

Nuxalk Nation Government

Last Updated Saturday, 16 March 2013

The

Nuxalk Nation is a sovereign Nation that has never ceded, sold, surrendered or lost our traditional lands through act of war or treaty. We are governed by the Nuxalk Government, which is a traditional government led by our Hereditary Chiefs.

Hereditary

Chieftainships have been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years. A chief, or Staltmc, is a family's representative speaker for their Ancestral Village and associated responsibilities of upholding their family's place and voice within the Nuxalk Nation.

The

Hereditary Chieftain system ensures a close tie to the land, with names, songs, stories and dances that are tied to exact locations throughout the territory. Each Staltmc is responsible to his or her family first and to the Nation as a whole.

However,

in the eyes of the Canadian government and public, the elected Band Chief and Council is often considered as the legitimate governing body. Many people do not realize that the Canadian government imposes this foreign colonial-rooted system, effectively employing Nuxalk people to administer colonial laws via the Nuxalk Nation Administration Office at the expense of Nuxalk traditional law and sovereignty.

The

elected Band Chief and Council are responsible for the day-to-day management of the Band, funded through the federal government's Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC). The Band Council is responsible for administering on-reserve only via AANDC regulations and funding.

For many Nuxalk people, working for the Canadian government is one of the only sources of employment available to them in the Bella Coola Valley. The

government programs that are run through the band office are often under-funded and very restrictive in their delivery and eligibility, thereby severely limiting access to Nuxalk people who are in need of them.

Nuxalkmc

have always resisted the Indian Act and the elected band council system and questioned the effectiveness and legitimacy of that system. The Nuxalk Nation is striving to strengthen our traditional systems of government, culture and balance with nature.