



# ALBERTA NATIVE NEWS



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Publication Mail Agreement No. 40050628  
Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: Circulation Department:  
102, 10155 114 Street NW  
Edmonton AB T5K 1R8  
E-mail: natnews@shaw.ca  
Tel: (780) 421-7966

Funded by the Government of Canada / Financé par le gouvernement du Canada

Canada

Volume 37, Number 7, July 2020  
ISSN #08294135  
www.albertanativenews.com

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ADVERTISING:  
Dan Moser 780-421-7966

Alberta Native News is published monthly for distribution to Native Bands and Metis Settlements across Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Northwest Territories.

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**\$57.75 per year**

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# Premier Kenney - fire your speechwriter!

by Jake Cardinal

Treaty 8 First Nations (Alberta) Grand Chief Arthur Noskey, President of the 60’s Scoop Indigenous Society of Alberta Adam North Peigan, MLA Richard Feehan, and others are calling for the termination of Alberta Premier Jason Kenney’s speechwriter, Paul Bunner.

In a statement, Treaty Eight chiefs wrote, “Chiefs of the Sovereign Treaty Nations are amazed at the level of disrespect brandished by Premier Kenney who continues to employ an individual who has published anti-First Nation views that are harmful, divisive, dehumanizing and racist to say the least.”

Paul Bunner wrote and published a 2013 article titled “The ‘Genocide’ That Failed” in which he argues that residential school survivors fabricated a “bogus genocide story” for their own financial gain.

“This article in its entirety is unconscionable. How can Premier Kenney know about this article and overlook the harm it continues to cause? The same way this government and its continued actions purposely ostracize the First Nation’s people! Premier Kenney’s acceptance of these articles demonstrates nothing but racism,” the Treaty Eight chiefs stated.

“The Chiefs of the Sovereign Treaty Nations call upon Premier Kenney to remove Mr. Bunner from his role as speechwriter and ensure that he is no longer associated with the government of Alberta moving forward.”

Chiefs of Treaty Six, the Blackfoot Confederacy, and the Assembly of First Nations regional chief for Alberta have also called on Kenney to fire Bunner.

The Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations chiefs stated, “It is clear that Bunner does not have the ability to see past his own privilege and prejudice to apologize for insulting our Indian residential school survivors and their children.”

They continued, “Any government with an interest of building trust with Indigenous communities must hold their employees accountable for blatantly discriminating against Indigenous peoples.”

“We call upon the province to make the right decision and dismiss this person,” added Blood Tribe/Kainai First Nation Chief Roy Fox.

“Some of our residential school survivors and their multi-generational families continue to be blamed by others as a result of their experiences as victims, and these misguided statements by governments only encourages continued racism against Indigenous people.”

“Bunner’s views on residential schools are offensive, dehumanizing and has hurt our Treaty relationship,” noted Eugene Creighton, a Blackfoot community member. “These stereotypes of First Nations fuel systemic racism that we’re struggling with in Treaty No. 7, Alberta and Canada.”

NDP Opposition Leader Rachel Notley said, “It is painful to read something as profoundly racist as the words Mr. Bunner wrote and published. I am deeply

troubled that Jason Kenney selected someone who holds these views to be one of his closest collaborators in the premier’s office.

“It is disturbing to think of how many of the premier’s public statements over the past year have been composed by someone who harbors such hatred towards Indigenous people.”

Marlene Poitras, the Assembly of First Nations’ regional chief for Alberta, said of Bunner’s beliefs, “It severely undermines the horrific experience of too many First Nations children and families during the residential school era,” she said. “Mr. Bunner also claims that learning about Aboriginal history, injustices and trauma would incite Aboriginal violence, creating Aboriginal terrorism. That is pure and utter hate and fear-mongering, and I strongly condemn the racist undertones of the article.

“Mr. Bunner’s article calls on media, academia and politicians to create a counter-narrative to Indigenous historical trauma and long-standing impacts,” Poitras added. “That is concerning, considering his access. He may only be a speech writer but he has a personal agenda and my concern is those views reflect on the current government.

“I think it would be wise for the premier to contact Indigenous leaders and reassure them that the views contained in this article do not reflect the views or intentions of his party or government.

“That said, actions speak louder than words. It would go a long way to regain Indigenous people’s trust in the government if they knew someone who had so much hate towards them was no longer working for Mr. Kenney.”

Bunner has an extensive history of writing and publishing deeply racist, sexist, homophobic, and transphobic articles from the early 1990s to as recently as 2016.

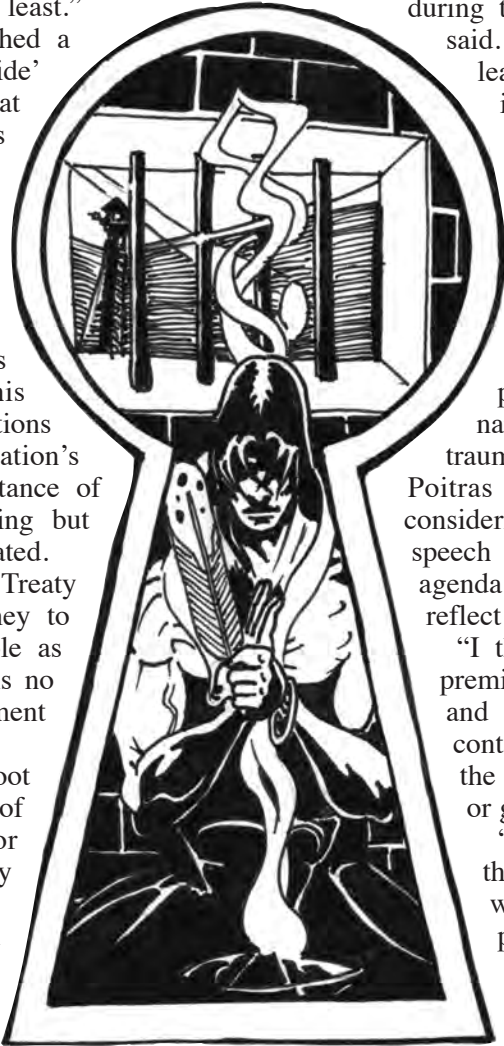
“It’s disgusting that Premier Kenney has defended his racist speechwriter,” said Richard Feehan, NDP Opposition Critic for Indigenous Relations.

“Bunner has spread hatred and racism towards Indigenous people and many others through his hateful writing. Kenney has known about this for more than a week. He must listen to the voices of Indigenous leaders in Alberta and fire his racist speechwriter immediately.”

Premier Kenney responded by saying, “Somebody who was a journalist for 40 years undoubtedly wrote things with which I disagree. That does not reflect or change the policy of the government of Alberta.”

When asked if the partnership between the provincial government and First Nations was at risk because of Bunner, Chief Noskey said, “I don’t think there is a partnership in place.”

*Jake Cardinal is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.*



Ray 2020







# Who is policing the police in Calgary?

By Jake Cardinal

*Above the Law*, a new documentary film by Marc Serpa Francoeur and Robinder Uppal about police brutality in Calgary, Alberta, premiered on CBC television earlier this month and it is available for streaming for free on CBC Gem. The production was led by Serpa Francoeur and Uppal's Lost Time Media, a Toronto-based production company focusing on engaging social issue documentary film and interactive projects.

"Born and raised in Calgary, we've always maintained an interest in what's going on in our hometown," said Serpa Francoeur and Uppal on their choice to make a film about the Calgary Police Service. "We definitely asked ourselves whether it was the right setting for an investigation of police malfeasance (versus, say, a larger city like Toronto), but the deeper we got, the more obvious it became that the Calgary Police Service, and Alberta more broadly, were very much deserving of our attention, both due to the sheer quantity and severity of violent incidents and other scandals, as well as the apparent lack of meaningful consequences for what seemed to us entirely unacceptable and shockingly commonplace behaviour."

In the film, injustice at the hands of Calgary police officers is put under a harsh magnifying glass, revealing everything wrong with policing in Alberta, and dare I say Canada. It brings attention to the problematic relationships between Alberta's police watchdog, the Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT), the police departments they are tasked with investigating, and the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service.

"The issues of police brutality and accountability combine two of the great social ills of the human experience: the betrayal of trust by those in positions of authority and the failure of institutions to hold the powerful to account."

"When we started to look into these issues in Alberta, almost by accident, what we found was deeply troubling — it's not an easy topic by any means, but it's something we felt compelled to pursue out of a fundamental interest in justice and equality," said Serpa Francoeur and Uppal.

The documentary is being released after a United States police officer murdered George Floyd in a public execution, which sparked mass protesting in American cities. Police brutality is not just isolated to the United States however, as Canada also saw its fair share of Black Lives Matter protests and police brutality, particularly against Indigenous Peoples in the past few months.

Serpa Francoeur and Uppal continued by saying, "There is, unfortunately, a lot of overlap between the issues we see in the U.S. and here in Canada, an assertion that will likely not sound at odds with the lived experiences of our Black, Indigenous, and other racialized communities, as well as deeply marginalized populations like drug users and the unhoused, who bear the brunt of so much police misconduct."

"So many of the issues that we've been concerned about are precisely those that are now being widely debated in the public sphere."

The film provides shocking data that will scare even those living in the furthest depths of Alberta.

Some of this data includes numbers like the amount of fatal police shootings (by city) in North America.

Fatal police shootings in 2018: Vancouver had 0 fatal shootings. Toronto had 1 fatal shooting. Chicago had 3 shootings. New York, a city which currently has 8.3 million people, had 4 shootings. And Calgary, a city with only 1.3 million people, had 5 shootings.

When asked about what instigated the film, the filmmakers said, "We first began looking into policing issues in Calgary after learning of Godfred Addai Nyamekye's experiences back in mid-2015, shortly after he had been acquitted of assaulting a peace officer following a three-day trial."

The film explains that Godfred was detained, potentially unlawfully, by Calgary police in the early morning of December 28, 2013, a night that saw temperatures reach as low as -28 degrees with the windchill. After being handcuffed and thrown into the back of a police van, he was taken on what it is horrifically known in western Canada as a "starlight tour" and left in the middle of nowhere in the freezing cold. Godfred then called 911 for help. However, the officer who showed up brutally tasered and beat him, and then had Godfred charged with assaulting a peace officer. Despite a paucity of evidence, the Crown saw fit to proceed to trial. Although he was ultimately acquitted of the charges, Godfred's life has never been the same and he deals with last trauma, both physical and psychological.

"Godfred's incident was profoundly disturbing to us, seemingly riddled with what appeared to be very serious and malignant behaviour from the various police officers on the ground, the 911 operators responding to Godfred's desperate calls for help, and even the Crown prosecutors who saw fit to drag this man through trial," stated Serpa Francoeur and Uppal.

For the other incidents featured in the documentary, the filmmakers were not able to get interviews from the victims — not because they refused to comment, but because they're not alive to tell their story.

Anthony Heffernan, a young man who struggled with substance abuse, was killed by police during a wellness check at a hotel. The hotel called the cops to check on him as they were unable to reach Anthony and he hadn't checked out on time. The police arrived, forced the door open, and Anthony was then tasered twice and shot multiple times, leaving him dead on the floor of the hotel room.

"We do not have a just society if police can come to a wellness check, kick in the door, taser, and shoot an unarmed man four times. Once in the chest and three times in the head. Anthony was not a threat to anyone."

"This must never happen again in Calgary, or Canada," said Patrick Heffernan, the father of Anthony Heffernan, a retired school principal from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) were then called in to investigate. It is worth mentioning that ASIRT has only recently filed charges against an officer for a shooting, despite the dozens of cases that they've investigated. Given the makeup of ASIRT, whose investigators are largely seconded officers on loan from the very departments that they are tasked to investigate, and even rely on the forensic teams at those departments, what is certain is that the optics regarding their independence is poor.



"Above the Law" explores the stories of three individuals who accuse the Calgary Police of excessive force. (Lost Time Media and Big Cedar Films)

*Above the Law* should be watched by everyone living in Canada, especially in Alberta, regardless of who you are or where you came from. It is a chilling indictment of police brutality, arrogance and racism. It shines a spotlight on the fact that there is no accountability — that no one is policing the police and that as in the case of George Floyd, without the real life videotape evidence provided by witnesses no one would believe that it even happens.

"We've spent the last five years researching and developing the film, with filming taking place over the course of several different production periods in 2018 and 2019," noted the filmmakers.

But there has never been a more relevant time for its release. Police brutality, systemic racism and abuse of power against vulnerable populations are topics that are currently on the minds of every person across North America. The film documents anti-black racism, excessive force and lethal force during wellness checks — foreshadowing the very incidents that made the headlines these past few months.

George Floyd was murdered on May 25, 2020 in Minneapolis and a week later Chantel Moore, an Indigenous woman living in New Brunswick was executed by a police officer (who has not been named) during what was supposed to be a wellness check. A week after Chantel Moore was murdered, Rodney Levi was executed by police in New Brunswick. He too was killed during a wellness check — and again, the officer was not named. Some months prior, Athabasca Chipewyan Chief Allan Adam was brutalized by RCMP over an expired licence plate in Northern Alberta; Chief Allan was then charged with assaulting a police officer, which is an issue brought up in the documentary.

"We never would have guessed five years ago, let alone five months ago, to what point the discourse would have advanced to by the time the film was being released," noted the filmmakers.

"A concept like 'defunding the police' could hardly have been further from mainstream, but in recent days, Edmonton announced an \$11 million reduction to the police budget spread over two years, with those funds going towards supportive housing. This seems to us like a small step in the right direction of reevaluating how we are allocating resources and what exactly are the roles and expectations of police departments."

As for Marc Serpa Francoeur and Robinder Uppal's future projects, they said, "We're putting the finishing touches on *No Visible Trauma*, a feature-length companion to *Above the Law* that we plan to start distributing in the fall. While the same three narratives are central to both films, at more than twice the length, we are able to explore them in greater detail, along with some other horrific excessive force incidents at CPS, as well as some of the major cultural issues, including issues of bullying, harassment, and intimidation."

A gofundme campaign has been started to help pay for Godfred Addai-Nyamekye's legal fees, physiotherapy, emotional support. As of this writing the campaign has raised 10% of its goal of \$35,000.

For more information about *Above the Law*, check out the film on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @Above the Law.

It is available to stream now on CBC Gem.

Jake Cardinal is a Local Initiative Journalism reporter for Alberta Native News.

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# SNC-Lavalin Delivers Projects That Matter

By Ruby Littlechild and SNC-Lavalin

SNC-Lavalin is a diverse company with diverse staff and clients across Canada and the world. The company has a history of partnering with the Indigenous peoples of Canada, and sharing knowledge and experience on a wide range of projects. One such client is the Ermineskin Cree Nation in Alberta. From March 2018 to December 2019, SNC-Lavalin worked on three projects for the nation.

The first project was the design followed by construction support for two municipal wastewater liftstations, which included the above-ground buildings. The ultimate product is a huge improvement on what was there before. Alistair James, project manager and principal geotechnical engineer with SNC-Lavalin’s Calgary office, explained that originally, Ermineskin’s water technicians had to work outdoors raising the pumps and performing maintenance in all weathers. With no wash facility, once technicians were done with maintenance, they were wet and exposed to the wastewater and had to head back to the office or home without cleaning at the site. Now, the technicians have wash facilities, the pumps can be raised and lowered, and much of the maintenance can be done inside or at least under cover.

The second project was a geotechnical investigation and topographic survey, lead by Alistair as well, for a residential expansion. While smaller in scale than the other two projects, it was no less important. The SNC-Lavalin team’s findings helped the Ermineskin Nation make expansion decisions informed by a solid knowledge of the site and its requirements for the third project, the Ermineskin Elders Village Southeast.

Lead by Dirk Scharbatke, manager of the geoscience and materials group at the Calgary office, with Alistair working on the geotechnical aspects, the SNC-Lavalin team provided design and construction support for deep utilities for the first phase of the Ermineskin Elders Village. The Elders Village is designed with the houses circling around a central backyard, so the Elders can connect and do things together. The road—and with it the water and wastewater services—circles the houses, making it quite a challenging design. It was very satisfying for Dirk and his team that they were able to design the services following the circle of the road, so that the Elders Village could keep its unique form.

“The First Nations treat their Elders with respect, and we were able to contribute to that,” Dirk says, mentioning especially the trust he felt from Anne Wildcat, Director of Infrastructure for Ermineskin, and also her wonderful sense of humour and the obvious care she feels for her community.

Beyond the technical and management aspects of the work, both Dirk and Alistair enjoyed meeting and working with those who did the work and their managers, who are all “hands-on” people, according to Alistair. The Ermineskin technical services team are

a close-knit group of people. They know their stuff inside out and work hard to deliver, maintain, and improve services to their community. Getting to know them, and also the community members who would benefit, made the personal side of the improvements apparent and meaningful.

Alistair notes that people were generous with their time and “forgiving of my terrible pronunciation and vocabulary getting slowly better” as he practiced Cree and learned more about the culture and traditions. Getting teased over hockey became another highlight. The Bruins decals on his truck elicited friendly taunts from the Oilers and Habs fans, and some cheers from one of the technicians, Donna White, a fellow Bruins fan. Donna went to the trouble of making Alistair a hand-stitched and beaded Bruins medallion: “I was so appreciative receiving the medallion; there was a lot of emotions from knowing the time, skill, and acceptance that I felt came from that moment amongst the team. I felt honoured and humble.”

Ultimately for SNC-Lavalin and our people, these three projects, and many others like it, are about delivering better services to all communities. It is core to what we as a company do. Our official Commitment to Indigenous Peoples, signed in June 2019, solidifies our commitment to establishing and maintaining mutually respect and meaningful relationships between Indigenous communities, our clients and our company. Collaborating with communities like Ermineskin Cree Nation and seeing the direct benefits of our work is all the reason our professionals need for doing what they do to the very best of their abilities.

Alistair sums it up really well: “This is the kind of work I got into civil engineering to do: help people have better



Construction of a new sanitary lift station at the Ermineskin Cree Nation.



Dirk Scharbatke



Alistair James

lives and to make it last for many years.”

## About SNC-Lavalin

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# Singing healing songs of stick game during Covid-19

By Jake Cardinal

Powwows have been cancelled across Turtle Island due to gathering restrictions related to COVID-19. Dancers and drummers are missing the powwow trail and so are hand game and stick game players.

A stick game is a traditional game where two teams battle each other for all the sticks (which are points) while songs are sung.

I spoke to stick game player, Lyndon Scott, on what he did to combat the cancellations.

“Stickgame has been a part of my life since I was a baby. I travelled with my parents everywhere and started singing when I was 4 years old and to this day I still remember the first song I ever learned. I miss the visiting with friends and family who I don't get to see during the winter months and of course I love singing,” Lyndon said of his love for stick game. “I miss it a lot.”

In order to keep stick game alive during the pandemic, Lyndon created the Facebook page, ‘The Healing Songs of Stickgame.’ It features videos from Indigenous people across the continent sharing stick game songs.

Continued on page 6



# What happened to Jacob Sansom and Morris Cardinal?

By Laura Mushumanski

The Indigenous way about hunting is always making sure the freezer is stocked and there is enough *mîciwin* (food) to go around to feed our relatives. And when the Métis-Cree men, Jacob Sansom and his uncle Morris Cardinal went hunting for moose on March 27, 2020 near Bonnyville, Alta., they had every intention of bringing home wild meat to feed their families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

When Sansom’s wife, Sarah, did not hear from Jacob on the evening of March 27th, she began to worry. On the morning of March 28th, 2020, approximately 4 a.m., both bodies later recognized as Sansom and Cardinal were reported found north of Glendon, Alta., 225 kilometres northeast of Edmonton, with several gunshot wounds.

The two men that shared a close kin relationship, regularly exercised their Métis rights to hunt on the land responsibly and sustainably by supporting their families. They bonded over hunting and preserving an essential part of Indigenous culture; both men were *manâtisiwin* (respectful) towards the animals they hunted for nourishment and utilized the entire animal, similar to how our *wahkomâkanakwak* (ancestors) respected the buffalo and all living things. Sansom and Cardinal were Métis Nation of Alberta citizens, practiced cultural traditions and were charismatic men towards their families and fellow community members.

Sansom’s wife and three children, aged 8, 11 & 13, are left to mourn the loss of their father and great uncle.

Samson was known for his optimism. In a 2017 video from Sansom’s Facebook page, his lust for life was captured with him sharing his worldviews that, “we should be part of each other. We should be living in this world together, not separate.” The 39 year old, Sansom, also worked as heavy duty mechanic, recently being laid off during COVID, and volunteered for his local fire department, the Nobleford fire department in the town where his immediate family resided, Nobleford, Alta.

Speculations circulating around the death of both Indigenous men, seem to be tied to the deeply rooted history of racism within Canada.

The beginning of June, Roger Bilodeau, 56, was

charged with second degree murder, and his son, Anthony Michael Bilodeau, 31, awaits trial to take place after pleading not guilty to second-degree murder for the deaths of Sansom and Cardinal.

As mentioned in a recent *Star* news report, a connection between Sansom and the older Bilodeau man has been made. Sansom worked in DLM Oilfield Enterprises mechanic shop located in Bonnyville, Sansom’s hometown, with Bilodeau back in 2014, and remained employed with the company up until the time of his death.

The investigation report of the murder of both Sansom and Cardinal state that there was an altercation that led to their deaths seven hours before their bodies were reported to have been found by Bonnyville RCMP. In the report shared with the public, there seemed to be an argument that ended in a physical fight, and shortly after a third vehicle approached the scene and brutally shot Sansom and Cardinal to their death.

Rural communities within Alberta seem to have a lasting negative attitude that stems from a time when cultural assimilation began on Turtle Island. These attitudes have led to discriminatory behaviors and bodies being found with unresolved murder investigations. Seemingly, the murder of Sansom and Cardinal align with the hostile behaviours that are repetitively being acted upon in an unjust manner and to question why, in the year 2020, are dehumanizing behaviours still undermining an Indigenous person’s Human Rights?

There has been a GO FUND ME webpage setup on behalf of Jake’s family, to financially assist Samson’s widow, Sarah, and their three children.

Meanwhile members of the Samson and Cardinal family are asking local mayors to address systemic racism and violence in their communities.

A letter, sent to the mayors of Glendon and Bonnyville indicated that their experiences of racism forced them to leave the Bonnyville area “out of fear for their safety.”

According to the *Edmonton Journal*, “the family asked the mayors to develop relationships with local Métis settlements and First Nations, use their positions to speak about racism and violence, develop



Jacob Sansom and Morris Cardinal were found dead with gunshot wounds on March 27 on a rural road near Glendon AB. Two men have been charged with second degree murder. (Submitted image)

anti-racism policies and promote anti-racism, address a lack of diversity on town council, and review how other communities have addressed racism.”

Gene Sobolewski, mayor of Bonnyville, told Postmedia News that he plans to set up a meeting with the family to learn more about their experiences.

“We’re in the process of responding, and are cognizant of the issue that they raised, and we’re hoping to have a dialogue with the parties ... and to get clarification on some of the contents of the letter,” he said.

Roger and Anthony Bilodeau appeared in St. Paul Provincial Court on June 18, 2020.

The lawyers for the senior Bilodeau have scheduled a bail hearing date for the bail application to be heard on July 29, 2020 at Edmonton Court of Queen’s Bench starting at 10 AM.

In the meantime, both accused will be back at St. Paul Provincial Court on July 16 for the parties to advise the Court what arrangements are being made in proceeding with the case.

Laura Mushumanski is a Local Journalism Initiative Reporter.

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Healing songs *cont. from p 5*

“The page is for people to post stickgame songs. We’ve had some post their songs when they lose a loved one, when they are missing someone - a lot just want heal themselves by singing with whatever ails them - and some post because they love to sing.”

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“I made the page in March, but didn't know how to get it started,” Lyndon said. “I made the page because a lot of people use the songs as healing, as I do. When you hear a song it reminds a person of someone they lost or miss.”

The page, while primarily being an outlet to share stick game songs, also hosts online singing contests. “An elder approached me and asked if there was a way to have a singing contest online,” Lyndon continued. The contests are for cash prizes and are made possible by donations.

“A lot of donations for the singing contest came from people who don't play stickgame, but hearing the songs reminded them of a lost brother sister parent grandparent best friend who use to play,” Lyndon stated.

Since the first contest, ‘Healing Songs of Stickgame’ has now grown to encompass almost five-thousand people who all celebrate the music of the traditional game.

“When I started the page I only expected 100-200 people to join, but we passed that in the second day,” Lyndon said of his initial expectations for the page. “We hit 1500 people by end of first week and then climbed to 3000 when the contest was on. Now it sits at just over 4500 with people still joining every day.

“We have people from Thailand, New Zealand, Germany, Hawaii, the USA, and Canada messaging me about the songs and game. I don't even know 4500 people so it is a surprise of how much it grew.”

To find out more about the music of stick game, you can visit ‘The Healing Songs of Stickgame’ on Facebook.

Jake Cardinal is a Local Journalism Initiative reporter.



# New agreement aims to increase Indigenous oversight of TMX

The Canada Energy Regulator (CER), Trans Mountain Corporation (TMC) and the Indigenous Advisory and Monitoring Committee for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project and Existing Pipeline (IAMC-TMX) have reached a joint agreement to make continual improvements to Indigenous monitoring.

Earlier this year, leaders from all three organizations endorsed the initiative, which is aimed at identifying opportunities to improve TMC’s and the IAMC-TMX’s respective Indigenous monitoring programs for the Trans Mountain Expansion Project (Project).

“This agreement represents how we are fundamentally transforming the way the CER works to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples,” says CER Acting-CEO Sandy Lapointe.

“Collaborating with the IAMC-TMX and Trans Mountain is helping us develop best practices in Indigenous monitoring and will inform how we approach and expand Indigenous inclusion in oversight for all future projects.”

These program discussions are even more critical in light of the COVID-19 pandemic where the CER, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), Parks Canada, and IAMC-TMX are finding innovative ways to continue to provide regulatory oversight.

“In-field inspections are still being performed, and work is ongoing to ensure Indigenous monitors and federal staff can conduct inspections safely, consistent with public and occupational health requirements,” says Lapointe.

By learning more about the unique objectives and strengths of each other’s programs, the three parties found common ground and developed a shared goal: to ensure the Project is built safely, in full regulatory compliance, with Indigenous participation in oversight, and with minimal harm to the environment and Indigenous interests.

“We’re working hard to put Indigenous boots on the ground, partnering with federal regulators to protect Indigenous interests,” says IAMC-TMX Indigenous Co-Chair Councilor Michelle Wilsdon of Enoch Cree Nation. Councilor Wilsdon is also the Chair of the Indigenous Caucus, which is comprised of the Indigenous members of the IAMC-TMX.

“Through this new initiative, we are seeking to better ensure the knowledge, values, and perspectives of Indigenous communities are respected and incorporated into how the Project is built, with the overall aim of advancing Indigenous interests in the oversight of the Project,” says Councilor Wilsdon.

Indigenous interests are reflected in the oversight of the Project and are occurring in multiple ways. The IAMC-TMX Indigenous Monitoring Program supports Indigenous Monitors to participate in verifying compliance through in-field inspections with the CER, DFO and Parks Canada. In TMC’s Indigenous Monitoring Program, Indigenous Monitors work directly with the company to ensure traditional knowledge is incorporated directly and pragmatically into construction oversight practices and decision-making.

“New ways of working together can generate better outcomes for Indigenous communities and industry,” says Kimberly Lavoie, interim NRCan Member and Government Co-Chair for IAMC-TMX.

“The relationships that we’ve developed will help all parties manage issues that might arise during construction.”

The early results of this work will improve the Indigenous monitoring programs by:

Providing meaningful opportunities for Indigenous communities to participate in monitoring and mitigation oversight of the construction of the Project and the operations of the existing pipeline;

Ensuring opportunities for communities to be able to work together, should they choose, in areas of shared territory;

Increasing the transparency of construction activities and monitoring reports; and

Building the capacity of and support for Indigenous communities and monitors to effectively protect communities’ interests.

The co-development initiative between the three organizations began in September 2019, when the CER requested Trans Mountain to collaborate with the IAMC-TMX outside of the regulatory process to

assess and explore improvements to Indigenous monitoring programs.

Since then, senior representatives of the CER, TMC, and the Indigenous Caucus, facilitated by Natural Resources Canada, have met numerous times to discuss issues related to participation and engagement, Indigenous knowledge, transparency and communication, capacity, coherence across programs, and independence.

The initiative has resulted in agreement on a framework of action, and the work to implement that framework continues. “The parties have not reached agreement on every issue, but we have made some important progress toward improving the transparency and capacity of both the IAMC-TMX’s and TMC’s monitoring programs,” says Chief Harvey McLeod, Chief of the Upper Nicola Band and an IAMC-TMX member.

Trans Mountain views the collaboration to explore Indigenous monitoring best practices as a means to work proactively with the Indigenous Caucus of the IAMC-TMX and regulators to find solutions that everyone can support.

“This collaboration allows for the best from all parties to be incorporated into shared objectives,” says Ian Anderson, Trans Mountain President and CEO.

The IAMC-TMX brings together 13 Indigenous representatives and six senior federal officials to



address shared interests such as Indigenous monitoring, Indigenous inclusion in emergency management, and mitigating the impacts of temporary labour camps. Indigenous members are selected on a regional basis by the 129 impacted Indigenous communities and participate “without prejudice” to their views on the project. The Committee is not a rights-holding body and is not a forum for consultation.

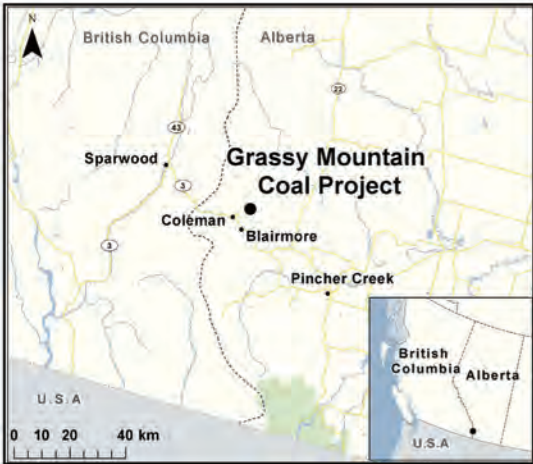
Next steps for the parties are to implement the “short-term deliverables” and explore other ways to work together to manage issues during construction. The parties are also interested in sharing best practices and lessons learned with other governments and industries that may benefit from similar approaches.

## Notice

### Grassy Mountain Coal Project – Joint Review Panel

#### Benga Mining Limited – Grassy Mountain Coal Project

The Joint Review Panel (the Panel) established to review the proposed Grassy Mountain Coal Project (the Project) and conduct an assessment of the environmental effects of the Project has determined that it has sufficient information to proceed to a public hearing. In addition, the environmental impact assessment and associated twelve addenda submitted by the proponent, Benga Mining Limited (Benga), have been deemed complete pursuant to section 53 of the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.



#### Information about the hearing

The Panel currently anticipates starting the hearing in October 2020 and plans to hold a portion of the public hearing sessions in proximity to the Project. However, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Panel will follow the recommendations of public health authorities and will prioritize the safety of all hearing participants. The Panel is currently considering all reasonable options to ensure that the hearing is accessible to all participants, including the potential for electronic hearing sessions using digital communication tools. The Panel will consider input from participants and Benga regarding the dates, locations, and the format of the hearing. These details will be announced at a later date.

#### Participation

The Panel invites groups and individuals who have an interest in the Project to submit a request to participate and to make submissions about preferred dates, locations and the format of the hearing. Should you wish to file a submission, submit evidence, make a statement, or participate at the hearing, you must submit a written request to participate **no later than July 20, 2020**. Detailed information on how to request to participate and what should be included in a request is contained in the Notice of Hearing.

Information sessions will be held online to provide information about the hearing process. Details regarding the dates and times of these sessions are included in the Notice of Hearing. All documents related to the Notice of Hearing, the Project and the environmental impact assessment are available on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry (Registry reference number 80101).

#### About the Project

The Project includes the construction, operation, and reclamation of an open-pit metallurgical coal mine near the Crowsnest Pass, approximately seven kilometres north of the community of Blairmore, in southwest Alberta. The production capacity of the Project would be a maximum of 4.5 million tonnes of metallurgical coal per year, over a mine-life of approximately 24 years. It would include surface coal mine pits and waste rock disposal areas, a coal handling and processing plant with associated infrastructure, water management structures, an overland conveyor system, a rail load-out facility, and other facilities. The surface mine area of the Project is approximately 2800 hectares.

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Issued on June 29, 2020





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