

North West Tribal Treaty

Charter

Article I

Preamble

Formed on the basis of the following principles agreed to by

Tsimshian, Haisla, Haida, Wet'suwet'en, Nisga'a, Gitksan, Lake Babine, Gitanyow, Carrier, Sekani, Tahltan, Taku River Tlingit, Kaska and Dene Nations:

We, the Northwest First Nations have occupied and governed our respective territories since time immemorial. The Creator put us on our territories and gave us laws in which to define and govern our relationships with each other and with the animals, plants, lands waters and air.

We have maintained our spiritual beliefs, our languages, our way of life and traditions. We have done this through intermarriage and the exchange of material and food resources, and shall continue to do so through infinity.

We, the signatories to this Treaty are of one heart in the advancement and protection of our common interests identified in the following principles

1. We shall continue to practice our own tribal political systems and laws, and we intend these separate jurisdictions to continue;
2. We shall continue to express our sovereignty as Nations;
3. We shall assist each other to reaffirm our continuing Hereditary Title and expression to our rights; and defend these against any erosion through external forces;
4. We shall collectively join other First Nations efforts to pursue the full exercise and aboriginal rights and title;
5. We shall continue to enter into bilateral and multilateral relationships with each other to strengthen and assist in settling matters and common concerns regarding our respective cultural identities, traditions, diversity, equality of our peoples and our common boundaries according to our traditional laws;
6. We shall, in the spirit of sharing and co-existence, continue to enter into mutually beneficial relationships regarding access to traditional territories and natural resources. These include all resources that come from our territories.

Article II

Declaration of Rights

**We the original peoples of Northern British Columbia
hereby Declare these to be Our Rights**

- (a) The right to self-determination and the freedom from arbitrary authority;
- (b) The right to make our own choices and act on our own behalf;
- (c) The right to consent to and to approve of how we are governed;
- (d) The right to organize ourselves internally and externally without requiring the consent of any other group;
- (e) The right to participate in any organization or forum without diminishing our sovereignty;
- (f) The right to maintain, enjoy and exercise our Aboriginal Rights and Title;
- (g) The individual right to the pursuit of prosperity;
- (h) The individual right to basic human rights.

Article III

Composition of NWTT

1. The Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations is made up of the people of those Nations in agreement with the principles and purpose of the "Northwest Tribal Treaty" signed February 11th, 1991 and is in agreement with the articles of this Charter;
2. Participants may indicate their agreement by adding their signatures to the "Northwest Tribal Treaty";
3. The Governing structure of the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations shall consist of three separate bodies –
 - The General Council;
 - The Executive Council; and
 - The Three Executive Chairs.
 - None of the separate bodies may perform the function or powers of the other, unless specifically provided for in this Charter.

Article IV

Functions and Powers of the General Council

1. The General Council shall be composed of elected Representatives and Traditional Leadership:
 - Each First Nation within the Geographic area of the North West Tribal Treaty may appoint one Representative who is an Elected Member of a First Nations Government; and one Representative from the Traditional Leadership of the Community.
2. The General Council shall be vested with the authority to elect the Executive Council and the Executive Chairs and to provide direction to the Executive Chairs and members of Executive Council;
 - Any person in attendance at a meeting of the General Council may participate in the process and procedures of NWTT General Council, including voting on resolutions
 - Only Representatives of the General Council may vote to elect the Executive Council and the Executive Chairs.
3. The General Council shall have the authority to establish Working Committees.
4. The General Council shall receive committee reports at each meeting of the General Council and may reconfirm continuation and mandates of Working Committees.

Article V

Executive Chairs Functions and Powers

There shall be three Executive Chairs of the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations.

1. The Executive Chairs of the North West Tribal Treaty Nations shall be elected by Representatives of the General Council and shall preside over General meetings of the General Council and the Executive Council.
2. The term of the Executive Chairs shall be three years;
3. The Executive Chairs shall be vested with the authority to setup and monitor committees established by the General Council and approve the appointment of Committee members;
4. The Executive Chairs may sign resolutions of the General Assembly, within 30 days, if they determine the resolution to be consistent with the principles of the Treaty and does not infringe on the Rights declared in this Charter. The Executive

- Chairs must record and present their objections to the resolution to the Executive Council;
5. The Executive Chairs shall appoint Chairs of Committees;
 6. The Executive Chairs may call meetings of the General Council and Executive Council;
 7. The Executive Chairs must call at least one meeting of the General Council each year, and a minimum of three meetings of the Executive Council each year.
 8. The Executive Chairs collectively have the authority to make decisions on the day to day operations of the NWTT office and to appoint one among themselves to act as the day to day decision maker in relation to the management of staff and other administrative matters;
 9. The Executive Chairs have the authority to issue public statements of behalf of NWTT;
 10. The Executive Chairs have the authority and responsibility to represent the interests of NWTT in other forums and Governments;
 11. The Executive Chairs shall act as the Executive of NWTT Group Society;

Article VI

Functions and Powers of the Executive Council

1. The Executive Council shall consist of 9 persons, three of which shall reside in the Eastern Region, three of which shall reside in the North Central Region and three of which shall reside in the Western Region of the traditional territory of the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations.
2. Each member of the Executive Council is a representative of all the NWTT Nations and original people of the North West and must act in the best interests of all;
3. The term of each Executive Council member shall be three years and any vacancies in any of the three regions may be filled by election or appointed by the Executive Council to be approved at the next meeting of the General Council;
4. The Executive Council may make recommendations, on any matter, to the Executive Chairs and the General Council;
5. The Executive Council may review General Council resolutions to ensure compliance with this Charter and advise the Executive Chairs on their findings;
6. Seven of nine Executive Council members may approve a General Council, resolution on behalf of the Executive Council, if the Executive Chairs have not signed the resolution in thirty days.

7. The Executive Council may Approve Committee recommendations;
8. The Executive Council shall have the authority to approve work plans, budgets and expenditures and may delegate but specify the level of delegation of this authority;
9. The Executive Council shall have the authority to approve Committee Terms of Reference established by the General Council;
10. The Executive Council in consultation with the Executive Chairs may determine the agenda of the General Council, subject to the approval of the General Council;
11. The Executive Council shall Act as directors of NWTT Society;

Article VII

Functions and Powers of committees Established by the General Council

1. If requested and with instructions from the Executive Chairs to act as lobby groups on specific items;
2. All committees established by the General Council will report at each meeting of the General Council;
3. Mandate of Committees must be renewed and the Committee reconstituted at each General Council meeting, or they cease to exist as NWTT Committees;
4. Committees established by the General Council will report to and take direction from Executive Council;

Article VIII

Election procedures

1. There shall be a general election of the three Chairs and the Executive council every three years, and the three Chairs and the 9 Executive Councilors shall hold office for three years.
2. An electoral officer shall be appointed by the Executive Council.
3. The electoral officer shall be an independent officer and decisions of the electoral officer shall be final.
4. Election procedures will be developed by the electoral officer in consultation with the Executive Chairs and the Executive Council.
5. Election procedures will include provisions for:
 - a. The election of one Executive Chair residing in the Eastern region, one Executive Chair residing in the North Central region, and one Executive Chair residing in the Western region
 - b. The election for the Executive Council: three persons residing in the Eastern region, and three persons residing in the North Central region, and three persons residing in the Western region.
 - c. Allowing all Representatives in the General Council the ability to vote for each of the three Chairs and each of the 9 Executive Councilors.
6. The election procedures will be recommended by the Executive Council to the General Council for approval.

Article IX

Functions and Powers of the NWTT Society (legal entity)

1. The NWTT society registered under the Societies Act of British Columbia will act as the Treasury Board of the NWTT;
2. The Society will be responsible for Financial accountability, auditing and reporting;
3. The Directors of the Society will approve budgets and work plans;
4. The Directors of the Society will Secure funding;
5. The NWTT Society will provide administrative support for the activities of NWTT Nations;

Article X

Ratification of the Charter

1. Approved at an assembly of the North West Tribal Treaty Nations

Article XI

Amendment of the Charter

1. Recommendations and Proposals to Amend to the Charter must be approved by a majority of the Executive Council and the Executive Chairs.
2. Notice of proposed changes shall be distributed 30 days in advance of an NWTT meeting of the General Council.
3. Amendments shall require a positive vote of at least 60% plus 1 of the General Council in attendance.

Approved at the 3rd Annual General Meeting of the Northwest Tribal Treaty Nations on May 27th, 2004 in Woyenne Lake Babine.

Gerald D. Wesley
Co-chair

Justa Monk
Co-chair

Appendix 1

Region - West – Line between Terrace and Cedarvale

Haida

Tsimshian

Nisga'a

Haisla

Region - North Central – Line between Smithers and Telkwa

Gitksan

Wet'suwet'en (Hagwilget and Moricetown)

Tahltan

Tlingit

Kaska

Dene

Region – East

Carrier

Sekani

Treaty Eight