



**PROMOTING  
PROSPERITY LUMMI  
NATION VENTURES  
PROGRAM**

**REPORTED PRESENTED TO THE  
NORTHWEST AREA FOUNDATION**

**DECEMBER 22, 2005**



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Promoting  
Prosperity  
Lummi Nation  
Ventures Program



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY LUMMI VENTURES PROGRAM PLAN**

The Lummi Ventures Program: Promoting Prosperity comes from the heart of the community. Lummi from all walks of life, with different economic status, religious beliefs and traditions, life styles, and goals came together at different points in the planning to give voice to the Lummi future. Through focus groups, interviews, surveys, knocking on doors, looking under bridges, holding community gatherings, organizing planning teams with the inexperienced and experienced, the youth and the elders, the very poor and sick, and the well and prosperous of the community all had a say in the plan. This report is grounded in Lummi culture, Lummi needs, and Lummi vision for the future.

An overview of the Plan can be described using the Northwest Area Foundation's desired community level outcomes:

### **Increased asset identification and development**

- ❖ The Plan builds on and expands the capacity of the numerous assets of the Lummi Nation including the Northwest Indian College, the Lummi Nation School, Daycare, the LIBC Departments of Planning and Economic Development, the Tribal Health Center and Community Mobilization Against Drugs initiative, and the Cedar Project for youth leadership. It also taps into and expands the capacity of the people of Lummi to contribute to Lummi, including the cultural and religious leaders, the elders, the artists, the fishermen, and the youth.
- ❖ The Plan includes a number of areas where more research is needed to use the assets most effectively and to create new capacity and strengths. For example, further research is needed into best practices related to areas such as workforce development and individual asset development, and community based asset and need surveys related to families and education are desired.

### **Expanded economic opportunities**

- ❖ The Plan calls for the development of a comprehensive small business incubator, which provides a wide range of support from assessment, planning, basic financial skills to micro-loan programs and technical support in growing a business. This is an example of supporting people in the community who are out of work, but with skills to offer such as the fishermen and artists.
- ❖ The Plan also calls for attracting larger scale employers to the reservation, with LIBC Economic Development in the lead, with support from Ventures.
- ❖ Ventures will support the development of businesses in the region with a major initiative to build a workforce that is educated, has the skills that are needed, and has excellent work habits. It will also make a significant contribution to the daycare capacity so parents can work.
- ❖ Ventures will also lead an effort to build the capital assets of the low-income through the rebuilding of credit, achieving financial literacy, building individual savings and first-time home ownership.

### **Increased capacity to reduce poverty**

The Ventures Plan has a large focus on increasing the capacity of families and individuals to lead lives that are free of strife, productive, and self-defined; and on increasing the



capacity of the community to work together in creating prosperity for all. This includes initiatives to:

- ❖ Create a community that values and participates in learning in many different ways and venues
- ❖ Make higher education available to low-income youth and young adults through scholarships
- ❖ Teach both children and adults to read
- ❖ Heal intergenerational trauma and reduce domestic violence
- ❖ Integrate Lummi culture, traditions and language into community life
- ❖ Teach basic life skills to youth and adults. This will range from financial literacy to healthy relationships.
- ❖ Build the 'people assets' of Lummi through strategies such as community gatherings and mentoring programs

### **Increased community use of inclusive decision-making**

The Ventures Project broke new ground in bringing together different parts of the community to contribute to and make decisions about the Ventures Plan. To maintain the connection and accountability to the community Ventures will be organized as a tribally chartered non-profit organization. The Ventures Plan calls for continued regular community gatherings to hear about progress, give feedback to the Board of Directors and Executive Director, and help evaluate and roll the plan forward over time.

Ventures will also sponsor conferences to bring together people from the Lummi community with regional leaders, including non-natives and other tribes. Examples are the Future Search Process to set educational standards, the Economic Summits, and a conference, modeled after the successful Squamish conference, to drive a reduction in domestic violence.

In concert with each other the Plan strategies will:

*Expand the education level and job-related skills of people living on the reservation*

*Expand the opportunities for living wage or better jobs and for small business development*

*Enable the low-income to build personal assets such as savings, homes and businesses.*

*Re-establish the Family and Lummi culture and traditions as the foundation of Lummi prosperity*

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