

# DITIDAHT FIRST NATION

Newsletter #3 - Update on the Comprehensive Community Plan

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LOGO DESIGN WINNER**

**Bobby Durocher!**

**Thank you to the artists  
that entered in to the draw.**

**This logo will now be used on  
all Comprehensive Community Plan  
(CCP) publications and mail outs.**



### **In this issue:**

- CCP Vision Statement – looking far into the future
- Meetings in September
- Territorial Overview and “The Great Flood” – presented by the Ditidaht Heritage Project

# CCP VISION STATEMENT

There have been comments from Ditidaht members on the Vision Statement in the CCP. Most of the comments are about the lack of a clear vision and the need for a Vision Statement that reflects the feelings and aspirations of community members.

A Vision Statement was drafted a few years ago and is now painted on the wall of the Community Hall. It says:

## ***First People-People First***

***Our Mission: the People through strong, democratic, transparent, & accountable leadership in order to deliver effective & efficient programs & services with compassion while respecting our culture, language & tradition. Our Vision: The Ditidaht Nation walks with pride & comfort between the traditional & modern worlds. We have restored health, lifestyles, language, spirituality, traditions & strong cultural identities that reflect Ditidaht values and beliefs. As a Nation we stand as one & are strong, harmonic, spirited, and culturally rich. We are traditional & independent Nation governed by the people, for the people.***

***The Ditidaht community is progressive, self- sufficient & economically sustainable with strong natural resources. Our forests are bountiful, our resources plentiful and we take pleasure in abundance of fish, clean air & water. We watch with wonder as our children play freely & people come together to take part in cultural events. Our people hold strong family values, have self-respect and respect for others. We find joy in traditional & modern education & technology and are confident choosing the life path that suits us. We are role models for other First Nations.***

This Vision Statement was updated at the Community Engagement Meetings in 2014 by the Ditidaht members. The New Statement (Draft) says.

***Our Vision is for a Healthy sustainable community where our families are well educated in our history and culture.***

***Though Unity, strong leadership, and based on Traditional Teachings, Values and Practice we shall provide good housing, employment and opportunities for all.***

***Based on Respect for our Territory, We shall develop our natural resources on land and sea for the benefit of many generations to come.***

How do these vision statements work for you? Are there parts that you like/don't like so much?

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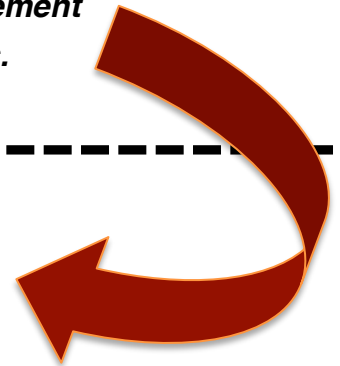
What words do you want included in the vision? These would be words that represent the future you would like to see for DFN.

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*We will draft your comments into a Vision Statement for their review at the September meetings.*



## **Save the Date!**

### ***Upcoming Community Meetings***

Four community meetings are scheduled in September to update members on the Comprehensive Community Plan. Dinner will be served at each of the meetings.

**Plan to Attend! Draw Prizes!**

- September 16<sup>th</sup> Port Alberni-Barclay Hotel
- September 17<sup>th</sup> Malachan-Community Hall
- September 22<sup>nd</sup> Duncan- Quw'usun Cultural Centre
- September 23<sup>rd</sup> Nanaimo- Coast Bastion Hotel

Each meeting starts 5:00 pm with dinner followed by an update on the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP).

# Digital Overview of Ditidaht Territory & the Great Flood Story

(presented by the Ditidaht Heritage Project)

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Ditidaht traditional territory is vast. It takes in the lands and waters stretching along the southwest coast of Vancouver Island between Bonilla Point on the east and Pachena Point on the west. This includes the Carmanah [k<sup>w</sup>aabaaduʔa], Cheewaht [č̣aax<sup>w</sup>iyt], Klanawa [ł̣adiiwaʔ], and Darling river systems. The territory also includes Nitinaht Lake and the Nitinaht, Caycuse [q̣iiquuws], Hobarton [x̣ubitadt], and Doobah [dubaʔ] river systems. The territory extends along Cowichan Lake and its tributary river systems, reaching down the Cowichan River to the easternmost boundary at Skutz Falls. Ditidaht territory is traditionally considered to extend offshore as far as the Vancouver Island Mountains are visible from a canoe.

To provide a visual overview of these extensive lands and waters, we will soon be posting a digital Google Earth tour of Ditidaht traditional territory on the Ditidaht First Nation website. Look out for this at [www.ditidaht.ca](http://www.ditidaht.ca)!

This overview tour includes the sacred mountain, kaakaapiya. Ditidaht oral history relates that kaakaapiya saved Ditidaht ancestors during a Great Flood in the distant past. Following is one version of this Flood story, shared by late Ditidaht Elder Ida Jones, in conversation with anthropologist Ann Bates...<sup>1</sup>



Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia. "Photograph: Clo-oose," 6-23 May 1914: Photograph from the Mckenna Land Commission Album Loaned to the Ethnology Division in the Fall of 1974." In BC Archives. Visual Records Collection. Photograph, AA00889. Victoria, 1914.

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<sup>1</sup> Ida Jones cited in Ann M. Bates. "Affiliation and Differentiation: Intertribal Interaction among the Makah and Ditidaht Indians." PhD Thesis, Indiana University, 1987, pages 290-293.

## The Great Flood



*Photo by Rolf Hopkinson, taken October 09, 2013 <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/97561021>*

“They move from Jordan River, it’s Ditida [diitiida]. This side of the bridge, Renfrew side of the bridge, it’s Ditida [diitiida]. Old people was living there, long, long time ago. Nitinahts, that’s why they call Nitinahts and Pacheeda. And other side, this side of the bridge, ?a?i•bi•suq’pis [ʔiʔi:biç’aqpiʔs], that’s “maple tree beach”, this side. And they used to say Ditida [diitiida], Port Renfrew side of the bridge. That’s where the people was living and the other side too. All the Nitinahts, I’m not talking about hundred years ago. I’m talking about way back, before when it was flood.

This island was under the water, whole Island. They moved. Ditidaht landed on ka•ka•pi•a• [kaakaapiya] that big mountain at Nitinaht. That’s where they landed. And a long, long time the trees didn’t grow, because it was all gone. And one family in a big, big canoe that was moving, like a family trip canoe. They have nine, eight sons and one daughter, and ten with the daughter, and the parents that makes it twelve. They were drifting around, drifting around. They have a bones [floats] like made out of the skins filled up water, some oil. They would hide inside the canoe when they were drifting. And they have lots and lots of dried fish. They were prepared for that, because somebody told him what’s going to happen and went to...pulled it up to a cave-like tunnel. He made him dig for so many years. He didn’t know who it was. That’s just like Noah’s ark. I didn’t know how to read the Bible before my old grandfather was telling me about it.

This young fella came, talk to the people, ‘This Island is going to go under the water. It’s going to come up. The water’s going to get salty just before the tide comes up. No more water, so you have to prepare for that and get water, put it in containers and whatever you ...’ and one man believe, everybody don’t. The tide is going to go down; everything is going to be, you know, dried. You can see everything wiggling around. Four times--way down and come up, come up, over where they usually

stop, the high tide. Four days. Three days it's going to go down. This fourth day, it's going to come right up. So, you prepare. He told him how to close the mouth of that doorway where he puts his canoe. It was logs on there, tied up in the cedar root rope. Tied on, the canoe tied on and they have spare paddles, spare poles, and lots and lots of ropes made out of roots, cedar bark roots. He was getting ready, believe, and everybody didn't think it was true that's going to happen.

Soon as he find it was burnt first, before the tide comes up. No more trees. And fourth day, the land was hot and can't get out. He had something to poke through, feel it if it's still hot, the ground. And it was long time, finally cooled off. That's what this man told him to watch out for that. So, when it cools off whatever he used to use poke out, and he opened it, and he pulled the canoe out. That was before that tide start coming up, and it come up, four times, the tide come up in, keep coming up and they drift around, start drifting around. They didn't know which way they were going to. They holding on. The canoes inside they have everything spare, paddles, poles, and ropes. They have real long ropes in this big canoe. That's what I can't remember, how many days, drifting around, drifting around. It was getting swifter and swifter every day, day and night, trying to keep the canoe from tipping over. But it was lots of weight inside, from this float, like that whale hunter used, but it was filled up with water and oil, and they had lots and lots of dried fish. I forgot how many days it was like that. They used to see somewhere else, I think some different tribe, and they used to drift by them. They used to be going like this [she gestures], asking them to help them.

Finally, they found a little tree sticking out. They don't know where it was. They tie it real fast, and this little tree keep breaking. They keep going down, more tied up, you know, really tied up. And it was like that for four days. Up like that, real swift, the water. And after that it stopped and it start going down. They take turns, four of them, watch when they going down, trying not to tip it over. They untied this. They follow when it was going down slowly, going down slowly. And fourth day, they couldn't keep up going down and they landed, it's not halfway on the ka•ka•pi•a• [kaakaapiya]. They stuck there. So, they stay there. They find out it wasn't going to come up again. Keep going down, so many days. So, they got out of the canoe, unload whatever they can use --blanket, they used to make blanket out of yellow cedar bark, two strand with the dog hair. They spin it and make real nice, waterproof blankets. That's what they were wearing. It wasn't naked like the picture. It was nice, like apron, both sides, and ladies used to have it all around. They was like panties, go between the legs and put the belt on.

This boys, the father sent them down when it finally got dry. They can see the lake, it was Nitinat Lake. And they couldn't make a canoe or anything, because there wasn't any tree. This was so many years, they live up the mountain. It wasn't just few years, it was long, long time. Finally the trees start growing. And this girl, something happened to her. She saw somebody that came to touch her, and find out she was going to have a baby. That's how that person starts growing more people again.

He send his four sons behind ka•ka•pi•a• [kaakaapiya], four boys didn't go right down and they saw something in there, ugly. It was long, like a serpent. It had a sharp back like knives, like really like diamond, sharp. And it was real long monster whatever it was going around the lake behind ka•ka•pi•a• [kaakaapiya]. And they didn't want to go down, because it was danger. They saw it cutting the little leaves, so they leave it alone, go back up to the mountain. They told his father what they saw. 'Don't try to go down. We'll all go down, this way, Nitinat Lake.'

So many years, that the young girl got a baby girl. It was a girl. So, this four young fellas finally got big enough to make a canoe, because they couldn't pull the canoe down. They left it there. And they go up and they saw what's up there above. And these four went out and went to Whyac [waayaa], the old village, and they come back and tell their father what they saw. This is my grandfather's story, passing on to way back. He doesn't know how long ago. He was from Nitinaht. This was the way he was telling me, over and over. It's my grandfather's side's story.

This young fellas that go up the lake, they saw all the rivers along the lake. They saw what's going up each river, what kind of salmon going up -- Hobiton [xubitadt], it was just sockeye, and Doobah was steelhead going up that way. Main river [Nitinat River] was dog salmon going up. Now today, it's all mixed up, just like us now. The salmon is mixed up now; they all going mixed up. It's not like it was before. And then they move down to Nitinaht, and they see something, awful thing, facing up where you come down, facing this way up the lake way, where they land. They couldn't get to the shore, because there was something, awful thing, there.

It had two heads this big [she gestures], pulling each other. There was a rock near that point, inside Whyac [waayaa] and he took his youngest son and cut along his legs right here [she points], make him bleed and he walk, making him walk four times around where this 'Now you step over,' he said, 'Step over, step over' and it was dripping on this thing--from his blood--on this monster. And he just went [she gestures] and he died, from the blood of the human being, and they just throw it away. That's what they say. My grandfather told me not to mention the name, because that's what they call when later on they want to kill, you know.

They stayed down there, because it was all wild rose bushes. It was tangled up where you go over to Whyac [waayaa]. It was just island like this [she gestures], because there was a water this way [she gestures], go over to the front beach. There was a water there. They keep making, start making ax out of the rock, whatever kind of rock he used to tell me and I didn't understand. They chopped for a long time, making road go toward that beach facing the ocean, and they burned. And they saw all kinds of flying things, like ducks, right in, closer to the one that's facing the ocean, up on the hill. They used to come up, whole bunch of them, go down again.

When they had the road finally get through to the other beach that facing, and they saw whale behind the waves. That's why my background is whale hunter. They were there long, I don't know how many thousand years, ago. It's the same time, I guess, what it says on that Bible. I didn't know that Bible. I never used to read when I was little girl. That's what my grandfather was saying that. This whale, they made him decide to stay, because it's good food. And they can go up the river to get some salmon and this whale, they can live on that. They clean up that Whyac [waayaa], cutting off that branch, burning them. And they saw that little lake. It was all kinds of feathers around. Must have been something in that, you know, eating. They killed that too. We not supposed to call it inside the house, what it called. It's bad luck, because they use it. I wish I could pronounce properly, you can't put it into English some words. You know, when they get rid of this, they put everything in this lake, little pond like. Something muse have been living there, and they burn it. That's the most awful thing, they can kill people if you look at it. And they burn that and get rid of it.



So many years later, they start building when it's all clear. That was an island, you know behind Edith's house. That was water go right down to the other beach. That's why my background belong to that [beach] facing the ocean. And they start, they made a big canoe, whaling canoe and it's finally grow bigger trees, cedar trees. Made a whale hunt canoe. And not right away, long, long time and it was start building up more people from this girl, daughter, and building up and got more and more people. That's why call Ditidaht because drift away from Ditida [diitiida], that Jordan River, that's Ditida [diitiida], that side ....And finally got ready, start collecting harbor seal and they used to blow that up, inside out, that float. They start making floats. And they finally got yew wood; they make steer [paddles]. My grandfather still had two steer, passing on from way, way back, it was still good. They finally got ready to hunt. They keep it secret from each family.

Finally, got lots of people coming from, growing at Nitinat. And then later on, they go each beach, like Carmanah, Tsuquada [cuxk<sup>w</sup>aada?] (that's other side of Nitinaht), Klanawah [λadiiwa?], Tsusiat [cusiiyit], way along that--all Nitinaht started from this one family canoe."

**Thank you for your time.**

**If you have questions or comments**

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