

# HFN GROUP OF BUSINESSES

## OUR VISION

Together, the Huu-ay-aht Economic Development Committee and group of businesses strive to achieve a flourishing Huu-ay-aht economy through initiatives that provide sustainable benefits for all.

## DID YOU KNOW?

To apply for a job or express your interest in working for the HFN group of businesses, please call 250-728-3080 or visit our website to view the latest job postings: [www.hfndevelopmentlp.org](http://www.hfndevelopmentlp.org).



Sarah Johnson is one of three employees of the HFN group of businesses taking part in supervisory training through the City of Port Alberni.

## Training Boosts Skills and Confidence of Employees

When opportunity knocks, it's often wise to answer. That's exactly what three employees from the HFN group of businesses did this fall and winter when presented with the opportunity to attend a training session hosted by the City of Port Alberni.

Sarah Johnson, Duane Nookemis Sr., and Trevor Cootes took part in two of three supervisory training sessions last November and again this February. The goal of the training? To increase confidence, responsibilities, and skills on the job, and to ready employees for future opportunities within the HFN group.

Mandatory for City of Port Alberni employees holding supervisory roles, the training was extended to the HFN group through the City's Human Resource department. "If you have the

## OTHER TRAINING NEWS

Other associates of the HFN group of business also benefited from training during the fall and winter months. Trudy Warner, who assists the HFN group with human resource and communications projects, completed a ten-week coaching program delivered by Coaching Out of the Box. In other training news, trainees with partner forestry companies continue to receive on-the-job mentorship in a variety of areas (e.g. truck driver and grapple yarder crew members). "This year we have had six people go through these partnerships...it has been phenomenal," says Denise Hollinger, financial controller for the HFN group.

passion to move up in the workplace, then this training is a great stepping stone," says Johnson.

Titled "The Complete Supervisor," the course looked at a supervisor's role, along with some associated challenges and responsibilities. For Johnson, who is entering her third year as the HFN group's executive assistant in Anacla, the training came with a world of new information.

"First there was a whole different language for me to learn, including things like WCB legislation that I'd never encountered in the workplace," Johnson says. "It was a bit of a learning curve, but it really gave me insight into the rationale behind all the safety details that we have in place. There are legitimate reasons for why those are there."

Johnson also enjoyed the way the training was delivered. Presented by Canscott Management Services Ltd., the training was fast-paced, interactive, and fun. "It's not very often that we interact with other companies—unless you count the government—so meeting employees from other companies and seeing what they do created a whole new picture for me," Johnson says.

Already Johnson is applying her newfound knowledge to her work back at home. "During my everyday tasks, I constantly think, 'what did I learn in the course, and what kind of responsibilities should I look at that I wouldn't have looked at before'?"

Johnson and other HFN group employees will attend one more training session in November of 2015. "We're both local governments," says Theresa Kingston, Director of Corporate Services for the City of Port Alberni. "The training is a really good opportunity for us to collaborate and support each other."



## SPENCER DRY LAND SORT

The Spencer dry land sort is just one part of the HFN forestry business, but it provides a lot of opportunity. Located at kilometer 45 on the Bamfield Road, the sort is one of three wood sorting facilities that are access points along the Alberni Canal. In addition to letting HFN forestry move wood into the water for towing and shipping to markets, the sort also provides the same opportunity to other forestry businesses working in the area.

The crewmembers working at the sort have been there just over a decade. They know their jobs well, and it shows. "This is a very tight knit group and a great group of people," says Sort Supervisor, Dan McKay. "Everyone can do a lot of the jobs at the sort, and everyone pitches in." The sort operates between 190 and 200 workdays per year, shutting down only when conditions become hazardous.

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–Dan McKay, Supervisor, Spencer Dry Land Sort



HFN Forestry lands provide training, employment, and revenue for the Huu-ay-aht community.

## A Window Into HFN Forestry

When Stan Coleman joined the HFN group of businesses back in 2011, the HFN forestry company was already undergoing significant changes.

Stan and his team added further improvements to those changes; now the evolution of HFN Forestry from a small operation to currently the nation's largest business revenue generator is nearly complete.

To understand the transformation, one has to look back more than a decade to a time when the forestry company's main purpose was salvage opportunities from blowdown patches and previously logged areas. Around that time, HFN Forestry began working with companies like MacMillan-Bloedel and Weyerhaeuser, (which is now Western Forest Products and Island Timberlands), to build capacity and develop a more robust forestry business.

Back then, Chief Councillor Robert Dennis Sr. and his team saw the potential of the forestry lands in HFN territory and worked to achieve a land transfer that would support a sustainable forestry business. Their work involved securing a commitment from the provincial government to sell 70,000



Replanting trees on HFN forestry lands is just one part of the HFN forestry operation.

cubic metres of timber from TFL 44 formerly managed under the provincial government's BC Timber Sales program. The next process was to define where these lands would be and then negotiate a price. This negotiation was done in parallel with treaty negotiations. Under treaty, Huu-ay-aht received over 8,000 hectares of private land rich in resources, including timber.

Stan, who previously worked with MacMillian Bloedel, Weyerhaeuser, Cascadia, and Western Forest Products, and who now owns Rocky Point Forest Services Ltd. says, "The objective was to see a tenure transfer happen on the effective date of treaty. The process leading up to that involved a number of players and required teamwork from Huu-ay-aht, forest companies and the provincial government."

Thanks to what Stan calls, "the leadership of Robert Dennis Sr. and his team," Huu-ay-aht succeeded. The nation now has the British Columbia's first "First Nations Forest Licence Agreement" with an annual cut of 70,000 cubic metres per year, plus a "Community Forest Agreement," with an annual cut of 17,000 cubic metres per year. "Having secure, area-based tenures totaling 87,000 cubic metres is a firm foundation for the Huu-ay-aht forestry business," Stan says.

Another part of revenue generation comes from logging done on the treaty settlement lands, which were also acquired with the treaty, effective date of April 1, 2011. These lands include approximately 8000 hectares, two-thirds of which are a resource management area. The HFN group of businesses holds a timber sale agreement with Huu-ay-aht First Nations to log 150,000 cubic metres of the treaty settlement lands between 2013 and 2015.

But getting access to the forestry lands was just the first step. The next was making the business profitable. In 2011, HFN Forestry contracted industry specialists to analyze the forestry business and reveal areas for improvement. At the time, the business was growing, but it wasn't making a profit.

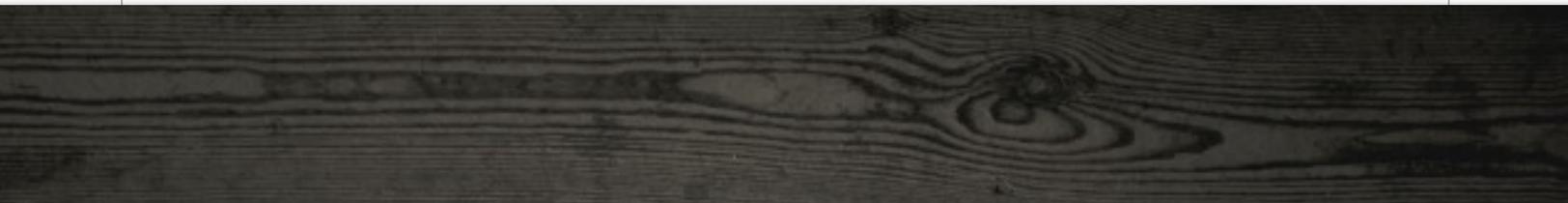
After considering the recommendations and making some changes, the team, started to see a shift. Now, not only does the business provide revenue for building a Huu-ay-aht economy, it also provides employment and training opportunities for citizens and associates.

"The business has evolved over fifteen years from small silviculture contracts and salvage harvesting into a full-fledged forestry company with its own tenures and scaling and sorting capacity," Stan says. "We're also making money."

Through partnerships and medium- and long-term planning, the business is succeeding like never before. Says Stan: "The opportunities are there—for us to grow and continue to develop revenue and capacity, whether it's through new investment or improving the current businesses. There's a lot we can do."



Stan Coleman, CEO of the HFN group of businesses, came to the HFN group from a long career in the forest industry.



## UPDATES

### THE MARKET:

Three months ago, Peter Herbig joined the HFN group of businesses as the new manager of the Market. Peter is a Bamfield resident and brings restaurant and professional baking experience to the position, along with experience in the construction industry. Peter began his new job during a time of many changes. Currently the Market is receiving upgrades to its purchase systems, including new systems in both the café and grocery store. The changes will help Peter and others have monthly inventories at their fingertips without having to conduct physical inventories. Although the systems take time to set up initially, customers will soon see their purchases scanned and weighed like a regular grocery store. “The Market is coming into the 21<sup>st</sup> century,” says Financial Controller, Denise Hollinger.



The market is open 9:30 to 5:30 every day. Market hours are subject to change over the winter.



### CAMPGROUND:

Although the campground is officially closed for the season, upgrades are taking place to get the facility ready for the next busy season. To date workers have been monitoring the site to track and repair storm damage and making arrangements to cap the road. In mid-February, electrical contractor Aines and Tyler worked with BC Hydro to begin converting power at the campground to a different, more accessible phase than previously existed.

### PEOPLE’S ASSEMBLY:

Representatives from the HFN group of business were on hand at the 2014 People’s Assembly to discuss the successes and challenges faced by HUU-ay-aht businesses. Trevor Cootes, Bob Brough, and Sarah Johnson talked about their role in the HFN group and the work that has taken place building and operating HFN businesses over the past year. They also shared information about services and upcoming projects and were available for questions.

## Contact Us:

For more information about HUU-ay-aht businesses, please contact Sarah Johnson (Anacla Administration) at 250-728-3080 or Martha Johnson (Port Alberni Accounting) at 778-421-3577.

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