
**Re-establishing
Traditional Trade and Commerce
and
Improving Community Social Capital
in Treaty #3**

*First Nation Veterinary Infrastructure Program Briefing
Grand Council of Treaty #3 National Assembly*

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Veterinary Infrastructure Program

Dr. Richard Herbert

Summary Report:

Over the last year, Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation, on behalf of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3, spearheaded the early development of a First Nation veterinary infrastructure and verified that a veterinary infrastructure can be adapted to meet the needs of the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3. Of primary concern to the nation was the development of safe traditional food and safe communities. From these concerns rose three interrelated Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 programs regarding; nuisance wildlife control, wild deer harvest, and dog control. These programs are related since they are built by the same First Nation veterinary infrastructure support service. A decision was made to hold on the nuisance wildlife program.

The program for surplus harvest of wild deer is able to ensure safe wild meat but continued to evolve into a framework to manage our region's out-of-control deer population to the benefit of the nation using an Elder-defined surplus harvest within an Elder-guided traditional tribal-based trade and commerce system. This program's dividends promise safe traditional food, prosperity, and independence for the nation; up to 250 million dollars of industry in Treaty #3 and up to 65 billion dollars in new industry revenue across Canada for nation communities. This program has been included into the Treaty #3 Economic Development portfolio workplan. Other wildlife meat and fish harvests can develop from this initial deer pilot project. Foundation frames within this program have been laid for laws and regulations, wildlife resource management and harvest, meat and byproduct industries, marketing, national and individual roles, traditional ownership, partnership, and prosperity sharing. This program currently needs an in depth consultation with our Elders and to be transferred into Grand Council Treaty #3.

The program for dog control was shown to be able to provide immediate and permanent solutions to dog public health crises in nation communities. In doing so, this program can significantly increase the social capital in our communities; relieve third world conditions. These intolerable conditions include a 130 times (13,000 percent) increased chance for our children to be killed by a dog on reserve and a least a 100 times higher risk of our children being bitten by a dog on-reserve. This program went on to demonstrate that it was not just communities that needed dog programs. Treaty police were unable fulfill their mandate and protect citizens from aggressive and dangerous dogs because harmonized bylaws and animal control service system do not exist, including; dog pounds, animal control officers, and related veterinary services. Many nation communities have expressed serious concerns regarding out-of-control dog populations. As a result, interim solutions for essential education and services were developed and frameworks for permanent solutions have been laid. This program also needs an Elder consultation and to be transferred into Grand Council Treaty #3.

Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation, an individual community, cannot continue to spearhead a project of this magnitude; a project based on treaty rights, a project involving multiple communities; a project with provincial, national, and international ramifications. The veterinary infrastructure and its support service needs to be spearheaded by the Treaty #3 Ojichidaa, transferred into Grand Council Treaty #3, and the developing programs need the moral and spiritual guidance of the Elders before they develop too far. Draft Grand Council resolutions to these ends have been submitted.

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Foreword:

We were unable to prepare presentations on deer harvest, dog control, and offshoot programs in the limited time and space allotted to this project. We have chosen to share more on the developing trade and commerce project which is powered by the surplus wild deer harvest.

Pazaga'owin:

The status quo must be challenged. The nation cannot continue on the same course. Our citizens are desperately looking to our leaders to find the solution. There is a solution but it is not inside the "INAC box." We have everything we need. If we can remember how to respect the land while harvesting for trade and commerce, she will provide for us again. We need to make old ways new. We need to be who we are in the 21st century. We need to be Anishinaabe.

Traditional trade and commerce roles and industries in our nation have virtually been wiped out and replaced by looking to jobs for provision and prosperity. Life revolves around jobs and the wages they bring into the home and community. However, jobs leave our nation without its own national trade and commerce foundation through which an economy is generated and adapted for the continued pursuit of prosperity and self-sufficiency. Both Provincial and Federal governments push a "jobs-jobs" model for economic development. That model is wrong! That approach will prevent an economy from emerging in our nation. We need "roles", not jobs. Roles are jobs "owned" by our people, in our economy.

Jobs are formed within a business that someone else owns. While a region may have an industry, that industry is developed through private or corporate businesses that use the region's resources. If these businesses close, the region quickly loses jobs and the industry associated with those closing businesses disappears. The solution is traditional trade and commerce. It replaces jobs with roles, corporate ownership with community ownership, INAC funding with trade and commerce revenue, and it replaces Federal dependency with independence, all within an Elder-guided traditional business system. Roles, and the industries they support, cannot be lost.

Bimiiwinitisowin Omaa Akiing:

Our Elders carry the knowledge we need to re-establish our traditional trade and commerce. We begin where we are because Elder teachings indicate that we have everything we need to survive as a people. Social development agreements, federal and provincial transfer agreements, treasury boards, and other similar initiatives are part of our function as a nation. But our national agenda must include a deliberate effort to rebuild basic societal foundational structures inherent in our traditional trade and commerce institutions. Then, our reborn economy can provide for our nationhood.

To rebuild our trade and commerce systems we need a pioneering pilot project that identifies missing roles in our traditional trade and commerce structures as it develops. The implementation of

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the pilot project will force the development of other traditional national structures it needs to function resulting in the restoration of a national foundation of Elder-guided roles, businesses, and industries. In this way, the pilot project will pioneer the development of traditional business structures and their industries. Once developed, the pilot project will become a **national trade and commerce engine** capable of generating revenue; revenue that will provide nation governances with the regulatory framework, structures, and capital to effectively manage our own economy. The business network that will be re-established by the pioneer pilot project will be used to establish other new and vibrant economic activity streams within the nation.

The pilot project needs to meet certain requirements to have enough power to pioneer all that is in front of it. First, it needs to start with what we have. In this regard, we have the inherent right to live on the land and support our families, Treaty rights to our avocations of hunting and fishing, legislated rights within the Indian Act to hunt, fish, and manage wildlife on reserves, and we have a United Nation international right to harvest and retail wildlife. The pilot project must have the maximum economic development, revenue, multiple industry, and role potential possible so there would be enough power to push change. It has to be something that no one else is doing so that we would not need to fight to take it from another group. Finally, it has to have a very firm cultural and historical foundation to make its development both technically and adaptively easier in the nation. The surplus wild deer harvest pilot program from the First Nation veterinary infrastructure project meets all the requirements of a pilot project capable of pioneering the re-establishment of traditional trade and commerce for the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3, including; 400-1,200 roles and \$20-87 million in potential gross revenues.

The same traditional trade and commerce framework, established with the pioneering surplus wild deer harvest pilot project, will be used for the future development of an inland fishery, to market lumber, harvest other surplus wildlife, and *etc.*. The economic and employment windfall of a fully developed, culturally-defined, tribal-based, national trade and commerce infrastructure in Treaty #3 is a staggering \$150-250,000,000 per year. After development, the new veterinary, wildlife, and tribal business infrastructures can be adapted to share prosperity with the rest of our nations in Canada. Conservative estimates suggest a 39-65 billion dollar annual windfall across Canada.

Issues:

Settler governments never anticipated that hunting and fishing would become valuable international trading commodities in the 21st century. They appropriated lumber and minerals but clearly left us with our avocations of hunting and fishing. Both Federal and Provincial governments are very aware that we have a right to sell what we hunt and fish. They just never explained that we simply need a Grand Council in Treaty #3 Veterinary Support Service to build our paperwork trail of protocols, programs, and services to harmonize with the global economy's regulation system. However, the sleeping giant has awakened and both Federal and Provincial governments have taken notice.

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We have submitted funding initiatives to INAC (3) and NOHFC (1). We have been in the process with INAC for 20 months over foundational funding for the veterinary infrastructure and the veterinary support service. The NOHFC initiative concerned a three-tiered national consultation process to obtain guidance in the rebuilding of traditional trade and commerce business systems. The NOHFC process is 9 months old. The bare minimums needed to have the project move forward are: (1) A Veterinary Support Service with two individuals working at least ½ full-time to develop programs and services; one veterinarian (technical support) and one citizen (adaptive support); and, (2) a national Elder consultation. These minimums would ensure that protocol, programs, and service pathways can develop to harmonize with existing global programs and services. The rest can literally build up from these two individuals using what we already have, as needs arise.

It is possible that not either the Federal or the Provincial governments will fund any aspect of the early veterinary support service work or the national Elder consultation. The potential for, and implications of, a national economy among nation communities may well be seen as a threat to the crown's sovereignty. However, we must continue to hold these outside funding agencies accountable by pursuing appeal processes and watchdog organizations. Ultimately, these governments will need to capitulate with funding.

Next:

Our Elders' teachings indicate that everything we need to rebuild our nation is already here. We should start with what we have; Elder guidance, Treaty rights, governance structures, communities, and citizens. Federal and Provincial governments have and will continue to bog us down, if we wait for them to rescue us with funds. So if everything is already here, we must also have enough finance somewhere to get this pilot project's technical and adaptive processes moving so we can re-establish our trade and commerce infrastructures. We can not let funding issues kill this opportunity to finance nationhood. We must look within the nation for the resources and to our leaders for the commitment to move the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 forward. The Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3 needs to depend less on outside funding sources for its national economy and look within itself for funds to move the Veterinary Support Service and the elder consultation process forward; defining its own economy.

Lac Des Mille Lacs First Nation moved the First Nation veterinary infrastructure project, and its capacity to make nation communities safer and prosperous, as far as it could. A single community cannot spearhead a project of this magnitude; a project based on treaty rights, a project involving multiple communities; a project with provincial, national, and international ramifications. The veterinary infrastructure and its support service needs to be spearheaded by the Treaty #3 Ojichidaa, transferred into Grand Council Treaty #3, developing programs need the moral and spiritual guidance of the Elders before they develop too far without it, and the program needs interim funding to continue.

Closing:

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Our traditional “roles” model of economic development can release our citizens from the grip of poverty and our nation from the poverty trap of dependance on outside funding sources. We can not continue as we have been. We must start the process of change. Once started, it will finish. Left unstarted, it will never happen.

Acknowledgements:

The introduction and input for the First Nation veterinary infrastructure program has followed a path of its own, breaking ground wherever it has been shared. We would like to thank Ida Linklater, then Health Director in Naicatchewenin First Nation, for initial input into program development and the Fort Frances Chiefs Secretariat for their initial support. We would like to thank Lac Des Milles Lac First Nation for bringing the veterinary infrastructure initiative to the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty #3, and for spearheading, on behalf of the Nation, early program development. We would also like to thank the Office of the Ogichidaa, Grand Council Treaty #3, and the Treaty #3 resource staff for their input and support.

There are many other individuals and communities through which aspects of this veterinary infrastructure and its derivative programs have developed. Thank you and forgive us for not having kept a detailed list of contributors only the way. Special thanks to Mr. Percy Bird.

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