



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

NEWS RELEASE

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First Nations Summit in full support of Carrier Sekani application for Judicial review of TransCanada's Coastal GasLink Pipeline project

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – First Nations Summit (FNS) leaders are voicing support for Nadleh Whut'en and Nak'azdli First Nation's decision to seek a judicial review of BC's issuance of an Environmental Assessment Certificate for TransCanada Pipeline's proposed Coastal GasLink Pipeline project which would cross some 200m km's of their traditional territories.

"We understand that Nadleh and Nak'azdli have made every effort to engage with BC in government-to-government discussions to identify and address their concerns regarding this project. Unfortunately, BC seems to have made a conscious decision to ignore Carrier Sekani concerns and fast track the project in an attempt to hop on the LNG development train", said Robert Phillips of the FNS political executive.

"Governments can't ignore their constitutional duty to consult and accommodate First Nations prior to making decisions to proceed on major development projects in this province. Similar to our views concerning the approval of the Site-C dam, this approach is unacceptable and an affront to the cultivation of constructive government-to-government relations between the provincial government and BC First Nations", added Phillips.

"Unfortunately we are now seeing a pattern of governments taking a 'business as usual status quo approach' in an effort to downplay the recent Supreme Court of Canada landmark decision in the Tsilhqot'in case. We can't stress enough to both government and industry, the necessary consultation standard for any development project in BC in a post-Tsilhqot'in world, must be to seek the free, prior and informed consent of each and every First Nation whose Aboriginal title and rights will be impacted. If governments continue to ignore this, then First Nations' will unfortunately have no other choice but to seek whatever remedies possible through the courts", concluded Cheryl Casimer, also of the FNS political executive.

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The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in treaty negotiations in British Columbia. The Summit is also a NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Further background information on the Summit may be found at www.fns.bc.ca.

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