

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

May 7, 2013

Charles Reid, President & CEO  
BC Hydro  
333 Dunsmuir St.  
Vancouver, BC V6B 5R3

Sent via fax: 604 623-4459

## OPEN LETTER TO BC HYDRO: DESTRUCTION AND DESECRATION OF PETROGLYPHS

Dear Mr. Reid

We are writing to express our utter shock and disappointment upon hearing of the destruction and desecration of significant petroglyphs within Snuneymuxw First Nation territory. This is an affront to the dignity of First Nations and completely disrespects the cultural heritage of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. We find it completely unbelievable that BC Hydro crews were unaware of such an important site, that has been well documented within the BC Provincial system, as well as publicly documented and well-known among local residents. This site is of significant cultural importance to the Snuneymuxw First Nation and has been registered within the Provincial system under the *Heritage Conservation Act* (HCA) since 1970. It is clear that the Provincial system is unable to provide for the protection and conservation of these types of sites in which it is intended to serve.

The United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP), endorsed by Canada in November 2010 states that “Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.”

We call on BC Hydro and the Province of BC to live up to the standards set out in the UNDRIP, as well as the protection measures articulated in the HCA. Once a new government comes into power following the election on May 14, members of the FNLC and Joint Working Group on First Nations Heritage Conservation will endeavour to work and compel the Province of BC to ensure that infractions on the part of BC Hydro and industry more broadly do not happen again. Ignorance of cultural sites or the legislation and rules in place to protect them is not a legitimate excuse, and this type of irresponsible and completely reckless behavior cannot be



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tolerated. As First Nations, we will continue to stand up and protect our sites that are of cultural and spiritual significance to our communities. Finally, we demand that BC Hydro immediately begin discussions to provide appropriate mitigation and to ensure repairs are made to the satisfaction of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

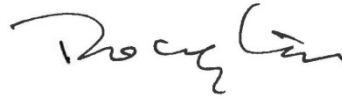
Yours truly,

**FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

**On behalf of the FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT:**



Grand Chief Edward John



Chief Douglas White III Kwulasultun



Dan Smith

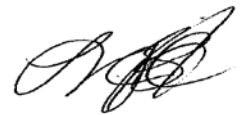
**On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS:**



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip



Chief Bob Chamberlin



Councillor Marilyn Baptiste

**On behalf of the BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS:**



Regional Chief Jody Wilson-Raybould

Cc: BC First Nations  
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