



**FIRST NATIONS TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL
LAND REFERRAL PROCESS/SYSTEMS WORKSHOP
Prince George
September 12-13, 2007**

A majority of First Nations in the province experience significant levels of frustration in dealing with forestry and crown land referrals on a daily basis. Chief Judy Wilson of the Neskonlith Indian Band of the central interior region says "New technology based management tools for referrals will soon provide viable solutions for First Nations. Hundreds of referral applications are received by the bands, which are under funded and short staffed and are expected to respond to each referral in a limited time. Usually each referral is manually processed, which is time consuming, and is not submitted in any standard format which compromises data management controls".

The First Nations Technology Council (FNTC) is a committee of the First Nations Summit but works on behalf of all BC First Nations on issues regarding technology. FNTC also has a mandate from the BC Chiefs to develop an integrated approach to information management. As such, FNTC is working with a number of Tribal Councils, Nations and First Nations organizations to develop a collaborative approach to Land and Resource Stewardship information management. While the long term goal is to work towards setting up a comprehensive information management system for First Nations Land Stewardship, the initial project is to look at how land referrals are process, stored and analyzed. Working together on the referral process would:

- Better utilize scarce resources – financial and human;
- Standardize the referrals process among First Nations and between First Nations, government and industry;
- Develop policies, processes and practices that would work for all;
- Benefit the many small First Nations communities in BC that do not have the resources required to implement change while coping with the onerous referral process;
- Provide better decision making information to communities while reducing the administrative burden of processing referrals;

- Allow neighbouring communities to share referrals information and to collaborate on projects, as appropriate.

Proposal:

FNTC is proposing to host a workshop to bring together groups currently developing or groups that have developed land referral processes and/or land referral tracking systems. The purpose of the workshop would be to share information about these various information management projects. The goal is to work together wherever possible, to share best practices and, where it makes sense, to share software currently being developed so that the remaining First Nations communities who are thinking about developing a referral tracking system will not have to go through the system development process. The long term goal is to build sustainability in the land stewardship information management process.

Approach:

FNTC has been discussing the land referral process with a number of stakeholders including, among others: Treaty 8, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, Neskonlith Indian Band, Adams Lake Indian Band, Ktunaxa Nation Council, Kaska Tribal Council, Tsilhqot'in National Government, Nanwakolas, EcoTrust Canada, National Centre for First Nations Governance and the First Nations Forestry Council. In addition, FNTC is contacting other Tribal Councils and individual First Nations to determine 'who is where' in the land referral process and what degree of interest exists in working together. The response has been very positive from all respondents.

Workshop Structure:

The Workshop will be held in Prince George. The University of Northern British Columbia is actively working with some of the northern tribal councils and First Nations on various projects related to land management, referral processes and capacity building to support land stewardship and will be an important player in the workshop. The Workshop would be 'by invitation' to key stakeholders and would be limited to 50 or fewer participants. Proposed date of the Workshop is the third week of August, 2007.

Space for poster presentations and general information about projects will also be made available.

Audience:

The Workshop is intended for technical staff of First Nations communities that are at variable levels of developing referral tracking systems, including GIS. The FNTC will engage participants and extend the invitation

Day 1 will consist of presentations from current initiatives including:

- Geoconnections presentation -
- **Carrier Sekani Tribal Council** - Jaime Sanchez - Land Use Planning Coordinator, Scott Emmons - GeoBorealis
- **Tsilhqot'in National Government** - Sam Zirnhelt - Forester, Scott Emmons - GeoBorealis
- **Neskonlith Indian Band/Adams Lake Indian Band** – Steve Murphy
- **Treaty 8** – Kiernan Broderick
- **Hupacasath** – Brandy Lauder
- **EcoTrust/Haida Nation/Lil'wat Nation** – Tracy Howlett, Marguerite Forest
- **Nanwakolas** – Dallas Smith, Kathy Campbell
- **Ktunaxa Nation** – José Galdamez
- **Kaska Dene Tribal Council – David Crampton**
- **Aboriginal Mapping Network** - Greg Kehm
- **First Nations Stewardship of Natural Resources/CONNECT** – Stuart Aird

Day 2 – Facilitated Session

- Best practices
 - Land referral process
 - Moving from resource draining to revenue generating
 - Capacity development
 - Application development – open source vs proprietary software
 - Information hosting
- Requirements
 - Analyses of requirements to determine areas of overlap/difference
 - Commitment to working together to reduce duplication
 - Commitment to information sharing

- Next Steps
 - Confirm funding commitments
 - Develop invitation list, with contact info
 - Confirm speakers and facilitators
 - Confirm date and space at UNBC