



*For Immediate Release*

**July 4, 2008**

### **First Nations Summit raises concerns with CN and CP Rail officials over recent train derailments in the Fraser Canyon**

Coast Salish Territory (West Vancouver) – The political executive of the First Nations Summit have written to E. Hunter Harrison, President and Chief Executive Officer of Canadian National Railway and Fred Green, President and Chief Executive Officer of Canadian Pacific Railway to lodge concerns regarding recent train derailments in the Fraser Canyon and the resulting negative environmental impacts in First Nations' traditional territories.

"We are seeking urgent meetings with the CEOs of CN and CP Rail to discuss how we can work together to prevent and mitigate negative impacts from rail transportation on our communities and members", said Grand Chief Doug Kelly, a member of the First Nations Summit political executive.

On July 1, 2008, four CP Rail cars, travelling on a CN Rail track, derailed 10 kilometres north of Lytton, BC, and landed in the Thompson River. One of these cars is now leaking ethylene glycol, a toxic substance used in antifreeze, into the Thompson River at the critical time of early Stuart and Chinook fishery runs.

"There are a large number of First Nations communities through the Fraser Canyon and other parts of BC that face threats from derailments. These communities, and First Nations throughout British Columbia, depend upon natural resources such as the fishery to sustain them throughout the year – nutritionally, economically, and culturally – as they have done since time immemorial. We must act swiftly to ensure that what is left of an already depleted Fraser fishery is protected from further environmental damage caused by train derailments", added Chief Kelly.

For years, First Nations have had to cope with rail traffic passing through their territories and, unfortunately, cope with the negative effects of derailments that seem to be occurring on an increasingly regular basis throughout the Fraser Canyon. First Nations communities, which are more vulnerable due to depressed socio-economic conditions, often are most seriously affected by rail accidents and their impacts on waters, fisheries and habitat.

-30-

*The First Nations Summit speaks on behalf of First Nations involved in the treaty negotiation process in British Columbia. Background information on the Summit may be found at [www.fns.bc.ca](http://www.fns.bc.ca).*

For Further Information:

Grand Chief Doug Kelly  
First Nations Summit Political Executive

778-834-7537

Colin Braker, First Nations Summit:  
Communications Director

(O) 604.926.9903  
(C) 604.328-4094