



TŚILHQOT'IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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PRESS RELEASE

Tsilhqot'in Nation remains concerned over New Westminister School Development

New Westminister, BC (July 18, 2016): The Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) remains concerned over the development of the New Westminister Secondary School, a site known to have remains of Tsilhqot'in War Chief, Chief Ahan. Today, 151 years after the wrongful trial and hanging of Chief Ahan, a Tsilhqot'in spiritual ceremony will be held at the New Westminister School to memorialize his life and legacy as well as protect his burial site.

New Westminister Secondary School was built on the burial grounds of many First Nations, along with others. School District No. 40 now has plans to build a new school and convert the current New Westminister School grounds to a memorial site. Through this process, the TNG is requesting archaeological and historical records be consulted, along with engaging fully with the Nation.

On July 18, 1865, Chief Ahan was the last of six war Chiefs hanged during the Chilcotin War of 1864/65. On October 23, 2014, in the BC Legislature Premier Christy Clark fully exonerated the six war Chiefs of any wrongdoing and recognized the Chiefs as war heroes, protecting their lands and their people.

Quotes:

Chief Joe Alphonse, Tribal Chairman of the Tsilhqot'in National Government:

“The legacy of Chief Ahan is far reaching. He was one of the six war Chiefs that protected our territory from further disease and unlawful taking of our lands – a significant part of BC’s history that set the path that the Tsilhqot'in have taken for the past 151 years. The location of Chief Ahan’s remains is of great importance to us. We have let our position be known and are here to determine whether there can be proper protections put in place. The best case scenario would be the relocation of these remains to our territory. Although we are in New Westminister today – this is an issue that is important to us as Tsilhqot'in people.”

Media Contact:

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Media is welcome to take part in this event

Time: 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Location: New Westminister Secondary School - 835 8th St, New Westminister, BC