



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2022

<u>PAGE NO.</u>	<u>REPORT</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
2	Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services – Northwest BC Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA) Meeting – April 22-23, 2022 – Terrace, B.C.	Recommendation

CORRESPONDENCE

3-6	Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation – Follow-up Letter Re: Regional District’s Commitments to Build Relationships and Collaborate with Local First Nations (RDBN Letter included)	Receive
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NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT



Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Board of Directors Supplementary

To: Chair and Board
From: Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Date: March 31, 2022
Subject: Northwest BC Resource Benefits Alliance (RBA) Meeting – April 22-23, 2022 – Terrace, B.C.

RECOMMENDATION: (all/directors/majority)

That the Board authorize the attendance of rural and municipal Directors to the Northwest BC Resource Benefits Alliance meeting on April 22-23, 2022 in Terrace, B.C. including expenses for hotels, travel and meals.

BACKGROUND

There is \$67,667 allocated to the Northwest BC Resource Benefits Alliance under General Government in the 2022 budget. Meeting remuneration will not be paid for this meeting which aligns with the other members of the RBA.

ATTACHMENTS

None



Ref. 54565

March 25, 2022

Gerry Thiessen
Chair
Regional District of Bulkely-Nechako
37 3rd Avenue
Burns Lake BC V0J 1E0
Via Email: gerry.thiessen@rdbn.bc.ca

Dear Gerry Thiessen:

Thank you for your letter of January 6, 2022, regarding our December meeting and the regional district's commitments to build relationships and collaborate with local First Nations to foster healthy ecosystems and economies.

I am pleased to hear about your considerations and planned work with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs with respect to Indigenous participation in regional district boards. As you know, on January 7, 2022 the Honourable Justice Kent released his reasons for decision (BC Supreme Court) relating to the litigation initiated by Saik'uz and Stelat'en First Nations in 2011. The Court issued two declarations: (i) the first declaration recognized that Saik'uz and Stelat'en have an Aboriginal right to fish the Nechako watershed for food, social and ceremonial purposes; and (ii) the second declaration that "As an incident of the honour of the Crown, both the provincial and federal governments have an obligation to protect that Aboriginal right."

We have been reviewing the reasons for decision and in the coming weeks will be exploring with the Saik'uz, Stelat'en and Nadleh Whut'en First Nations how best to address these matters. We will continue to raise in those discussions the topic of how to effectively engage with local and regional governments and others potentially affected by any future agreements during negotiations and implementation.

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**Ministry of
Indigenous Relations
and Reconciliation**

Office of the
Minister

Mailing Address:
Box 9151 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2
email: IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca
website: www.gov.bc.ca/irr

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We are very supportive of regularly scheduled meetings to keep each other apprised of developments pertaining to Pathway Forward. We will continue to engage with Carrier Sekani First Nations leaders to better understand shared opportunities to support local and regional government engagement.

For agreements within Skeena region, I am pleased the Skeena Round table is being initiated this spring. I appreciate Regional District Bulkley-Nechako's support to help design a forum that supports effective and ongoing communication between our governments.

Sincerely,

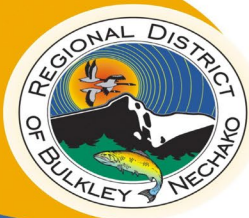
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Murray Rankin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Murray" and the last name "Rankin" clearly distinguishable.

Murray Rankin, QC
Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

CC: Taddea Kunkel, First Nation Liaison
Regional District of Bulkely-Nechako

Curtis Helgesen, Chief Administrative Officer
Regional District of Bulkely-Nechako

Cheryl Anderson, Director of Corporate Services
Regional District of Bulkely-Nechako



37, 3RD AVE, PO Box 820
BURNS LAKE, BC
VOJ 1E0

REGIONAL DISTRICT
OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO
"A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN OUR REGION"

January 6, 2022

The Honourable Murray Rankin
Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
PO Box 9051 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 9E2
IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca

Dear Minister Rankin,

On behalf of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN), I would like to thank you and your staff for taking the time to meet with us on December 15, 2021. It is great to hear your commitment to including local governments at the negotiation and agreement tables and that our inclusion in these discussions should not be an afterthought.

As you noted, across our region, we have many agreements and negotiations between the Province and First Nation governments occurring that would see these Nations moving ahead with self-determination in a variety of different forms. Our Regional District is committed to working alongside and in collaboration with local First Nations and building those relationships to foster healthy ecosystems and economies. Our commitment to these relationships is evident in our recently signed MOU with the Nechako First Nations and the continued work of our First Nations Liaison.

Our discussion of the Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) covered talks with the Province, Rio Tinto, and the Nechako First Nations, and your commitment to broach the idea of our inclusion within these talks is highly positive. We are optimistic that through our inclusion, our region could meaningfully advance environmental stewardship that would balance Indigenous and non-Indigenous social, recreational, and economic values that would benefit all living and working within the region. As local government elections will be occurring in the fall of 2022, any advancement we can make on our inclusion on the NDA prior to the elections would allow us to not only gain momentum but ensure that efforts would not be halted or hindered by it.

MUNICIPALITIES:

SMITHERS FORT ST. JAMES
VANDERHOOF FRASER LAKE
HOUSTON TELKWA
BURNS LAKE GRANISLE

ELECTORAL AREAS:

A - SMITHERS RURAL E - OOTSA LAKE/FRANCOIS LAKE
B - BURNS LAKE RURAL F - VANDERHOOF RURAL
C - FORT ST. JAMES RURAL G - HOUSTON RURAL
D - FRASER LAKE RURAL

INQUIRIES@RDBN.BC.CA
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Following our meeting, our Board will be putting some thought into the DRIPA draft Action Plan's item:

"1.13 Support inclusive regional governance by advancing Indigenous participation in regional district boards. (*Ministry of Municipal Affairs*)"

We welcome the opportunity to engage directly with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and local First Nations on the visioning of this Action Item and how we meaningfully include First Nation governments into our existing Board structure. As we continue to reach out and engage with our local First Nations on relationship building, we will begin to include this within our discussions, thus starting that dialogue.

As these government-to-government discussions are important to ensuring that our collective action is moving positively in the direction of greater reconciliation across the region and province, we would welcome the opportunity to have regularly scheduled meetings with your staff to keep each other apprised of developments pertaining to the Pathways Forward 2.0 and other agreements within our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gerry Thiessen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gerry Thiessen
Chair