

Excerpts from Other First Nation Self Government Agreements (Series Continued)

In recent past editions of the Newsletter, which are also posted on the First Nation website, we provided you with excerpts from other First Nation Self Government Agreements (SGA) such as those of the Vuntut Gwichin and the Nisga'a Nation. As mentioned in those editions SGA's call for the First Nation (FN) to develop their own Constitution within which they can also develop their own First Nation Citizenship Code.

The following are some excerpts from **the Citizenship Code of the Vuntut Gwichin FN Constitution which the FN developed pursuant to Chapter 10 of their SGA.**

"FIRST NATION CITIZENSHIP ENROLMENT

A person shall be eligible to be a registered First Nation citizen if that person is alive, and

- a) his or her name appears on the First Nation List as of June 20, 1987;**
- b) is 25% or more Indian blood and was ordinarily resident in the Old Crow traditional territory prior to June 20, 1987;**
- c) deemed by the Council and Elders Council to be eligible for registration;**
- d) is a legitimate or illegitimate lineal descendant of a person who meets or would have met the criteria in section a), b) or c) or,**
- e) is an adopted child of an eligible person.**

So what does this mean? Clause a) is saying that **anyone who was on the FN (formerly known as the Old Crow Indian Band) List as of June 20, 1987 is eligible to be a citizen of the now recognized Vuntut Gwichin First Nation.**

Clause b) is saying that **a person who is 25% or more Indian blood and was normally living in the Old Crow traditional territory as of June 20, 1987 is also eligible to be a citizen.** Clause c) says that any person deemed by the Council and the Elders Council (both of which are defined in the FN Constitution) are also eligible to be citizens.

Clauses d) and e) state that **any descendant of such persons who meet paragraphs a), b) or c) are also eligible to be citizens of the Vuntut Gwichin First Nation. It doesn't matter if you are a Status Indian or not.**

To make this clearer if we entered into a SGA and developed a Citizenship Code that **included clauses like a), and d) above then anyone who was on our Band List, prior to us entering a SGA, would be eligible to be a citizen and any descendant (any child, grandchildren, great grandchildren and so on) of anyone on the Band List would also be eligible to be citizens,** even if they do not have Indian Status under the Indian Act.

So the Vuntut Gwichin First Nation determines who their own citizens are pursuant to the Citizenship Code they have developed in their own Constitution.

Their Constitution is recognized by the Self Government Agreement they have negotiated and signed with the Federal Government and the Yukon Territorial Government. Stay tuned to upcoming issues of the Newsletter for more info on other Self Government Agreements and excerpts from other SGA First Nation Constitutions.

Chief and Council