

TRANSLATION AND PROCESS OF CHANGE: THE FORT PECK TRIBES STORY

The Fort Peck Tribal Health Tobacco Prevention Program began October 2003 by doing many community activities that included: walk/runs, commercial tobacco free celebrations, health fairs, youth movements, educational campaigns, elder's documentaries, coalition building and meetings, trainings, and more. At every event we would invite people through newspapers, flyers, word of mouth. We would always personally invite members of the Fort Peck Tribal Executive Council (FPTEC).

Our focus is to "Keep Tobacco Sacred" so we asked many of our elders how to translate into Assiniboine and Sioux which is the tribes represented on the Fort Peck Reservation. After a few years of talking with the elders, we found both translations. "Ohinni Candi Wakandapi" (Dakota) and "Chani Wakan K/Nusa" (Assiniboine).

In May 2005, we approached the Fort Peck Tribal Executive Council on passing a No-Smoking Resolution on the basis of the harmful effects of commercial tobacco and it was passed effective June 2005. Key Point of the passing of this ordinance was that members of our council who smoked made the motion to pass because they understood the affects?

Fort Peck Tribal Health received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on December 1, 2006 to work on a commercial tobacco free ordinance. Community Activities were continued and a specialized training was provided to the FPTEC in April 26, 2007. Community Assessments were done across Reservation wide activities from April to May 2007. The findings were then presented to the FPTEC: Subcommittee on Health and Education on May 24, 2007. The message was that 8 out of 10 people on the Fort Peck Reservation wanted to learn the traditional tobacco teachings and would be supportive of a commercial tobacco free ordinance.

Fort Peck Tribes policies and procedures incorporated were that we go through Legal Review through the Tribal Attorney's and Tribal Courts. After review, the draft "Ohinni Candi Wakandapi/Chani Wakan K/Nusa" Ordinance was presented to the FPTEC: Subcommittee on Health and Education, the motion was passed to bring to full board on July 19, 2007. The crucial point of the passing of the motion was the protection and revitalization of our people and cultural ways.

On August 10, 2007, the FPTEC adopts the "Ohinni Candi Wakandapi/Chani Wakan K/Nusa" Ordinance. It will be enacted October 1, 2007. First and foremost, the ordinance acknowledges the responsibility and sacred gift of the traditional tobacco. It covers all types of commercial tobacco including spit tobacco. Also, the ordinance includes the casinos and bingo halls.

Implementation will include continued education and awareness through flyers, posters, print media in all local newspapers, radio stations, television station that focus on our main message, "Ohinni Candi Wakandapi/Chani Wakan K/Nusa" (Keep Tobacco Sacred). Reservation wide poster contest to keep the community engaged in the process in designing our official signage for the ordinance. We will paint the 25 foot boundary lines from all facilities. Community Awareness Rallies will be held in each individual community that includes food, door prizes, and education. The Fort Peck Tribal Health has a tobacco prevention program that will help continue the sustainability and enforcement of the ordinance.

Overall, the "Ohinni Candi Wakandapi/Chani Wakan K/Nusa" Ordinance is to protect the people of the Fort Peck Reservation and revitalize and promote the true cultural responsibility of the sacred tobacco.

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