconceivable" that Columbus could have killed millions and said most died because of diseases like smallpox and others.

"The native population gave the early explorers syphilis, which they brought back to Europe. Blaming Columbus for the extermination of the native population is as fair as blaming the native population for people who die using tobacco and cocaine, which the natives introduced to the Europeans," Weiler said. "I'm not going to sit here and listen to history being rewritten. We have a great history in this country and can honor Columbus and our indigenous people without disparaging either side."

Sen. Howard Stephenson, R-Draper, proposed calling the holiday "Columbus-Indigenous Peoples Day," but his amendment failed and the Senate went on to defeat Dabakis' bill.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.sltrib.com/home/3603922-155/senate-blocks-effort-to-rename-columbus>