

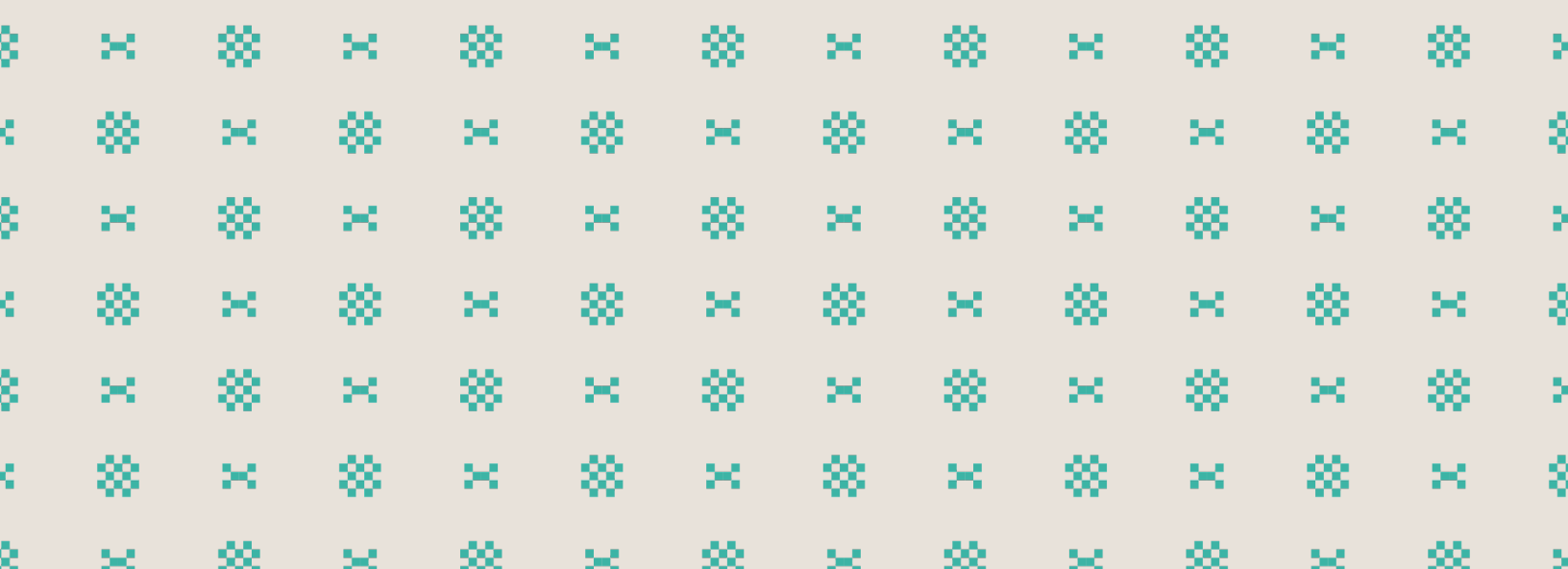
# Landslide Reflections From Tl'esqox Leadership

*Learnings from the 2024 T̓silhqot'in Landslide*



T̓silhqot'in  
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT



# Landslide Reflections From Tl'esqox Leadership



# LANDSLIDE REFLECTIONS FROM TL'ESQOX LEADERSHIP



*“It’s our Aboriginal right to fish. When we consume the food, it is our Human Rights to that food. We are very proud with how we have managed the river; the salmon run was very strong with over 4 million returning and roughly 100 million smolts will be returning next spring to the ocean. The T̂silhqox river flows down with that salmon that are born up there, they come down to where I am. I refer to it as a river that’s been flowing title for thousands of years and that title flows down to where I am...that is the reason why we are called the T̂silhqot’in.”*

- NITS’IL?IN FRANCIS LACEESE

## Foreword

Our community, Tl’esqox First Nation is located 30 minutes west of Williams Lake, B.C., and is situated 15 minutes from the area of Farwell Canyon. The unique landscape of the territory and our knowledge of the area is expressed through T̂silhqot’in names describing their features. The T̂silhqot’in name for Farwell Canyon, which is Nagwentled, describes how “the ground is always moving.”

Our ancestors have imparted their knowledge through generations about the behaviour of the landscape, how to predict or expect changes to the environment and how to care for and manage the area. Nagwentled is a sacred area with significant importance to our people - utilized extensively for T̂silhqot’in cultural and traditional practices, including our fish camps. Acting on our experience with previous landslides in Nagwentled, our community members were the first to warn people of the danger in the area as soon as the landslide happened. We continue to steward this area, monitoring the nen (land), the water (tu), and the fish (lhuy).

The report, Nagwentled - Changing Waters, showcases the learnings from our community’s and the Nation’s experiences of the 2024 T̂silhqox landslide.

The report addresses what is important to us: respect for our people, governance, and our lands and waters; acknowledgement that fish and wildlife are integral to our survival; and understanding that our people are the best to lead response in our territories. Indigenous jurisdiction and consent are central. Our experiences with the 2024 T̂silhqox landslide illustrate why governments must coordinate and collaborate with Indigenous Peoples through respectful relations that reflect our inherent knowledge, laws, and jurisdiction.

Nearly two years after the landslide, we want to see reconciliation through continued implementation of recovery actions. The 2024 T̂silhqox landslide is still with us to this day. It continues to have grave impacts to our salmon, and on our community. The land will slide again; it is only a matter of time. The most significant impacts of the 2024 T̂silhqox landslide may still be ahead of us.

We call on government and industry to continue building on the progress of the past two years, where consent and respect guide meaningful and tangible outcomes for today and for future generations.

## Introduction

It has been close to two years since the 2024 Tâilhqox landslide caused a significant block of the Tâilhqox (Chilcotin River) for six days. At the time, the landslide threatened public safety, sacred sites and the 2024 salmon run.

In the Spring of 2026, the Tâilhqot'in Nation led and funded a highly successful slope stabilization project at Nagwentled. The 2024 Tâilhqox landslide left the land unstable with an impending risk of additional landslides, putting our salmon at direct risk. The protection of future salmon stocks was and remains our highest priority.

*“The salmon, that’s our biggest concern always.”*

- NITS'IL?IN FRANCIS LACEESE



Tl'esqox Leadership (Nits'il?in-Yaz Suzanne Tuerlings, Nits'il?in-Yaz Violet Fuller, Nits'il?in Francis Laceese, Nits'il?in-Yaz Jason Houde, Nits'il?in-Yaz Joey Isnardy)

Documented experiences from Tl'esqox and the T̄silhqot'in Nation leadership and staff resulted in the 2024 T̄silhqox Landslide Report release in February 2025. The report featured T̄silhqot'in personal accounts of the natural disaster and further outlined four calls to action and affiliated recommendations.

On the anniversary of the landslide report the community of Tl'esqox recognizes the hard work of those involved in response and recovery and continues to seek meaningful advancements with BC and Canada in the four calls to action:

1. Establishing core funding for emergency response and restoration.
2. Reforming fisheries management through upholding the inherent and constitutional rights and jurisdiction of the T̄silhqot'in in policy and in practice.
3. Transitioning the Emergency Salmon Task Force long-term, harnessing the combination of strong T̄silhqot'in, BC and Canada's technical expertise with T̄silhqot'in jurisdiction.
4. Integrating Indigenous jurisdiction in all levels of emergency management.

### **Nagwentled is a Sacred Area**

Nagwentled winds through the caretaker area of the Tl'esqox community. T̄silhqot'in Elders recount that Nagwentled has long been understood as a slide area and have witnessed recent slides in 2004 and even earlier in 1964. The 2024 landslide fully blocked the T̄silhqox (Chilcotin River) for six

days and the resulting breach impacted properties, artifacts, fishing, and burial sites.

Nagwentled is an area of teaching, healing, and ceremony. T̄silhqot'in utilize this area frequently to perform spiritual and traditional practices and to teach youth about these practices. Alongside the river, this area is well known as a main fishing location, and as such, is the location for seasonal fish camps where the communities camp to fish and preserve the fish they catch.

The Nation is mourning the important cultural and personal sites and belongings that the landslide washed away. While some is lost, work to restore this area within T̄silhqot'in culture is in progress.

### **Still More Work Ahead - Jurisdiction & Understanding Mitigation, Risk & Impacts**

Tl'esqox, as the nearest community to Nagwentled, inherently responds to emergencies in the area. As Nits'il?in Lennon Solomon of the neighbouring T̄silhqot'in community of Yunešit'in identified, to respect T̄silhqot'in protocol, at the first sign of the emergency, government "should... [contact the] nearest community, Tl'esqox and then TNG." This protocol was not followed with the landslide, creating unnecessary confusion and ill-will. Provincial and federal governments must respect T̄silhqot'in jurisdiction by following protocol. This will establish stronger, coordinated working relationships which harness the depth of knowledge within the Nation that can only come from living off the lands and respecting and experiencing the area through generations.



A thunderbird in the rock at Nagwentled - by Nits'il?in-Yaz Fuller

*“We should have been the point of contact... Now that this has happened twice in our lifetime, it should be clear to everyone moving forward.”*

- NITS'IL?IN-YAZ VIOLET FULLER

Traditional and cultural protocols between Nations were called upon during and after the landslide. In a state of local emergency, in 2024 the T̂silhqot'in National Government called for the nation to halt fishing activities in the area and called on government, fisheries, and downstream First Nations to seek conservation measures and where possible cease fisheries that would impact territory-bound salmon. Furthermore, following the local fisheries ban, T̂silhqot'in communities attained salmon from other unaffected territories.

*“[First] Nations in the past always helped one another”*

- NITS'IL?IN-YAZ JASON HOUDE

### **The Landslide is not Over**

Waiting for a catastrophe was not an acceptable approach. The T̂silhqot'in Nation sought funding through governmental partners to perform necessary emergency slope mitigation work through 2025. In the Spring of 2026, when it became clear that funding was not accessible, Tl'esqox and the T̂silhqot'in Nation funded and led a slope stabilization mitigation project ensuring that the salmon would have safe passage in the summer.

Fortunately, the 2025 salmon returns were not impacted by further landslides. T̂silhqot'in were able to practice an abundant traditional fishery in 2025. Tl'esqox members caught salmon for members who are not able to fish, taking care of one another.

Salmon were at the heart of both the Tl'esqox community and T̂silhqot'in Nation gatherings in 2025. These gatherings are important for the communities, for the sense of unity, and for enacting T̂silhqot'in teachings.

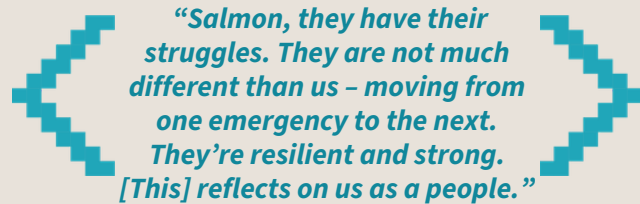
Still, the survival of the Chilko Lake ts’eman (sockeye) and other sacred salmon runs is at stake. While salmon made it to their spawning grounds after the 2024 landslide, T̂silhqot’in-led monitoring programs show that the salmon were severely impacted by turbidity and debris in the water. The full scope of these impacts on future generations of salmon remains to be seen.

The T̂silhqot’in Nation has continued to collaborate with First Nations and provincial and federal partners through the Emergency Salmon Task Force. This collaboration has produced excellent technical information about the state of the salmon and was a forum in which the slope stabilization plan was developed, then later implemented successfully. Throughout the 2025 season, Tl’esqox monitored the nen and the salmon. Tl’esqox information officers work with community members and visitors to the area to ensure they understood the risks of the area and that they followed protocol. As part of landslide recovery, Tl’esqox continues to advocate for its own information monitors and land rangers in order to put the Nation’s salmon expertise fully into practice on the ground.

### **Moving Forward**

T̂silhqot’in Dechen Ts’edilhtan (law) requires seeing the world from the perspective of the salmon.

Seeing from the salmon’s perspective provides layered insight for how to continue to protect the waters that sustain them, and in turn, sustain T̂silhqot’in deni (people).



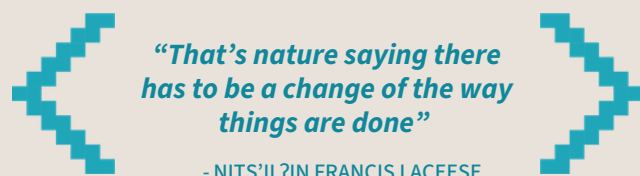
*“Salmon, they have their struggles. They are not much different than us – moving from one emergency to the next. They’re resilient and strong. [This] reflects on us as a people.”*

- NITS'IL?IN FRANCIS LACEESE

The landslide made clear that within T̂silhqot’in Dechen Ts’edilhtan, title to the land and jurisdiction over how to take care of it are intrinsically linked.

The T̂silhqot’in decision declared title to a portion of T̂silhqot’in territory. The T̂silhqot’in Nation has never ceded or surrendered their nen or tu and exercises jurisdiction over the whole of T̂silhqot’in territory. In this way, communities downriver from the Declared Title Area continue to exercise jurisdiction with the force of that title.

Nagwentled – changing waters – calls on us all to realign our relationships. The two-year anniversary of the landslide report requires us to all strengthen and deepen our commitment to caring for the nen, the tu, the ts’eman, and lhuy. The T̂silhqot'in Nation has demonstrated this through the 2026 slope mitigation project and will continue to care for the territory for future generations - independently and with meaningful partnerships.



*“That’s nature saying there has to be a change of the way things are done”*

- NITS'IL?IN FRANCIS LACEESE



**Tsilhqot'in**  
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Contact

Tl'esqox First Nation  
Phone: (250) 659-5655

Tsilhqot'in National Government  
Phone: (250) 392-3918

