

**Chapter 2 – First Nations**



## 2. First Nations

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The Project is located within the asserted territory of the Bonaparte Indian Band of the Secwepemc Nation, and appears to be close to, or within, the asserted traditional territory of the Nlaka'pamux Nation, the Ashcroft Indian Band being the Nlaka'pamux Nation band that appears to be most closely associated with the Project area.

As required under the Section 11 Order, the Proponents have been consulting with the Bonaparte and Ashcroft Indian Bands, and will consult with any additional First Nations identified by the BCEAO.

### 2.1 Consultation

Both the Bonaparte Indian Band and the Ashcroft Indian Band have reserves near the Project site area as shown in Table 2-1.

TABLE 2-1  
Bonaparte and Ashcroft Indian Band Reserves

Indian Band	Affiliation	Reserves
Bonaparte	Shuswap Nation Tribal Council	Nine reserves covering approximately 1,880 ha; two reserves are located close to the Project site.
Ashcroft	Nlaka'pamux Nation	Four reserves that total approximately 1,985 ha; three of the four reserves are located close to the Project site.

In anticipation of entering the environmental assessment process, Belcorp initiated a series of meetings with the Bonaparte and Ashcroft Indian Bands in 2006 and 2007. The purpose of these meetings was to share information about the Project and to gather information regarding issues of concern and their desired level of involvement in the environmental assessment process. These discussions also contributed to the development of the draft Terms of Reference for the Project Application. The Bonaparte and Ashcroft Indian Bands are on record as being in support of the proposed Project. Both Bands, along with Belcorp and local and regional government officials, participated in a news conference on August 8, 2008, that announced the start of the public consultation process for the Project.

Consultation with the two Bands is ongoing. To this end, representatives from Belcorp have met several times with the Bonaparte and Ashcroft Indian Band Chiefs and Councils, and both First Nations are represented on the BCEAO Advisory Working Group and internal Project Steering Committee. A number of key issues related to the protection and recognition of aboriginal interests have been identified and addressed in the course of pre-ATOR and post-ATOR discussions with the two Bands. These include:

- The opportunity to participate in all phases of the environmental assessment and future Project-related activities, including participation in the collection of baseline information, and oversight of the construction and operational phases
- Protecting groundwater resources
- Ensuring that downstream watercourses are not adversely impacted by potential leachate and other contaminants from the Project area
- Identification of archaeological and culturally important resources, including plants
- Participating in the post-closure site restoration planning for the Project
- Development of protocol and benefit sharing agreements

## 2.2 Impact and Benefit Sharing Agreements

Protocol and benefit sharing agreements have been developed with the two Bands for purposes of formalizing resolution to some of the concerns noted above in Section 2.1. The Bonaparte and Ashcroft Indian Bands both have benefit-sharing agreements with Belcorp. These agreements also provide for continued consultations, involvement in all phases of the environmental assessment and Project, revenue sharing, and capacity building opportunities.

## 2.3 Involvement of First Nations

To date, First Nations have been invited to participate, not only as members of the BCEAO Advisory Working Group and the internal Project Steering Committee, but also as members of the field teams collecting baseline information for the Project. Members of the Bonaparte Indian Band have assisted with bore hole drilling activities associated with the hydrogeological field survey, summer surveys of rare plants, and archeological work. These surveys occurred during the summer months of 2008. Through their involvement with the internal Project Steering Committee, both Bands have also been instrumental in determining the scope of the project, and identifying the “valued ecosystem components” (VECs) for the assessment of potential Project impacts.

Through an internal Project Steering Committee, the Bonaparte and Ashcroft Indian Bands are involved in advising the Proponents on aspects of the environmental assessment process. Through this committee, the Proponents will be reviewing their responses to public and agency comments on the Application for an Environmental Assessment Certificate, and commitments made as part of the environmental assessment process with the two Bands. The Proponents will also review the application under the Land Tenure Act with the two Bands, as well as the request by the Proponents to have the Land Tenure application reviewed concurrently with the Environmental Certificate.

Once the environmental certificate has been issued and the Project moves to the implementation phase, both Bands will be part of a Landfill Advisory Committee that will oversee the construction phase and provide ongoing oversight of the operational phase.