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**Speaking Notes
for**

**Hon. Murray Rankin
Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation**

Estimates Speech

**BC Legislature
Date TBC
*Time TBC***

Word count: 1,300

MIRR KEY MESSAGES:

- **Budget 2021 supports our work across government to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and build a stronger, more inclusive economy for everyone.**
- **With funding across government for work between the Province and Indigenous peoples, Budget 2021 advances reconciliation, ensures Indigenous peoples are an important part of economic recovery, and supports continued implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.**
- **This work with Indigenous peoples supports sustainable, healthy and resilient Indigenous communities, which benefits everyone in the Province.**
- **Budget 2021 provides dedicated, annualized funding through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation for Indigenous participation in land and resource activities, negotiations, and engagement on legislation, policy and programs.**
- **Stable funding is vitally important to advance reconciliation consistent with the Declaration Act and enhance the relationships and collaborative work between the Province, First Nations, local governments, stakeholders and industry.**
- **New positions in key ministries will help ensure we have the necessary people in place to carry out our work together on reconciliation, including implementing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and reconciliation agreements between the Province and First Nations, particularly land transfers.**
- **Our government has developed new and innovative approaches and encouraged more flexibility in treaty- and agreement-making, which has led to progress at many negotiation tables.**
- **This includes important agreements in the past year with Lake Babine Nation, Coastal First Nations, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Heiltsuk Nation, and Huu-ay-aht First Nations.**
- **We need to work together to make a difference in the lives of Indigenous peoples through ongoing investments in COVID recovery, affordable housing, Indigenous language and culture, childcare, mental health and addictions, culturally safe health care, skills training, and economic development.**

2021 Estimates Speech

- It is my pleasure to speak today about Budget 2021.
- Acknowledge territory: Lekwungen [*Luh-KWUNG-in*] peoples and Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

[PAUSE]

- Joining us today are ministry staff including (TBC):
 - Deputy Minister Doug Caul, who is with me in the room, and
 - Assistant Deputy Ministers Wes Boyd, Jennifer Melles [*MELL-ess*], Jessica Wood, Trish Balcaen [*like Balkan*] – who are connected in virtually to support our dialogue here today
- Great honour to have been appointed Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

- A privilege to take part in my first Estimates debate.
- Acknowledge previous minister Scott Fraser...
- Relationships he built, and work he accomplished – including with the members joining us for these debates today
- Returning to the Ministry after many years away – remarkable changes
- Bring valuable perspective – all sides of the treaty table - worked for First Nations, government
- This diversity of experience will help in our work to advance reconciliation
- None of that experience, however, prepared me for being a minister during a global pandemic.

COVID-19

- Acknowledge strong response from First Nations leadership to keep members and therefore all of us safer
- Committed to continuing to work in partnership with Indigenous peoples to navigate this crisis safely together
- First item in mandate letter
- We have had some challenges as we navigate this unprecedented and protracted public-health emergency together...
- But we have also seen a new level of co-ordination and co-operation between government and Nations over the past 14 months.

- I see this as a concrete example of progress in shifting our government-to-government relationships
- That changing relationship is also evident with Indigenous peoples being prioritized for vaccinations
- First Nations communities have faced much higher risks from epidemics in the past...
- And COVID-19 is no different.
- Evidence shows that Indigenous peoples are disproportionately affected by COVID-19...
- Both with the rate of positive cases, and for hospitalizations and deaths.
- That why all Indigenous peoples 18 and older are eligible get their first dose of the vaccine

- Vaccines have been offered in all First Nations communities
- And more than 80,000 vaccines have been administered to First Nations peoples in B.C.
- Almost two million people in British Columbia overall now vaccinated with a first dose.
- This gives me great hope that things will soon improve for everyone
- But until we are through this, we must keep working together to get everyone through this safely

[PAUSE]

- Important discussions on economic recovery after COVID are also underway.

- As we continue to plan and roll out recovery efforts, First Nations' participation is vital.
- First Nations will have a strong voice in B.C.'s economic recovery planning
- The \$10-billion StrongerBC Economic Recovery Plan included significant funding to advance reconciliation and build a more inclusive economy. Such as:
 - \$90 million to support expansion of broadband to 200 rural and Indigenous communities
 - \$5 million to Indigenous Tourism BC to provide relief for Indigenous tourism operators.

[PAUSE]

Mandate

- As government takes actions to support the recovery, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples will remain a key principle
- Every minister has been tasked with advancing reconciliation, guided by the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act – passed unanimously in 2019
- Part of the implementation of the Declaration Act includes establishing a secretariat to co-ordinate this work, and delivering an Action Plan in consultation and co-operation with Indigenous peoples and that is work I'm honoured to be responsible for
- Our government has made substantial progress over the past few years – setting strong foundation for

our continuing work to advance true and meaningful reconciliation

- Together with Indigenous peoples, we have been working to build a more prosperous future, with revenue sharing and affordable housing.
- We have focused on language revitalization, a new First Nations justice strategy, a new K-to-12 curriculum so children are taught about Indigenous culture and history improving the child-welfare system.
- We are making innovative agreements with First Nations that support self-government and self-determination.

[PAUSE]

Reconciliation funding

- Budget 2021 continues to support this work.
- It advances reconciliation...ensures Indigenous peoples are an important part of economic recovery ... and supports continued implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.
- Of particular note for our ministry...
- Budget 2021 provides \$60 million in dedicated, annualized funding for Indigenous participation in land and resource activities
- This is dependable funding in our base budget for work that historically has been funded in an ad hoc way – out of contingencies
- It is now core funding...

- Supporting First Nations' engagement, stewardship, negotiations and economic development related to natural resources
- Work that is vitally important to advance reconciliation and enhance the relationships and collaborative activities between the Province, First Nations and industry.
- Budget 2021 also provides funding for 30 new positions to be split between my ministry and the Ministry of Forests and Lands...
- Making sure we have the necessary people in place to implement agreements, including land transfers
- We need to keep working together to make a difference in the lives of Indigenous peoples...
- And our government is doing that in Budget 2021...

- Through ongoing investments in COVID recovery... affordable housing... Indigenous language and culture... childcare... mental health and addictions supports... culturally safe health care... skills training... and economic development

[PAUSE]

Declaration Act

- Of course, there is another critically important part of our work on reconciliation in B.C.
- That is the ongoing implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act
- Its passage a year and a half ago was a historic moment – all parties united in a unanimous vote
- It gave us great responsibility to carry out what can only be described as generational work
- Work to start undoing 175 years and more of colonialism
- The bill was historic milestone – but it was just one step
- Now, we are into the real work

- My highest priority is to deliver a collaboratively developed action plan
- Act requires us to develop the plan in “consultation and co-operation with Indigenous peoples” – that is what we are doing
- The work of engaging deeply with First Nations and Indigenous peoples has been underway for a year now – despite the pressures on everyone from the global pandemic
- Expect to release a consultation draft of the action plan – built from our engagement with Indigenous peoples – in the coming weeks
- Will be launching a broad consultation process to seek further input from Indigenous Nations, organizations and from individual Indigenous people

- Also working on proposal for a secretariat to help co-ordinate reconciliation work across government – including alignment of laws
- Still in early conversations, but look forward to sharing more as plans come together

[PAUSE]

- Reconciliation is about working together, government-to-government, in respectful partnerships that recognize the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples.
- We are committed to doing that:
 - As we rebuild the province's economy after this pandemic

- As we negotiate treaties and other constructive agreements that bring lasting change
- And as we align our provincial laws with the human rights everyone must have.
- I know this is a big task, but I am eager to move it forward – with new energy and commitment.

Conclusion

- Important progress has been made since 2017
- And we have much more to do
- Declaration Act provides a path to meaningful reconciliation....
- Bringing clarity and predictability for businesses to collaborate and create successful partnerships with Indigenous Nations

- That work benefits Indigenous peoples, business and industry – and all British Columbians.
- As we continue to engage with the business community and international investors, it becomes more and more clear...
- Our work on reconciliation creates further predictability for investment – and a world-class destination for business opportunities...
- While also building an inclusive economy.
- ESG standards – or environmental, social, and governance standards – are growing considerations for investors around the world. And B.C. is building a competitive advantage in this area as a result of our work on reconciliation and climate action.
- As ESG becomes a leading guidepost for investment, jurisdictions with strong ESG track records are

well-positioned to attract international business and investment.

- B.C. can become a destination of choice for sustainable investment.

[PAUSE]

- By working together, we get better outcomes.
- That is how we create opportunities for Indigenous peoples, B.C. businesses, communities and families everywhere
- Thank you – I look forward to our discussion today

– END –

Confidential Issues Note - ADVICE TO MINISTER

Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Date: May 6, 2021 Minister Responsible: Hon. Murray Rankin	MIRR 2021/22 Budget
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TOP MESSAGE:

- **Budget 2021 supports our work across government to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and build a stronger, more inclusive economy for everyone.**

KEY MESSAGES:

- **With funding across government for work between the Province and Indigenous peoples, Budget 2021 advances reconciliation, ensures Indigenous peoples are an important part of economic recovery, and supports continued implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.**
- **This work with Indigenous peoples supports sustainable, healthy and resilient Indigenous communities, which benefits everyone in the Province.**
- **Budget 2021 provides dedicated, annualized funding through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation for Indigenous participation in land and resource activities, negotiations, and engagement on legislation, policy and programs.**
- **Stable funding is vitally important to advance reconciliation consistent with the Declaration Act and enhance the relationships and collaborative work between the Province, First Nations, local governments, stakeholders and industry.**
- **New positions in key ministries will help ensure we have the necessary people in place to carry out our work together on reconciliation, including implementing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and reconciliation agreements between the Province and First Nations, particularly land transfers.**
- **Our government has developed new and innovative approaches and encouraged more flexibility in treaty- and agreement-making, which has led to progress at many negotiation tables.**
- **This includes important agreements in the past year with Lake Babine Nation, Coastal First Nations, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Heiltsuk Nation, and Huu-ay-aht First Nations.**
- **We need to work together to make a difference in the lives of Indigenous peoples through ongoing investments in COVID recovery, affordable housing, Indigenous language and culture, childcare, mental health and addictions, culturally safe health care, skills training, and economic development.**

Confidential Issues Note - ADVICE TO MINISTER

BACKGROUND:

- The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation's (MIRR) 2021/22 budget is \$178.713million. This is an \$82.041-million increase (84.9%) from the previous year.
- \$77.621-million net increase to \$117.063 million for Treaty and Other Agreements. The majority of the increase is to meet funding obligations for this year that are in already-signed agreements, including \$12.8 million for LNG agreements being added to the base budget, which were previously in contingency, as well as \$60 million to move the Indigenous contingency funding program into the base budget.
- \$3.616-million net increase in the Ministry Operations budget to \$50.74 million. That includes a \$2.987-million increase to fund implementation resources (15 FTEs); \$295,000 to fund the Minister's Office; \$455,000 for negotiated wage increases and adjustments; and a \$120,000 reduction in maintenance costs for the Transforming First Nations Consultation Information System.
- The First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund increased \$1.067 million to \$9.268 million because the forecast for how much money will be returned to the fund through land and water rents associated with power projects has increased as projects come online.
- There was a decrease of \$263,000 to the First Citizen Fund to \$1.624 million, primarily due to decreasing investment fund revenues. Government is addressing the funding shortfall of the First Citizens Fund this year from contingencies.
- Financing transaction costs were added in Budget 2021 for private land purchases as part of treaty and other agreements, and to fund implementation of the long-term gaming revenue-sharing agreement, which start in 2021/22.

Contingency funding annualized into base budget

- Budget 2021 adds \$60 million in annual base funding to the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation to support Indigenous participation in land and resource activities, negotiations, and engagement on legislation, policy and programs.
- Funding for this work historically came from contingencies.
- Adding this funding, which is accessible by the five natural resource ministries, will support First Nations' engagement, stewardship, negotiations and economic development related to natural resources, which is vitally important to advance reconciliation and enhance the relationships and collaborative work between the Province, First Nations and industry.

Gaming revenue sharing

- In 2021/22, an estimated \$58.059 million will be distributed to First Nations through the First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Limited Partnership, equivalent to 7% of BCLC's net income for 2021/22. This is significantly lower than was estimated at the time the agreement was signed (approximately \$100 million annually) due to a decrease in BC Lottery Corporation revenue because of the pandemic.
- Two years of gaming revenue (\$194.84 million) was provided in 2019 through the interim gaming revenue-sharing agreement. Regular annual payments start in fiscal 2021/22.

Confidential Issues Note - ADVICE TO MINISTER

- Because payments are provided based on an estimate of the future year's revenues, under the agreement they need to be reconciled in a subsequent year. This means if revenues are lower or higher than anticipated, the over- or under-payment will be reconciled from a future year transfer.
- The significant drop in gaming revenues due to the pandemic is expected to affect the amount of revenue transferred in 2022 when the difference in estimated and actual revenues is reconciled for the 2019/20 payment. First Nations are expected to be concerned about receiving less revenue than expected. The First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Limited Partnership holds the responsibility for managing the revenues, including transfers to Nations and related communications.
- Government is currently in discussions with the First Nations Gaming Commission about the effects of the pandemic on Nations and the shared gaming revenues.

Minister's Office expenses

- A \$294,000 budget increase over last year's budget – from \$684,000 in 2020/21 to \$978,000 in 2021/21.
- Minister's Office budgets were reviewed as part of Budget 2021 and aligned to better reflect projected expenses.
- The 2021/22 increase supports a total of nine full-time positions, including the Minister, a net increase of two full-time positions.
- The office's budget also accounts for increased staffing costs due to temporary staff leaves, which can include things such as parental and medical leaves.

Communications contact: Cale Cowan

Program area contact: Ranbir Parmar/Michelle Roland

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

MIRR Budget 2021

May 4, 2021

KEY MESSAGES:

- **Budget 2021 supports our work across government to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and build a stronger, more inclusive economy for everyone.**
- **With funding across government for work between the Province and Indigenous peoples, Budget 2021 advances reconciliation, ensures Indigenous peoples are an important part of economic recovery, and supports continued implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.**
- **This work with Indigenous peoples supports sustainable, healthy and resilient Indigenous communities, which benefits everyone in the Province.**
- **Budget 2021 provides dedicated, annualized funding through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation for Indigenous participation in land and resource activities, negotiations, and engagement on legislation, policy and programs.**
- **Stable funding is vitally important to advance reconciliation consistent with the Declaration Act and enhance the relationships and collaborative work between the Province, First Nations, local governments, stakeholders and industry.**
- **New positions in key ministries will help ensure we have the necessary people in place to carry out our work together on reconciliation, including implementing the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and reconciliation agreements between the Province and First Nations, particularly land transfers.**
- **Our government has developed new and innovative approaches and encouraged more flexibility in treaty- and agreement-making, which has led to progress at many negotiation tables.**
- **This includes important agreements in the past year with Lake Babine Nation, Coastal First Nations, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Heiltsuk Nation, and Huu-ay-aht First Nations.**
- **We need to work together to make a difference in the lives of Indigenous peoples through ongoing investments in COVID recovery, affordable housing, Indigenous language and culture, childcare, mental health and addictions, culturally safe health care, skills training, and economic development..**

1. What's in Budget 2021 in MIRR for Indigenous peoples?

- Budget 2021 provides dedicated, annualized funding through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation for Indigenous participation in land and resource activities and negotiations, as well as engagement on legislation, policy and programs.
- This provides dedicated, dependable funding for work historically funded out of contingencies.
- Stable funding to support First Nations' engagement, stewardship, negotiations and economic development related to natural resources is vitally important to advance reconciliation and enhance the relationships and collaborative work between the Province, First Nations and industry.
- New positions in key ministries (Indigenous Relations and Forests and Lands) will help ensure we have the necessary people in place to carry out this work together, including implementing signed agreements with First Nations, including land transfers, and implementing the Declaration Act.

2. Have you consulted with First Nations on this budget?

- There is an extensive consultation process on the budget that is led by the legislature's select standing committee on finance, which provides opportunity for all to provide their perspectives on the budget.
- In addition, consistent with the Declaration Act, individual ministries consulted with Indigenous peoples and organizations on the development of the many initiatives included in Budget 2021, and there is more than \$290 million in funding to support reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.
- This includes \$45 million in funding to support the implementation of the In Plain Sight report, where government worked collaboratively with Indigenous peoples to better respond to the issue of systemic racism in the health-care sector.
- In addition, government is confirming \$180 million in stable, predictable funding to support a range of initiatives, including engagement with Indigenous peoples on matters such as land and resource activities, and reflects government's commitment to implementing the Declaration Act.

3. What is the ministry's total budget increase?

- MIRR's 2021/22 budget is \$178.713million. This is an \$82.041-million increase (84.9%) from the previous year, including \$2.987 million for new staff resources.

4. Why is the ministry's budget increasing?

- Like any government, we must manage various commitments over the course of the fiscal plan.
- This is primarily because we have added \$60 million in funding for our reconciliation work into the base budget, funding for activities that have historically been funded from contingencies.
- This funding supports ongoing negotiations and agreements with First Nations, resource development activities, and a wide variety of other activities, which include engagement with Indigenous groups on natural resource and economic development related initiatives.
- It also supports engagement on policy and legislation, stewardship and land-use planning, and strategic forestry agreements to meet legal obligations and expand the role of First Nations in the economy.

5. What are details for the net budget increase?

- \$84.855 million increase for agreements with First Nations (\$0.180 million decrease in treaty payments, \$80.031 million increase in non-treaty payments and \$5.004 million increase in revenue sharing); offset by:
 - \$7.234 million increased revenue sharing payments (\$5.358 million increase Forest Consultation & Revenue Sharing Agreements (FCRSA) and \$1.876 million increase in Economic & Community Development Agreements (ECDA) and Economic Benefits Agreements (EBA).
- \$1.067 million increase to the First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund.
- \$2.987 million on staff resources to support implementation of the Declaration Act and signed agreements – these are net new positions.
- \$455,000 increase for negotiated wage increases under the Sustainable Services Mandate and
- \$294,000 increase to the Minister's Office
- \$263,000 decrease to the First Citizens Fund
- \$120,000 reduction in maintenance costs to the Transforming First Nations Consultation Information System (TFNCI).

6. Why is there a large increase of \$77.621 million in 2021/22 to fund treaty and other agreements?

- The ministry budget is funded to match the ongoing cost of signed agreements.
- \$80.031 million increase in non-treaty payments, which includes:
 - \$180,000 decrease in treaty payments
 - \$2.230-million net increase in revenue recoveries to fund revenue-sharing agreements
- The increase in non-treaty payments includes \$60 million added as annualized funding for the ministry's budget to support First Nations' engagement, stewardship, negotiations and economic development related to natural resources.
- \$12.8 million is also being added to the base budget to support commitments under LNG agreements.
- Both activities have previously been funded out of contingencies on an ad-hoc basis. Stable, predictable funding will support the ministry's work to advance reconciliation and build partnerships between First Nations, government and industry.

7. How will the addition of \$60 million in base budget funding be used?

- This funding supports ongoing negotiations and agreements with First Nations.
- This includes resource development and activities such as engagement with Indigenous groups on natural resource and economic development related initiatives on policy and legislation, stewardship and land-use planning, strategic forestry agreements to support legal obligations and expand First Nations' role in the economy.
- This may include engagement on activities on the land in Nations' territories under various policies and legislation, such as
 - Forest and Range Practices Act
 - Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy
 - Heritage Conservation Act
 - Remote communities energy strategy
 - Timber supply review
 - BC flood risk strategy (*continued next page*)

- Also, engagement on stewardship initiatives that may include:
 - Environmental and collaborative stewardship forums across BC
 - Aboriginal Liaison and other guardian programs
 - Marine Planning Partnership with Coastal First Nations/Nanwakolas Council
 - Land-use planning engagement across the province
- The funding also includes strategic forestry initiatives to support legal obligations and expand First Nations' role in the economy.
- And the capacity to negotiate various reconciliation agreements, economic and community development agreements, strategic engagement agreements, groundwater allocations with Maa-nulth treaty Nations, and cannabis agreements.

8. What is the purpose of the financing transactions allocated to the Ministry?

- Financing transactions for land transfers allow the ministry to purchase private land as part of treaty or other agreements. Planned land purchases for 2021/22 are \$32.57 million, which is a \$17.57 million increase from 2020/21.
- Financing transactions for the BC First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Limited Partnership has been added in Budget 2021, allowing the ministry to start sharing gaming revenues.
- Financing transaction costs were added in Budget 2021.

9. Why was there an increase for operations of the Minister's Office?

- My office's budget has increased to reflect our government's new mandate, and our high standards for public engagement and working across government to fix problems and find solutions for British Columbians.
- As we continue to continue to support people through the pandemic and work to build a Stronger BC for everyone, we strongly believe in the value of meaningful communication and consultation with the diverse people and sectors in British Columbia.
- The budget for the Minister's Office for 2021/22 is \$978,000; a net increase of \$294,000 from 2020/21.
- The 2021/22 increase supports a total of nine full-time positions, including the Minister, a net increase of two full-time positions.
- The office's budget also accounts for increased staffing costs due to temporary staff leaves, which can include things such as parental and medical leaves.

10. Given the decline in gaming revenues from the pandemic and closure of casinos, what is the expected impact on the shared gaming revenues with First Nations?

- The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound and unprecedented effect on provincial, federal and global economies throughout all sectors.
- Under the Gaming Control Act and the Province's long-term agreement with First Nations, the Province shares 7% of gaming revenues with First Nations in B.C.
- In 2021/22 it is estimated just over \$58 million will be distributed to First Nations through the First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Limited Partnership.
- Casinos have now been fully closed for more than a year and as a result, BCLC net income is significantly lower than originally projected.
- We recognize that Nations have been counting on the gaming revenues to fund many needed priorities in their communities.
- We are in discussion with the Limited Partnership about the effect of the pandemic on gaming revenues.

11. Are any measures being considered to deal with this shortfall and the effect it will have on First Nations communities?

- No decisions have been made at this point.
- We anticipate the need to discuss the implications of the shortfall with the First Nations Gaming Commission, but we have not had those discussions yet.

12. Did lower revenue also affect what was shared as part of the two-year pre-payment in 2019? If so, what is the remedy for that?

- In 2019, the Province paid the First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Limited Partnership \$196.84 million, which was two years' worth of gaming revenue based on BC Lottery Corporation's (BCLC) estimated net income for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 fiscal years.
- The pandemic significantly affected BCLC's operations in 2020/21, namely with the ongoing closure of casinos through measures put in place to safeguard the health of British Columbians.
- BCLC's actual net income for 2020/21 is expected to be significantly lower than projected before the pandemic.
- We will know the full extent when the Public Accounts are completed later this summer.
- The agreement contains provisions for reconciling the difference between actual and estimated net income through future years' payments. Both the 2019/20 and 2020/21 payments will be reconciled in the 2022/23 payment, so not for another year.
- In the meantime, no decisions have been made.
- We anticipate the need to discuss the implications of the shortfall with the First Nations Gaming Commission, but we have not had those discussions to this point.

13. How does gaming revenue sharing with First Nations work?

- A commitment to share \$3 billion in revenue with First Nations over the next 25 years is supporting self-government and self-determination, strong, healthy communities and services that make life better for families.
- Like every government, First Nations need stable, predictable sources of revenue to fund their priorities – critical things for every government, such as infrastructure, services that build healthy communities and the staff to get it done.
- All First Nations communities in B.C. are eligible to become members of the First Nations Gaming Revenue Sharing Limited Partnership. The Province has an agreement with the Limited Partnership to share 7% of provincial gaming revenues, and the partnership then transfers the funding to First Nations based on a formula developed in consultation with First Nations.
- Each First Nation that participates in the revenue-sharing agreement can use the gaming revenue to support priorities for its community, such as enhanced social services, education, housing, infrastructure, cultural revitalization and self-government capacity.

14. In response to criticism from the First Nations Leadership Council, what is in this budget to address important issues for First Nations communities?

- The First Nations Leadership Council has highlighted the importance of our focus on pandemic response and recovery, and other key investments we're making to help people and support our economy.
- I value their feedback on where they want to see more attention – aquaculture, forest policy, the Indigenous justice sector, and working to bring the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act to life.
- Every insight is valuable – as we are committed to making progress in those areas as well.
- We have also provided funding across government for work between the Province and Indigenous peoples
- This budget advances reconciliation, ensures Indigenous peoples are an important part of economic recovery, and supports continued implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.
- We are providing dedicated, annualized funding through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation for Indigenous participation in land and resource activities and negotiations, as well as engagement on legislation, policy and programs.
- And we are making sure we have the necessary people in place to carry out this work together.
- We know there is more work to do and we greatly value the views of Indigenous partners in helping all people recover from this pandemic and build a better province for the future.

15. The First Nations Leadership Council is also calling for an MMIWG national action plan and calls for justice. Has this been addressed?

- Violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit Peoples remains an urgent issue in our province and across the country.
- The Calls for Justice in the National Inquiry's Final Report continue to guide our work as we go forward.
- Community-based engagement to collaborate on concrete steps have been undertaken and we are committed to developing a path forward that will be directly informed by survivors, family members and communities.
- Dismantling the underlying and systemic issues that result in Indigenous women experiencing violence at a much higher rate than non-Indigenous women is fundamental to our work toward true and lasting reconciliation.
- We'll continue to work directly with Indigenous communities and organizations on creating a path forward.

16. Is there action on a cannabis strategy and legalization for First Nations?

- The Province is committed to supporting Indigenous participation in the emerging legal cannabis industry and building positive relationships with Indigenous governments.
- The joint Provincial-First Nations Leadership Council Working Group on Cannabis serves as a key forum for identifying and engaging on Indigenous interests in cannabis.

17. Will the ministry restore the level of funding to the First Citizens Fund seen four years ago?

- The First Citizens Fund is a special fund within government's Consolidated Revenue Fund and the monies do not come from the ministry budget.
- Recent low interest rates have affected the revenue that supports programs and will provide approximately \$1.6 million to support programs in 2021/22, which is down from \$1.9 million in 2020/21.
- This funding supports Indigenous small business development, First Nations language preservation, bursaries for Indigenous post-secondary students, and assistance for elders to attend their annual gathering.
- The First Citizens Fund also provides \$600,000 annually to the First Peoples' Cultural Council to support Indigenous language revitalization.

18. How are you supporting Indigenous language revitalization and culture?

- We are committed to continuing our collaborative efforts to revitalize and preserve Indigenous languages.
- Due to the unprecedented circumstances during the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some funding remains from the \$50-million investment for Indigenous language revitalization. This funding will be allocated in 2021/22.
- We are committed to extend support for cultural preservation and revitalization by funding key projects designed to preserve and respect Indigenous cultures, including the retention and revitalization of First Nations languages.
- We are working with partner ministries (Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sports, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource and Rural Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Children and Family Development) to explore a longer-term sustainable approach to support First Peoples Cultural Council's work in language revitalization, cultural heritage and arts.
- Our ministry also plans to engage with the federal government to potentially leverage additional federal support for the First Peoples Cultural Council.
- We also support the work of the Ministry of Education to put more Indigenous languages into B.C.'s curriculum, as well as supporting the work of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy to reflect Indigenous peoples' history and cultures in provincial parks and wilderness areas.
- Only if asked: The amount remaining is approximately \$10 million to support FPCC language programs.

19. Why is the ministry increasing funding to the First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund?

- The Province is increasing funding for First Nations clean-energy projects by \$1.067 million to \$9.268 million for the 2021/22.
- We are increasing funding by \$970,000 for sharing with First Nations.
- We are increasing administrative costs by \$97,000 to upgrade and maintain the fund.
- Additional funding has also been dedicated to helping remote First Nations communities reduce reliance on diesel-powered generators.
- The forecast for how much money will be returned to the fund through land and water rents associated with power projects has increased as projects come online, making this increase possible.

20. Has the budget been increased for the Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreements (FCRSA)?

- B.C. will continue to fund the current Forest Consultation and Revenue Sharing Agreement program through Treaty and Other Agreements funding vote. \$56 million has been budgeted for 2021/22.
- That's a net increase of \$3 million from 2020/21 and is primarily a result of increased stumpage values projecting higher returns.
- Revenue sharing is based on a percentage of forest revenues in the district and a return on the stumpage paid:
 - 3% of forest revenues in district and 35% return on stumpage paid;
 - 4% of revenue and 50% return if they are in a Strategic Engagement Agreement; and
 - 5% of revenue and 75% return if they are in a Reconciliation Agreement,
- Each agreement has a minimum annual payment of \$35,000.

21. How has government supported Aboriginal Friendship Centres?

- Aboriginal friendship centres are key partners in supporting urban Indigenous people who can face complex social challenges.
- In 2018, the ministry tripled funding for friendship centres and made it annual, reliable funding so they can focus on their important work.
- The ministry also provided \$7.8 million funding to friendship centres to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, in light of a significant increase in demand for services from Indigenous peoples living in urban areas. This funding is helping assist individuals, young families, single parents, youth and Elders through a mix of in-person and online services.

22. Is government still committed to funding for First Nations related to LNG? Are you still negotiating LNG agreements with First Nations?

- There is \$12.8 million in this budget for agreements related to the LNG Canada project.
- The Province is continuing with several LNG-related negotiations. These negotiations include completing agreements with First Nations associated with the LNG Canada/Coastal Gaslink and Woodfibre/Eagle Mountain LNG projects.
- For agreements completed between the Province and First Nations, as projects meet construction thresholds and begin operation, further benefits will be provided.
- Our government has made it clear that any proposed LNG project must respect and include First Nations as partners and also protect the environment.

