

How Can We Communicate Better?


The Ktunaxa Nation and Regional Districts

By nasukin (Chief) Jason Louie and Ktunaxa Nation Council CAO Dale LeClair

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Ktunaxa Communities




yaqaan nukiy (Lower Kootenay Band) - located south of Creston in RDCK Area B

Nasukin - Jason Louie
Councilors - Destyni Basil, Jared Basil, Sandra Luke, Mary Basil

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Ktunaxa Communities




Akisqnuq First Nation - located south of Windermere in RDEK Area F

Nasukin - Lorne Shovar
Councilors - Lucille Shovar, Alan Nicholas, Donald Sam, Rosemary Phillips

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Ktunaxa Communities




ʔaq'am (St Mary's Band) - located northeast of Cranbrook in RDEK Area C

Nasukin - Jim Whitehead
Councilors - Codie Andrew, Corrie Walkley, Marty Williams, Vickie Thomas

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Ktunaxa Communities



ʔakinkumʔasnuqʔit (Tobacco Plains Indian Band) located north of Roosville Border Crossing in RDEK Area B

Nasukin - Mary Mahseelah
Councilors - Dan Gravelle, Bob Luke, Jason Gravelle, Corey Letcher

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Ktunaxa Communities



Kootenai Tribe of Idaho located in Bonners Ferry, Idaho



The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes located in Northern Montana

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Ktunaxa Nation Council



Ktunaxa Nation Council Chair - Kathryn Teneese
Ktunaxa Nation Council Chief Administrative Officer - Dale LeClair


The Ktunaxa Nation Council operates out of the Ktunaxa Nation Government Building in Cranbrook.

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TRADITIONAL TERRITORY OF THE KTUNAXA NATION

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Communication across our respective governments has improved over the last 15 years, but there is still much room for improvement.


What has been done in the past?

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On September 21, 2005, KKTC and RDEK held a Community to Community Forum.

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The main objective of the Forum was to firmly establish a working relationship and to continue communication between First Nations and local governments in the East Kootenay region.

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50 representatives from Band Councils, Regional District Boards and Municipal Councils attended the session held at Fort Steele.

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Topics discussed included:


- Ktunaxa Nation Land Use Plan and Accommodation & Consultation Policy Framework
- Canadian Rockies International Airport Upgrade Project
- Broadband Project Update

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Participants at the forum were also able to review and provide feedback on a Communications Memorandum of Understanding between the Ktunaxa Nation and local governments.

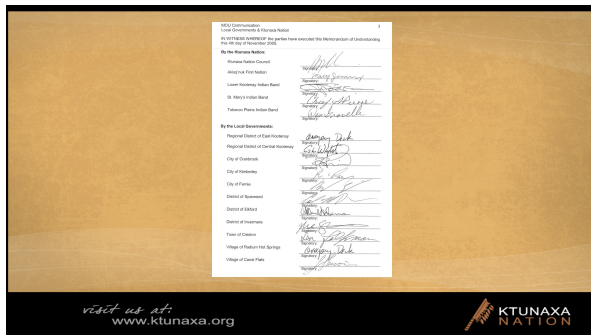
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The Communications MoU was signed a few weeks later at the RDEK offices in Cranbrook

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This session featured ‘what-if’ scenarios dealing with jurisdictions and title that participants were asked to consider and provide feedback and possible solutions.


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Scenario 1 - Class 'A' Park

The Province wants to create a new class 'A' park to protect high value animal and plant species on Crown land that is (a) used by the local First Nation Members for gathering medicinal plants and cultural species and for occasional hunting, (b) used by locals generally for hunting and four-wheeling, (c) highly desired by a nearby forestry company who employs numerous local residents, both First Nations and non-FN and who says this land is critical to them financially and (d) that the local regional district supports as a provincial park because it would be a good tourism draw.


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Questions

1. In this scenario who would be the appropriate staff who would deal with this?
(Is it a First Nation community, or is it Nation level, or both, or is it RDEK, or is it a municipality, or political leadership from many areas)
2. What issues may arise from this new designation?
3. If there was a difference in opinion on how this project were to proceed, how could it be resolved? Who would have to be part of those discussions?
4. What if it couldn't be resolved, what would happen then?

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The last C2C forum on a regional between the RDEK and KNC was held in 2012. The agenda was very similar to the 2009 session.

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The Ktunaxa Nation has recently held C2C Forums with the Town of Elkford in 2013 and the Village of Canal Flats in 2012.

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How have yaqan nukiy and the neighbouring communities and organizations worked together?

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In 2010, yaqan nuiky and the Town of Creston signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Friendship

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The MoU contains a number of principals based on mutual respect, recognition and reciprocal consideration of common interests.

Both Councils agreed to meet twice a year and made committee appointments for liaison and coordination purposes.

Both Councils also agreed to exchange Council member appointment lists annually.

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On September 22, 2011, Chief Louie was invited to speak at the Regional District of Central Kootenay meeting by board chair John Kettle.

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"I've been chief for seven months, but it feels like seven years," he said. "It has been a long road and there is much to be done. We have worked to establish partnerships with other groups - the RDCK, the Town of Creston, the RCMP - and achieved positive results."

"It was an important day for the regional district and the Lower Kootenay Band," Creston Mayor Ron Toyota said on Monday. "Our council has worked to establish a positive working relationship with the Lower Kootenay community because we all share the Creston Valley as our home. Chief Louie's appearance at the RDCK meeting was another step in developing strong relationships throughout the Kootenays."

Creston Valley Advance - September 30, 2011


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On December 1st, 2014, the Town of Creston and the Lower Kootenay Band held a joint inaugural Council Meeting.

The Memorandum of Understanding and Friendship was reviewed.

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THE BIG QUESTION

How can the Ktunaxa Nation Council, Ktunaxa communities, municipalities and regional districts facilitate more effective and better communications?
What has worked in the past? What has not?

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Questions? Thoughts?

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