



Ref. 50419

August 13, 2020

Angela Stadel
Senior Negotiator, Aboriginal Negotiations Division
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Dear Angela Stadel:

On May 14, 2020 the Province of British Columbia, Canada and Hereditary Chiefs of the Wet'suwet'en Nation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to negotiate agreements to implement Wet'suwet'en rights and title in their traditional territory "the Yintah." Matters of rights and title have been left unresolved for many years, resulting in uncertainty and conflict. The goal of these negotiations is to bring greater certainty for everyone and to work together for the benefit of all people who live in the region.

Doing this work during the COVID-19 pandemic has created additional challenges and we have adjusted our target for a draft agreement to mid-October 2020. While we continue to work in good faith in an agreed-upon accelerated process, it is now time to involve stakeholders who have an interest in the Yintah. We'd like you, as a key community leader and representative of important interests, to be part of that. Developing a common understanding of Wet'suwet'en rights and title is essential to creating an agreement that contributes to a vibrant economy and builds strong local relationships.

To support transparency and the success of the negotiations, we have developed a comprehensive Community Engagement Strategy. (For more detail, please see the attached background.) We would like to invite you to become a member of a Regional Engagement Group comprised of key community leaders from local government, industry, services agencies and user groups, which will ensure a diversity of voices is considered throughout our negotiations.

We will be holding an introductory meeting to discuss the MOU, its implications, and how the agreement will be developed, as well as how voices from the broader community who represent the varied views and interests in the Yintah should be included. We intend to hold these meetings on an ongoing basis about every three months throughout the negotiations. Virtual options to attend will be available. The first meeting will be held at 19:00 on September 10, 2020. Please confirm your interest in attending this initial meeting by replying to Katherine Bellefontaine via email (Katherine.Bellefontaine@gov.bc.ca).

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We also invite you to consider nominating an individual to become a member of a Core Advisory Council. The Core Advisory Council will be a smaller group of committed and credible voices expected to inform the negotiation process and engage with the Regional Engagement Group as well as the broader community. The Core Advisory Council will meet on a monthly basis. Its members should have a strong voice within key sectors of society and be able to provide critical input and feedback to the negotiation process. Should you have a nominee, please send their contact information and a brief summary of their suitability to Katherine Bellefontaine via email (Katherine.Bellefontaine@gov.bc.ca).

Please note that if you agree to become a standing member of the Regional Engagement Group or Core Advisory Council you would be expected to commit to regular attendance at meetings. At these meetings you will receive updates on this negotiation process and have an opportunity to provide input. While a final Terms of Reference to guide each group will be developed by the group themselves, the expectation would be that members commit to a sustained level of participation to ensure trust-building and respectful relationships. As you consider this opportunity, I encourage you to reach out to Stewart Dickson (Stewart.Dickson@gov.bc.ca) or Sandra Harris (Smharris877@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

On behalf of the Province of British Columbia, the Federal Government of Canada, and the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, thank you for taking the time to consider our invitation to play a critical role in this historic process. This is a significant opportunity to advance reconciliation, create more certainty, and lend your local voice and experience in the development of an agreement that will have generational significance.

ON BEHALF OF THE WET'SUWET'EN NATION
by the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs

Woos (Frank Alec)

Madeek (Jeff Brown)

Knededeas (Warner William)

T'sek'ot (Ron Austin)

Hagwilneghl (Ron Mitchell)

Kloum Khun (Alphonse Gagnon)

Na'Moks (John Ridsdale)

Gisday'wa (Fred Tom)

Smogelgem (Warner Naziel)

Lay'oh (James Namox)

ON BEHALF OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN IN RIGHT OF THE PROVINCE OF
BRITISH COLUMBIA
by the Minister of INDIGENOUS RELATIONS AND RECONCILIATION

Hon. Scott Fraser

Backgrounder: Components of the Wet'suwet'en, Canada, B.C. Community Engagement Strategy

Stakeholder and community engagement are key parts of any significant negotiation between Government and Indigenous Nations. This multi-layered Community Engagement Strategy offers targeted and public engagement opportunities to the general public and key interest-holders and is critical to successful implementation of the MOU between Wet'suwet'en, B.C. and Canada. The Community Engagement Strategy consists of four components:

Regional Engagement Group (REG)

- 30-50 members that represent key community interests and sectors
- Representative of local government, industry, service agencies, user groups, etc.
- Receives updates on negotiations and provides input to ongoing discussions
- Meets quarterly

Core Advisory Council (CAC)

- Consists of 8-12 members that are nominated from the Regional Engagement Group for consideration to join the Core Advisory Council
- Selected individuals are key influencers able to represent the broad interests of the REG, and are:
 - Committed – willing to attend the process through to signing of Rights & Title
 - Courageous – willing to represent difficult conversations and decisions and bring back critical feedback
 - Curious – able to represent strong views yet remain open to new approaches to governance
 - Credible – have a strong voice within key sectors of society within the Yintah and the support of members of the REG
- Meets monthly, responsible for shaping the content of REG quarterly meetings and Public Engagement Sessions
- Provides input to ongoing discussions on a regular basis
- Receives personal and professional development opportunities

Public Engagement Sessions

- Semi-annual webinar/town hall to engage public on the rights and title dialogue
- Opportunity for information sharing about the process and progress of title negotiations
- Platform for community dialogue and education about reconciliation, rights and title, and the Wet'suwet'en Nation

Working Committees

- Determined by topic when more in-depth engagement is necessary
- Called as needed in support of priority topics at the rights and title table
- Relevant interest-holders will be invited to participate to engage in dialogue on specific issues of importance