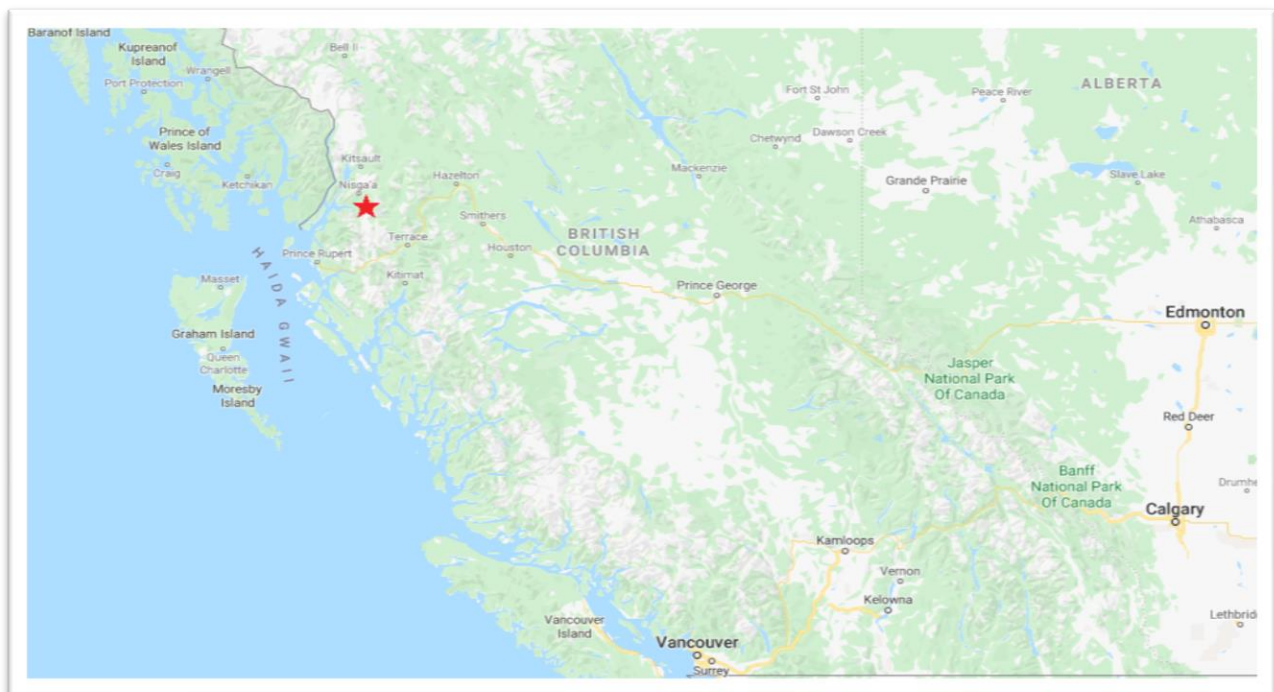


A CONVERSATION WITH ANTHONY MOORE Emergency Response Services Manager, Nisga'a Lisims Government

As part of IAEM-Canada's mission to advance the emergency management profession, the EM Profiles Series aims to illustrate the breadth of experiences of emergency management professionals across Canada, share knowledge and insights into the field, and promote continued professional development.

In our second profile, Anthony Moore discusses how his program has grown, the importance of public engagement and education, and the nuances of being an Emergency Manager for remote communities within a treaty First Nations Government.

Located on British Columbia's rugged northwest coast, Nisga'a Lands are blessed with soaring mountains, dramatic lava beds, picturesque fjords, and thriving rivers and streams. The natural beauty of Nisga'a Lands is complemented by the Nisga'a Nation's rich cultural traditions. <http://www.nisgaanation.ca/maps-3>).



Vanessa Howard: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this IAEM interview today. We are profiling EM professionals because we want to showcase the important work that emergency managers do across the country and how it looks different from community and community.

How did you get involved in emergency management?

Anthony Moore: In 2013 I started my first job with our government, the Nisga'a Lisims Government, as a land officer. We are a treaty First Nations government with the Nisga'a Lisims nation. Back then, the EM was done by our communications department. This seems very common in First Nations communities. They did a great job of building the program from 2010-2015 but they didn't have enough time dedicated to that type of position. So, during the time while I was a land officer with our Lands and Resources Department, I began courses sponsored by EMBC [Emergency Management British Columbia]. I started volunteering with the operations section of our operations centre. At that time I was a fire fighter and first responder and had been a captain for about 10 years. So with my background as a first responder, I was put into the operations role. Without knowing the end plan, my land manager and current director pointed me in the direction of taking emergency management certificate courses. I had already taken EOC [Emergency Operations Centre] essentials and logistics courses, so he began putting me into core courses with the JIBC [Justice Institute of British Columbia] in 2014 and completed my certificate in 2016.

Vanessa: That is a big course load while working as well. Once you had your certificate, did they transition you to the EM role?

Anthony: Yeah, I moved into this role in 2017, and then they transitioned me to a new role that was called the Emergency Management and Health and Safety Coordinator. That was partly because of my involvement in our health and safety committee. I was that committee's chair from 2013 to 2017.

The new position was created to have a dedicated emergency management position within our government.

The goals were to provide training to our staff, develop exercises, and obtain equipment and supplies. In 2018 I was promoted to the Emergency Response Services Manager and they created a new directorate called Enforcement and Emergency Services. This allowed one director to focus on these two services instead of being in the Lands and Resources which was too much for one person to take on.

Shortly after becoming a manager I created two positions. One of them being Emergency Response in Search and Rescue and a Health, Safety and Environment Officer. At that point I became aware of some of the grants that were available to us through the Union of BC Municipalities and began to access grant money.

We have also been very successful working with the Coast Guard and Ministry of Environment. Since 2017 I have been successful in applying for about \$1.4 million in grants. The biggest one being for flood mitigation. With

BIOGRAPHY

Anthony Moore is currently the Emergency Response Services Manager for the Nisga'a Lisims Government. He began as a Land Officer for the Government, and moved into this position once it was created.. Anthony has a varied background that provides him the public speaking expertise needed for the intergovernmental and public engagement that has allowed him to propel his diverse program forward.

this, we've been working with a company to update our lidar imagery and tidal monitoring.

Vanessa: That is great.

Anthony: It's been really wonderful. I've expanded my department to have 10 different programs in it. The main ones being the Emergency Operations Center where I act as the EOC director. I have an ESS [Emergency Social Services] director, and we just signed an agreement where we do an emergency health services transportation program.

Vanessa: I just saw that [announcement](#). It seems very exciting for your community.

Anthony: It was a lot of work to get that program up and running. It was in the works for quite a number of years and a lot of work was done before I came in.

I also work closely with our fire departments who are trying to get their programs up and running. Some of the communities have a strong fire program and other communities are facing some struggles with getting their Fire Chief position filled and staffing.

We also have a 20 person wildland fire unit crew working for wildland fire protection. A lot of the funding I applied for was applied to that program.

My department also oversees a 10 person occupational health and safety committee for our whole government which includes about 16 different buildings and staff.

In another area, we've been working closely with the Coast Guard for the past two years. Since I became a manager, we have been working with the Coast Guard to build our marine spill response and search and rescue, as well as to establish our ground search and rescue.

Vanessa Very interesting. It sounds like you are managing the oversight as well as the logistics to meet the spill responses or the search and rescue obligations, is that right?

Anthony: Yeah that's right. For the land based spill response and search and rescue we are more of the

contact point and coordination while we work with volunteers from our community. But for the marine search and rescue and marine spill response we are the response agency. Or at least we are working toward being the response agency. We have done courses with the Coast Guard in Prince Rupert and Vancouver Island for different aspects of search and rescue but now we are at the point where we can only do so much training without vessels. I've applied for two vessels within our provisional budget, and another vessel through the Coast Guard for spill response. The two vessels we have applied for will be rib craft, one will be with a cabin one will be without a cabin and through the Coast Guard we're applying for a landing craft.

This will allow our response teams to help vessels in distress as well as manage spill responses.

Vanessa: How has the fact that you work under British Columbia's first modern treaty impacted your interactions while working with outside agencies? Have you felt like you have needed to educate them a lot about what it means to work with your community in comparison to a community that doesn't have a modern treaty in place?

Anthony: Most agencies we work with have already done their homework on what our treaty means. Also, a lot of the work has already been done by our communications department where they did education regarding how best to view our nation in comparison with our neighbors who have a different structure. We are more in line with a regional district, or at least that's how we found it easiest to explain to outside agencies. Our government itself acts like the local authority for our communities. We take care of all four communities. Each community has their own emergency program coordinator, but they focus on emergency support services for their village while working with our ESS director. This allowed us to grow in the areas we described earlier. These are the things they've asked us to help them with, not necessarily financially but logistically. It also allows us to have benefits including

direct access to EMBC prior to the agreements with Indigenous Services Canada. Our treaty provided us direct relationships with the various ministries that want to work on our land and additionally has provided us access to grant and funding streams we would not have had access to if we were not a modern treaty nation. For example, most First Nations would not be able to apply for the Union of BC Municipalities grant funding, they would have had to go through a different funding system.

Another difference I have noticed is when I travel to conferences is it seems like I am often the only First Nation there. All of our staff and directors wear uniforms which helps us show a professional face when we are attending events and conferences. We are either in uniform or a suit, because were trained at a young age to present ourselves in a professional way. It's what we grew up with.

The funding for travel is different for us because being a treaty, we are able to budget for the travel whereas other First Nations in this province might not have the budget to be able to travel and attend conferences like this. It's one of the things I think that's the difference between us and our neighbors in British Columbia and one of the biggest benefits to being a treaty nation.

Vanessa: Thank you for sharing that insight with us. It's a big part of what we want to do with these profiles is to show the different professionals working in emergency management and their perspective. Yours is certainly a unique one within Canada. I think it's important for all Canadians to understand the differences and what that looks like for you as well as the communities around you.

You have a very large program and have a lot of different areas that you manage within that program but is there a particular area of emergency management that is a passion of yours?

Anthony: Education, not for me but for our public, for the rest of the people in our nation. I've spent the entire time as a program coordinator and a manager building awareness for emergency programs through

community events and public engagement sessions. Each year I host what's called the Nisga'a Emergency Preparedness Week which is an emergency management and preparedness conference during emergency management week in May. This spring we held our third annual event and it is held on a rotating basis in each of our communities. I've always enjoyed seeing the a-ha moments when I'm describing to someone what they're supposed to do or how to be more prepared and you see it's clicked for them. You can tell they understand what it is they're supposed to do to help make themselves more prepared, or that they know what to expect from my department. Now most of our citizens know how to prepare themselves due to the education. We've even changed how we prepare our emergency preparedness kits. We've added dried berries and preserved food like dried fish so that it makes the kits a little bit more personal for everyone.

We do purchase the prepared kits from companies like St. John's Ambulance and Total Prepared, in fact we've purchased 100 to 150 kits each year to ensure our community has the kits and we give them away as door prizes and things like that.

When I was young, I was told I would be a speaker for our house. Gitlaxdax is the house I belong to. I was always told I needed to practice public speaking whenever I could so I used the emergency preparedness public education as opportunities to practice public speaking as much as possible.

Vanessa: It sounds like your public education campaign has been very successful. I'm sure there are emergency managers from across the country who would love to benefit from any insights you might have. Would you be willing to speak to the ways that you have made it so successful? Has the bulk of your focus been your one week in May or do you also work on public engagement throughout the year?

Anthony: My conference is a big part. I bring in a lot of other entities to my event. When I go down to the emergency preparedness and business continuity

conference as well as the fire chief conference. I encourage the people I connect with there to participate in my emergency conference. This year I had 22 different organizations attend and present. We had to expand it to two days this year because we had so many speakers.

I also attend each of the community's public meetings where I present one topic at each meeting. These are usually along the lines of what to do if there is an earthquake or what to do if there is a wildfire. I also act as a Fire Smart representative with [Fire Smart Canada](#) so can provide information to communities about how to make their houses safer from wildfires.

I show them the work that our crews are doing around the community to make the community safer and then I ask them to do their part to make their homes safer and that will help our whole community. Right now, I have about 40% engagement where those people go out and actually take preventative measures around their properties following our engagement sessions. There are a lot of videos from the Fort McMurray and other fires that help show how important it is to do preparedness work to limit the risk of wildfire. I find that they're very helpful.

I try and do four or five public engagement sessions in each community throughout the year. In addition to presentations to our Executive.

Our government is structured so the first level of elected officials is our Executive. This includes our directors from Nisga'a Lisims Government and our Chief Councillors, our President or Secretary Treasurer and our Chairperson for Council of Elders. For larger decisions such as large capital expenses, the decision goes to every elected official meeting together in our chambers. I do a lot of presentations to this group as well.

I jump on every opportunity that's out there basically and so does my staff; we all work hard in public engagement.

Those are the avenues I've taken so far. And it is working for us. When any emergency happens, they call my cell

before they call their fire department, so I guess it is working.

Vanessa: You have spoken about public education public speaking, multi-tasking and empowering people to be prepared. These are all important skills to have as an emergency manager. Do you have any others that you think are essential to be an effective emergency manager?

Anthony: I've had a very different background from most of the people I have met in this field. I didn't go to post-secondary education after high school. I went to work as a commercial diver and from there I learned how to speak to different people from different backgrounds whether that be academic or trades and the different types of people you might meet. That experience gave me very good interpersonal skills and how to communicate with different people to match their needs. I've been a firefighter for 17 years and that background gave me very good leadership qualities as well as understanding of how to influence a program. That experience has made me the subject matter expert in emergency response and I think that background has given me a lot of respect when I'm speaking as an emergency manager, especially for bringing an idea to our Executive. I've been in mineral exploration for about 10 years and while there I did a lot of public speaking and training including speaking with the Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association about my experience in mining.

These experiences gave me skills on how to present myself verbally and physically in a style that translates well to politicians and executives.

Good interpersonal skills, leadership, self-awareness, being able to follow through with something, and being able to show and convey understanding, knowledge, skills and abilities that are necessary for the field of emergency management.

Vanessa: Those sound like a list of core competencies to me.

Anthony: It has worked really well for me. It has let me propel my programs to a level I couldn't have otherwise. For example we are actually in our seventh year of a [Firefighter Boot Camp](#). We take kids ages 8 to 15 and we take them for a week and we teach them the basics of structure fires. We bring them on an ambulance and we show them basic first aid skills. I bring my wildland fire crew to talk to them and show them our tools and get them to use our tools. I do presentations on the Emergency Operations Center and ESS I also have a game around the preparedness kits we do with them and then we do a competition at the end of the week. The RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] join us and do a short presentation for them as well. We try and ensure that we fit all the emergency services into the week.

That has been a very successful program, we have 30 kids this year. The fire chief and I work closely together to make this a success.

Vanessa: It sounds like you have been preparing to be a public figure for a lot of your life. Despite that is there a piece of advice you wish someone had given you before going into emergency management?

Anthony: To finish schooling as early as possible before taking employment because once you are in this field the time you have to continue your education and training becomes very limited. I've been working on training but I haven't had time to take the full program that I want to. I want to take the bachelor's program through JIBC but I just don't have time to start that program. And budgets. In general, emergency management is underfunded so I think funding will always be a challenge. There are so many great ideas that could have such big differences, it's always a challenge to decide where the funding goes.

WE'RE ALWAYS LOOKING TO MEET GREAT EM PROFESSIONALS

If you would like to nominate a colleague to be profiled, please communicate with EMProfilesProject@gmail.com. We are looking to showcase a variety of emergency management professionals including practitioners, researchers, and academics, as well as those working in the public and private sectors, community organizations, First Nations communities, and in remote regions across Canada. Let's connect, share and learn from each other.