

APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND ON ACTIVITIES RELATED TO FIRST NATIONS INCLUSION

Related to this work on First Nations participation at the CRD Board and/or Committees, the following timeline illustrates the various steps that have been undertaken from 2014 to present day. Identified steps include:

- **October 2014** - Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees First Nation) Chief Ron Sam signalled the Nation's interest in having formal representation on the CRD Board.
- **January 2015** – The CRD's Special Task Force on First Nations Engagement (Task Force) was established with a mandate to recommend more inclusive models of governance and decision-making between the CRD and First Nations governments.
- **April 2015** – W̱SIKEM (Tseycum First Nation) Chief XÁLÁTE (Jacks) acknowledged that Tseycum would like to sit and share knowledge with the Board. He said that it is time to “cut the strings that separate us and start working together”.
- **May 2015** - STÁUTW̱ (Tsawout First Nation) Chief Underwood identified that representation on the CRD Board has been an ongoing issue for STÁUTW̱ and recalled that this topic was discussed at Chief and Council 30 years earlier.
- **June 2015** – Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District Chair Josie Osborne shared with the Task Force that the most noticeable benefit of having First Nations at the table is the expansion of minds and diversity of perspectives that is brought to the decision making. It has brought fulsomeness to discussions around the Board table.
- **July 2015** - W̱JOŁŁP (Tsartlip First Nation) expressed a challenge relating to existing capacity limitations should W̱JOŁŁP sit on committee positions to fully participate in regional decisions.
- **August 2015** - BOKÉĆEN (Pauquachin First Nation) Chief Harris noted that is it time to learn more about local government, the CRD, and is interested in learning more.
- **September 2015** – T'Sou-ke First Nation Councillor Dumont stated that they are looking forward to future meetings and decisions about either sitting on the CRD Board or an alternative that supports shared governance.
- **October 2015** – CRD Board Chair Nils Jensen sent BC Premier Christy Clark a letter thanking Premier Clark and John Rustad, Minister of Aboriginal Relations for a meeting at the 2015 UBCM conference and further detailing that the province remove identified legislative barriers and support First Nations capacity to participate in local government matters.
- **November 2015** - Xwsepsum (Esquimalt First Nation) Chief Andy Thomas expressed to the Task Force that he has asked for a seat at the CRD for a long time.
- **November 2015** - W̱SIKEM (Tseycum First Nation) newly elected Chief Jimmy emphasized the importance of W̱SIKEM involvement in (local government) matters whenever they are able. The Nation is looking to work on together on practical day-to-day activities to build experience at the “lower level” and work up to higher level governance such as the CRD Board.
- **December 2016** – The suite of recommendations contained within the Year End Report from the Task Force were adopted with the direction that the Task Force guide the completion of the items that include the following selected recommendations:

- To undertake a comprehensive review of the suite of policies and procedures bylaws for CRD Committees and Commissions with recommendations for proposed amendments that will allow for First Nations representation; and,
 - Direct staff to develop options for increased resourcing and financial implications to accommodate greater participation, engagement and reconciliation.
- **November 2017** – CRD Board Chair Steve Price sent a letter to Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation requesting the opportunity to connect on obstacles faced by First Nations and local governments, legislative barriers for First Nations in obtaining a vote at the CRD Board, and understanding the provincial governments approach to historical treaties.
- **August 2018** - WSIKEM (Tseycum First Nation) sent a letter to Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation requesting that First Nations not participating in the modern treaty process are offered a formal voice in matters that affect the territories, rights, and WSIKEM people.
- **2018 Onward** – The CRD continue to meet with staff from the Ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation to explore other avenues to address the challenges relating to increasing First Nations participation in regional discussions.
- **2019 Onward** – The provincial government tabled Bill 41: Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, which received Royal Assent on November 28, 2019 and has passed into law. This Bill mandates the provincial government to bring provincial laws into harmony with the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through:
 - The development of an action plan to achieve alignment over time;
 - Requiring regular monitoring on progress;
 - Allowing for flexibility for the types of agreements the Province can enter with Indigenous governments; and,
 - Provides a framework for decision-making between Indigenous governments and the province.