



Carrier Sekani Tribal Council

200 – 1460 – 6th Avenue, Prince George, B.C. V2L 3N2

MEDIA RELEASE

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CSTC Applauds SCC Tsilhqot'in Decision: Aboriginal Title Land Declared

Lheidli T'enneh Territory/Prince George BC – Today marks a historic day for the Tsilhqot'in First Nations across Canada and for all Canadians. The Supreme Court of Canada upheld the 2007 ruling of the BC Supreme Court and declared Aboriginal title to about 2,000 km² of lands in the Tsilhqot'in territory, located in Cariboo-Chilcotin region of British Columbia.

Tribal Chief Terry Teegee stated, "We stand with our Tsilhqot'in brothers and sisters in acknowledging the work of their elders and leaders that sought to protect their lands and culture over the past 25 years. This court decision will change everything when it comes to reconciliation between the Carrier Sekani and the Crown. The Carrier Sekani are prepared to work with government and other First Nations to find a better way forward."

Chief Just Monk of the Tl'azt'en Nation noted, "Today's decision will lead to more certainty on the land. The economy in our region will not slow down. We will now have to work harder with industry to improve certainty for projects that we want in our territories."

"Our traditional laws will now have a better standing in our unceded lands. We congratulate the Tsilhqot'in and their Elders for protecting their laws. The BC treaty process is questionable now, and today marks the beginning of Dakelh authority to our own lands. Maybe now Enbridge will understand what 'NO' means", said Chief Martin Louie of the Nadleh Whut'en First Nation.

Chief Archie Patrick of the Stelat'en First Nation said, "The Supreme Court of Canada has re-affirmed our identity as indigenous people, with laws, culture and authority to our lands outside of Indian Reserves. After 150 years, First Nations and Canadians are seeing justice served. This is an historic day for First Nations and Canadians."

Tsil Kaz Koh First Nation Chief Wes Sam stated: "Congratulations to the Tsilhqot'in people, their leaders and Elders. It has been a long hard fought battle, and we fully support the SCC decision. This is a major victory for Canadians and First Nations. The world is watching how BC and Canada change their policies of denying First Nations rights and title."

"Today we celebrate with the Tsilhqot'in peoples on this historic victory. Dakelh people will now take some time to contemplate next steps with government and industry. Today's ruling changes everything. We have undeniable evidence to our lands, including title", stated Chief Fred Sam of the Nak'azdli First Nation.

Chief Stanley Thomas of the Saik'uz First Nation said, "Our people are very pleased with today's decision, and congratulate the Tsilhqot'in in their victory. We will be watching closely how industry and

the Crown respond. We have been saying for over 100 years that our rights included title to our lands. We have been here since time immemorial, and our laws will now be supported by this new decision.”

Deputy Chief John Allen French of the Takla Lake First Nation added, “Our ancestors stories, trails, paintings, camps and remains have been on our lands for thousands of years. It is what we are, what all indigenous peoples are. We are truly thankful to the Tsilhqot’in for seeking and fighting for the truth. This brings us all closer to justice. Justice for our ancestors, justice for our rights and justice for the future.”

“Our Chiefs will meet with our Tsilhqot’in neighbours and other First Nations with unceded rights and title to determine next steps. We applaud the Supreme Court of Canada for its wisdom and impartiality. We will work with anyone interested in developing world class policies and laws that meaningfully incorporate Carrier Sekani laws and protocols”, concluded Tribal Chief Teegee.

About CSTC

The Carrier Sekani Tribal Council is formed by eight (8) First Nations including: Nak’azdli, Nadleh Whut’en, Stelat’en, Saik’uz, Takla Lake, Tsil Kaz Koh, Tl’azt’en and Wet’suwet’en. The CSTC works to support its members in areas of negotiations, natural resource management, technical services and advocacy, for an area covering 78,000 sq. km west of Prince George. Visit www.carriersekani.ca for more information.

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