

**R.A.V.E.N. 2013
ANNUAL REPORT**



MESSAGE FROM THE ED

For RAVEN, 2013 was the Year of Living Strategically. Our efforts since inception in 2009 produced growth and stability. However, it became increasingly clear that the way forward was a little murky. Our vision, our mission and our goals needed sharper focus.

We successfully applied for an MEC grant which allowed us to undertake strategic planning in earnest. At the outset it was determined that this was not some navel-gazing exercise but rather hard work to see where our weaknesses lay, where we intend to be in the coming years, and most importantly, how we will get there. Led by the tough-love team of Jan Bate and Stan Boychuk, our board, staff and volunteers spent many days together in deep think. It bonded us even more deeply as a team, and crystallized our commitment.

RAVEN's vision is a country that embraces the caretaker values of First Nations and their equitable access to the justice system within a thriving natural habitat.



We have a new vision statement. We honed our mission. And we believe even more strongly in the value of our contribution to Canada and First Nations.

On a personal note, the exercise was truly fortifying. It saddens me in a way that there is a need for the charitable services of RAVEN. And my true goal is that we realize our vision and are no longer needed in 20 years. (That may be optimistic, I'll grant you.) It would be ideal that our constitutional democracy was flourishing such that First Nations' rights were balanced with the fiduciary duty of our federal government. Until that day, RAVEN will move forward with our mission to raise legal defence funds to assist First Nations who enforce their rights and title to protect their traditional territories. Through our education programs, RAVEN transforms public awareness to eliminate environmental racism and create a collaborative new economy.

We embrace 2014 as the Year of Achieving Change.

Susan Smitten



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The year 2013 was an active one for our organization. I hope you will review the program updates, photos and financial statements we have offered in this annual report.

In addition to our ongoing work to support Beaver Lake Cree Nation and the Tsilhqot'in and Xeni Gwet'in First Nations, our board was busy throughout 2013. We strengthened RAVEN in several ways:

- ✚ Reviewed and updated our vision, mission and bylaws
- ✚ Reviewed our personnel and board governance policies
- ✚ Added a conflict of interest policy
- ✚ Added a new board member & Social Media Coordinator
- ✚ Developed of a strategic plan.

We are approaching the end of our fifth year in service to First Nations in Canada and we believe in operating our charitable non-profit as effectively and efficiently as possible. With our clear vision and mission statements to guide us into the next year – and for years ahead – the Board of Directors feel strongly that RAVEN is on a steady course to achieving its goals.

We could not operate without financial support; support that is critical to paying our staff salaries, rent and phone bills in addition to covering the legal costs for our programs. RAVEN has made a deliberate decision not to receive government funding.

So I want to thank our donors for their generous contributions over the past year. You enabled us to stand solidly behind the Tsilhqot'in National Government and Xeni Gwet'in First Nation through a second federal environmental review hearing into the proposed New Prosperity mine. And you are the bedrock of Beaver Lake Cree Nation's ongoing legal action against Canada and Alberta over the cumulative impacts of industrial expansion like the tar sands industry into their traditional territory.

In 2014, we hope to put the mine issue to rest once and for all. We expect to see great strides towards a trial for Beaver Lake Cree Nation. We also expect to expand our service to other nations, including those poised to launch legal action against pipelines, and other First Nations litigating over tar sands developments. We will post updates on our website and various social media pages.

David Williams



REPORT FROM RAVEN'S DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

TNG donation recap

RAVEN was honoured to raise \$106,000 to support the Tsilhqot'in National Government through the second round of environmental review hearings. These funds allowed the Tsilhqot'in to afford the best possible experts and legal support at the hearings. The experts brought to light the potential environmental effects and were able to highlight crucial information from Taseko Mines Ltd.'s Environmental Impact Statement, which would ultimately result in a second scathing panel report.

Beaver Lake Cree Nation donation recap

2013 was RAVEN's first attempt in a crowd funding campaign. It far exceeded our expectations! In less than a month more than \$34,000 was donated online to support cumulative impact mapping needs of Beaver Lake Cree in preparation of trial. An additional \$55,000 was raised through amazing individual donors and foundations to support the ongoing funding needs for BLCN to continue on to trial.



1% for the Planet

RAVEN welcomed our first two 1% for the Planet donations in 2013. Thank you to WAI SUP from Nevada and Moxie's Bookkeeping from Brooklyn, NY! We see the potential for growth with this program and plan on expanding donations in 2014.

Music For RAVEN

Music For RAVEN, the brainchild of Canadian musician Chris Brown, exists as an outlet for artists who want to use their talent to support RAVEN. Last year, two concerts were held in Toronto and in Wakefield, PQ, benefitting Beaver Lake Cree Nation. Music For RAVEN will continue to grow in the coming years as more artists stand in solidarity with First Nations. There is already a concert planned on May 2, 2014 in Toronto, ON with internationally renowned musicians Stephan Crump & The Rosetta Trio.



Beyond Miles

Last year, RAVEN was accepted into the Beyond Miles program which allows supporters to donate Aeroplan miles to use for travel. Our first campaign, benefitting the Tsilhqot'in, saw great success. The campaign's goal was to raise 100,000 miles to offset travel cost for elders travelling to Ottawa to represent the community at the Supreme Court of Canada. More than 378,000 miles were donated – that translated to saving the Tsilhqot'in \$3800 in hotel costs along the way.

PROGRAM UPDATES

In addition to the intense strategic planning of 2013, which culminated in the adoption of the Strategic Plan, Personnel Policy and revised Board Governance policies, RAVEN also carried forward with our major programs. We happily expanded our education mandate, something we will continue to do over the coming years.

Education



RAVEN supported UBC law student Mina Holmes (left) to attend the National Aboriginal Law Conference in Victoria, BC.



CEDAR: We funded work on the CEDAR program – a geospatial data system For First Nations developed by Victoria-based Geomemes. The Cedar software package not only allows First Nations to collect the data and track their land, but to also steward their land by being able to respond to development queries. University of Victoria students Jade Lacosse and Greg Sebastien (above right) worked on three projects over the summer to upgrade the system using funds provided by RAVEN.



Young Scholars Essay Prize: The 2013 first place winner was **Kevin Ly** for his paper "[The Fight for Water: Examining Environmental Racism & the Effects on British Columbia's First Nations' Culture & Society.](#)"

Our second place winner was **Andre Bessette**. His winning submission is "[Thieves of the Northwest Coast: Understanding Native and Non-Native Relations in Clayoquot Sound, 1791-1792.](#)"

Gitga’at Acoustic Baseline: RAVEN assisted with funding a portion of the research being done by PhD candidate Max Ritts. The project, a partnership between the Gitga’at Guardian Program and UBC Geography, aims to provide a new tool for Gitga’at decision-makers, and a new set of ears for all who make, celebrate and depend upon the unique sounds of the Gitga’at Territory. Eight battery-powered units (‘Song Meters’) are currently recording the acoustic conditions of select areas of the Territory. Song Meters allow researchers to listen to surrounding ecologies and digitally record their acoustic qualities – such as birdsong and fin whale blows, oceans swells, wind and heavy rainfall.

Once analyzed, the data from the Song Meters will be used to produce an “acoustic baseline”: a scientific report on the diversity and patterns of sound that define Gitga’at Territory at present – for e.g. before the introduction of loud tankers. This baseline will help Gitga’at decision-makers to better understand the Territory’s changing ecology as well as those areas needing more protection efforts.

RAVEN’S PROGRAMS

TSILHQOT’IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN CEEA REVIEW OF NEW PROSPERITY MINE PROPOSAL



Fish Lake (Teztan Biny), Little Fish Lake (Yanah Biny) and Nabas (general area) are in a remote and beautiful area of profound cultural and spiritual importance to the Tsilhqot’in Nation. The area is very close to the salmon-rich Taseko and Chilko Rivers, and it also provides critical wetlands and lake habitat for wild rainbow trout, moose, grizzly bear, and many other mammals and migratory birds.

For twenty years Taseko Mines Limited (TML) has tried to get approval for a low-grade, open-pit copper and gold mine at Teztan Biny (Fish Lake.) The Prosperity Mine proposal is one of the most contested mining projects in Canada. RAVEN supported the Tsilhqot’in National Government and Xenigwet’in First Nation through the first round, providing funds to participate in the quasi-judicial process by accessing competent legal and expert opinions pertinent to the review. After a rejection of the project in 2010 by the Federal government, based on a scathing independent panel report describing unprecedented impacts to the environment, and Tsilhqot’in current use, rights and culture, Taseko Mines Ltd. quickly announced it had ‘re-jigged’ the proposal and would re-submit. The new proposal, dubbed the New Prosperity Mine, does not have the support of the Tsilhqot’in Nation.

For the first time, a mine proposal once rejected was being reviewed again by a new federal panel, over the objections of local First Nations. This is unprecedented in the history of the federal environmental assessment process.



New hearings for the revised New Prosperity Mine project began on July 22nd 2013 in Williams Lake, B.C. Many of the same experts called upon for the first hearing offered their services again to examine and report on the deficiencies in the company's plan.

The Tsilhqot'in Nation celebrated a huge success on October 31, 2013. On that day, the independent panel reviewing the New Prosperity mine proposal released



a scathing report that confirmed the Tsilhqot'in stance: this project would have devastating cultural and environmental impacts, would contaminate Teztan Biny (Fish Lake), and would destroy an area of unique and special significance to the Tsilhqot'in people – as a critical fishery, as a cultural school, as a sacred site, and as some of their last intact hunting and trapping grounds.



The federal government's decision on the report is due on February 28, 2014.

In the meantime, Taseko Mines Ltd. launched a judicial review of the final report, attacking the credibility of the independent panel. The lawsuit was filed at the end of November. In this lawsuit, the company asks the Federal Court to set aside key findings of the Panel and declare the Panel's process unfair to the company. The company's actions have left the Tsilhqot'in with little choice but to participate in this litigation to defend their

rights and interests.

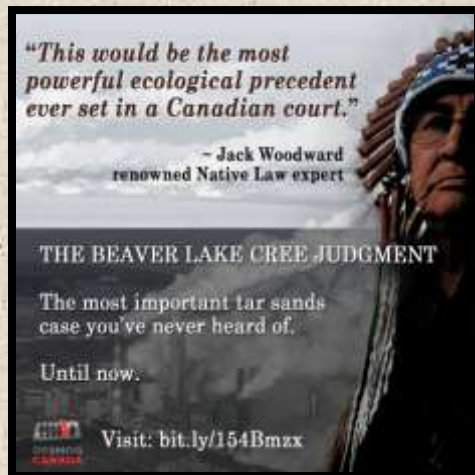
In order to participate in the judicial review, the Tsilhqot'in National Government estimates that \$75,000 is required. RAVEN has committed to help raise this amount by March 2014 so that the Tsilhqot'in have the resources they need.

ELDER EXPRESS - JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE



Toward the end of the year, RAVEN assisted with a campaign to bring a bus load of Tsilhqot'in elders, plus chiefs and community members to Ottawa. Many were the original witnesses in the *William vs BC* rights and title case. They made the journey to attend the long awaited hearing of their title case before Canada's top bench.

The sole issue before the Supreme Court of Canada on November 7, 2013 was Aboriginal title. The outcome of this appeal can be expected to profoundly shape the future of Canada's Aboriginal peoples. The Tsilhqot'in Nation called on the Court to continue on the path that it has charted, to end the long era of denial and discrimination that has shadowed the nation's past, and to provide long-overdue recognition of Aboriginal title on the ground, as the starting point for true and lasting reconciliation. The SCC decision will be released in 2014.



BEAVER LAKE CREE NATION vs ALBERTA & CANADA

Two major events defined the year for this long running legal action. The first was a ruling from Alberta's Appeal Court on April 30th upholding the right of the nation to take their legal action, launched in May 2008, forward to trial.

"The parties will be well-served by returning to their case management judge for the implication plan to advance this litigation through trial," wrote the Court. In other words, no more dilly dallying. This case is going to court.

The decision attracted some much needed media attention, including a longer article by DeSmog Canada's Carol Linnit entitled "The Most Important Tar Sands Case You've Never Heard Of." You can find the article on the RAVEN website.



Much of the year involved building on this development and creating new alliances. RAVEN worked closely with members of Beaver Lake Cree Nation, and hosted a talk by band member Crystal Lameman in October. Ms Lameman was a keynote speaker at PowerShift in Victoria, a national event that RAVEN sponsored and used every opportunity

to enlighten people about the BLCN case, including such luminaries as David Suzuki.



RAVEN also worked with musician Chris Brown (centre) to mobilize a new artistic movement in solidarity with Beaver Lake Cree Nation's legal action. Music For RAVEN was born, and two concerts were held to raise both funds and awareness. RAVEN also partnered with various groups to hold a crowd-funding campaign with a short time frame and clear target. It was remarkably successful, as our development director reported, and will be the first of other such endeavours.

The second major development was a shift in legal counsel for the band. Woodward and Company LLP saw the legal action through the long process of filing its Statement of Claim, and then fended off two concerted efforts by the Crowns to have the entire case thrown out of court. The firm has passed the torch to another Victoria-based law firm: Janes Freedman Kyle Law Corporation will take the case forward to trial. RAVEN is extremely grateful for the dedication of both law firms, and we look forward to working with the new team as we continue to raise funds on the band's behalf.

ATHABASCA CHIPEWYAN FIRST NATION



Back on our roster, though still fairly small in terms of our contribution, RAVEN was pleased to be able to offer financial support to Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation in continuity with the woodland caribou judicial review we supported back in 2010 and 2011. ACFN was one of the three parties to the legal action, and in 2013 the nation pressed forward with the win from the judgment to protect animals in their region. The result was that two proposed drilling developments were withdrawn. We hope to continue supporting this nation in 2014.

**R.A.V.E.N.
Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs**

Statement of Financial Position (Part 1)

(Prepared without Audit or Review: See Notice to Reader)

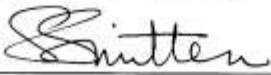
as at December 31, 2013

Assets

	2013	2012
Current		
Cash	\$ 113,926	\$ 338,138
Due from Governmental Agencies	2,227	1,121
Inventory	<u>1,735</u>	<u>2,267</u>
	<u>\$ 117,888</u>	<u>\$ 341,526</u>

*The accompanying Notes are an integral part of these
Financial Statements.*

Approved on Behalf of the Board:

 Director

_____ Director



**R.A.V.E.N.
Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs**

Statement of Financial Position (Part 2)

(Prepared without Audit or Review: See Notice to Reader)

as at December 31, 2013

Liabilities

	2013	2012
Current		
Accounts Payable	\$ -	\$ 871
Restricted Donations	<u>42,986</u>	<u>195,611</u>
	<u>42,986</u>	<u>196,482</u>

Members' Surplus

Net Assets	<u>74,902</u>	<u>145,044</u>
	<u>\$ 117,888</u>	<u>\$ 341,526</u>

*The accompanying Notes are an integral part of these
Financial Statements.*



**R.A.V.E.N.
Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs**

Statement of Operations

(Prepared without Audit or Review: See Notice to Reader)

for the year ended December 31, 2013

	2013	2012
Receipts		
Donations	\$ 327,847	\$ 432,816
Expended Restricted Donations	186,456	-
Capacity Building 10% Income	23,530	35,794
Fundraising Revenue	1,333	7,509
Interest Income	<u>581</u>	<u>63</u>
	539,747	476,182
Direct Costs	<u>532</u>	<u>1,112</u>
	539,215	475,070
Disbursements	<u>609,357</u>	<u>458,033</u>
	(Note 3)	
Net (Disbursements) Receipts for the year	\$ <u>(70,142)</u>	\$ <u>17,037</u>

*The accompanying Notes are an integral part of these
Financial Statements.*



2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DAVID WILLIAMS – President

RONALD LAMEMAN – Vice-President

ROBERT GILL – Treasurer (resigned July 2013)

LYNN HUNTER – Secretary

CARLA FUNK – Director (resigned September 2013)

KATHRYN HARWOOD – Director

J.P. LAPLANTE – Director

CLAYTON THOMAS-MULLER – Director

STAFF

SUSAN SMITTEN – Executive Director

LAURIE MACKENZIE – Development Director

MICHELLE ZAKRISON – Social Media Coordinator

VOLUNTEERS

MAX RITTS – Young Scholars Essay Prize

JESSY RUCKER – Events

RAVEN sends a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to the foundations that supported our mission in 2013.

Fitzhenry Family Foundation

Swift Foundation

