



# **GITXSAN HEREDITARY CHIEFS**

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## **A Gitksan Update**

### **A Gitksan Update - The 2009 Summit**

Many positive comments are being made about the 2009 Summit. It began with an amazing Welcome performance of the Gidahmes dancers. Thereafter, Dan George did a review called Gitksan Strategic Planning, the sixth according to his records. He said we are not there yet but are moving in the right direction.

The key issue of land negotiations was led by Gwaans, a senior negotiator with Yoobx, Elmer Derrick. Gordon introduced two Gitksan advisors, Gordon Gibson, a former Liberal leader in B.C. and an advisor to former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. The other was Tex Ingamark, one who understands the intricate workings of the B.C. government. This review done by Gwaans was an overview of the Gitksan position from the horse's mouth you might say. It was a clear picture of how they envision the wilps working together under their Inter Wilp agreements over the 33,000 sq. km's of Gitksan Territory. One of the many responses was from Darlene Howard recalling the advice and encouragement of the late 'Axdi Hiiix. Darlene spoke for many when she said that she needed a job and wanted to be considered with upcoming employment opportunities. However, her final conclusion was that she thought the workers were doing the right thing.

Following was the Gisaga'as trail crew who was introduced and they all spoke of what the trail building experience meant to them. Richard Sampson put together a power point presentation that captured a verbal explanation of the importance and significance of the trail project. This was a good demonstration of what the Gisaga'as Chiefs were doing aside from the revitalization project and the intent to move back to their home. This was quite an emotional time for Rhoda Wilson as her mom and dad were probably the last to use that trail, not once, but many times.

Towards the end of the day Gitwangaax introduced their field workers and the work they were doing in consultation with the transmission line proposed to go through their Watershed. They were explaining how they did their planning and field research analysis.

The two days following Jako Krushnisky of Run Of River, Denis Smith of Compass, Peter Zell of Sedan Creek, Don Steele of Pacific Bio Mass, David Emmerson of Northwest Transmission Lines, Tom Decoteau of Jardin Lloyd Thompson, Kieth Atkinson of B.C. Forest Council, Janine North of Northern Development Trust, Ben Chalmers of B.C. Mining Association and Cathy Ulrich of Northwest health Authority did a presentation on; varying degrees of talks with the Gitksan Chiefs of the state of affairs and what they propose to invest etc.

The other highlights were the Visit of Shawn Atleo, the Assembly of First Nations National Chief. It is a first, that a National Chief honored an invite to our Summit. He showed a genuine interest to work with the Gitksan. The other was Jody Wilson Raybould a newly elected Vice Chief of the AFN who was given the same respect and time to express how they would like to work with us. The bigger highlight was our two honorees Sadie Howard and Matilda Wilson, a very well deserved recognition of our own.



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