

# Hlaa K'akhl Wilphl Nisga'a /

This  
Nisga'a  
House  
is Open



The Nisga'a Final Agreement is British Columbia's first modern treaty. A landmark in the relationship between Canada and its First Nations peoples, the Treaty came into effect on May 11, 2000. The governments of Canada, British Columbia, and the Nisga'a Nation are partners in the Nisga'a Final Agreement (the Treaty), which sets out Nisga'a Lands and the Nisga'a people's right of self-government. Because three governments share responsibility for the Treaty, an implementation committee was formed to provide a forum for the partners to discuss its implementation.

This report summarizes the progress made in the sixteenth year of the Treaty, from April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016.





**THIS IS OUR GIFT...**

*...to each other, our fellow Canadians,  
and the world.*

////////// In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries,  
many Nisga'a treasures were taken from the Nass  
Valley and held in private collections and museums  
around the world.

For the Nisga'a people, these exquisite  
blankets and robes, headdresses, bentwood  
boxes, feast bowls and serving spoons  
represent more than tangible links to their  
past – they are imbued with the spirit of  
their ancestors. During the struggle for their  
treaty, Nisga'a elders and leaders fought to  
ensure this scattered legacy would find its  
way back home. ///





/// **The return of Nisga'a artifacts** is a result of the landmark Nisga'a Final Agreement. It fulfills the obligation of Chapter 17, which states: "The Parties (to this treaty) recognize the integral role of Nisga'a artifacts in the continuation of Nisga'a culture, values, and traditions." It recognizes that the Nisga'a have a "traditional and sacred connection" with these artifacts. Now, housed in a permanent place of honour, this treasury of Nisga'a culture ranks among the world's finest collections of Northwest Coast Aboriginal art.







**Hli Ɔoothl Wilp-AdoƆshl Nisga'a**, the Nisga'a Museum, opened in LaxƆalts'ap in the spring of 2011. On display for the first time, this gathering of over 300 Nisga'a artifacts represents a significant achievement of the Treaty. Five years on, the exhibit has drawn both national and international recognition as the exhibition continues to grow. Each year, visitors from around the world are moved by the power and spirit encountered here. ///



## **Our Land**

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K'ali-Aksim Lisims (the Nass River) flows through a land of sacred mountains and dense forests on Canada's Pacific Coast. The Nisga'a people have lived in the Nass River Valley since before recorded time. Today, the Nisga'a Nation includes more than 7,212 people residing in the Nisga'a Villages of Gingolx, Laxgalts'ap, Gitwinksihlkw, Gitlaxt'aamiks (formerly New Aiyansh) and beyond the Nass Valley in Terrace, Prince Rupert/Port Edward, Greater Vancouver, and across North America.

## **Our Treaty**

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May 11, 2000, marked the end of a 113-year journey – and the first steps in a new direction. On that date, the Effective Date of the Nisga'a Final Agreement, the *Indian Act* ceased to apply to Nisga'a people (except for the purpose of determining whether an individual is an "Indian"). The Nisga'a Final Agreement is the first treaty in British Columbia to provide constitutional certainty in respect of an Aboriginal people's Section 35 right to self-government. The Treaty recognizes Nisga'a Lands (2,000 square kilometres) and opens the door for joint economic initiatives in the development of the Nisga'a Nation's natural resources. An example of hope, trust, and cooperation, the Nisga'a Final Agreement is being studied by governments and Aboriginal peoples the world over.

## **Our Government**

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Proud British Columbians and Canadians, Nisga'a citizens are responsible for building and maintaining their own institutions. The Nisga'a Nation is represented by Nisga'a Lisims Government (NLG) – a modern, forward thinking administration based on traditional culture and values. Nisga'a Government has the authority to pass laws on a broad range of matters. At the same time, Nisga'a lawmaking authority is concurrent with federal and provincial authority. Designed to assure democracy, transparency, and accountability, Nisga'a Government is comprised of NLG, the four Nisga'a Village Governments, and three Nisga'a Urban Locals.

## **Our Vision**

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"Sayt-K'ilim-Goot: one heart, one path, one nation." NLG is committed to ensuring its programs, services, and day-to-day operations reflect this vision. In the spirit of Sayt-K'ilim-Goot, the Nisga'a Nation is a place where:

- + our Ayuuk, language, and culture are the foundation of our identity;
- + learning is a way of life;
- + we strive for sustainable prosperity and self-reliance;
- + we inspire trust and understanding through effective communication; and
- + our governance and services evolve to meet our people's needs.



# Nisga'a Culture & Heritage

*Nilhl gan aluut'aahl naa nuurh wil dip hooxhl Ayuukhl Nisga'a ganhl lip algaḡam ganhl lip wilaa loom / Our Ayuuk, language, and culture are the foundation of our identity*

Nisga'a Lisims Government is committed to protecting and promoting Nisga'a culture in all aspects of society. Ayuukhl Nisga'a – the ancient laws and customs of the Nisga'a people – informs, guides, and inspires Nisga'a culture. The Nisga'a Constitution provides that Simgigat (chiefs), Sigidim haanaḡ (matriarchs), and respected Nisga'a elders advise Nisga'a Government on matters relating to the traditional values of the Nisga'a Nation through the Council of Elders, and that Nisga'a Government must respect and encourage the use of the Nisga'a language and the practice of Nisga'a culture.

## **Ayuukhl Nisga'a Department**

The Ayuukhl Nisga'a Department (AND) protects, preserves, and promotes Nisga'a language, culture, and history. This is achieved through:

- + developing and maintaining a catalogue system for Nisga'a archives;
- + digitizing audio interviews with elders and past leaders;
- + resource and administrative support for the Council of Elders and various government committees;
- + collaborating and supporting various language and culture initiatives by various NLG stakeholders;
- + research and production of resource materials on key aspects of Nisga'a culture;
- + supporting other NLG language and culture initiatives.

During the reporting period, NLG's Access to Information Policy began providing for the protection and preservation of the Land Ownership and Occupancy Study. The Access to Information Policy identifies the application process for access and support in interpretation, research assistance, and analysis of research requests of Nisga'a cultural practices and protocols. Language translation is provided through interpretation and vetting for authentication and authorization. All applications can be requested through the Ayuukhl Nisga'a Administrative Assistant, or [www.nisgaanation.ca](http://www.nisgaanation.ca).

In addition, AND provided:

- + interpretation services for the October 2015 federal election to Elections Canada for Nisga'a elections information and posters;
- + support to BC Parks Interpretive Centre, Auto Tour, brochures, children's art projects, anthropological and environmental researchers, as well as acknowledging Nisga'a identification and use of traditional sites;
- + support for Bachelors and Masters students with their research.

## **Nisga'a Language & Culture Authority**

During the reporting period, NLG established an Interim Nisga'a Language and Culture Authority. Both Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute and School District #92 (Nisga'a) were asked to consider for appointment one of their respective board members to sit on the Interim Nisga'a Language and Culture Authority.



**Anhluut’ukwsim Laxmihl  
Angwinga’asa’anskwil Nisga’a /  
Nisga’a Memorial Lava Bed Park**

Nisga’a Memorial Lava Bed Park – the first provincial park managed jointly by a First Nation and British Columbia – offers spectacular natural features and a dramatic introduction to Nisga’a culture. The Nisga’a alkali basalt flow is one of the youngest and most accessible volcanic features in the province. With a 16-site vehicle campground, picnic areas, visitor information centre, boat launches, and short hikes, the park offers visitors a wide variety of activities and a chance to learn more about Nisga’a culture and the natural history of the region. British Columbia funds an annual agreement for park services and maintenance (\$61,178).

**Nisga’a Museum**

Hli Goothl Wilp-Adokshl Nisga’a, the Nisga’a Museum, is the permanent home of the Ancestors’ Collection – over 300 Nisga’a artifacts that have been repatriated through the Nisga’a Final Agreement. Hli Goothl Wilp-Adokshl Nisga’a means “The Heart of Nisga’a House Crests,” a name that celebrates the importance of Nisga’a tribes and tribal crests in Nisga’a society. With a design inspired by traditional Nisga’a longhouses, feast dishes, and canoes, the 929 square metre facility contains exquisitely carved masks, bentwood boxes, headdresses, and soul catchers acquired from the Nass Valley during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A permanent home for the preservation and celebration of all that is Nisga’a, the Nisga’a Museum is becoming a centre of research, learning, and cultural tourism in northwest British Columbia.

During the reporting period, Museum staff continued to work on two new temporary exhibitions: *Voices of the Nisga’a Treaty* and *Harvesting Nisga’a: The Survival and Rich Cultural Identity of Nisga’a Fishing*, which will open in 2017. *Voices of the Nisga’a Treaty*, an interactive media experience, focuses on the story of the Nisga’a Final Agreement and interviews of Nisga’a citizens. These interviews feature emotional moments associated with the formation of the Treaty and the legacy of the Nisga’a Nation. *Harvesting Nisga’a* is a look at the traditional harvesting of eulachon, salmon, and other seafood and how harvesting these resources has shaped Nisga’a culture and endures today.

Nisga’a Museum staff continued researching the history of each item in the Ancestors’ Collection and continually enhancing the permanent collection. Through exhibit information panels, an audio guide, museum books, audio/visual presentation, and searchable database, these rich and interwoven tales take visitors deep into traditional Nisga’a life and culture.

*“The traditional roles of Simgigat and Sigidim haanaḵ, and respected Nisga’a elders, as recognized and honoured in Nisga’a culture from time immemorial, will be respected; Nisga’a elders, Simgigat and Sigidim haanaḵ will continue to provide guidance and interpretation of the Ayuuk to Nisga’a Government.”*  
– Declaration of the Nisga’a Nation







# Nisga'a Education

*Ts'im ganwilaak'ils wil luusisghl gandidils / Learning is a way of life*

The Nisga'a Nation is committed to improving its education system, helping adult learners gain more training, and encouraging all Nisga'a to engage in lifelong learning to help build the economy and strengthen Nisga'a society.

## Primary & Secondary Education

On Nisga'a Lands, primary and secondary students are served by School District #92 (Nisga'a), part of British Columbia's publicly funded school system. The school board consists of four Nisga'a members (representing each Nisga'a Village) and one non-Nisga'a member. NLG works in partnership with the school district to foster and protect Nisga'a language and culture while seeking to raise the standard of education for all Nass Valley youth.

During the reporting period, British Columbia allocated to School District #92 (Nisga'a) a total of \$7,693,295 in operating funding for the 2015/2016 school year. British Columbia also funded the Lisims Early Learning Partnership Team to help School District #92 (Nisga'a) build capacity for early learning, and \$173,880 was provided to support the program in coordinating local early learning efforts. School District #92 (Nisga'a) also received \$130,476 in CommunityLink payments, which helps provide services such as breakfast and lunch programs, community school programs, school-based support workers, and counselling for at-risk children and youth. Nisga'a Elementary Secondary School also received a \$4,500 grant from British Columbia for its school-based Parent Advisory Council.

In addition, School District #92 (Nisga'a) created the Sayt-K'ilim-Goot Learning Circle advisory group, which seeks to:

- + honour the educational successes and gifts of all learners;
- + advise the Board of Education on development of culturally inclusive practices for school districts;
- + advise the Board of Education on development of programming to improve retention of and academic success for Nisga'a young people.

## B.C. Performance Standards

The standard of education at School District #92 (Nisga'a) has been guided by policy and legislation, including the *School Act* and the English Language Arts K-7 Integrated Resource Package.

During the reporting period, School District #92 began moving towards B.C. Performance Standards. Developed for voluntary use in British Columbia schools, the B.C. Performance Standards describe the professional judgments of a significant number of educators about standards and expectations for the following key areas of learning:

- + Reading and Writing;
- + Numeracy;
- + Social Responsibility;
- + Information and Communications Technology Integration;
- + Healthy Living.



**Post-Secondary Education**

The Nisga'a Post-Secondary Education Assistance Program's mission is to assist Nisga'a citizens, ordinarily resident in Canada, in embracing the principles of academic freedom and responsibility. This is achieved by maintaining Nisga'a identity and cultural values and by ensuring access to high-quality education that responds to the Nisga'a Nation's diverse community, leadership, and self-government needs. During the reporting period, 204 students were sponsored for post-secondary education funding.

A three-day Nisga'a Education Conference themed "Embracing Education in the Spirit of Sayt-K'ilim-Goot" took place during the reporting period in Gitlaxt'aamiks. Special guests included: a commercial airplane pilot with Air Canada; lawyers; PhDs in Architecture, Sociology and Education; Red Seal electricians; carpenters; and cement masonries. These distinguished guests had one thing in common – all of them were Nisga'a.

**Combined Post-Secondary enrollment and completion rates of Nisga'a citizens\***

YEAR	ENROLLMENT		COMPLETION RATE %	
	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE
2015-2016	130	74	51%	70%
2014-2015	118	132	57%	66%
2013-2014	135	166	49%	56%
2012-2013	145	72	54%	65%
2011-2012	153	128	66%	85%
2010-2011	169	107	53%	65%
2009-2010	144	87	70%	75%
2008-2009	128	92	48%	52%
2007-2008	152	104	49%	47%
2006-2007	126	58	42%	47%

\*Who were eligible to graduate. Includes university, college, Open Learning Agency, institutes, and private post-secondary institutions.



## Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute

Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Institute (WWNI) is a not-for-profit, community driven, student focused Indigenous post-secondary and training institute that works in four areas: academic, vocational and technical, and continuing community education. Through partnerships with a number of public post-secondary institutes, including a Federated Agreement with the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), WWNI delivers a range of programs and training opportunities, including: Master of Arts First Nations Studies, Bachelor of Arts (First Nations Studies), University/College preparation, Grade 12 achievement, vocational/technical training, and continuing education programs.

Nisga'a Language and Culture courses continue to be WWNI's most subscribed courses. To date, WWNI has recorded 1,594 course completions in Nisga'a Culture.

During the reporting period, WWNI reported 162 course enrolments in academic programs and 258 course enrolments in vocational/technical programs. Since WWNI's incorporation in 1993, graduates have earned the following credentials.

### ACADEMIC

- + 1 Master of Arts (FNST) Degree with Distinction
- + 43 Bachelor of Arts
- + 2 Bachelor of Science (most coursework through WWNI)
- + 1 Bachelor of Commerce (most coursework through WWNI)
- + 1 Education Diploma in Nisga'a Language and Culture
- + 3 Honorary Doctorate of Laws
- + 1 Professor Emerita
- + 1 Honorary Nisga'a Studies Certificate

### ACADEMIC CERTIFICATES

- + 54 Nisga'a Studies Certificates
- + 15 First Nations Language – Nisga'a Certificates
- + 47 General First Nations Studies Certificates

### VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL CERTIFICATES

- + 175 (various)

## WWNI Funding Sources

<b>NISGA'A LISIMS GOVERNMENT</b>	\$365,834
<b>NISGA'A NATION FFA - CANADA</b>	\$403,900
<b>MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION – NISGA'A NATION FFA (BRITISH COLUMBIA)</b>	\$280,000
<b>MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION – UNBC / WWNI FEDERATED AGREEMENT (BRITISH COLUMBIA)</b>	\$216,000
<b>MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION (BRITISH COLUMBIA)</b>	\$121,000
<b>UNBC / WWNI ENDOWMENT FUND*</b>	\$40,067

\*Accrued interest from this fund provides partial support to Nisga'a Language at the WWNI Institute.

\*Through the Vancouver Foundation. Current fund value: \$1,039,314.

**UNBC Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Endowment Foundation Fund\***

2001	\$681,008
2002	\$720,723
2003	\$759,554
2004	\$788,757
2005	\$818,914
2006	\$851,884
2007	\$890,807
2008	\$923,911
2009	\$949,931
2010	\$968,482
2011	\$1,012,251
2012	\$1,046,099
2013	\$1,071,892
2014	\$1,038,457
2015	\$1,039,314
2016	\$1,040,330

\*Annual fund value (on March 31).

**UNBC Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Endowment Foundation Fund**

The UNBC Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Endowment Foundation (a registered charitable society) was established in order to build a secure, independent funding base for WWNI's capital projects, student scholarships and bursaries, faculty and staff development, and other priorities. From its inception, WWNI has received strong support from the Nisga'a people, British Columbia, and Canada. In a demonstration of support, the Nisga'a business community initially contributed \$100,000, and later made a \$250,000 donation to the Nisga'a Endowment

Fund (as it was then known). This was generously matched by British Columbia and UNBC. The endowment has continued to grow under the UNBC Wilp Wilxo'oskwhl Nisga'a Endowment Foundation.

*"We commit ourselves to the values of our Ayuuk, which have always sustained us and by which we govern ourselves, and we each acknowledge our accountability to those values, and to the Nisga'a Nation."*

– Declaration of the Nisga'a Nation







# Nisga'a Economy

*Sgihl gandi'akhla'amskw loorh, gan wil dip dixyugwihl ha'am wil /  
We strive for sustainable prosperity and self-reliance*

A fully integrated part of the economy of northwest British Columbia, the Nisga'a economy shares in both the region's opportunities and challenges. The primary industries in the Nass Valley are fishing and forestry. Seasonal resource industries are complemented by full-time employment in the government, education, and health-care sectors. Since May 11, 2000, infrastructure improvements have brought new jobs and skills while tourism and telecommunications offer the promise of expanding and diversifying employment opportunities.

## **Nisga'a Economic Development**

Through the department of Nisga'a Economic Development, NLG provides Nisga'a entrepreneurs and organizations with access to business information, tools, and financial capital. NLG is investing in research and development, infrastructure, strategic partnerships, and a variety of projects to stimulate the Nisga'a economy, support Nisga'a citizens, and promote a new era of economic prosperity and sustainability. Since the Effective Date of the Treaty, NLG has worked to lay a foundation for prosperity and self-determination through collaboration with Nisga'a Village Governments and Nisga'a Urban Locals. This effort is resulting in a shared vision for sustainable economic prosperity.

## **Nisga'a Employment, Skills, & Training**

NLG and Canada work together to provide the Aboriginal Skills, Employment, and Training program for Nisga'a citizens. This partnership has resulted in the Nisga'a Employment, Skills, and Training (NEST) program. NEST's mandate

is to help Nisga'a people thrive and succeed in a rapidly developing economy by helping them find meaningful, demand-driven, employment. NEST has offices in Gitlaxt'aamiks, Terrace, and Prince Rupert to serve the communities of Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gitwinksihlkw, Laxgalts'ap, Gingolx, Terrace, Kitimat, Prince Rupert, and Port Edward.

During the reporting period, representatives of NLG and British Columbia held a joint press conference respecting the announcement of \$2.1 million investment from British Columbia for job skills training to be administered by NEST. Over the next three years, that investment will be utilized in the NLG Pathways to Employment program, which will provide training, work experience, and entry to trades apprenticeships for 215 participants from Nisga'a communities.

In addition, NEST launched its new website at [www.nisgaaworks.ca](http://www.nisgaaworks.ca).

## **Nisga'a Business Development Fund**

With the goal of helping Nisga'a entrepreneurs compete in the global marketplace, the Nisga'a Business Development Fund provides advice, services, and funding. Recipients include both new and established Nisga'a enterprises with promising products or services targeted at a variety of market sectors. Funds are provided for business support and capacity building, feasibility studies and development costs, and capital investments for business infrastructure. These investments are intended to help applicants leverage funds from lending institutions and other equity programs. Tourism projects, retail

and home-based businesses, small industry development, and corporate projects have all received investments.

## **Nisga'a Pacific Ventures LP**

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NLG's commercial initiatives are operated under the central control of a master limited partnership that is owned by the Nisga'a Nation – Nisga'a Pacific Ventures Limited Partnership (NPV). As a Nisga'a Nation-owned entity, NPV is obliged to comply with the *Financial Administration Act* for budgeting and financial reporting purposes. NPV corporations include seven businesses managed with a mandate to improve and sustain the economic wealth and well-being of the Nisga'a Nation and its citizens by being professional, profitable, and having a reputation for excellence.

- + **NISGA'A FISHERIES LP** provides for the purchase and sale of salmon in accordance with the Nisga'a Annual Fishing Plan. Additional services include the marketing of Nisga'a Wild Salmon and value-added production to processing salmon for sale to domestic and international markets. Non-salmon species available for market and value-added production are under consideration.
- + **LISIMS COMMUNICATIONS LP** is an internet service provider utilizing the Nisga'a Nation-owned fibre optic cable connecting the Nass Valley to fibre optic cable along British Columbia Highway 16 corridor. Additional services include internet connectivity sales and technical support to customers resident in the Nass Valley and beyond.
- + **LISIMS FOREST RESOURCES LP (LFR)** services include the harvest, sale, and marketing of timber available for harvest under the Nisga'a Forest Development Plan. Additional services include the engineering of forest logging blocks and Silviculture Management contained in the Nisga'a FDP, and the sale of timber supply to Nisga'a businesses. As LFR is a BC Forest Safety Council SAFE-certified company,

environmental support and wildlife monitoring services are also provided. Future services will include wood milling and salvage wood milling.

- + **NISGA'A TOURISM LP** services include the sale and marketing of eco-tourism experiences provided under the Nisga'a Commercial Recreation Tenure certificate in the Nass Area. Nisga'a Tourism supports Nisga'a-owned businesses in providing lodging and accommodation services.
- + **K'ALII AKS CONSTRUCTION LP** services include partnering with established businesses for contracting opportunities associated with resource development projects operating and seeking to operate in the Nass Area. Additional services include Transmission Line and Provincial Highways support in the Nass Area and beyond.
- + **NASS AREA PROPERTIES LP** services include the development of properties owned by the Nisga'a Nation. Future services will include the land use development plan for the Sga Sginis properties, as well as commercial and residential construction divisions.
- + **NISGA'A GUIDE OUTFITTING LP** services include the transfer of business associated with the BC Guide Certificate operating in the Nass Area and areas adjacent to the Nass Area. Business services include guided hunting trips and taxidermy. Guided angling services will also be provided for saltwater and freshwater rod and fly-fishing.

## **Department of Forest Resources**

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NLG manages Nisga'a forests to protect this natural inheritance and to provide employment for Nisga'a people. Ecological sustainability is a prime consideration in the development and approval of all operations within Nisga'a Lands, and the *Nisga'a Forest Act* sets high standards to maintain biodiversity. NLG also manages all land and forest resources on Nisga'a Lands, including non-timber resources. Pine mushrooms, a popular



delicacy in Asia, are a valuable resource found in Nisga'a forests and are harvested seasonally.

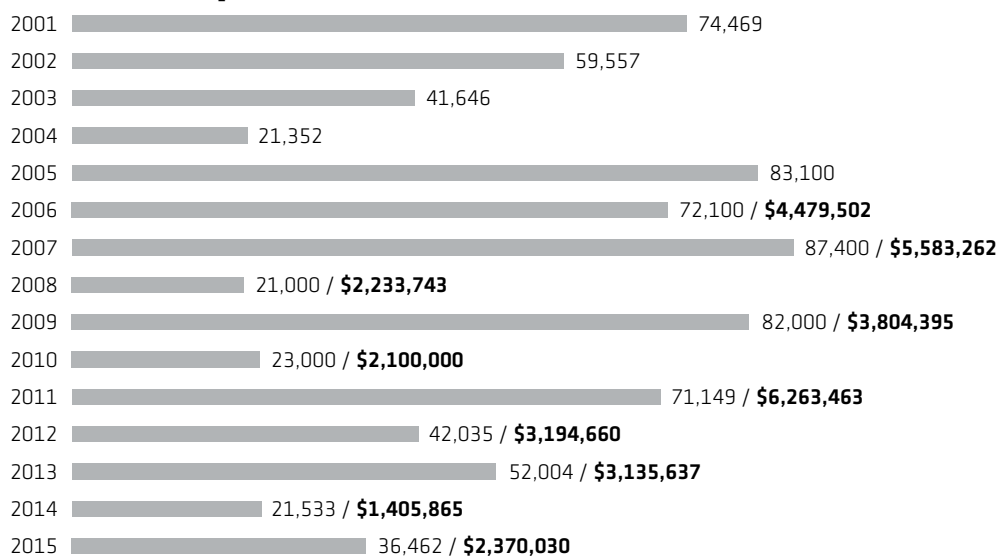
All harvested cut blocks on Nisga'a Lands are regenerated through planting and natural regeneration. To ensure reforestation, NLG collects a silviculture levy for each harvested cut block. The current fund is approx. \$1.8 million. Normally, planting takes place within first or second year following harvesting. Results have shown that after four to six years, harvested areas are fully stocked with acceptable commercial species.

The forest resources on Nisga'a Lands represent a vast range of potential opportunities. Since the Effective Date, a significantly depressed forest economy has meant that only a relatively small timber harvest volume was economically viable. This situation has improved. The Nisga'a Nation has yet to harvest up to the quota set in Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) and the resulting backlog of volume provides opportunities to intensify production. With rising wood prices and changing markets, it is expected that harvest levels will increase.

During the reporting period, the Timber Supply Review and AAC determination for Nisga'a Lands was completed. The sustainability of natural resources, biodiversity, and protection of sensitive ecosystems were all integral to the analysis. The information contained in the report is used by the NLG Director of Lands and Resources to establish the new AAC.

Lisims Forest Resources LP (LFR) is the sole license holder on Nisga'a Lands. LFR operates under NLG's 2014-2019 Forest Development Plan, which is publicly available at both the NLG office in Gitlaxt'aamiks and the Nisga'a Pacific Ventures Office. During the reporting period, LFR focused on logging unfinished logging blocks from previous years. In total, there were nine active logging blocks, 36,462 cubic metres were harvested, 1.3 kilometres of branch roads and 2.6 kilometres of spur roads were built, 68,035 seedlings were planted, and 33 hectares were brushed.

### Cubic Metres of Nisga'a Timber Harvests



\*Dollar value of timber sales reported beginning in 2006.



## Provincial Funding: Forestry

In 2003, following the bankruptcy of New Skeena Forest Products, British Columbia assumed responsibility for completing unfulfilled treaty obligations. The work includes replanting cut-blocks, maintaining roads, and decommissioning two abandoned work sites. During the reporting period, British Columbia conducted the following forest health activities in accordance with the Treaty.

- + Observations were made (twice) from Nisga'a Highway 113 of the status of pine stands above Crater Creek. A low incidence of mountain pine beetle (MPB) attack was noted.
- + A district review of provincial forest health was conducted using 2015 aerial overview survey maps and data.
- + A first reconnaissance of a potential spruce beetle infestation site was conducted at Eider Creek (the site was not found). On a second reconnaissance, the site was located and a significant area of spruce beetle attack was identified.
- + Reforestation took place on harvested areas within Nisga'a Lands amounting to \$49,366 and 185 person days of employment for Nisga'a workers.

## Provincial Funding: Roads

Under the Treaty, British Columbia maintains ownership of the Nisga'a Highway corridor, the right of way for secondary provincial roads, and responsibility for the repair and maintenance of those roads. During the reporting period, British Columbia undertook the following activities on Nisga'a Lands:

- + road maintenance reclassification of the Nisga'a Highway #113 from Winter Class 'C' to Winter Class 'B';
- + road base repairs and paving on the Nisga'a Hwy - Kincolith Section;
- + road widening and crosswalk installation in Laxgalts'ap;
- + extensive crack sealing of the Nisga'a Highway;
- + regular maintenance activities;
- + consultation with NLG Resource Committee, Nisga'a Village Governments, and NLG (for permitting of works on right-of-way within Nisga'a Lands);
- + requested permits from NLG for various activities on Nisga'a Lands (i.e. disposal of clean fill).

## Wildland Firefighter Program

NLG's Seasonal Wildland Firefighter Program includes an initial attack crew, whose duties include: preparedness to fight wildfires, patrolling, wildfire fighting training, promoting public awareness of wildfires, liaison with Village Government fire departments, and educating youth. In addition, the wildfire crew performed over 750 hours of brushing on forestry roads, light maintenance of culverts, removing litter, and supporting activities on recreational sites.

## Nisga'a Fisheries Management Program

One of the healthiest river systems in the world, K'ali-Aksim Lisims (the Nass) is the spawning grounds of five species of wild salmon, steelhead, and eulachon. NLG and Canada manage the Nass River salmon fishery to preserve the resource, provide for Nisga'a citizens, and support a modern, sustainable fishing industry. Facilitated through the Joint Fisheries Management Committee (JFMC), which is comprised of representatives from Canada, British Columbia, and the Nisga'a Nation, the Nisga'a Fisheries Management Program utilizes fish wheels and other technologies on the Nass River for salmon monitoring, tagging, and data collection, and conducts stock assessments on a variety of species throughout the Nass Area. NLG works with British Columbia to manage the non-salmon sport fishery. Since 1992, the Nass salmon stock status has been monitored annually by NLG's Nisga'a Fisheries and Wildlife Department (NFWD).

During the reporting period, NFWD:

- + successfully implemented 30 projects;
- + met escapement goals for all salmon species and steelhead;

- + achieved Nisga'a entitlement targets (no overharvesting, balanced chum underage by converting to Sockeye Equivalency as defined by the Treaty);
- + surveyed coastal areas and discovered good chum returns to several systems;
- + monitored Kwinageese barrier and discovered successful passage of salmon and steelhead (Kwinageese barrier was permanently removed in December of 2015);
- + continued sampling for the presence of contamination from the Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan (Nass sockeye, pink, and steelhead showed no signs of radioactive contamination);
- + continued to increase the capacity of NFWD employees through ongoing training;
- + implemented all programs within budget.

These projects were funded by NLG, Lisims Fisheries Conservation Trust Fund, and the Fiscal Finance Agreement. Additional projects were funded by Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), British Columbia (\$85,000), the Pacific Salmon Commission, and the Coast Opportunity Funds. The fisheries program employed 37 Nisga'a citizens in 2015.

## Salmon Harvested in Individual and Communal Sale Fisheries

	SOCKEYE	COHO	PINK	CHUM	CHINOOK	REVENUE
2001	51,427	12,068	75,820	1,078	0	\$637,000
2002	108,814	6,800	0	0	0	\$1,177,000
2003	114,572	13,672	14,075	23	0	\$1,326,000
2004	116,671	17,170	8,983	0	0	\$1,619,000
2005	82,679	12,585	2,361	577	857	\$956,000
2006	64,253	5,249	3,042	948	1,946	\$671,000
2007	33,624	6,372	3,688	697	2,435	\$484,000
2008	17,728	793	3,438	276	0	\$206,126
2009	45,542	10,406	20,895	0	1,597	\$624,000
2010	33,818	7,768	1,338	1	28	\$440,000
2011	18,364	1,134	40,460	0	874	\$347,435
2012	39,961	9,037	3,628	0	649	\$961,124
2013	45,618	11,096	16,848	0	0	\$1,278,777
2014	49,744	5,951	944	0	0	\$600,000
2015	114,153	4,801	19,422	0	2,062	\$1,111,000

Chart based on the estimated number of individual fish caught during the Individual and Communal Sale fisheries. Estimated revenue to local economy based on annual average weight and price per pound for each species in Area 3 commercial fisheries.





During the reporting period, Nisga'a fishers had one of the best seasons in the in-river and marine sale fisheries with a record number of openings and revenues earned by fishers.

### **Nass River: A Certified Sustainable Fishery**

The health of the Nass River continues to garner international acclaim. During the reporting period, the Nass sockeye fishery was again certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) as a sustainable fishery. Maintaining this highly respected certification is a testament to the management of Nass salmon stocks under the framework of the Nisga'a Final Agreement. Nisga'a Fisheries continued to address the three conditions of MSC certification with DFO for the Nass sockeye fishery, and partnered with DFO in developing conservation benchmarks for Nass salmon as part of MSC's Wild Salmon Policy.

Since 2009, the upper Nass River Chinook stock has been recognized by the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) as a "Sentinel Stock", one of the 29 stocks that are used to manage all Chinook stocks harvested in the Pacific Region fisheries and critical to the implementation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty between Canada and the United States. During the reporting period, the Nisga'a Fish and Wildlife Department was awarded its seventh annual installment of this multi-year program funding to enhance its ability to accurately estimate the abundance of these critical Chinook populations. In addition, the PSC helped support the review of Coastal Nass Area chum escapement methods (Year Two of a four-year study).

### **Lisims Fisheries Conservation Trust**

The Nisga'a Fisheries Management Program applies the highest standards in the areas of conservation and environmental protection to ensure a healthy, productive aquatic ecosystem for the benefit of present and future generations. This commitment is ensured, in part, by the Lisims Fisheries Conservation Trust. Trustees appointed by NLG and Canada administer the trust, and recommendations from the Joint Fisheries Management Committee are taken into account in sponsoring projects, programs, and activities that are in keeping with the trust's objectives. The trust promotes conservation and protection of Nass Area fish species, facilitates sustainable management, and supports Nisga'a participation in fishery stewardship for the benefit of all Canadians.

#### **Lisims Trust\***

	<b>NET ASSET</b>	<b>DISBURSEMENT</b>
2001	\$13,720,000	\$0
2002	\$12,300,000	\$0
2003	\$12,210,000	\$0
2004	\$13,370,000	\$313,000
2005	\$14,860,000	\$600,000
2006	\$15,590,000	\$600,000
2007	\$15,650,000	\$550,000
2008	\$12,230,000	\$0
2009	\$14,390,000	\$550,000
2010	\$15,428,380	\$550,000
2011	\$14,127,661	\$575,000
2012	\$14,586,330	\$550,000
2013	\$15,853,237	\$550,000
2014	\$14,100,000	\$550,000
2015	\$15,287,167	\$550,000

\*Approximate Net Asset Value (on Dec. 31).

## **Department of Resource Enforcement**

The Department of Resource Enforcement, Directorate of Fisheries and Wildlife, and the Directorate of Lands and Resources work together to enforce Nisga'a procedures, policies, and laws under the *Fisheries and Wildlife Act*, *Nisga'a Forest Act*, and *Nisga'a Offence Act*. Currently, two personnel are committed to the Department of Resource Enforcement team.

The Department of Resource Enforcement divides its year into five seasons: Eulachon, Fishing, Mushroom, Hunting, and Training. Enforcement officers can be found patrolling the Nass Wildlife Area by vehicle, ATV, snowmobile, and boat. With the goal of protecting and preserving the region's natural resources, NLG's Department of Resource Enforcement works with DFO and British Columbia's Conservation Officer Service to ensure that all Nisga'a, provincial, and federal laws are enforced on Nisga'a Lands.

## **Wildlife Management**

As a member of the tripartite Nass Wildlife Committee, NLG co-manages wildlife in the 16,101 square kilometre Nass Wildlife Area. Under the Treaty, moose, mountain goat, and grizzly bear have been identified as designated species for which there are specific Nisga'a allocations. The committee reviews available data annually and makes recommendations regarding total allowable harvests and annual management plans. British Columbia uses this information to establish total allowable harvests and approve the annual management plans. The Nass Wildlife Committee meets biannually and monitors annual hunts.

Through the Fiscal Financing Agreement, British Columbia provides \$20,000 annually to NLG for wildlife management. NLG has implemented a permit system to manage the harvest of designated species by Nisga'a citizens. British Columbia invested a further \$30,000 in enforcement activities in the Nass Valley during the winter moose harvest period to gain a better understanding of compliance with the permit system.

In previous years, the Nass Wildlife Committee and British Columbia identified the need for a comprehensive plan to reverse the decline of Nass moose populations and re-establish population levels. As a result, NLG voluntarily reduced its treaty-allocated take. During the reporting period, British Columbia closed the recreational moose harvest to residents.

## **Guide Outfitting**

During the reporting period, British Columbia approved the transfer of a guiding territory certificate to a Nisga'a citizen in trust for the Nisga'a Nation. In addition, British Columbia approved the issuance of a park use permit for 16 parks, conservancies, and recreational areas. With the issuance of the certificate and permit, the Nisga'a Nation has now realized its long-standing objective of obtaining guide outfitting privileges.

## **Working Group & Environmental Assessment**

NLG's Nass Area Strategy Working Group (NASWG) reviews and prepares responses for various environmental referrals and processes. NASWG regularly reviews referrals from British Columbia and Canada regarding mineral exploration projects, land tenures, forest tenures, and environmental permits. NLG's participation in various external Environmental Assessment processes is also managed by NASWG.

Where necessary, NLG hires technical experts to provide advice. NLG does not rely on technical experts of proponents. The costs of participating in environmental assessments (i.e. hiring technical experts and negotiating benefit agreements) are paid for by project proponents through capacity funding agreements. Canada and British Columbia undertake environmental assessments of projects that may impact Nisga'a Lands or interests and consult NLG in this process. NLG actively participates in these assessments.

During the reporting period, NLG drafted Environmental Assessment legislation in accordance with Chapter 10 of the Treaty.

## **Nass Area Strategy**

Under the Nisga'a Final Agreement, the Nisga'a Nation has substantial treaty rights throughout the 27,000-square-kilometre (approximate) Nass Area. The Nisga'a Nation owns and has control over development on Nisga'a Lands, which make up about eight per cent of the total Nass Area. The Nisga'a Nation also has comprehensive rights relating to consultation and environmental assessment over proposed developments in the rest of the Nass Area.

The Nass Area Strategy was developed to ensure that proposed resource developments in the Nass Area comply with all Nisga'a Treaty rights. The Nisga'a Nation evaluates proposals by assessing a project's potential environmental, social, and cultural impacts; the proposed strategies to mitigate those impacts; and the potential economic benefit to the Nisga'a Nation. NLG does not rely on technical experts of proponents. The costs of participating in environmental assessments (i.e. hiring technical experts and negotiating benefits agreements) are paid for by project proponents through capacity funding agreements. Canada and British Columbia also undertake environmental assessments of any project that may impact Nisga'a Lands or interests and consult NLG in this process. NLG actively participates in these assessments.

During the reporting period, NLG took part in numerous Environmental Assessments and entered into various agreements involving projects that may impact the Nisga'a Nation's treaty interests. The following are the most notable of these projects.

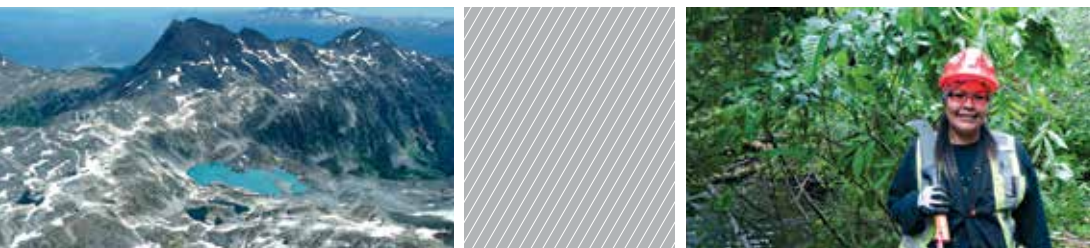
### **NORTHWEST TRANSMISSION LINE**

The Northwest Transmission Line (NTL) is a 335-kilometre, 287-kilovolt transmission line between Skeena Substation (near Terrace) and a new substation to be built near Bob Quinn Lake. The agreement between NLG and British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority (BC Hydro) ensures that as long as the NTL is on Nisga'a Lands, Nisga'a people will benefit and the environment will be protected. This agreement marks the first time since the Effective Date that the rights of NLG under the Environmental Assessment and Protection Chapter of the Treaty have been tested. Rights to consultation were implemented, rights to environmental mitigation of adverse affects are complied with, as well as rights in connection with Nisga'a Nation economic participation were all achieved in this approval process.

A benefit of the NTL is the installation of fibre optic line into Nisga'a Lands to improve internet communications. During the previous reporting period, three of four Nisga'a communities (Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gitwinksihlkw, Laxgalts'ap) were connected to the network. Work toward connecting the fourth community (Gingolx) continued.

### **LONG LAKE HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT**

The Long Lake Hydroelectric Project is a 31 mega-watt facility, located 25 kilometres north of Stewart, close to the British Columbia/Alaska border. The construction of a ten-kilometre, 138-kilovolt transmission line connects the site to the BC Hydro grid, with opportunities to interconnect with





other regional projects. The Nisga'a Nation will share revenues from this project. When operating at full capacity, revenue to the Nisga'a Nation from the Long Lake Hydroelectric Project is forecast at \$123,820 per year over the life of the project. This revenue sharing agreement comes through the First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund.

#### **WINDRIVER KINSKUCH LAKE PROJECT**

The Nisga'a Nation and WindRiver have completed a Project Agreement for the Kinskuch Lake Project, a 50-megawatt hydroelectric project that will use glacier-fed Kinskuch Lake (north of the Nass Valley) as a reservoir. Nisga'a Land around the lake will add to the size of the reservoir, and a 60-kilometre line will connect to the BC Hydro Aiyansh Substation.

Under the agreement, the Nisga'a Nation will be a partner in the project, hold an interest in the equity of the project, and hold voting rights and appropriate board representation. The agreement contains provisions in respect of payments on the occurrence of the following events: (a) the signing of the impact benefits agreement, (b) signing of an electricity purchase agreement with BC Hydro, and (c) project commissioning. The agreement provides for employment and service opportunities, training and employment plans, as well as contracting opportunities.

During the reporting period, a comprehensive Benefits Agreement between NLG and WindRiver Power Corporation, in respect of WindRiver's Kinskuch Lake Project, was finalized. This project will undergo an environmental assessment in the next reporting period.

#### **PRINCE RUPERT GAS TRANSMISSION LTD. (PRGT)**

The Nisga'a Nation and Prince Rupert Gas Transmission Ltd. (PRGT) have an agreement on a proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) pipeline from northeast British Columbia, through Nisga'a Lands, to the coast.

The agreement provides the Nisga'a Nation with significant direct financial benefits including annual payments over the life of the project, capacity funding, exclusive contracting opportunities for right-of-way clearing, camp services, security, and medical services on Nisga'a Lands. Additionally, the Nisga'a Nation and PRGT will work together to determine whether the Nisga'a Nation can establish a future natural gas distribution scheme to serve homes within the Nass Valley.

In addition to the Benefits Agreement with PRGT, the Nisga'a Nation entered into an agreement with British Columbia to provide for the sharing of benefits associated with the project with the Nisga'a Nation. Under the agreement, British Columbia will pay lump sum milestone payments as well as yearly payments over the life of the project. While payments have already been made under the Benefits Agreement, PRGT has yet to proceed with the project. PRGT's final investment decision in the project is awaiting the determination as to whether the Pacific Northwest (PNW) LNG plant will proceed. The PNW LNG plant is proposed as the terminus of the PRGT pipeline. The PNW LNG plant has undergone a federal environmental assessment and the Canada's decision in respect of the project is expected in the near future.

During the reporting period, to give effect to its agreement with PRGT, NLG granted to PRGT a license of occupation under section 6 of the *Nisga'a Land Act*.

#### **PROPOSED LAND ACQUISITION**

Pursuant to the agreement allowing PRGT to build a natural gas pipeline through the Nass Area and Nisga'a Lands, the Nisga'a Nation has an option to secure capacity in the proposed PRGT pipeline for use by an LNG developer. The Nisga'a Nation has been actively pursuing opportunities for LNG development in the vicinity of Nasoga Gulf. Although no project is proposed for this location at this time, the area may eventually

be developed and may include LNG or other infrastructure development.

During the reporting period, to facilitate the development of this and other opportunities, the Nisga'a Nation engaged in negotiations with British Columbia on the potential sale and lease of land in the vicinity of Nasoga Gulf. These negotiations are confidential between the Parties and, if concluded, subject to provincial consultation with potentially impacted First Nations.

#### **WESTCOAST CONNECTOR GAS TRANSMISSION PROJECT**

Spectra Energy Corporation's Westcoast Connector Gas Transmission (WCGT) Project – a proposed LNG pipeline from northeast British Columbia to the proposed Prince Rupert LNG facility and export terminal – has received approval with its environmental assessment certificate, but remains on hold indefinitely. The Nisga'a Nation has entered into an agreement with British Columbia with terms similar to those in the agreement in respect of the PRGT Project. Should the WCGT Project proceed, the Nisga'a Nation is guaranteed to share in the benefits associated with the project.

#### **SEABRIDGE GOLD INC. / KSM MINE**

NLG and Seabridge Gold Inc. (Seabridge) have a Benefits Agreement in connection with Seabridge's proposed KSM Project, which would include an open-pit gold, copper, silver, and molybdenum mine development near the headwaters of the Unuk River. The project is known as the Kerr-Sulphurets Mitchell (KSM) Mine. The agreement includes commitments by Seabridge regarding jobs and contracting opportunities at the KSM Project, education and training, financial payments, and a framework for working together on ongoing development matters. This comprehensive agreement also addresses concerns expressed by the Nisga'a Nation around the potential environmental and social impacts of the KSM Project.

During the reporting period, the project received an Environment Assessment Certificate from both British Columbia and Canada and permitting was underway. NLG is a member of the Mine Development Review Committee specifically relating to reviewing the impact of permit applications affecting the Nass Area.

#### **STEWART WORLD PORT**

During the reporting period, Nisga'a representatives attended the opening of the Stewart World Port in Stewart, British Columbia. NLG is of the view that the opening of this port is a positive development for the region's economy.

#### **KITSAULT MINE**

The Kitsault Mine Project is a proposal to restart a molybdenum mine located within the Nass Area that has been inactive since 1982. During the reporting period, the price of molybdenum remained low. As a result, the project is on hold indefinitely.

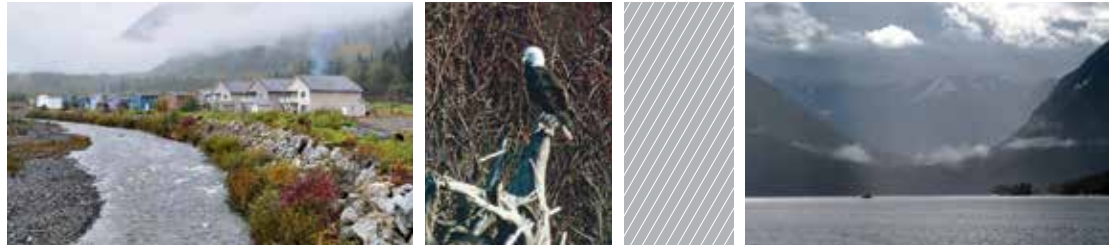
#### **RED MOUNTAIN MINE (IDM MINING)**

During the reporting period, IDM Mining proposed the exploration and development of the Red Mountain Gold Mine project, located 15 kilometres east of Stewart. NLG is a member of the Environmental Assessment Working Group that is selecting valued components that the proponent must evaluate and satisfy in order to obtain an environmental assessment certificate.

#### **PRETIUM RESOURCES INC. –**

##### **BRUCEJACK LAKE**

During the reporting period, NLG entered into a Project Agreement with Pretium Resources Inc. with respect to the potential underground gold and silver mine near Brucejack Lake. Under the Benefits Agreement, Pretium Resources will make a series of lump sum payments to the Nisga'a Nation upon the occurrence of certain milestones. Pretium Resources will also make an annual payment to the Nisga'a Nation that will be expressed as a percentage of the mineral tax payable by Pretium for the year.



The Benefits Agreement also provides opportunities in respect of contracting and employment for Nisga'a Businesses and Nisga'a citizens. In addition, the Nisga'a Nation has entered into an Economic, Community Development Agreement with British Columbia which will see the province share a percentage of the mineral tax revenue collected from the mine in each year. Pretium began construction of the mine and a number of Nisga'a workers and contractors were employed at Pretium's operations.

### **Nisga'a Land Title**

Holding the title to one's own land offers the potential to generate capital for economic development. Developing nations and their citizens are crippled by their inability to use the title to their lands as a means of raising capital. No longer bound by the *Indian Act*, this should not be the case for the Nisga'a Nation or its citizens. Yet Nisga'a citizens have, until recently, been unable to benefit from the equity in their homes and Nisga'a Villages have been unable to capitalize on their assets. The Nisga'a Individual Landholding Project has changed this.

Unrestricted fee simple ownership, possible since October 2012, allows Nisga'a citizens to own land in fee simple and to be able to approach lending institutions for a mortgage without requiring a guarantee from the Nisga'a Nation. Providing Nisga'a citizens with the ability to use their residential properties to raise capital – like other Canadians – unlocks an important resource for supporting economic growth, investment, and increase prosperity for Nisga'a citizens.

The Nisga'a Land Title system is unique in the world, considered to be a best practice model internationally, and is the only Aboriginal title system that has membership in both the Canadian Conference of Land Title Officials and the International Registrars of Title Organization.

During the reporting period, the Nisga'a Land Title Office was invited to join the Canadian Council of Land Title Officials. This is a significant achievement. Until now, this organization's membership has been restricted to provincial and territorial governments. NLG is the only Aboriginal government member.

In addition, NLG's Land Title Office made significant improvements to its technology infrastructure, with the addition of software components that track both the Lisims Land Registry and property assessment folios.

*"The Nisga'a Nation will prosper as a self-reliant society with a sustainable economy. Nisga'a culture, self-determination, and well-being will be preserved and enhanced for generations to come."*

– Declaration of the Nisga'a Nation







# Communications & Intergovernmental Relations

*Wil dip adigwil nidixdidalk̓tdir̓ gan wilhl s̓gihl ax̓' ookskw sk̓'apdir̓ /  
We inspire trust and understanding through effective communication*

The Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Directorate of Nisga'a Lisims Government works to improve the way government members communicate with each other, Nisga'a citizens, its Treaty partners, and the wider world.

## **Communicating with Citizens**

NLG is committed to maintaining open, honest, and effective channels of communication. Special Assemblies are held every two years, where government members report (both in person and in a printed report) on all areas of governance and public programs. Every Nisga'a citizen has the right to attend and speak at Special Assemblies and the proceedings are webcast to ensure all Nisga'a citizens are able to participate.

In addition to biennial Special Assemblies, the directorate:

- + publishes NLG's monthly newsletter;
- + maintains and enhances NLG's website ([www.nisgaanation.ca](http://www.nisgaanation.ca)) and social media;
- + develops and maintains websites and social media for major events;
- + webcasts important events;
- + broadcasts Nisga'a news and information to Nisga'a Villages, Urban Locals, and Nisga'a institutions;
- + compiles and maintains a photo gallery of significant events.

## **Reaching the Wider World**

While some issues and initiatives are specific to Nisga'a citizens, others may have regional, provincial, or national implications. The Nisga'a Final Agreement is a ground-breaking treaty and its implementation is being closely watched. Fostering a broad understanding of the Treaty is the goal of the directorate's public relations efforts. This goal is achieved through the production and distribution of information packages, videos, media alerts, press releases, interviews, and collaborating with Treaty partners (Canada and British Columbia) in the production of this report.

## **Emergency Planning & Response**

The Communications and Intergovernmental Relations Directorate is also responsible for emergency planning and response.

The directorate remains focused on training, running exercises, planning, and promoting public awareness.

The directorate supports Nisga'a Emergency Operations Centre personnel participation in British Columbia-sponsored Emergency Management training throughout the northwest region. In addition, the directorate undertakes periodic discussion and tabletop training exercises to enhance familiarity with the Emergency Plan, protocols, and other public awareness initiatives such as "Shake Out BC," an annual earthquake preparedness drill.

During the reporting period, NLG partnered with the Justice Institute of British Columbia to provide Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Essentials and EOC Applied Training. Twenty-five participants from NLG, Nisga'a Villages, and Nisga'a Valley Health Authority successfully completed the two courses.

### **Nisga'a Foundation**

The Nisga'a Foundation was established to seek out funding opportunities to leverage the existing resources of the Nisga'a Nation, and to partner with various foundations and charitable organizations to promote the social, environmental, and economic aspirations of the Nisga'a Nation. During the reporting period, upon review of the foundation's form of incorporation and structure, NLG decided to dissolve the federally registered foundation.

### **Land Claims Agreement Coalition**

When it comes to treaty-making, Nisga'a Lisims Government has a wealth of experience to share. As a way of reaching out to and partnering with First Nations and Inuit across Canada, NLG is a member of the Land Claims Agreement Coalition (LCAC). The objective of the LCAC is to lobby Canada to put in place a federal Implementation Policy that supports the full implementation of modern day treaties, such as the Nisga'a Final Agreement.

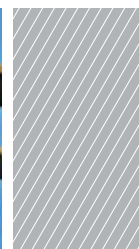
During the reporting period, as Co-Chair of the LCAC, NLG participated in the coalition's "Making Treaties Work" conference in Ottawa. Representatives from NLG and coalition partners continued to lobby the federal government to adopt a comprehensive Implementation Policy for modern treaties.

### **Assembly of First Nations**

During the reporting period, the Nisga'a Nation hosted the British Columbia Assembly of First Nations meeting in Laxgalts'ap. Also in attendance was the National Chief, who traveled from Ottawa. The Grand Chief of the British Columbia First Nations Summit issued an apology on behalf of the British Columbia Chiefs for their lack of support to the Nisga'a Nation in the (1973) Calder case at the Supreme Court of Canada.

*"We are Nisga'a. We declare to the world that we are a unique Aboriginal nation of Canada, proud of our history, and assured in our future. We claim and take our rightful place as equal participants in Canadian society. Our destiny is living peacefully together with the other nations of Canada."*

– Declaration of the Nisga'a Nation





# Programs & Services

*Dimt hugaxam diyeerh hidiit t an dixde'entgurh /  
Our governance and services evolve to meet our people's needs*

Guided by Nisga'a culture and best practices from around the world, Nisga'a Lisims Government works to improve the lives of Nisga'a people. In partnership with the four Nisga'a Village Governments, NLG delivers a wide range of culturally appropriate programs and services in the areas of health, education, social development, local services, and access to justice.

## **Fiscal Financing Agreement**

The Treaty requires the Parties to enter into a Fiscal Financing Agreement describing the financial relationship among the Parties. The FFA sets out funding amounts from Canada and British Columbia to NLG for supporting agreed-upon government programs and services, and for supporting treaty implementation activities. The FFA also sets out terms, conditions, and reporting requirements for transfer payments.

During the reporting period, funding from Canada amounted to \$65.5 million for federally-supported programs and services, including: education, social development, health, physical works (capital/housing), local government, and non-commercial fisheries. British Columbia paid \$5,118,338. All federal and provincial transfers were completed on time.

Canada and British Columbia may also provide additional program or project funding to NLG to support specific initiatives; these funding amounts are indicated in relevant sections of this report. The current Nisga'a Nation FFA was signed by the Parties on February 26, 2010 with effective dates of April 1, 2009 to March 31, 2015. The term of the current agreement was extended to March 31, 2017. Negotiations for the new FFA continued.

## **Nisga'a Valley Health Authority**

Nisga'a Government manages the delivery of healthcare in Nisga'a communities through the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority (NVHA). Registered under the *Societies Act*, the elected body includes representatives from the four Nisga'a Villages and an elected representative from the non-Nisga'a community.

Responsible for creating and maintaining facilities and promoting medical and public healthcare programs, NVHA operates a diagnostic centre in Gitlaxt'aamiks and satellite clinics in the other Nisga'a Villages, providing physician services, home care, cultural community health representatives, and the administration of non-insured health benefits. During the reporting period, through the Fiscal Financing Agreement, NVHA received \$13.5 million from Canada and \$2,395,233 from British Columbia.

The Nisga'a Valley Health Authority developed the Nisga'a Nation Health Plan during the reporting period. The plan outlines how the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority will move forward in fulfilling its core mandate of providing health services while strengthening its focus with key partners to advance mutual priorities for improved health. These priorities have been identified in collaboration with NLG, the four Nisga'a Villages, Nisga'a Valley Health Authority Board, medical teams, and employees.

The Nisga'a Nation Health Plan "A Shared Path to Improved Health" is available on the NVHA website: [www.nisgahealth.bc.ca](http://www.nisgahealth.bc.ca).

## **Proposed Nisga'a Public Institution for Healthcare Delivery**

During the reporting period, NLG moved forward with the establishment of a new Nisga'a Public Institution respecting health services, which will be accountable to Nisga'a Nation. NLG is committed to ensuring a smooth transition from the current NVHA so that services will continue with little or virtually no service disruption. Wilp Si'ayuuḱhl Nisga'a voted unanimously in favour of the resolution, which makes it a historical first in exercising provisions of the Nisga'a Treaty and the Nisga'a Constitution in respect of the establishment of a Nisga'a Public Institution for the delivery of health service.

The Nisga'a Finance Committee recommended that NLG Executive exercise its termination rights under section 38 (1) of the service delivery agreement between the Nisga'a Nation and the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority, dated April 1, 2013 (the Agreement). Considering that the Nisga'a Nation has an obligation under the Treaty made April 1, 2009 (the FFA), to ensure the ongoing provision of health services on Nisga'a Lands, the Executive directed the Chief Executive Officer to investigate:

- + the conditions that must be satisfied before the Nisga'a Nation may terminate the Agreement;
- + how termination of the Agreement may affect the Nisga'a Nation's obligations under the FFA to provide health services on Nisga'a Lands;
- + the options currently available to the Nisga'a Nation for meeting its obligations under the FFA to provide health services on Nisga'a Lands if the Agreement is terminated.

## **Nisga'a Child & Family Services**

NLG provides service options to ensure the protection and well-being of Nisga'a children consistent with both the Ayuukhl Nisga'a and British Columbia statutes and policies. This is achieved through Nisga'a Child and Family Services (NCFS), which works to support Nisga'a families through the promotion and utilization of the Ayuuk. With offices located in Gitlaxt'aamiks,

Terrace, and Prince Rupert, NCFS provides both statutory services (an extension of the child welfare law) and non-statutory services (volunteer community services). During the reporting period, Canada provided \$5.1 million for social programs and British Columbia provided \$2,197,000 for delegated and non-delegated services. British Columbia also contributed \$104,436 for child and youth mental health services.

NCFS offers support services for families, which promote sound parenting practices and respite care. Voluntary care agreements allow parents to place their children in a safe, approved home during medical treatment or training. Special Needs Agreements ensure the safe care of children with special needs.

NCFS also distributes support payments to families for providing foster care for Nisga'a children in Nisga'a family care homes. Other services include:

- + Family Group Conference Program, which provides a venue for alternative family dispute resolution;
- + Infant Development Program, which benefits children from birth to three years of age by providing support and education for parents;
- + Supported Child Care Development Program, which supports and provides advocacy for children with special needs.

NCFS surplus funds provide resources for the following NLG programs:

- + Youth Worker Program;
- + Recreation Program;
- + Community Workshops;
- + Family Support Services.

During the reporting period, NCFS relocated their offices in Terrace. The new (leased) offices are better suited to serving clients as NCFS assumes greater levels of responsibility.



## Child Protection (C-6) Status

Nisga'a Child and Family Services and British Columbia continued preparations for the transition to Child Protection (or C-6) status under British Columbia's *Child, Family and Community Service Act*. C-6 status allows for control over the last important area of child and family service delivery, empowering delegated NCFS staff to conduct child welfare investigations, remove children at risk, and make representations to family court with respect to children in need of protection. This is an important step in the evolution of NLG, one that has the potential to make an enormous, positive change in the lives of Nisga'a children and their families.

During the reporting period, NCFS received Delegated C-6 status from the Aboriginal Policy and Service Support division of British Columbia's Ministry of Children and Family Development. A transition phase was in effect as work that has been carried out by the Ministry of Children and Family Development moved to the NCFS office in Gitlaxt'aamiks.

## Social Development Services

NLG is committed to supporting healthy and economically prosperous Nisga'a communities where children, youth, and adults have hope and opportunities, as well as access to social programs that support a healthy living standard. This is accomplished by developing individual

and family strengths and by providing access to social services that will enhance their self-sufficiency. As social policies are continuously evolving, NLG keeps apprised of any provincial changes and ensures NLG's policies and services are reasonably comparable to those available to residents elsewhere in British Columbia.

The following programs are funded through the FFA:

- + Basic Needs;
- + Training Employment Support;
- + Special Needs;
- + Family Violence Prevention;
- + Guardian Financial Assistance;
- + Community Support Services;
- + Adult In-Home Care;
- + National Child Benefit Reinvestment;
- + Employment Initiatives;
- + Community Preventative Services.

## Housing on Nisga'a Lands

During the reporting period, NLG provided financial support for existing and new housing for Nisga'a citizens residing on Nisga'a Lands with the disbursement of \$848,403 to each Nisga'a Village Government.

## Policing Services

During the reporting period, NLG entered into the Police Services Funding Contribution Agreement with Canada.



## Access to Justice

NLG's Access to Justice Department works to involve every Nisga'a citizen in promoting safety by building on the strengths of individuals, families, and communities. The Justice Department supports the prevention and resolution of conflicts by increasing awareness of the Nisga'a Ayuuk and Canadian laws through the following programs.

- + The **ABORIGINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM** assists the justice system in improving its relevance and effectiveness in Nisga'a communities; encourages the revival of traditional Nisga'a practices in resolving conflict; develops alternative programming to deal with deterrence and prevention, diversion, sentencing, rehabilitation, and incarceration; and encourages crime prevention through information, education, and community development programming with Nisga'a communities. (Funded \$98,062 annually from British Columbia.)
- + The **YUHLIMK'ASKW PROGRAM** and **YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM** provide culturally appropriate alternative justice solutions and help Nisga'a communities effectively respond to youth justice issues/needs. (Funded \$79,101 annually from Canada.)
- + The **NASS VALLEY VICTIM SERVICES PROGRAM** provides emotional support to victims of crime during their recovery and involvement with the justice process. (Funded \$35,844 annually by British Columbia.)

## Nisga'a Registry of Laws

The Nisga'a Registry of Laws is housed in NLG's offices and is available to the public. Updated on a regular basis, the registry consists of laws, regulations, and amendments currently in force, which are now available on the NLG website at: [www.nisgaanation.ca](http://www.nisgaanation.ca).

During the reporting period, NLG's legislature, Wilp Si'ayuukhl Nisga'a (WSN), passed the following legislation and enacted the following regulations:

- + *Nisga'a Homeowner Grant Amendment Act*;
- + *Nisga'a Government Amendment Act*;
- + *Nisga'a Land Amendment Act, 2015* In Force Regulation;
- + *Nisga'a Real Property Tax Regulation*;
- + *Nisga'a Permissive Exemptions Amendment Regulation*;
- + *Nisga'a Government Amendment Regulation*;
- + *Nisga'a Permissive Exemptions Regulation*;
- + *Nisga'a Land Regulation*.

In addition, WSN mandated a formal review and analysis of existing Nisga'a laws as to their effectiveness and efficiency in the operation of Nisga'a Lisims Government.



## Nisga'a Settlement Trust

Under the Treaty, the capital transfer to the Nisga'a Nation is paid over 14 years. NLG has developed a risk budgeting framework for these funds, known as the Nisga'a Settlement Trust. NLG diligently monitors the trust to ensure continued growth. Where other elected administrations routinely plan four to five years into the future, the primary goal of the Nisga'a Settlement Trust is to provide financial stability to the Nisga'a Nation through the seventh generation.

### Nisga'a Settlement Trust\*

2003	\$27,028,368
2004	\$36,903,676
2005	\$44,858,894
2006	\$55,504,793
2007	\$71,875,085
2008	\$82,520,867
2009	\$78,990,071
2010	\$112,361,793
2011	\$143,959,977
2012	\$164,888,996
2013	\$192,581,720
2014	\$234,058,417
2015	\$278,350,704
2016	\$303,670,753

\*Annual fund value on March 31.

## Capital Finance Commission

NLG's Capital Finance Commission (CFC) was established to enable the financing of major maintenance or replacement of FFA listed assets. In addition, the Commission is responsible for management and control of the Capital Finance Commission fund in accordance with the *Nisga'a Capital Finance Commission Act*. The CFC meets to consider submissions under Schedule C of the FFA, and to consider submissions under the *New Assets Act*.

## Personal Income Taxation

Under the Treaty, the income tax exemption for Nisga'a citizens, and all Status Indians employed on Nisga'a Lands, ceased to apply effective January 1, 2013. Nisga'a citizens are no longer exempt from income tax if they are employed on any reserve land in Canada. Prior to the conclusion of the exemption, NLG negotiated and executed revenue sharing agreements with Canada and British Columbia. Under these agreements, income taxes paid by Nisga'a citizens resident on Nisga'a Lands flow to the Nation. In addition, some income taxes paid by non-Nisga'a citizens resident on Nisga'a Lands also flow to the Nisga'a Nation. Residency is determined as the ordinary residence of the individual on the last calendar day of each tax year (December 31st).

## Consumption Taxation

In accordance with the Treaty, the exemption from consumption taxes ceased to apply effective June 1, 2008 for all status Indians within Nisga'a Lands and for Nisga'a citizens elsewhere in Canada. Effective July 30, 2008, under a tax administration agreement with Canada, Canada collects and administers the Nisga'a Goods and Services tax on behalf of NLG. The Nisga'a Goods and Services Tax replaces the federal goods and services tax on Nisga'a Lands and is payable by both Nisga'a citizens and other person on Nisga'a Lands. Under the 2013 Provincial Sales Tax Revenue Sharing Agreement (PSTRSA), British Columbia shares 50 per cent of provincial sales tax revenues estimated to be attributable to Nisga'a citizens resident on Nisga'a Lands. The PSTRSA replaces all previous consumption taxation agreements between the Nisga'a Nation and British Columbia.

## Property Taxation

During the reporting period, the Nisga'a Nation implemented its property taxation authority under the Real Property Tax Co-ordination Agreement between the Nisga'a Nation and British Columbia. Commencing with the 2015 taxation year, the Nisga'a Nation levies and

collects real property taxes on properties held by both Nisga'a citizens and persons other than Nisga'a citizens on Nisga'a Lands.

All residents on Nisga'a Lands received a letter from British Columbia Assessment in early January after which Property Tax notices were issued from NLC's Property Tax Administrator. The assessment provided Nisga'a citizen homeowners with an initial objective valuation of their property. NLG managed the impact of these assessments through a series of measures similarly employed by governments throughout British Columbia, including the Home Owner Grant, the Low Income Grant Program, and exemptions for NLG's public service and other institutions.

The British Columbia Assessment system will be of enormous value to the Nisga'a Nation when industrial and commercial properties are developed on Nisga'a Land. The tax revenue from those developments will provide funding for infrastructure, as well as social and economic programs.

During the reporting period, British Columbia and the Nisga'a Nation concluded a Contribution Agreement for Policing and Law Enforcement Services Funding under the provincial *Police Act* in which Nisga'a Nation contributes to the cost of policing and law enforcement services on Nisga'a Lands. As a result of this Agreement, the Nisga'a Nation does not receive a requisition for provincial police taxes under the *Police Act* and police taxes do not apply on Nisga'a Lands.

British Columbia also consulted with the Nisga'a Nation during the reporting period on the drafting of the Hydro and Power Authority Annual Grants Order, which is an Order-in Council that provides the authority to BC Hydro to pay grants-in-lieu of property taxes to the Nisga'a Nation. Payment of these grants satisfies both an RPTCA obligation and a treaty obligation.

## Balanced Budget

During the reporting period, WSN passed a balanced final budget for fiscal year 2015-2016, as required by Nisga'a law.

## Youth in Government

From time immemorial, Nisga'a elders have selected youth and trained them to become leaders of their respective wilps (houses). In keeping with this tradition, Nisga'a Government continues to engage and train the leaders of tomorrow. NLG is committed to improving access for Nisga'a youth to programs and services by involving them in the social and economic decision-making of government. This is accomplished through the Nisga'a Youth Advisory Council (NYAC). Each Nisga'a Village and each Nisga'a Urban Local has its own Youth Council, which sends a representative to the seven-member NYAC.

In addition to taking an active role in government, Nisga'a youth participated in the following activities during the reporting period:

- + Nisga'a Youth and Elder workshops;
- + Nisga'a Youth Lisims Rafting Expedition and Cultural Camp;
- + Special Assembly;
- + Gathering Our Voices Indigenous Youth Training event;
- + Gathering Our Strength Canoe Journey.

*"We are Nisga'a, the people of K'alii-Aksim Lisims. May K'am Ligii Hahlhaahl continue to protect our land and nation."*

– Declaration of the Nisga'a Nation



## **Nisga'a Lisims Government — Transparency & Accountability**

A pillar in the foundation of good governance is a government's ability to maintain transparency and accountability in its day-to-day operation. The Constitution of the Nisga'a Nation (Nisga'a Constitution) came into effect on May 11, 2000, and provides for the establishment of Nisga'a Lisims Government, each of the four Nisga'a Village Governments, and the three Nisga'a Urban Locals. The Nisga'a Constitution further called for the establishment of Nisga'a Laws, which, among other things, contain provisions for transparency and accountability in government decision-making and financial administration.

One of over 239 laws enacted since the Effective Date, the *Nisga'a Government Act* stipulates requirements for the frequency of meetings of various bodies, such as WSN, the NLG Executive, the Council of Elders, and all other House committees of Nisga'a Government.

The *Nisga'a Government Act* also enforces the Members' Code of Conduct, which specifies requirements with respect to the conduct of each elected and appointed Nisga'a representative while serving in their official capacity.

The Nisga'a Government's standards of financial administration are comparable to standards generally accepted for governments in Canada. There are requirements in Nisga'a Laws for budgets, quarterly reports, annual reports, and audits of the financial activities of Nisga'a Government and Nisga'a Public Institutions.

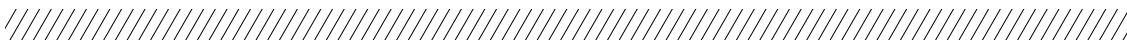
The *Nisga'a Financial Administration Act* stipulates details for oversight, management and control of all financial matters of the Nisga'a Nation, Nisga'a Government, and Nisga'a Public Institutions. Under the *Nisga'a Financial Administration Act* there must be an annual independent audit of financial statements of Nisga'a Government and Nisga'a Public Institutions, which is made available for inspection by Nisga'a citizens and is available on the Nisga'a Lisims Government website: [www.nisgaanation.ca](http://www.nisgaanation.ca).

The Nisga'a Nation is also accountable to the governments of Canada and British Columbia for the funding provided by those governments and fulfills this obligation by submitting reports and audits, annually or as required.

## Nisga'a Lisims Government — Summary Financial Information

All amounts are included in the March 31, 2016 audited consolidated financial statements of Nisga'a Lisims Government or have been calculated from those financial statements. The statements are available to all Nisga'a citizens by appointment, or on [www.nisgaanation.ca](http://www.nisgaanation.ca).

<b>Statement of operations and accumulated surplus</b>	<b>2016</b>	2015
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Fiscal Financing Agreement and related funding	\$ 63,230,432	\$ 60,103,740
Investment Income	14,283,720	13,861,056
Tax revenue	9,544,384	6,770,586
Share of commercial entities' revenue	3,074,991	2,130,832
Other revenues	6,079,803	14,238,581
	<b>96,213,330</b>	97,104,795
Operating expenses	43,779,878	36,846,483
Transfers and operating grants		
Nisga'a Village Governments	25,612,786	24,771,491
Nisga'a Valley Health Authority	16,164,921	16,051,474
Nisga'a School Board #92	8,304,271	7,187,799
Nisga'a Urban Locals	2,008,712	2,018,442
Wilp Wilxo'oskwahl Nisga'a	794,802	1,138,385
	<b>52,885,492</b>	51,167,591
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>(452,040)</b>	9,090,721
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	244,983,383	235,892,662
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>244,531,343</b>	244,983,383
<b>Consolidated Statement of Financial Position</b>	<b>2016</b>	2015
<b>FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		
Cash and other current assets	2,244,962	6,759,314
Accounts and loans receivable	2,532,410	3,145,333
Capital Finance Commission receivable	3,614,634	7,229,268
Designated cash	30,521,825	27,276,269
Designated trust funds	241,536,294	228,850,451
Investments in other entities	1,321,063	777,148
	<b>281,771,188</b>	274,037,783
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Bank indebtedness	140,824	–
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	23,145,402	17,260,461
Deferred revenues and deposits received	3,074,034	1,252,978
Funds held for silviculture	1,629,767	1,624,455
Treaty debt payable due to Lisims Forest Resource Limited Partnership	–	32,675
Capital Finance Commission deferred revenue	33,786,473	34,241,582
Long-term debt	2,434,414	2,920,427
	<b>64,210,914</b>	57,332,578
<b>NET FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>	<b>217,560,274</b>	216,705,205
<b>NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		
Tangible capital assets	26,360,437	27,558,611
Other non-financial assets	610,632	719,567
	<b>26,971,069</b>	28,278,178
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS</b>	<b>244,531,343</b>	244,983,383



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- + Nisga'a Lisims Government at 250-633-3000 or [www.nisgaanation.ca](http://www.nisgaanation.ca).

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/// **“We are Nisga’a**, the people of K̓’alii-Aksim Lisims. From time immemorial, we have lived in the lands that K’am Ligii Hahlhaahl gave to our ancestors.”

– Declaration of the Nisga’a Nation (1998)