



Fraser Basin Council

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Fraser Basin Council Approves Action Plan on Building and Improving Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Relations in the Fraser Basin.

On February 5, 2004, the Fraser Basin Council Board of Directors approved an Action Plan on Building and Improving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Relations in the Fraser Basin. The Action Plan is founded on the belief that good relations are the basis for good process, and lead to better understanding and effective action. The Action Plan recognizes that just and fair acknowledgment and reconciliation of Aboriginal rights and title is integral to achieving a more sustainable Fraser Basin.

The Action Plan provides a roadmap for how the Council will recognize Aboriginal rights and title and provide meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal involvement in Council activities. The Plan's goals are to:

- Enhance understanding of the historical and current context of key Aboriginal issues, and how recognition of Aboriginal title and rights relates to achieving sustainability in the Fraser Basin; and
- Promote joint solutions to sustainability issues that are shared by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in the Fraser Basin.

The Action Plan commits to goals and objectives to be achieved by June 2005. The Council is working with partners and is seeking financial support to accomplish specific outcomes including:

- Publishing a book on First Nations in the Basin, summarizing key Aboriginal issues, traditional and contemporary practices of sustainability and prospects for the future of sustainability in the Basin.
- Developing an indicator of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations by tracking the number and substance of protocols, agreements, etc. in the Basin.
- Sharing lessons on how to establish effective Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations.

Since its inception in 1997, the Fraser Basin Council – a unique non-governmental, non-profit organization with a mandate to advance sustainability in the Fraser River Basin – has brought the four orders of Canadian government (First Nations, federal, provincial and local) together with business and civil society to find common ground and develop solutions to complex issues. There are eight Aboriginal members on the Council's Board of Directors, representing the eight First Nations language groups in the Fraser Basin.

The Council's work is guided by our *Charter for Sustainability*, whose 11th Principle states:

We recognize that Aboriginal nations within the Fraser Basin assert aboriginal rights and title. These rights and title now being defined must be acknowledged and reconciled in a just and fair manner.

For more information on the Action Plan and the Council's work in general, please contact Jessica Bratty at 604-488-5350 or email info@fraserbasin.bc.ca.