



talk about Aboriginal relations

April 2009

Alberta Energy:

Aboriginal Relations Business Unit
The Alberta Energy Aboriginal Relations Business Unit takes a proactive approach to Aboriginal issues that may impact mineral exploration and development on provincial Crown lands. The unit works closely with Aboriginal communities, industry, and provincial and federal governments to address legal, land claim and treaty issues that may affect resource development in Alberta.

Working with Aboriginal communities
To encourage positive involvement of Aboriginal people in mineral resource development, Aboriginal Relations focuses on three major initiatives:

First Nations consultation

Aboriginal Relations participates in a cross-ministry consultation initiative to assist Aboriginal communities in broadening their understanding of the resource industry and regulatory processes. Through developing and maintaining good working relationships with communities and other government departments, Aboriginal Relations can effectively address general and project-specific mineral resource development concerns.

Traditional Use Studies

Many Aboriginal groups in Alberta are recording their traditional knowledge and mapping locations of traditional activities through a *Traditional Use Study*. As significant cultural site locations are shared with the government, access restrictions can be placed on the provincial Crown land database to offer protection to the sites from unintentional damage by resource industry activities. Aboriginal Relations provides technical support to communities in conducting a study and jointly reviews funding requests with other government ministries.

Training to employment

In Alberta's thriving energy industry, the need for skilled workers is key. Aboriginal Relations facilitates resource industry training and employment opportunities for Aboriginal people by strengthening partnerships with industry, Aboriginal communities and government.

Staying informed

Aboriginal legal actions and court decisions could potentially impact Alberta Energy's business practises and the province's resource industry. Aboriginal Relations monitors these legal activities while staying informed of concerns Aboriginal communities may have with the mineral resource development sector, in order to facilitate solutions prior to legal action being taken.

Participating in land claims negotiations

The Government of Canada set aside land and mineral rights for First Nations as a result of treaties signed in the 1800s. In instances where First Nations have not received all of their reserve lands, treaty land entitlement claims are negotiated. Claims are filed with the federal government, but Alberta Energy participates in negotiations because claims often affect Alberta Crown mineral rights.

Improving communication through interactive on-line services

Alberta Energy's *Aboriginal Community Link*, <http://www.energy.gov.ab.ca/AbRel/523.asp>, is an interactive mapping website designed to share mineral resource activity information with Alberta's Aboriginal communities. The site contains mineral disposition and access restriction information for a variety of minerals. As well, the site shows mineral rights posted for public offerings, Crown mineral ownership, pipeline and facility locations, and well data.