

News Release

For Immediate Release:
December 19, 2013

First Nations remain steadfastly opposed to Proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline

Coast Salish Territory, Vancouver, British Columbia – Leaders of the First Nations Summit and Union of BC Indian Chiefs are calling on the federal government to reject the Joint Review Panel for the Northern Gateway Pipeline Project (JRP) recommendation of a conditional approval of the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project.

The federal government ignored First Nations requests to create a decision-making process for the Enbridge project that would respect First Nations constitutionally-protected Title and Rights. The federal government instead chose to gut federal environmental protections, unilaterally designed and imposed its greatly weakened environmental review process as a quick-and-dirty Aboriginal consultation process for the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project. The flawed JRP clearly did not respect First Nations' rights or decision-making authority over their territories in coming to their decision.

"The Joint Review Panel decision to provide conditional approval does not alter or negate in any way, the federal government's clear legal responsibility to consult and accommodate First Nations, especially given the precedent provided by a long list of Supreme Court decisions," said Grand Chief Edward John of the First Nations Summit political executive. "The necessary consultation standard for any development project in BC, especially those with such a high potential for negative impacts, must be to seek the free, prior and informed consent of each and every First Nation whose Aboriginal title and rights will be impacted by a proposed project"

"We shall fully exercise our rights and inherent jurisdiction rooted in our Indigenous Laws and Indigenous land rights to defend our lands, waters and the safety and well-being of our Peoples," stated Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs. "Today's recommended approval with conditions stems from a fundamentally and fatally flawed process where as a matter of record, the overwhelming majority of presentations made to the Panel here in B.C. expressed grave concerns, distressing facts and a shared belief the project should not proceed. The Northern Gateway Project is being vehemently opposed by Indigenous Peoples who will not put their territories, waters and communities at risk. This is about the environmental integrity of the watersheds we all share and we are willing to go to any lengths to defend our watersheds. We are prepared to go to the wall against this project. We have no choice."

For more information please contact:

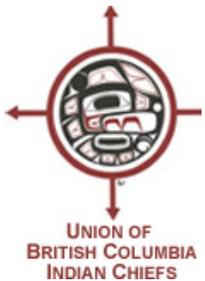
Grand Chief Edward John 778-772-8218
Political Executive, First Nations Summit

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip 250-490-5314
President, Union of BC Indian Chiefs



1200-100 Park Royal South
West Vancouver, BC
V7T 1A2

Ph: 604-926-9903
Fx: 604-926-9923
Toll Free: 866-990-9939



500-342 Water Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1B6

Ph: 604-684-0231
Fx: 604-684-5726