



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

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First Nations Summit supports Cheslatta Carrier Nation's plan to stop destructive flooding of Nechako Lake

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – First Nations Summit (FNS) leaders are supporting the Cheslatta Carrier Nation's water license application submitted to the Provincial government this morning. The application is a necessary step in their \$280 million Nechako Rivers Legacy Project which details a plan to construct a water release facility at Kenney Dam in an effort to restore water flows on the Nechako River and cease the destructive flooding that occurs annually on Cheslatta Lake.

"The construction of the Kenney Dam in 1952 and the subsequent diversion of the Nechako River had devastating consequences for the Cheslatta people, both above and below Kenney dam" said Grand Chief Edward John of the FNS political executive.

Kenney Dam, located close to Vanderhoof, BC, diverts the water from the Nechako River into the Nechako Reservoir. The lack of a water release facility at Kenney Dam has resulted in an annual high water level domino effect where the Nechako Reservoir reaches its capacity and backs up into Cheslatta Lake. This has resulted in the flooding of Cheslatta village sites the disturbance of many Cheslatta grave sites, and the destruction of spawning grounds. The proposed Nechako Rivers Legacy Project would see the construction of a much needed water release facility and hydro generator at Kenney Dam, diverting water back to a portion of the Nechako River that has been dry since 1952.

"The Cheslatta people have had to endure the destruction and desecration of more than 60 grave sites due to annual flooding on Cheslatta Lake. They have been trying for more than 60 years to reverse some of these wrongs. Unfortunately, their pleas to both government and industry have to date fallen on deaf ears. We commend them for taking the initiative to establish the Nechako Rivers Legacy Project to solve some of these issues. We are hopeful the Cheslatta Carrier water application will be successful and allow them to proceed towards environmental and economic sustainability in the area", added Chief John.

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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