



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT



The BC
Aboriginal Fisheries
Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT AND BCAFC APPOINT JOINT FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PANEL

(Vancouver) – The First Nations Summit and the BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission (BCAFC) jointly announced today the creation of a panel to examine fisheries management regimes that reflect issues of conservation, sustainability, aboriginal rights and economic needs of First Nations. The Panel will study the Fraser/Columbia and Skeena watersheds and Coast areas and parallel the work of the federal/provincial fisheries task group.

The three panel members are:

- **Neil Sterritt** of Kispiox, BC. He is president of Sterritt Consulting Ltd. and works as a consultant specializing in a range of aboriginal / indigenous issues in Canada and overseas. Mr. Sterritt is an authority on aboriginal governance, and authored the *First Nations Governance Handbook: A Resource Guide for Effective Councils* (Queens Printer, 2001).
- **Russ Jones** of Skidegate, Haida Gwaii. He is a fisheries consultant and serves as a commissioner on two international bodies, the Pacific Salmon Commission and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission. Mr. Jones has completed a wide variety of consulting assignments in the areas of fisheries stock assessment, co-management, watershed restoration and marine protected area planning working mainly with First Nation clients in British Columbia.

- **Marcel Shepert** has been a fisheries program manager and coordinator for the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council since 1996. He has been instrumental in building a strong First Nations team establishing itself as a solid management force within the British Columbia Interior's resource sector. He sits on a number of boards including the Upper Fraser and Nechako Fisheries Council.

"This panel will help First Nations articulate a vision of fisheries management and develop a workable framework that addresses predictability for resource users, focuses on conservation and sustainability and considers the creation of economic opportunities", said Grand Chief Edward John of the First Nations Summit political executive.

"We needed to create our own First Nations fisheries panel because the federal-provincial task group failed to reflect the tripartite nature of the BC treaty negotiation process ", added Chief John.

"This panel will finally give our people the opportunity to give their perspective on fisheries issues, allocations and management; issues that we have been attempted to deal with since 1888," stated Arnie Narcisse, Chair of the BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission.

The Panel will report to the First Nations Summit and BCAFC Steering Committee by March 31, 2004.

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in the treaty negotiation process in British Columbia. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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