



Tsilhqot'in Nation Denounces BC Conservative Party Platform

The Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) is raising the alarm about the BC Conservative Party platform that seeks to repeal the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) and threatens progress on the climate crisis and establishing environmental protections.

The path that the BC Conservatives has outlined for British Columbia is a path of conflict on the land and in the courts. DRIPA is an essential framework to hold B.C. to international laws and standards, to implement the human rights of Indigenous peoples in B.C., and to resolve long-standing conflicts in this Province based on recognition and respect, in a manner that benefits all British Columbians.

The BC Conservative platform also seeks to streamline resource project permitting, favouring efficiency and simplicity over meaningful engagement and environmental oversight. Indigenous communities are often on the frontlines of resource extraction and stand to be the most directly impacted, though everyone in the province loses from the legacy of contamination and environmental disaster that can result from “fast track” approvals for contentious projects.

The Tsilhqot'in National Government is the governing body for the Tsilhqot'in people. The Tsilhqot'in Nation is comprised of six communities located throughout the Tsilhqot'in (Chilcotin) territory and is the only Nation in Canada with a court declaration of Aboriginal title (*Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*).

For decades, Taseko Mines Limited (TML) tried to obtain approval for a low-grade, copper and gold mine at Težtan Biny (Fish Lake), over the objections of the Tsilhqot'in Nation. While the B.C. government of the day rushed to grant environmental approval for the proposed Prosperity Mine, the Federal Government ultimately rejected the Prosperity/New Prosperity Project due to major environmental issues and significant impacts on First Nations that could not be mitigated.

“Rustad’s platform should be deeply concerning for all British Columbians. History has shown that casting Indigenous peoples as adversaries is a far more difficult path than as allies. The BC Conservatives seek to return First Nations, Government and Industry back

to the times of direct, protracted conflict that benefited nobody. This will slow things down in the long run as everything will end up in front of the courts.”

“Rustad was the Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation when B.C. approved an extensive drilling program for Taseko Mines Ltd. on the last day in power of the former Liberal Government. This permit triggered further conflict between the T̓silhqot̓in Nation, Taseko Mines Ltd., and the B.C Government that remains unresolved, taking time and attention away from other priorities for years. If elected, the T̓silhqot̓in have this hand grenade of an issue to hand back to Mr. Rustad.”

— Nits̓il̓ʔin (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, LL.D. (hon.), Tribal Chair, T̓silhqot̓in National Government

“A true leader is one that is willing to work with First Nations across this province and uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). John Rustad has proven to favour conflict over progress. How could any person – or Indigenous person - even think of voting for Conservatives? The NDP has proven that they are willing to do the hard work of working to create peace on the land to allow for further opportunities for everyone. NDP has my vote in this election.”

— Nits̓il̓ʔin Roger William, LL.D. (hon.), Xen̓i Gwet̓in

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More information: <https://tsilhqotin.ca/our-territory/nen-lands-resources/te%e1%ba%91tan-biny/>

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