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## Northern Strategy Initiative will Address Substance Abuse Healing

With funding from Northern Strategy Trust, the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS) will partner with Liard First Nation and other community agencies to undertake a two-year participatory planning process to develop a plan for community-based substance abuse and detoxification.

LAWS will complete a planning strategy to clarify how best to approach community based holistic substance abuse treatment and detoxification. The planning strategy will detail how best to use existing human and financial resources, programs, services and facilities and will determine how gaps can be resolved. The plan will address the needs of all residents of the region. The objectives of the community-based planning process are to:

- Develop a clear, written plan for culturally appropriate, holistic, community based substance abuse treatment and detoxification that has the support of a wide cross section of people in the region.
- Facilitate the involvement of a wide cross section of the whole community, local agencies and NGO's in the planning process, and empower confidence about finding local solutions to local concerns.
- Expand governance capacity and control through hands-on learning, innovative decision tools, multiple engagement methods and action research while maintaining gender and demographic diversity in a culturally sensitive manner.



### Liard Aboriginal Women's Society

*We were honored to have Lorna Reid sitting on our Board of Directors from our very beginning, and her humble sharing of stories gave hope to many others on their journey. Lorna shared our vision of healing for all and her strong prayers and support will be sadly missed. Lorna prayed for healing for her people and we felt she would be so pleased to see our Northern Strategy Initiative come to life. We move forward with this project in fond memory of Lorna...*

Laws Executive Director: Anne Maje Raider  
 Administrative Assistant: Joanne Bailey  
 Directors: Fannie Vance, Bernice Ball, Mary Maje,  
 Billie Maje, Violet Greenway  
 Therapist: Michael J. Healey

## Our Northern Strategy Healing Vision

The planning process will focus on garnering broad community support and building partnerships in the community to share in the creation of programs as well as in leadership participation in the healing process through the programs.

The goal is to prepare a three-year strategic plan with a three-year implementation plan. The plan will involve such things as healing workshops, speakers forums, world café, storytelling, focus groups, and video corners. Various communication tools such as newsletters, session briefs, brochures, and website development will help to ensure ongoing community and leadership support.

- As a by-product of the planning process, the project will increase community awareness and understanding about critical social and health issues, and their relationships with substance abuse and treatment and options for regaining control.
- Maximize opportunities to build upon existing human, technical, and physical resources, including services, programs and facilities.
- Communicate the results of the planning strategy on a regular, consistent and effective manner throughout the course of the project.

## Lorna Reid

1930-2008

It is with sadness and a deep sense of loss that we mourn the passing of Lorna Reid. Lorna was a highly respected elder from Lower Post and her passing has left a definite void in the community.

Our condolences go out to all of Lorna's many family and friends.

It is with great certainty that her strength and strong character will live on in the lives of those she touched.



# Bulletin Board

A reminder to those in need of assistance in filling out the **Common Experience** forms to feel free to call our office and we will do our best to help in any way we can. **536-2097**

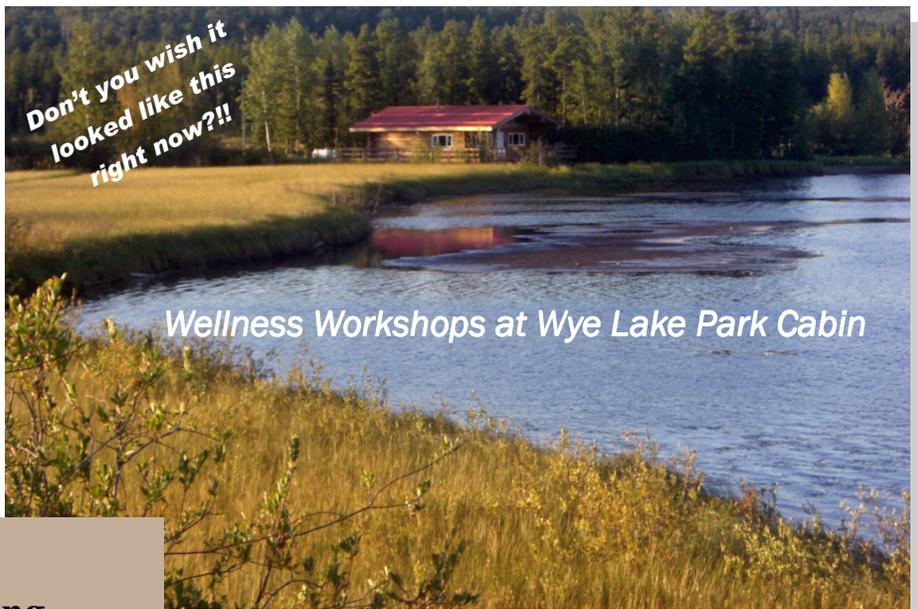


We'd Like to thank **Liard First Nation** for taking on the upgrade of our camp at Francis Lake. We hope to see many healing and cultural events and gatherings there in the future.



Our Website is an ongoing project and we are thankful to **Rick Rotondi** for his great ideas and expertise in setting this up. New articles are always being added so be sure to check back every once in awhile.

[www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca](http://www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca)



*Don't you wish it looked like this right now??!*

*Wellness Workshops at Wye Lake Park Cabin*



## Aboriginal Healing Foundation Program

We've been very busy with the arrival of our new therapist, **Michael Healey**. Michael has been meeting with clients for one on one counseling, networking with other agencies and developing interesting and vital new programming. The Therapeutic Behavior Mentoring Program is now in its initial stages and will be a welcome addition to available programming in our community. Copies of this and other LAWS initiatives can be found on our website at [www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca](http://www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca).

In our ongoing work to help heal the effects of abuse in the residential schools we have been offering wellness workshops every second week at Wye Lake Cabin. Women have been attending these workshops, along with Elders and learning about health and wellness issues. Lately we have been looking at different stress relief techniques while sharing in a safe and healthy environment. We are very thankful for the attendance of our Elders at these functions as their calming wisdom is a welcome addition to any gathering.



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## **GUKEYEH GUK'EH GU'SANI: Kaska Dena National Constitution 2007**

**GUKEYEH GUK'EH GU'SANI** is now complete and reflects the views expressed by Kaska Dena members at community meetings, assemblies, and in surveys. It is time for all Kaska Dena to come together and discuss the new Kaska Dena National Constitution and vote on each of the four Governing Documents.

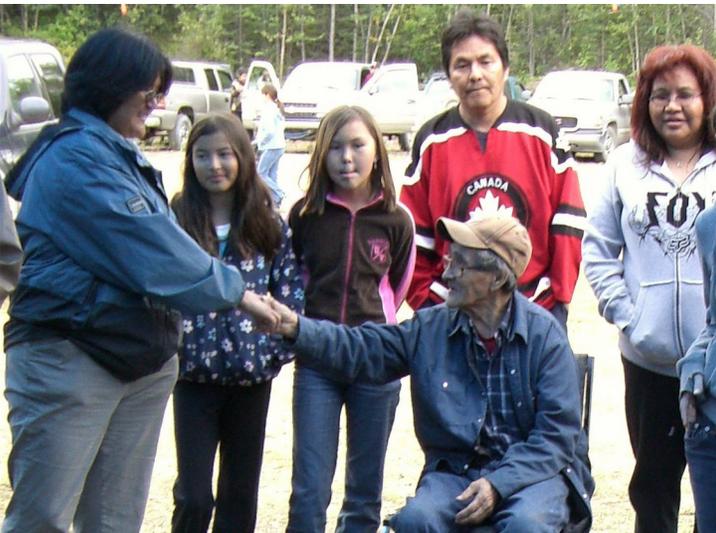
It is the responsibility of each Kaska member to become familiar with these documents in order to discuss them and vote with understanding. Each of these documents will be given a short summary in this newsletter, but we strongly encourage the membership to obtain the complete documents from Band Offices, or online:

**[www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca](http://www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca)**

The last LAWS Newsletter also has a brief description of the underlying principles and values on which the constitution has been written as well as a thorough description of the National Institutions governed by the GUKEYEH GUK'EH GU'SANI.

**All Members are Encouraged to Attend This Important Assembly. Lunch is included.**

*We'd like to extend a special thanks to our Leadership for supporting the Constitution initiative.*



*Our constitution affects every generation and the quality of life for our families now and in the future.*

## **Lorna Reid—A True Kaska Woman**

Kaska women carry a strong physical and spiritual connection with their children, their Elders, the language, the land and animals and the Creator. Kaska women are politically astute with a strong social conscience to affect change to ensure Kaska families can live in harmony with the land and each other, while honoring and living the Kaska traditions and customs.

Kaska Women recognize that their Kaska communities and Nation continues to experience social, economic and political change which adversely affects their relationships with the land and resources, with each other, and with their respective leadership and governments.

Kaska Women recognize that their communities and families struggle with social realities due to a number of historical factors, such as past Canadian government laws and policies intending to civilize and assimilate First Nations into the Canadian societal fabric.



With land claims and self government discussions and negotiations, along with land and resource development, Kaska Women and families want to ensure that future discussions and decisions are exercised in accordance with Kaska traditional laws and customs, with a balanced approach to address the social as well as the economic needs of the Kaska and provide for the greatest community participation possible.

In light of all the challenges Kaska women face to sustain their traditional and customary ways of life, they are relentless in their convictions to provide their children with a promising future, while continuing to promote a Kaska society that is built upon respect, knowledge and honor.

*In memory of Lorna Reid: 1930 - 2008*

**All Members are encouraged to attend this important Assembly**

# **Kaska Tribal Council**

To all Members of

**Liard First Nation**

**(including Daylu Dena Council)**

**Ross River Dena Council**

**Kwadacha First Nation**

**Dease River Band Council**

**TAKE NOTICE that a**

**Special General Assembly**

**will be held at the**

**Watson Lake Recreation Centre**

**March 25, 26, and 27, 2008**

**to consider and vote on the following documents:**

- ◆ **Constitution of the Kaska Dena National Government**
- ◆ **Kaska Dena Good Governance Act**
- ◆ **Kaska Dena Finance Act**
- ◆ **Kaska Dena National Election Code**

**Copies of these documents may be obtained at the following offices:**

**Kaska Tribal Council office**

**in Watson Lake**

**867-536-2805**

**or online at**

**[www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca](http://www.liardaboriginalwomen.ca).**

**Lunch will be served each day**

**Liard First Nation**

**867-536-5200**

**Ross River Dena Council**

**867-969-2277**

**Kwadacha First Nation**

**250-563-4161**

**Dease River Band Council**

**250-239-3000**



## Kaska Dena National Constitution



**Preamble:** *Outlined in LAWS Newsletter 11/07*

### Chapter 1: Founding Provisions

- ◆ Founded on fundamental values including spirituality, traditions, protection of rights, Kaska Dena Kayeh -Traditional Territory, Elder characteristics, Language and Culture, Citizenship and Rights

### Chapter 2: National Institutions

- ◆ Describes governing authorities of the Nation primarily responsible for matters that may affect more than one Kaska First Nation, common to all first Nations, or of national or international significance insofar as the responsibilities are delegated to it by Kaska First Nations. Refer to *LAWS Newsletter 11/07* for a detailed description of National Institutions.

### Chapter 3: Finance

- ◆ Required to operate on principles of prudence, transparency and accountability
- ◆ Describes financial duties, structure and responsibilities of Finance Committee, controls of financial administration, and contracts

### Chapter 4: Programs and Services

- ◆ Administration of Programs and Services based on Kaska Dena inherent values and principles

### Chapter 5: Kaska Dena National Judicial Council

- ◆ Adjudicates violations of National Laws, determines validity of Laws or regulations or decisions of National Government, arbitrates disputes, investigates irregularities.

### Chapter 6: Constitutional Amendments

### Chapter 7: Law Making

- ◆ National Institutions may propose new legislation or amendments.

### Chapter 8: Ratification of Constitution

### Chapter 9: Transition of Ratified Constitution

## National Election Code



Sets out the rules for the election process including:

- ◆ Voter eligibility
- ◆ Candidate eligibility
- ◆ Appointment of Chief Returning Officer and duties
- ◆ Voter lists
- ◆ Election Day schedule, personnel, and procedures
- ◆ Candidate nomination forms and procedures
- ◆ Special ballots
- ◆ Vote counting, election ties and election appeal

## Kaska Dena Government Finance Act



Provides guidelines for the administration, operation and financial management of the Government with oversight by a Finance Committee which provides advice to the Council. The Act includes guidelines for:

- ◆ Requirements of financial statements and public accounts and annual audits if necessary, and appointment of a Finance Manager to ensure the proper collection, receipt, recording and disposition of public money and preparation of financial statements and reports
- ◆ Appointment of a Finance Chairperson to oversee preparation of annual budgets
- ◆ Ability of Finance Manager or delegate to enter into contracts when authorized by Council
- ◆ Disposition or loan of public property
- ◆ Accountability for public monies, misuse of funds, accounts, assets, liabilities, negligence, etc.

## Good Governance Act



Provides for the exercise of the National Government's legal capacity and self governing powers and the management and administration of the National Government including:

- ◆ Giving Executive the authority to enter into contracts, agreements, memorandums of understanding, acquiring and holding property, raising, investing and borrowing money, forming corporations and other legal entities
- ◆ The right of National Government to Establish committees and appoint members of board committees
- ◆ Assign an Executive member to administer, apply and enforce a particular law
- ◆ Establishing standards of accountability to citizens
- ◆ Investigating complaints of undue influence
- ◆ Maintaining and filing Records available to citizens
- ◆ Establishing a procedure for grievances
- ◆ Overseeing staff employment and administration of programs and services
- ◆ Maintaining a register of Kaska Dena Citizens, a Register of National Laws and a register of National Contracts
- ◆ Outlining liability of employees of National Gov't.