

MINISTRY OF ABORIGINAL RELATIONS
AND RECONCILIATION
BRIEFING NOTE

Date: July 25, 2014
Ref. No. 34930

File: 280-20

I Prepared for the **INFORMATION** of Honourable John Rustad, Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation

II ISSUE:

Wet'suwet'en First Nation Healing Project, August 8, 2014 from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm at the Wet'suwet'en First Nation's Necigeh Beyikh Hall.

III BACKGROUND:

CN/ED _____

ADM _____

DM _____

On February 14, 2014, the Honourable John Rustad, and on March 7, 2014, the Honourable John Rustad and the Honourable Rich Coleman, Deputy Premier and Minister of Natural Gas Development and Minister Responsible for Housing met with Chief Karen Ogen, and other representatives of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation (WFN). At these meetings, commitments were made regarding exploring a healing process for the mill workers and the families of the workers who were lost in the Babine Forest Products Mill fire. There were nineteen men injured and two First Nations men who lost their lives.

The WFN submitted a proposal on March 27, 2014 for a facilitated meeting between representatives of the Provincial Government and the mill workers and their families (see Appendix 1). A shared cost arrangement was signed on April 1, 2014 supporting a one day, facilitated session in Burns Lake (see Appendix 2).

IV DISCUSSION:

Kim Baird was retained, by the WFN, to organize and facilitate the session. Ms. Baird has been working closely with staff on the design and delivery of the session.

The purpose is to identify how the Province, the First Nation and the workers can work together to assist the workers through the trauma they are experiencing. The session will be an opportunity for those who were impacted to share their experiences and challenges, as well as, their hopes, aspirations and solutions for the journey of healing and recovery.

The day is structured to provide an opportunity in the morning for all participants to share their experiences and how they are feeling through a facilitated process. The afternoon will be looking for ideas for moving forward. The session will be recorded, potential actions will be captured on flip charts and a final report will be provided.

The Coroner's Office is aware of the project and is supportive. They have met with families of the deceased to explain the process involved in a Coroner's Inquest. They would be interested in the outcomes of the session and would likely be available to meet with the WFN to explain the process if requested.

Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training staff who were involved in the initial provincial response to the fire are aware of the project.

V CONCLUSION:

The session is for listening and for finding ways to support the families and community through this difficult time while meeting the commitments made at the earlier meetings with the Wet'suwet'en First Nation.

Appendix 1: WFN Proposal

Appendix 2: Shared Cost Agreement

Appendix 3: Draft Agenda

Appendix 4: Draft Invitation

Drafter: Susan Kelly, Director, (250)387-2536

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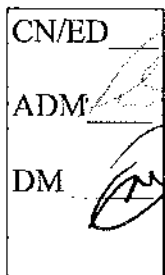
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