

?Akisq̓nuk First Nation

Monthly Leadership Report

October 2024

Submitted by: Councillor Darcy Fisher

Introduction

October brought opportunities to witness Indigenous food sovereignty work beyond our territory and to continue governance responsibilities at home.

I've been following Native Grown & Gathered for about three years now. Watching it grow from interviews with small Indigenous food programs into what it became this year: a full expo. Over 300 people. First Nations from Canada and the United States. Not talking about food insecurity. Building food sovereignty.

That distinction matters. One waits for solutions. The other creates them.

Formal Governance Activities

Over the past month, I contributed to Nation governance through:

- Governance Policy Review (October 14)
- Chief & Council Meeting (October 15)
- Changemakers Meeting (October 20)
- Ktunaxa Nation Council Society (KNCS) Leadership Meeting (October 29, 30)

This work continues Council's focus on governance structures that serve members, align with cultural responsibility, and create clarity in how we operate as leadership.

Food Sovereignty in Practice

Native Grown & Gathered Expo | Seattle, WA | October 1–3

Three hundred attendees. Tribal delegates. Day participants. Indigenous entrepreneurs and food security initiatives being honored not for needing support, but for already doing the work.

What stood out: these people weren't gathering to process intergenerational trauma. They were building intergenerational wealth. They're the difference makers within their families and their communities. People who decided they could feed themselves, create economies from their knowledge, and build infrastructure that serves generations yet to come.

This is what a calling of like-minded people looks like. People looking to the future. Looking beyond themselves. We have seen what it is like to lose a way of life and to still survive. Now we get to write what comes next.

The question this raises for our work at home: what does this look like here?

Encroachment work answers part of it. Use it or lose it. Borders work when we're willing to protect them. When we support traditional harvesting rights, protect gathering sites, ensure land access, we're drawing lines that matter. Lines that say: this territory is ours, this knowledge is ours, this future is ours to build.

But here's what matters more than the lines themselves: what we protect them for. Do we draw borders to expand what our people can reach, or to limit who gets to reach? Do we defend territory to create possibility, or to cage potential?

Too often leadership tells people they can reach for the stars as long as they don't leave fingerprints on the glass ceiling. That's not protection. That's limitation wearing the mask of governance.

The work is this: draw the lines that defend what sustains us. Then get out of the way and let people build. Not just survival. Thriving across generations. That's the distinction between managing dependency and building capacity.

Reflection

The Changemakers engagement this month, the ongoing Governance Policy work, and the learning from Seattle all point toward the same understanding: leadership that builds capacity matters more than leadership that maintains dependency.

Governance should hold some like-mindedness about what we're actually building toward. Our roles are temporary. The greater outcome is ungovernable people. Not chaos. Not dysfunction. People who can govern themselves according to what sustains life.

That's the work. Creating conditions where self-determination isn't a policy goal but a lived reality. Where people feed themselves. Where knowledge that has served us since the beginning continues to serve those yet to come.

The work we do today should ensure that those who come after us can look back and say: "They knew we were coming."

Hu sukit 'qukni,
Darcy Fisher