

Newsletter of the Nanwakolas Council

AWEENAK'OLA



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Leading the Way to Management of Our Territories

In the April 2014 issue of this newsletter, we reported on the process that Nanwakolas Council was co-leading with the provincial government to develop a marine plan for northern Vancouver Island.

By then, the Nanwakolas member Nations had each successfully completed individual marine plans for their territories, and a joint regional plan incorporating their common vision for management of Nanwakolas member Nation territories, the Ha-ma-yas, had been collaboratively developed. The interests of the Nanwakolas member Nations expressed in their individual plans and the common vision set out in Ha-ma-yas were brought to the table by Nanwakolas Council in the development of the joint Nanwakolas/provincial government Marine Plan.

We also brought a clear message with us: the Nanwakolas member Nations will decide what is required to protect our territories, to sustain our communities and to protect our Aboriginal rights and title and way of life that goes back for millennia in this region.

I am delighted to report that last December Nanwakolas Council and the provincial government reached agreement on the North Vancouver Island Marine Plan, which incorporates the interests of the Nanwakolas member Nations, and the collective Ha-ma-yas vision. The Plan was signed in April this year. On page 2, we tell you more about the Plan and what will be happening next out on the water in the territories.

A priority that the Nations have emphasized to us over the course of this process, and in the development of the Community Wellbeing Strengthening Plan (which we told you about in the last issue of Aweenak'ola) is training for community members. On page 7, you can read about some of the successful programs that have been introduced over the last few months, and how you can participate in upcoming training programs that will be taking place.

We hope you enjoy this issue, and wish everyone a happy summer out in the territories.

Dallas W. Smith, President, Nanwakolas Council

“This is one of the greatest steps forward we have made in many years. I’m so happy this Plan is in place. There is still a lot of hard work ahead of us to implement it but I know many great things will be coming out of that work.”

CHIEF HAROLD SEWID, MAMALILIKULLA-QWE’QWA’SOT’EM

A Dream Becomes Reality: The Completion of the North Vancouver Island Marine Plan

In April this year, after three years of hard work and collaborative efforts on the part of Nanwakolas Council and the provincial government, the North Vancouver Island Marine Plan was signed by both parties.

At the signing ceremony, which was held at the BC Legislature in Victoria, Nanwakolas President Dallas Smith told a packed room: “This has been a tremendous journey. We’ve come a long way in this process, and built tremendous relationships along the way. It’s given us the opportunity to have



PHOTO COURTESY OF GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

FRONT, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: DON ROBERTS (CHIEF, KITSUMKALUM), DALLAS SMITH (PRESIDENT, NANWAKOLAS COUNCIL), STEVE THOMSON (MINISTER, FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS), JOHN RUSTAD (MINISTER, ABORIGINAL RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION), PETER LANTIN (PRESIDENT, COUNCIL OF THE HAIDA NATION), DOUG NEASLOSS (CHIEF COUNCILLOR, KITASOO XAI’XAIS), HEREDITARY CHIEF BILL CRANMER. REAR, DRUM AND DANCE TEAM, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: TYLER CRANMER, CURTIS WILSON, EDGAR CRANMER, KEVIN CRANMER, ELI CRANMER.

the conversations required to ensure that development on our coast is sustainable, meaningful and inclusive of First Nations communities.”

Mamalilikulla-Qwe’Qwa’Sot’Em Chief Harold Sewid, who is a member of the Nanwakolas Chiefs’ Board, participated in the planning committee process. Chief Sewid reflects: “Working together as a Nanwakolas team gave us the strength and the power to make things happen. This was a great process and a great result. Now we can expect true collaboration on management of our territories.”

John Bones, Nanwakolas Marine Planning Coordinator, is justifiably proud of what has been accomplished by the Nanwakolas team: “It’s a very significant accomplishment to achieve this substantial planning outcome in just three years, with a plan that really reflects the interests and priorities of the Nanwakolas communities for what should happen in the marine environment within their territories.”

How it all began

As some readers may remember from the April 2014 issue of Aweenak’ola, in 2011, thanks in part to consistent pressure from Nanwakolas, the Marine Planning Partnership for the North Pacific Coast (MaPP for short) was created. With funding provided by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the MaPP partnership of eighteen First Nations (including the Nanwakolas Nations) and the provincial government began developing four regional marine plans for the northern coast of BC, covering Haida Gwaii, the North Coast, the Central Coast, and North Vancouver Island (NVI).

“I’d like to acknowledge the visionary leadership of the Nanwakolas Chiefs who brought forward their First Nations’ dreams of having management control over their territories, and with the collaboration of our partners, are turning that dream into reality, one step at a time.”

DALLAS SMITH, PRESIDENT, NANWAKOLAS COUNCIL

Nanwakolas co-led the development of the NVI Plan with the provincial government. First, however, each of the Nanwakolas Nations completed comprehensive individual plans for the marine areas within their own territories. A document called the Ha-Ma-Yas was then created to integrate the individual documents into a regional plan reflecting their collective vision, common values, principles and zones for marine management.

With a clear understanding of the regional and individual interests and priorities of the Nanwakolas Nations in hand, the joint provincial/Nanwakolas NVI Plan was then developed. The views of third party stakeholders like recreational fishing guides and kayak tour operators were also gathered, with the final content of the NVI plan determined by Nanwakolas and BC.

What’s in the NVI Plan

The area covered by the Plan—more than 8,000 square kilometres—includes the marine territories of the seven Nanwakolas Nations, from Quadra Island and Bute Inlet in the south to the northern tip of Vancouver Island and beyond into Queen Charlotte Strait.

The Plan’s Introduction explains: “The Plan brings together science, technical information, traditional and local knowledge and input from public and stakeholder engagement.” Based on that information, objectives and strategies for managing various uses of the marine environment and activities in it are set out in the Plan. Areas are also zoned either for special uses, protection or general use.

These objectives, strategies and zones will be used in making management decisions about sustainable economic development and stewardship of the coast. The vision is that long term implementation of the Plan will result in improved wellbeing for the people and communities within the Plan area, increased economic opportunities and ocean conservation in this ecologically significant part of the world.

“Our Nations worked together with the Province to build a common vision that will lead to certainty and sustainability,” explains Dallas Smith. “This Plan is a vital step to including the marine environment into that common vision.”

The Plan doesn’t include management of activities within federal government jurisdiction, as the federal government chose not to participate in the planning process. John Bones notes: “There are many things in the NVI Plan that have implications for federal activities. We are aware that the federal government is investigating ways of doing cumulative impact assessment and ecosystem health monitoring, for example. Accordingly, there is an open invitation from

BC'S APPROACH TO THE NVI MARINE PLAN

Matthew Justice, a senior marine resource specialist with the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, says that the provincial government approached the marine planning process from an ecosystem-based management perspective.

"There are three pillars to that: how the environment of the Plan area is to be maintained in a healthy state, improving governance of the area, and increasing opportunities for sustainable economic activity that fits with the Plan's objectives," says Justice.

He found the collaborative planning process to be a valuable and positive experience: "That's the case at so many levels. To have achieved this plan in less than three years is very impressive, and the Plan is very substantial. It contains many objectives for improving the governance and health of the northern Vancouver Island marine environment. It provides the base for lots of training opportunities that will help support those objectives as well."

Justice considers that the marine planning process was also ground-breaking: "This was a unique opportunity for BC to work collaboratively on this scale with the First Nations up and down the coast, and build plans together that incorporated not only their objectives and local expertise and knowledge but which also included feedback contributed by other groups such as local governments, businesses and recreational users of the marine environment."

He believes that it "speaks volumes" for the process that the majority of these groups enthusiastically supported the final Plan, which previously wasn't always the case. "I'm sure that was the direct result of their feeling involved and heard. The provincial government really appreciated how open the Nanwakolas Nations were to including these groups as advisors to the planning process."

"The result of the collaboration between the provincial government and the Nanwakolas Nations," concludes Justice, "is that the Plan now sets out a clear guide to what should be happening on this part of the coast. It will help management of the marine environment be more effective and efficient because everyone understands and supports the objectives in it. That's good for everyone involved."

The story of the development of the NVI Plan (and the Ha-Ma-Yas Marine Plan that it is based on), as well as a more detailed description of its contents, was included in the April 2014 edition of Aweenakola, which can be read on our website at www.nanwakolas.com/sites/default/files/NANWAKOLAS-newsletter-april2014-web.pdf.

The Plan, and a map showing the area it covers, can also be read in full at www.nanwakolas.com.

Nanwakolas and BC to the federal government to collaborate with us on implementation of the Plan. We expect that they will be interested in doing so.”

What happens next

The Nanwakolas team are now working with the parties to the three other regional marine plans and with the Province to develop a framework for regional coordination.

“There are greater efficiencies to be gained if certain interests that we all have in common are managed together,” explains John Bones. For example, every plan has identified the measuring of ecological health as a key activity. “There’s no point in setting up four separate monitoring systems, so that’s a good one to work on together. We can work out what kind of information-sharing would be required and how to do it across the whole region more effectively than separately.”

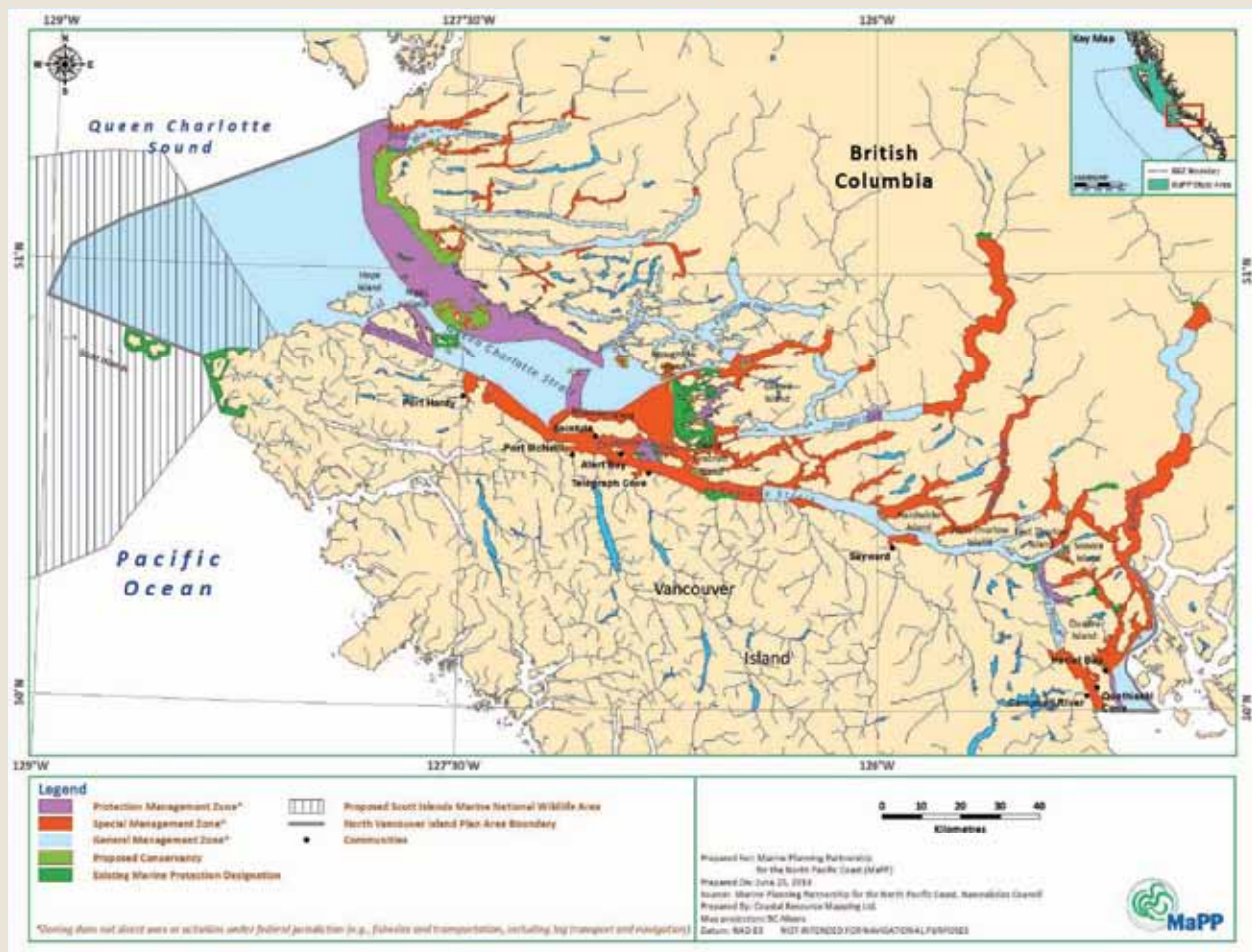
The framework will be in place in the next few months, as will an implementation agreement with the provincial

government. “Based on the individual priorities of each of the Nanwakolas Nations, the Chiefs’ Board is looking at the overall priorities and timeline for implementation of those priorities, and the appropriate allocation of implementation funding over time,” says Bones.

Priorities and funding allocations will be decided annually by the Nanwakolas Chiefs’ Board. Funding for the first twelve months of implementation is in place, and work is under way to source longer term funding through the Moore Foundation and other donors.

What the NVI Plan will mean out on the water

“This is a very exciting time for us,” says Chief Harold Sewid enthusiastically. “With the certainty that the Plan provides to us and the management control we are exercising in our territory, we will have a much greater presence on the water. We’ll be doing work that wasn’t being done previously, like monitoring the health of shellfish in our marine environment.”



MAP OF THE NVI PLAN BOUNDARIES AND ZONES.



'NAMGIS HEREDITARY CHIEF BILL GRANMER AT THE NVI PLAN SIGNING CEREMONY AT THE BC LEGISLATURE.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Chief Sewid continues: “We will also be growing our tourism activities and our Guardian program. That program is really turning into something to be reckoned with. We now have fulltime Guardians monitoring the traffic and activities in the territory. I can also envision economic opportunities through the Plan. There is a huge opportunity for shellfish aquaculture here, for example.”

He says that additional training is already underway for Watchmen staff, including tourism guiding skills. “The Guardians are a very helpful resource for tourists, because they are so knowledgeable. It’s exciting to see that happen. It’s exciting to see the dream we have been working for become reality on the water this way, and it’s just going to grow and grow.”

“I’d also like to acknowledge BC for its approach to co-leadership of development and implementation of the Plan,” he adds. “That’s going to be good for everyone.” He points to the shellfish health monitoring as a good example of that: “With more consistent, year-round monitoring taking place by our Guardians, that will enable decisions about opening the shellfish season to be made more often, or earlier, than it has in the past, so we’re pleased about that, and so is everyone who likes to gather shellfish.”

John Bones says: “For all the Nanwaḱolas communities, the Plan has real significance because so many of the things they want to see happening in their territories are in it.” Bones describes the planning process that has led to that result as “phenomenal, trend-setting” work that will have a real and meaningful impact on management of the marine environment in Nanwaḱolas Nation territories.

“In their individual plans, every Nanwaḱolas Nation now has a blueprint for its desires and expectations for the management of their territories,” says Bones.

“Regionally, the Nations were able to collaborate effectively to resolve any inconsistencies or conflicts over shared interests across their territories, and bring a united vision to the table with the Province. At the provincial government level, BC now has a very clear understanding of those expectations. This will make the relationship stronger, and be very helpful in the work we do together.” For example, he says, the referrals process should be more streamlined, relieving all of the Nations of some of the burden of dealing with referrals relating to activities that would not be consistent with the Plan.

“Most importantly of all, perhaps,” reflects Bones, “this is a very positive and timely step towards greater control and self-determination for all of the Nations.”

Nanwakolas Training Programs Get Under Way



TRADITIONAL CARVER,
BILL HENDERSON

The 2014 Nanwakolas Community Wellbeing Strengthening Plan identified training needs as a high priority for building capacity in Nanwakolas communities (you can read more about the Plan and how it was created in the last issue of Aweenak'ola).



PARTICIPANT RICKY COON (IN WHITE SHIRT, SEATED NEXT TO EDDY CLIFFE IN RED SHIRT) FOUND THE COURSES HE TOOK IMMENSELY HELPFUL TO HIS WORK AS THE GWA'SALA-'NAXWAKDA'XW FIRST NATIONS COMMUNICATIONS LIAISON.

As soon as the Plan was complete, N̄anwakolas staff promptly set to work to get several training programs up and running. By May this year, dozens of N̄anwakolas community members had participated in the training programs, with very positive results. “The two courses I took did wonders for me!” enthuses Ricky Coon, Gwa’sala-’Nakwaxda’xw First Nations Communications Liaison. “I came home with a real passion to share what I had learned in the community.”

Guardian Training

All of the N̄anwakolas member Nations have stewardship or Guardian programs in place, monitoring and taking care of the territories. To support that work, N̄anwakolas Council is creating a regional stewardship network to coordinate the efforts of each of the member Nations to strengthen their monitoring capabilities on a regional basis.

Offering training programs, says N̄anwakolas staff Planner Scott Harris, fits right into that work. “The stewardship staff working for each of the member Nations take these skills back to implement their Nation’s individual stewardship goals,” says Harris. The courses are already proving very popular: “There’s

“I learned a lot on the Guardian skills training programs. I took several of them, because it seemed like a good idea. They were all really interesting. There were many things I didn’t realize I didn’t know, but I was also happy to have confirmed how much I already did know, too. That’s given me a lot of confidence to do my job well.”

HAROLD GLENDALE JR., DA’NAXDA’XW
AWAETLALA GUARDIAN

been an incredible uptake from the member Nations,” confirms Harris. “It’s been really great.”

With funding provided by Tides Canada, a number of stewardship and Guardian staff have participated to date in Advanced Marine First Aid, Swift Water Rescue, Data Collection and Tablet Training, and Compliance and Monitoring Training. These are all critical skills to enhance stewardship performance, and for the participants, it’s already paying off.

Harold Glendale Jr. and Stanley Beans both took the courses. Not long after taking the compliance and monitoring training, the pair found themselves having to talk to some visitors to the forest near their community. “I don’t think I would have felt able to do it without having had the training,” says Glendale. “It gave me the assertiveness I needed to do that.” Beans agrees: “It really has helped me be confident in doing the job.”

Nanwakolas is also coordinating courses in Small Vessel Operator Proficiency, Marine Emergency Duties, and Radio Operators’ Certification, and more courses are on the way. On June 22, a one day training session called “Verbal Judo” will be delivered in Campbell River by a park ranger from the Oregon State Parks Service. The session covers techniques of communication to

diffuse confrontational situations with people through verbal communication.

“We are also looking at contracting biological services to provide specific training on the member Nations’ marine research priorities,” says Harris. “For example, surveys of eel grass, clams, crabs, prawns and seal populations will be conducted in specific locations identified by the Nations, and the biologist will train all the Guardians with the proper survey techniques. At the end, there will be a manual on how to conduct a specific survey utilizing accepted methodology for each of the Nations’ priority research topics.”

Last but not least, planned for the fall of 2015 through to spring 2016, will be a stewardship technician training program to be conducted in partnership with Vancouver Island University and the Coastal Stewardship Network. The training is designed for new employees who will be hired as stewardship technicians upon completion of the course, as well as existing stewardship technicians (including Guardians, fisheries technicians, or other stewardship staff) who want to move into more senior or permanent positions.

For more information on stewardship training, contact Scott Harris at ScottHarris@Nanwakolas.com.

SOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE LARGE CULTURAL CEDAR IDENTIFICATION COURSE. LEFT TO RIGHT: JORDEN HENDERSON, CHRISTINE ROBERTS, MARVIN PUGLAS.



Large Cultural Cedar Identification

In October 2014, Nanwakolas designed a training program for the identification of large cultural cedar

trees. The goal of the program, which was funded by the federal government’s BC Capacity Initiative, was to train community members to become large cultural cedar surveyors, to use equipment required to access and inventory large cultural cedar trees, and to create a database of the trees and of areas accessed to harvest the trees.

“These Western Red Cedar trees, which can be several hundreds of years old, are traditionally used for canoe-making, Big Houses and poles,” explains Nanwakolas Referrals Office Manager Art Wilson. “Having an inventory of the trees and an understanding of the types of locations where they are found will hopefully ensure that a sustainable long term supply of the trees will always be there.”

“After taking the large cultural cedar identification training, I have a better knowledge of my territory. I enjoy the fact that the trees we tag will be there for future use.”

MARVIN PUGLAS, MAMALILIKULLA-QWE’QWA’SOT’EM

“This is very important,” confirms traditional carver Bill Henderson, who accompanied the participants on the training program to show them how to find the trees and identify their key characteristics. “You need a sound tree, a straight tree maybe 60—80 feet high from stump level, with no branches,” says Henderson. “You have to look for wood that is even throughout the trunk. Some trees, if they have had to weather storms on one side because they are higher up the mountain, they may be very hard on one side, which makes them difficult to carve.”

These trees, says Henderson—who has been carving for nearly six decades—are rapidly vanishing from the landscape because of large-scale logging on Vancouver Island. “So we really need the young people to be able to do this work and help save these trees while we can.”

Participants spent one week learning the theory they would need in the classroom, then went out in the field to apply their new skills in practice, an experience which student Jordan Henderson (Gwa’sala-’Nakwaxda’xw) found very rewarding. Jordan, who wants to become a registered professional forester eventually, says: “It was important for me to pass this course. It brings opportunities with it. I would like to thank all the staff for the support and time they put in to make the course happen.” He adds: “I want to pass down what I learned to people who will be interested in this job as well. These trees,” he concludes, “help keep the culture strong.”

It’s helpful for the forestry companies to have people who are experts in identifying the locations of the trees as well as the trees themselves, adds Wilson. “In fact, speaking of opportunities, one company has already hired our crew to do a survey. So this is already proving to be a very good thing for everyone.”

For more information on Large Cultural Cedar training, contact Art Wilson at ArtWilson@Nanwakolas.com.

Entrepreneurship and Communications Skills

To round out the first set of training programs, last October Nanwakolas worked with the Canadian Centre for Aboriginal Entrepreneurship to deliver an Aboriginal Business and Entrepreneurship Skills course, and with the Centre for First Nations Governance to undertake a communications skills workshop focussing on community communications.

Chris Roberts, Nanwakolas Regional Economic Development Coordinator, says: “People have been asking us about the potential for professional development workshops for economic development staff for a long time. So the desire has been out there and the completion of the Community Wellbeing Strengthening Plan, with training identified as a high priority, was an opportunity to fulfil it.”

Communications skills were identified as a key need by everyone, says Roberts. “That’s at every level: internally in administration, within the communities and externally as well. So we expected strong interest but the uptake on the course exceeded our expectations.”

The same was true of the entrepreneurship course, which focussed on the skills required to research, start and grow a small business. Ricky Coon took both courses, and found them both invaluable. “I learnt some very important skills, things like how to create and analyze business plans, and how to deal with pressure.”

The communications skills course will be very helpful to him in his new role as a communications liaison for his Nation’s treaty team. “They shared some great tools for engaging with people,” says Coon. “It was also good to discover how many of the Nations face similar issues and how communications problems can occur everywhere, not just in our own communities, so having these tools means you can use them in a different circumstances and in different places and they are still applicable and effective.”

More opportunities to take part in training courses will be available

To help respond to the training and education needs of Nanwakolas member Nations and their members, Nanwakolas Council has entered into Memoranda of Understanding with two prominent regional post-secondary institutions over the past two years, North Island College (May 2014) and Vancouver Island

University (February 2015). These institutions have committed to collaborate with Nanwakolas on training and education programs relevant to Nanwakolas member Nations.

Nanwakolas will continue to offer training and capacity-strengthening programs that not only meet the needs of the member Nations but which incrementally build upon the skills and knowledge that participants gain through the programs. A key principle built into the development of the programs, says Roberts, is ensuring the sustainability and transferability of acquired skills and knowledge.

For example, he says, Nanwakolas is in the process of developing training for the member Nations on how to create and maintain effective membership skills databases. The goal is to develop sustainable databases that can be used to identify employment and training opportunities as well as needs.

“Right now there is limited capacity to do that, so Nanwakolas is responding by developing the training to meet that need. In fact,” concludes Roberts, “that’s really behind all of the Nanwakolas training programs: identifying a need of the member Nations, and responding to it with an appropriate program. And so far, the response from the Nations has been huge. It’s been really rewarding.”

For more information on professional development training or training in general, contact Chris Roberts at ChrisRoberts@Nanwakolas.com.

“The courses I did worked wonders for me. I'm telling everyone these are you-just-can't-leave-home-without-them life skills! I am really encouraging people to take advantage of the training available to them through Nanwakolas programs.”

*RICKY COON, GWA'SALA-'NAKWAXDA'XW
FIRST NATIONS COMMUNICATIONS LIAISON*

PARTICIPANTS IN THE ABORIGINAL BEST PROGRAM INCLUDED STACIA GOODMAN (2ND FROM RIGHT), SHERYL THOMPSON (4TH FROM RIGHT) AND BLAIR HARRY (IN WHITE JACKET).



Other News

The fourth annual Nanwakolas Council Corporate Challenge golf tournament will be held on September 4, 2015 at Crown Isle Resort in Comox. All proceeds from the tournament are going to the creation of the Stan Hagen Tl'axam Scholarship at North Island College, a fund dedicated to supporting prospective First Nations students. Registration information will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead.

Please Get in Touch

Please don't hesitate to let us know how you like "Aweenak'ola," and what else we could do with it to make it more informative, interesting and useful to you. If you have photo or story submissions, ideas on where else we should distribute the newsletter, or you would like us to email it to you whenever it comes out, please contact us at info@nanwakolas.com or call Coral Duncan at 250.286.7200.

Newsletter of the Nanwakolas Council

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The Nanwakolas Council is comprised of seven member First Nations whose traditional territories are located in the Northern Vancouver Island and adjacent South Central Coast areas of British Columbia.

