



**DOIG**  
RIVER FIRST NATION  
TSAA?ÇHÉ NE DANE

## THE VISION: A HEALTHY, STRONG, AND PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

Featured on the FNTC's panel at the recent *First Nations Leading the Way 4* national meeting, Doig River First Nation Chief Trevor Makadahay and Band Manager Shona Nelson shared their inspiring story of developing a foundation of nation building and community participation to achieve their community's vision of economic and financial self-sufficiency.

Doig River is one part of the original Fort St. John Beaver Band along with Blueberry River First Nations. Located approximately 70 kilometres northeast of Fort St. John, BC, Doig River has 335 members. Although small in size, Doig River is strong in their language and culture, active on the land, and a participant in the modern economy of Northeast BC.

In advance of completing their recent Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) claim settlement, Doig River undertook extensive nation building work with the support of the FNTC, the First Nations Financial Management Board, and the First Nations Lands Advisory Board (LAB).

The Doig River leadership is using their culture and the modern fiscal and governance tools provided by the First Nations Fiscal Management Act (FMA) and the First Nations Lands Management Act (FNLMA) to exercise jurisdiction and achieve their shared community vision.

This important work began with strong and active community participation. Through planning sessions that include the Beaver language and group discussions, members developed personal and shared visions for Doig River and identified priority areas for future development.

In the 2021 TLE planning process, members participated through membership engagement, including surveys, community cafés, and virtual meetings.

Working with the FMA Institutions and the LAB, the community has achieved a number of milestones to support nation building in recent years:

- Completed a Financial Administration Law in 2017, 2019 & 2021;
- Became a developmental First Nation with the LAB in 2020;
- Staff training at the Tulo Centre of Indigenous Economics for tax administration, applied economics, and applied lands management; and
- Completed the FMB Financial Management Systems certification in April 2022.

FNTC aided the Doig River Additions to Reserve (ATR) process through support for their negotiation of a property tax-based Municipal Service Agreement (MSA) with the City of Fort St. John. Doig River purchased land in 2016 in Fort St. John to create an urban reserve. An MSA is required under the ATR process.

The Gah Tah Kwa Reserve, within Fort St. John, was established on April 5, 2022. Property tax laws for the new urban reserve are under development. The FNTC is also supporting Doig River on the development of a new fiscal relationship with the province of BC.

Right: Chief Commissioner speaks at Doig River during National Indigenous Day celebrations.



Photo Above (left to right): Chief Trevor Makadahay (front), Councillor Garry Oker, Allisun Rana, Patricia Maclver, Councillor Brittany Brinkworth, Mayor Lori Ackerman, Shona Nelson, Chief Commissioner Manny Jules, Councillor Starr Acko