



April Minutes

Tuesday April 14, 2026 – 10:00am

Meeting held Via Zoom

Attendance: Nancy Wilkin, Bev Ramey, Tory Stevens, Colin Campbell, Bob Peart, Bill Henwood, Mark Haddock
Regrets: Ric Careless, Wayne Stetski, Mel Turner, Denis Moffat.
Guest: Greg McDade (retired lawyer)

1. Guest Presentation

The meeting started with our guest Greg McDade, a prominent retired lawyer who has represented First Nations for about three decades, and who was extensively involved in protected areas and environmental issues when he was executive director of the Sierra Legal Defence Fund (now Ecojustice Canada) and the West Coast Environmental Law Association.

Greg discussed his experience representing indigenous clients, many of whom carry out their own land use planning and identify areas for protection from resource development even though some might not want to see them designated under the Park Act or Protected Areas of BC Act. Some have negotiated with the Province for greater protection of wildlife habitat and areas of special importance and come up with their own names and vision of appropriate use for them. In general, some concerns about park designation stems from concerns about recreational overuse by the growing BC population. BC Parks has not been much involved in these discussions and negotiations; they are usually dealing with other ministries responsible for indigenous relations and reconciliation and those with land and resource mandates and the Premier's office.

Greg also mentioned pressure to develop natural resources and the attraction of joint ventures for revenue and jobs. Early in his practice First Nations had significant resourcing issues to respond to industrial development in client territories, but more recently there has been a fair amount of funding available and indigenous governments have larger staff to sustain.

Elders Council directors asked Greg several questions, such as the permanence of protection under FN land use plans that are not legally protected under BC law. Greg stated that the planning processes that were in place in the 1990s for advancing the protected areas strategy are no longer in

place and suggested that outreach to and environmental education of indigenous youth should be considered by those able to provide it.

2. Agenda Items

All other agenda items were deferred to the May meeting due to time and attendance.

3. Next Meeting

Next meeting: May 12, 2026, 10 a.m.

4. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.