

Reflections on the K'omoks First Nation Intergovernmental Meeting

June 11 & 12, 2018

From the Denman Island and Hornby Island Local Trust Committees

1. Gratitude:

We thank you for putting on this event and including us. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves, learned a lot, deepened relationships, and emerged with motivation and ideas for action.

The warm welcome, cedar brushing, gift and the many smiles made us feel welcome and set a respectful and heartfelt tone. The meeting was extremely well-organized, with the perfect balance of listening, talking in small groups, and coming together as a plenary. The creation of a vision for the K'omoks Valley provided a culminating focus and sense of accomplishment.

The meeting felt like the beginning of a new era for the K'omoks Nation in its relationships with local and regional governments and we are honoured to be part of that. We also appreciate that our time together provided fruitful relationship-building between the various local and regional governments present.

2. Some things we learned:

- There is huge potential for effective cooperation when local governments partner with First Nations;
- We can make better decisions if we think of a 250-year cycle, rather than just the immediate future;
- In Councillor Jack's words, "First Nations are still working within their traditional culture." This means the rest of us have the opportunity and responsibility of learning about that culture and respecting it;
- Sometimes it is beneficial to pause and ask, "What does your grandfather want to see?"
- Reconciliation is a process that will be ongoing, so we shouldn't expect it to be "done" once we achieve a few shared goals or a few feel-good moments;
- We need to respect the limited capacity of the KFN right now and be patient.

3. Some Ideas for action (for all and any local governments) we heard at the meeting:

- Create a protocol agreement with K'omoks First Nation;
- Tease out opportunities for partnerships, including job shadowing and internships;
- Offer practical help, such as sharing of expertise;
- Make territorial acknowledgements at our meetings and include them in written form in our correspondence;
- Workshops for staff and elected officials;
- Hold cultural events;
- Participate in a review of the K'omoks Marine Plan.

4. Next steps for Islands Trust:

We have already had a meeting to share our impressions and conclusions from the meeting and consider further actions. We are reporting back to our communities using social media, local newspapers, speaking to the public at community meetings, and word-of-mouth. We will be corresponding with you in the next few weeks about follow-up, and in the meantime welcome outreach from your team regarding future cooperation, dialogue and/or events.