



# Sayt-K'ìlim-Goot

one heart, one path, one nation



Nisga'a Lisims Government

February 2012

## Election Act

*Nisga'a Elections Amendment Act, 2011 In Force Regulation (No. 2)*

Nisga'a Lisims Government would like to let all Nisga'a citizens know that the final step in introducing the changes requested by the electorate to the Nisga'a elections process has now been achieved.

In July of 2011, Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a enacted legislation that amended many sections of the *Nisga'a Elections Act* as well as certain sections of the *Nisga'a Government Act*, the *Members' Code of Conduct*, and the *Nisga'a Personnel Administration Act*.

All of the provisions of the amending legislation came into effect in fall of 2011, with the exception of section 35 of the *Nisga'a Elections Amendment Act, No. 1*.

In the February 2012 meeting of the Executive, a regulation was passed to bring section 35 into force as of the date of the next general election on November 7, 2012.

Section 35 of the *Nisga'a Elections Amendment Act, No. 1* amends the *Members' Code of Conduct* by restricting a Nisga'a representative from holding specified offices and positions, including an employment position with the Nisga'a Nation, a Nisga'a Village, a Nisga'a Urban Local, School District No. 92, the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority, or Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Society (WWNI).

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## Q of L — Quality of Life

**Our journey as a Nation and our lengthy road to become the first modern-day Treaty Nation in Canada was always with one main goal in mind — to improve the quality of life for all Nisga'a people.**

With that in mind, Nisga'a Lisims Government has been focused on developing governance practices and public policy initiatives that measurably will improve the quality of life for all Nisga'a citizens.

In September of 2011, NLG held a Quality of Life (Q of L) strategy session which was followed up in January 2011 with a meeting among senior staff. The purpose of this was to establish a framework that will enable NLG to develop a plan that will result in measurable improvements in the Quality of Life for Nisga'a citizens.

In order to give this real meaning and honour the path of our Elders and Ancestors, we intend to vigorously pursue this initiative.

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**Election Act...** continued from cover

The same amendment restricts Nisga'a representatives from acting as an officer, trustee or director of School District No. 92, the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority or WWNI.

Finally, section 35 bars a Nisga'a representative from holding the position of a public officer whose position is prescribed under section 10(b) of the *Nisga'a Personnel Administration Act*.

For further information on these and other changes to Nisga'a elections legislation, visit [www.nnkn.ca](http://www.nnkn.ca) or contact the Nisga'a Elections Office at (250) 633 2715.

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**Quality of Life...** continued from cover

Initial steps identified to achieve this goal are:

1. Prepare for and convene a Quality of Life Summit
2. Develop a Quality of Life Strategy
3. Validate that "Q of L" strategy with youth, leadership and citizens
4. Implement the Nisga'a Quality of Life approach in conjunction with planning for fiscal year 2013/2014

**MORE BACKGROUND**

In strategy and discussion sessions, NLG needed to best identify what should be included in a Quality of Life Strategy and to look at one aspect to begin with and continue to build on it. We believe it should be a strategy that supports the Nisga'a Nation and Village and Urban locals in:

**Developing a Life Long Quality of Life Policy** (through which) Nisga'a Nation public policy is coordinated and consistent with the Ayuuk, Treaty, Jurisdiction, Constitution and applicable laws...and improves the quality of life of all Nisga'a citizens.

**Aligning Governance, Administrations and Programs and Services with a Quality of Life Approach** (while ensuring that) Government, administration, resources and priorities are aligned with Nisga'a Ayuuk, culture and family values.

**Documenting/Measuring/Proving Changes in Quality of Life** (to support) Nisga'a Nation (ability) to regularly report on improvements/changes in the quality of life of its citizens at the Nation, Village, Urban, family and individual level.

**Engaging Others Through a Quality of Life Summit** (to increase) understanding, support participation, and (generate) a sense of ownership throughout the Nisga'a Nation in the development and implementation of a lifelong Quality of Life Strategy.

# Moose Numbers

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We Nisga'a have always been the best stewards of our own land. From time immemorial, we have managed our resources in such a manner that we only "took what we need". We have been careful with our fish and wildlife stocks, so that future Nisga'a generations will always have access to species that have been traditionally harvested by us as a food source.

In fact, we have always been leaders in wildlife conservation – the world wide recognition of the quality and level of Nisga'a Fisheries management of the Nass River and its salmon stocks is evidence of this. As part of our Ayuuk, we learn that when numbers are down for a certain species, we hunt something else in order for the threatened group to regain strength in numbers.

At the present time, we are concerned about our Moose population in the Nass Wilderness Area (NWA), numbers are way down. This fiscal year we had a lottery for 40 or 50 moose, however, we are contemplating the hard fact that in order to protect the moose population, we may have to suspend the hunt in order for the population to recover.

We are looking into this and doing everything else possible to bring the count back up.

**“All government agencies are working together on this and we value the continued support of our Nation members”**

Harry Nyce Sr. Nisga'a Lisims Government,  
Director of Fisheries & Wildlife.

Some of the causes for decline of the moose population have been identified:

- Predation by wolves and bear
- Hunting (regulated, unregulated, illegal)
- Deep snowpack in recent years
- Habitat supply over time



## **Moose Population Recovery Plan**

Our target goal is to get the moose population back in the NWA up to 1,000. We are putting renewed efforts into moose harvest management by focussing on:

- Harvest reduction or closure(s)
- Enforcement of Nisga'a and provincial laws
- Predator management
- Habitat management
- Education outreach

Our grizzly bear population, and our mountain goat population in the Nass Wilderness Area (NWA) is believed to be healthy and we will endeavor to make sure our moose population recovers to the same healthy levels.

# Being Nisga'a — Positive Direction from Council of Elders Review Gathering

On Nov 29th, the Council of Elders convened a meeting to review the minutes of the Nisga'a Elders — Youth Gathering: Bridging The Generations and to come to a consensus as to how to best follow up on issues and concerns that arose from the October 4 – 6 gathering.

Reviewing the minutes, the Council of Elders returned to the question “What is the best way to handle the issues and concerns?” The Elders are recommending that a host of workshops be held within the Nass Valley.

These workshops will be used as a way of interacting with the youth and responding to the many questions they have about our Ayuuk, language, and culture.

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**The workshops will give the youth valuable one-on-one time with the Elders in which they can express themselves and define their ideas and understanding of the Ayuuk, language, and culture as they see it.**

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As well, the workshops will give the Elders time to give full explanation and demonstrate to the youth as to how and why things are being done in such a way. The youth will begin to understand that when dealing with culture it can lead to one thing or another — it will demonstrate how important it is to continue to use the language and practice our culture so that it will not become extinct. The Elders will listen and pass on knowledge they have learned through years of life experience, and from the wisdom they have passed down from their Ancestors.

This direct relationship between the Elders and our youth is critically important — it is imperative that our youth continue to follow the Ayuuk, learn our language, and embrace our culture.

**This is the only way we will continue to survive as Nisga'a people.**

## ★ Don't forget

WWNI has made the Nisga'a Language App available on iTunes. This is a great way for our youth to connect with our language that has been preserved by our Elders.

The free app is available for use on the iPod Touch, iPhone and iPad .

Link to the app: <http://itunes.apple.com/app/nisgaa/id490034233?mt=8>



# Safeguarding Our Own

For years, Nisga'a Child & Family Services (CFS) has operated under delegation authority. Now, we are essentially moving from our previous level of authority, relating to guardianship, to the next level of authority, child protection.

This means that Nisga'a Child & Family Services have the authority to remove children when they are at risk, as opposed to the Province doing this.

There are many advantages. FIRST, we know the families and understand their circumstances better than Provincial Child Family Service agencies in Terrace. SECOND, we are closer — rather than waiting for MCFD from Terrace to come all the way to the valley, Nisga'a Child & Family Services will

be able to act sooner as we are local — much safer. THIRD, because of our location we will be able to assist in preventative aspects and should apprehension occur, we will be able to ensure that Nisga'a children are placed with local foster care in the valley.

The administration has been working on this for some time. We have undertaken an initial round of consultations with the communities informing them of this change.

We are developing a comprehensive plan with regards to this and we expect to implement it within the next fiscal year.

## Nisga'a Museum / Interesting artefacts from nnkn.ca

In the book *From Time Before Memory* (School District 92, 1996, pp. 176–177), the role of the Sigits'oon or Halayt helper is explained. One of his functions was to create special mechanical masks and props that were used by the Halayt to amaze people with his power.

The Nisga'a Museum has a number of objects created by these powerful artists. There are many others in museums throughout the world. Masks and dance props are often discussed in publications on northwest coast art but there is little information on Nisga'a puppets. It is an old art form — in 1792 Captain Jacinto Caamaño's visited the

north coast and witnessed a puppet performance in a Tsimshian community (not identified). Without doubt, puppet performances were already a well established art form in the eighteenth century.



< NM102 is a puppet in the form of a human figure wearing a wolf robe. Beneath the robe, the

puppet consists of a solid wood block with two moveable arms attached. The hands are painted red and strings from the wrist enable the puppet master to manipulate its movement. The head is without hair but it looks as though hair was originally painted on. The face is expertly wrought with large eyes and a wide mouth; the lips, nostrils and ears are painted red. The head can swivel back and forth. The collector did not record information on how it was used in a performance.



< NM5 is a marmot puppet that was meant to be pulled along the floor. The wooden spool at the bottom served to enable it to

roll along the floor. The puppet has a carved head and face with marmot fur body that has no form to it. This puppet was acquired from Lucy Sharp at Laxgalts'ap in 1912. The collector's notes indicate it was "used by Raven family" but did not record how it was used.

# Highlights from NLG Executive Meeting February 22–23, 2012

*Following is a summary (excerpted) from the detailed legislation*

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## February 22, 2012

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive has appointed Richard Leeson and Les Clayton as representatives of the Nisga'a Nation to the Tribal Resources Investment Corporation (TRICORP) Board of Directors for a three-year term commencing April 1, 2012 and expiring on March 31, 2015.

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## February 22, 2012

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive has re-appointed Edward McMillan to the board of the Nisga'a Administrative Decisions Review Board (NADR) for a term of three years. Mr. McMillan's term had expired, and he agreed to stand for re-appointment.

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## February 22, 2012

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive adopted the financial statement for the period ending January 31, 2011 as presented by the Chief Financial Officer.

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## February 22, 2012

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive received the minutes of the Nisga'a Finance Committee held on February 20, 2012.

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## February 23, 2012

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive supported the November 29, 2011 recommendation by the Council of Elders, flowing from the Elders and Youth Gathering held on October 3 and 4, 2011, to hold workshops to teach those youth who are willing to participate about Nisga'a language, culture and Ayuuk, and that the Council of Elders seek funds from the Nisga'a Lisims Government to hold such workshops.

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**February 23, 2012**

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive has authorized the Director of Programs and Services to undertake the development of a Labour Market Plan (now described as the Nisga'a Sustainable Employment Plan (NSEP));

NSEP used a comprehensive engagement opportunity for Nisga'a and stakeholders to have input to create the NSEP by town hall meetings, participating in 800 surveys and attending focus groups amongst the four villages, TSN and Gitmaxmak'ay Nisga'a PR/PE Society.

NSEP has determined four key strategies that support a Nisga'a Sustainable Employment Plan including community and culture, communication and coordination, programs and services, career and fulfillment.

The development of NSEP also allows NLG to qualify for additional resources from the BC Ministry of Housing and Social Development to implement the training components of NSEP.

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**February 23, 2012**

The Lisims Emergency Planning Committee met on January 31, 2012 for a final review of the draft Lisims Emergency Plan and the Committee approved and adopted the Plan in its current form.

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive agreed to:

1. approve and adopt the Plan
2. authorize the Emergency Preparedness Coordinator to take the necessary steps to enhance the preparedness of Nisga'a Lisims Government to implement the Plan, subject to the availability of funding.

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**February 23, 2012**

Nisga'a Lisims Government Executive enacted, under the *Nisga'a Elections Act*, the *Nisga'a Elections Amendment Act, 2011 in Force Regulation (No. 2)*.

Section 35 of the *Amendment Act* will come into force on November 7, 2012, on the day of the Nisga'a Nation regular election.

# Update on Focus Group Sessions

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Further to our correspondence of August 11th, 2011, Nisga'a Lisims Government is contacting you at this time to inform you of focus group sessions that will be undertaken in the four Nisga'a Villages (and in Terrace and Prince Rupert/Port Edward), likely during the week of March 12th, 2012, as follow up to the surveys undertaken during the fall of 2011. The survey and the planned focus group sessions are part of the environmental assessment process of the Kitsault Mine Project.

Seabridge Gold Inc. is in the process of undergoing an environmental assessment of its proposed project. Nisga'a Lisims Government has provided guidance to the BC Environmental Assessment Office (BCEAO) and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) with respect to conducting the environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Nisga'a Treaty.

Seabridge and their environmental consultants Rescan are now in process of organising these focus groups. the purpose of the focus groups is to collect information for the environmental assessment of the proposed mining project and, in particular, to address the environmental, social, economic and cultural effects assessment that is being carried out for that project. This assessment is an important requirement of the Nisga'a Treaty.

NLG requests your cooperation and encourages Nisga'a citizens that are contacted by Seabridge and Rescan to participate in the focus groups. Rescan is

proposing to conduct four focus groups, Youth, Elders, Men and Women, in each of the four Nisga'a Villages (and in Terrace and Prince Rupert/Port Edward), for a total of 16(24) focus groups. Ideally, each focus group would have between 8–12 participants.

NLG has not taken a position in respect of this project. However, the information generated by this initiative may help us to better understand how the project may affect our citizens and our communities and may also help us to understand whether this project may generate employment and business opportunities for Nisga'a citizens, entrepreneurs and businesses.



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