



Building for the future by listening *now*.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ***NEWS RELEASE***

### **NEW RELATIONSHIP TRUST SEEKS FEEDBACK FROM FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITY**

Beginning next week, First Nations people in BC will have the chance to help shape the direction of the ***New Relationship Trust***, an important new organization dedicated to helping strengthen First Nations in BC.

Established last spring, the ***New Relationship Trust*** is currently in a planning phase, and is seeking input from the community. That input will be used to create the first Strategic Plan, including details about how the Trust's \$100 million fund will be used and managed.

Ten **Regional Engagement Meetings** will be held throughout BC, beginning in Haida Gwaii on August 21<sup>st</sup> and concluding in Atlin in late September. The complete meeting schedule is as follows:

Masset	August 21	9 am - 3 pm	Old Masset Community Hall
Terrace	August 24	9 am - 3 pm	Muks-kum-ol Housing Society
Port Hardy	August 29	9 am - 3 pm	Kwakiutl Community Hall
Fort St. John	September 11	9 am - 3 pm	Treaty 8 Association Boardroom
Port Alberni	September 12	9 am - 3 pm	Maht Mahs Gym
Prince George	September 13	9 am - 3 pm	Native Friendship Centre
Vancouver	September 14	9 am - 3 pm	Aboriginal Friendship Centre
Kamloops	September 19	9 am - 3 pm	Sk'elep School of Excellence
Cranbrook	September 22	9 am - 3 pm	St. Eugene Mission Resort
Atlin	September 26	9 am - 3 pm	Atlin Inn

Attendees are requested to RSVP by telephone, toll free to 1-877-922-3338.

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"This is an important time for all First Nations people in BC," says New Relationship Trust Chair Nathan Matthew. "We have a government that has indicated its willingness to change their relationship with our people. We have an opportunity to begin to create a more positive future for BC's First Nations, one that respects our unique values, and addresses the most pressing issues we face – issues like poverty, loss of language, and lack of access to our traditional lands and resources."

Mr. Matthew is one of seven Board members assigned to the Trust last spring. He is of Secwepemc heritage, and was Chief to the Simpcw First Nation for 18 years. Today he works as a First Nations educator and sits on a number of Boards related to First Nations' development.

First Nations consultant Jacob Beaton is working with the Trust to implement the regional engagement process. "We are aligning the consulting process with cultural values common to all First Nations in BC," says Beaton. "By listening first, allowing all people to have a chance to speak, and keeping the process open and transparent we are hoping the Strategic Plan will truly reflect the values and needs of the people the Trust is meant to serve."

Members of the media are invited to attend the regional engagement in their area. Please join us for lunch, at which time the Nathan and Jacob will be available for interview, as well as members of the public.

The Trust is a not-for-profit organization that builds on the New Relationship vision. The vision, jointly agreed to by the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, the BC Assembly of First Nations, and the Province of BC, vision outlines a future First Nations based on "respect, recognition, and accommodation of Aboriginal rights and title."

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General information:

Web site: [www.newrelationshiptrust.ca](http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca)

Toll free #: 1-877-922-3338

Nathan Matthew:

Tel: 250- 672-5652      Cel: 250 -851-6054

Jacob Beaton:

Tel: 250-842-5252      Cel: 250-480-8716

