



Upper Similkameen Indian Band

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COMMUNITY TO COMMUNITY FORUM PROJECT

Upper Similkameen Indian Band

Town of Princeton

Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen – Areas G and H

-- FINAL REPORT --

Submitted by:

Upper Similkameen Indian Band

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Submitted to:

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BACKGROUND

On March 6, 2006, an application for Community to Community Forum funding was developed by the Upper Similkameen Indian Band, in collaboration with the Town of Princeton, and Areas G and H of the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen to hold a community to community meeting to review a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the USIB and Princeton in 2001 but never implemented by the parties. There were six actions identified as priorities in the 2001 MOU. The current Community to Community Forum was developed to determine if these actions were still relevant and if so, would the parties re-commit to their implementation, possibly under an expanded group including Areas G and H.

A particular area of interest to the USIB is the development of an accord or protocol concerning the protection of cultural heritage resources on lands under local government planning jurisdiction within the Band's territory.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Upper Similkameen Valley local governments and the Upper Similkameen Indian Band have been meeting for several years in order to improve communications and collaborate on a number of mutual objectives. In May, 2001 an MOU was signed by the Upper Similkameen Indian Band (USIB), the Town of Princeton and Area H of the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen.

The focus of the Community to Community Forum will be to reach agreement on the need to develop a Cultural Heritage Resources Accord, as a function of the MOU, and to identify the elements of this accord, a timeline and budget for its completion. A follow up application to the Community to Community Forum program will be provided in early April of 2006 to seek funding support for additional community to community meetings as required to complete the Accord.

Our specific objectives for the proposed community to community meeting are:

- USIB to provide information on the rationale and benefits for establishing a Cultural Heritage Resources Accord, and its link to the existing Government-Government MOU.
- Facilitated discussion to determine level of interest in the proposed Accord, identify key issues and concerns, and actions to address these.
- Develop a communications plan to ensure support from local government and First Nation constituencies in the Upper Similkameen Valley.

PARTICIPANTS

Local Governments: Areas G and H, Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen, Town of Princeton

First Nations: Upper Similkameen Indian Band

OUTCOMES

The Community to Community meeting was held in Princeton on March 27th. The participants were:

Rick Holmes – Chief, Upper Similkameen Indian Band
Miranda Squakin – Councillor – Upper Similkameen Indian Band
Randy McLean – Mayor, Town of Princeton
Jim Manion – Councillor, Town of Princeton
Ray Jarvis – Councillor, Town of Princeton
Pam Jones – Councillor, Town of Princeton
Gerri Logan – Director, RDOS Area H
Joe Nitsch – Director, RDOS Area G
Philippe Batini – Band Manager, Upper Similkameen Indian Band
Patrick Robins – Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Princeton
Brenda Gould – Archaeologist, USIB
Robert Hutton – facilitator/recorder

The expected results will include: (i) an agreement to proceed with the development of a Cultural Heritage Resources Accord, including a terms of reference for future community to community meetings required to complete the accord; (ii) A budget and timeframe for developing the Cultural Heritage Resources Accord; (iii) a project report, containing all results from the Community to Community Forum.

The key discussion points from the meeting were:

- ❖ After a round of introductions, a description of the purpose of this meeting was provided by Philippe Batini and Rob Hutton.
- ❖ The Town of Princeton, the Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen Chair and the Upper Similkameen Indian Band have had intermittent meetings over the past few years but there has not been a coordinated and ongoing communication or action strategy put into place. To ensure that we don't let the actions on the agreement 'slip' again, we should have regular meetings with an organized agenda.
- ❖ Most of the people here today were not involved with the 2001 MOU and so it will take some time to become acquainted with it and think about whether it needs to be amended. However, the two original signers are currently sitting politicians, so there is some continuity.

- ❖ The local governments would like to see a map of the Band’s traditional territory overlaid onto a map showing the local government jurisdictions. “Our cultures are intertwined; it only makes sense that we work together.”
- ❖ The Upper Similkameen Indian Band has a very active archaeology department and has been involved in a number of negotiations with provincial agencies and resource development companies. On the provincial side, these negotiations have to a significant degree been focussed on protection of the Band’s archaeological resources as well as addressing other aboriginal interests. Recently, an agreement was initialled between the USIB and the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. This agreement lays out an efficient process for addressing a range of referrals which fall under the *Mines Act* of BC.
- ❖ The USIB feels that agreements with other governments can be a useful tool to standardize practices and procedures, and improve overall communications.
- ❖ The Town of Princeton recognizes the importance of preserving the archaeology of the area and recognizes that culture and history is a vital asset for the Upper Similkameen valley. The Town is mindful of the need to keep processes simple and to not take on new responsibilities that cannot be fulfilled because of a lack of funds or human resources. If the Province intends to offload responsibility to local governments for ensuring the protection of archaeological resources, it is important to be ready for that and to work with the USIB to keep the process from being too onerous on local government, the development community or landowners.
- ❖ The Town of Princeton intends to review and revise the existing OCP – now would be a good time to look at incorporating any archaeological information and planning requirements into the development permitting process.
- ❖ The history of the Princeton area is rich. It would be a good idea to record surviving Elders’ knowledge and gather any other interviews that have been done in the past and combine into a book or other documentation before we lose this information.
- ❖ There should, at some point in these discussions, be some involvement of the people who might be the most affected, such as developers and realtors. Information should be available in paper form and through meetings.
- ❖ When and how to involve the public and development community needs to be discussed further.
- ❖ All local governments wish to move ahead to the next steps.

The **action items** arising from the discussion were:

1. Everyone is to go back and review the 2001 MOU, write down questions, comments or ideas and be prepared to discuss these at the next meeting.
2. The first 4 actions items from the 2001 MOU are likely to be the focus of an action plan for the coming year. These deal with establishing a **communications protocol**, a **dispute prevention and information sharing process**, a **cultural heritage resources protection accord**, and an **archaeological resources mapping system**.

3. Draft wording for a Press Release that outlines the general intent and issues discussed in this meeting is to be prepared by March 30th and circulated to the USIB, Areas G and H, and the Town of Princeton. The press release is to be provided to the local newspaper within a week of this meeting.
4. Other examples of procedures or protocols involving the protection of archaeological resources need to be sourced to determine if we can learn from the successes of others.
5. Locate and distribute to local government representatives the soon-to-be-released policy that will effectively download archaeological resource protection responsibility to local government.
6. Date for next meeting – May 2nd at 5:30 pm, the Hitching Post Restaurant, Hedley.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The following table outlines the actual costs incurred to date. The group wishes to submit a new application to the UBCM for additional Community to Community Forum funding to continue working on this initiative.

Expenditure item	In-kind, USIB	In-kind-local govt	UBCM C-C Forum
Facilitator/Project Consultant – fees	\$900.00	\$0.00	\$1,150.00
Facilitator/Project Consultant – travel	0.00	0.00	258.50
Local govt/FN reps-travel	225.00	70.00	0.00
Materials & supplies	50.00	0.00	0.00
A/V Equipment rental	100.00	0.00	0.00
Meals	0.00	0.00	262.81
Room rental	100.00	0.00	0.00
Project admin costs	250.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS:	\$1,625.00	\$70.00	\$1,671.31

APPENDICES

1. Memorandum of Understanding (2001) signed between the Upper Similkameen Indian Band and the Town of Princeton (attached in separate file).