



Progress Report

Update on Aboriginal Initiatives

Winter 2003

Federal funding announced for Dene Tha' First Nation oil and gas drilling business

The Dene Tha' First Nation will receive \$1.96 million in federal funding to assist their entry into the oil and gas drilling business. The funds will allow the First Nation to acquire a 50 percent interest in two oil and gas drilling rigs.

The purchase is part of a joint venture between the Dene Tha' First Nation, EnCana Corporation and Lakota Drilling Ltd. that is expected to bring jobs, training and expanded business expertise to the Dene Tha' First Nation in Northern Alberta.

The Dene Tha' First Nation will benefit financially through a 50/50 partnership with Lakota Drilling in this \$14.9-million project. An agreement with EnCana guarantees 760 drilling days for each of the two rigs over the next four years.

The project will create 32 new jobs, as well as an additional 100 jobs related to the enterprise. In addition, training will provide job skills in the drilling industry that can be used beyond this present partnership.

An EnCana spokesperson says his company fully recognizes the potential Aboriginal communities have to develop the required manpower skills needed by the growing oil and gas industry.

For further information about this announcement go to http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nr/prs/s-d2002/2-02200_e.html

First Nations governance legislation is reintroduced

The proposed First Nations Governance Act (FNGA), Bill C-7, now before Parliament, will give First Nations people a greater opportunity to participate in their communities.

The proposed act is based on a number of principles, including accountability, transparency and redress – the hallmarks of modern democratic governments. The proposed legislation would empower First Nations to design three codes according to their needs on leadership selection, administration of government, and financial management and accountability.

For more information about the FNGA and how First Nations people can participate in the development of legislation, go to http://www.fng-gpn.gc.ca/index_e.asp

\$1.9 million will assist Manitoba youth to acquire skills

Sixteen Manitoba community groups will share in more than \$1.9 million to enhance economic, social and personal prospects of Aboriginal youth in the province. Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage, recently made the announcement.

The funds will be spread among 18 projects and will enable urban Aboriginal youth to develop education, employment and leadership skills, and increase their awareness of traditional Aboriginal values and practices.

The funding is part of the Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centre Initiative. This initiative provides urban Aboriginal youth aged 15 to 24 with accessible, Aboriginal community-based, culturally relevant and supportive projects, as well as professional and peer counselling.

For detailed information about the announcement and a list of local groups receiving funds, go to http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca/newsroom/news_e.cfm?Action=Display&code=2N0267E

Bill to create First Nations fiscal institutions is introduced

After 10 years of hard work by First Nations leaders and individuals, the Honourable Robert D. Nault, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, has introduced the proposed First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act (FNFSMA) in the House of Commons.

The First Nations-led initiative will establish, through legislation, four public institutions designed to provide First Nations with the practical tools available to other governments for modern fiscal management. The four public institutions to be established under the FNFSMA are: First Nations Finance Authority; First Nations Tax Commission; First Nations Financial Management Board; and First Nations Statistics.

While participation is not mandatory, use of these institutions will improve the ability of First Nations governments to address the social and economic well-being of First Nations communities. The establishment of these institutions is an important step in improving the fiscal relationship between First Nations and the rest of Canada.

For more information about proposed legislation related to First Nations fiscal institutions go to <http://www.fnfi.ca> or http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nr/prs/m-a2002/2-02170_e.html

Feedback

Progress Report invites your comments and suggestions. Drop us a line at:

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