



Williams Lake Indian Band (T'exelc)
2672 Indian Drive, Williams Lake, BC Canada V2G 5K9

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NStQ Chiefs and Council meet with British Columbia Liberal Leader, Christy Clark at the Williams Lake Indian Band's Chief James Louie Resource Building



(Photo Credit: Tony Morgan, Williams Lake Indian Band)

PHOTO: NStQ Leadership Council members pose with Premier of British Columbia. (From Left to Right: T'exelc Councillor Rick Gilbert, Tsq'escen' Chief Mike Archie, T'exelc Councillor Chris Wycotte, Xat'sull Chief Donna Dixon, Cariboo-Chilcotin Liberal MLA Donna Barnett, T'exelc Councillor Willie Sellars, T'exelc Chief Ann Louie, Xat'sull Councillor Sheri Sellars, The Honourable Premier Christy Clark, Stswecem'c Xgat'tem Councillor Harold Duncan, Stswecem'c Xgat'tem Chief Patrick Harry, Stswecem'c Xgat'tem Councillor Catlin Duncan, T'exelc Councillor Heather McKenzie and Stswecem'c Xgat'tem Councillor Eric Archie).

April 21st, 2017 (Williams Lake, British Columbia) – With less than three weeks left on the campaign trail before the BC Provincial elections, Liberal Leader Christy Clark met with the Northern Secwepemc te Qelmuw (NStQ) Leadership early Friday morning, April 21st.

The four bands of the NStQ, Canim Lake Indian Band (Tsq'escen'), Soda Creek Indian Band (Xats'ūll), Stswecem'c/Xgat'tem First Nation (Canoe Creek/Dog Creek Indian Band) and Williams Lake Indian Band (T'exelc) have been in treaty negotiations with British Columbia and Canada for more than 20 years, and have been anticipating this long-awaited meeting with Clark to discuss significant matters of importance involving the NStQ treaty process and its' traditional territories.

Clark stated her commitment to the made-in-BC Treaty process to the NStQ Leadership. She also promised, with the help of Donna Barnett, Cariboo-Chilcotin Liberal MLA who accompanied her to the meeting at the Williams Lake Indian Band, to make NStQ treaty negotiations a priority.



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Clark's follow through on more discussions with the NStQ is dependent on the outcome of elections come May 9, 2017. NStQ leaders remain steadfast in their position that the provincial government must address the seriousness of the NStQ's looming concerns, soon after the election.

Quotes:

Christy Clark, The Honourable Premier of British Columbia – "Thank you again for spending time with me this morning. I hope that this has, in some way, helped to heal the hurt from my failure to visit with you in the past, which has caused a sense and belief that we are going too slow on the treaty process. Donna and I are going to work hard to make sure we speed it up, not just for you, but for everybody. But, knowing that you are one of the First Nations that has been in it the longest and it's getting close to the end, I do really want to make sure we prioritize you. So, thank you for the thoughts and ideas about how we can speed it up and why we need to speed it up. My commitment to you is that we will. If we get re-elected we are not going to wait three months to get back to you. I will probably be up in July for Stampede, but if I can get up in May or June, I will certainly come and see you then."

Patrick Harry, Chief of Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation – "The NStQ appreciates the opportunity to meet with Liberal Leader Christy Clark. In this era of reconciliation it is important that government respect Secwepemc protocol when visiting NStQ territories. We look forward to further meaningful engagement. We view today's meeting as a step in the right direction when advancing our government-to-government relationship."

Donna Dixon, Chief of Soda Creek Indian Band – "Our meeting with Christy Clark was a long time coming. We had many important messages for her and I'm glad she made the time to meet with us."

Mike Archie, Chief of Canim Lake Indian Band – "The BC provincial election on May 9th, is fast approaching. Christy Clark met with us, the Chiefs of the NStQ. Previously, we made several attempts to set a meeting to discuss our concerns, but to no avail. Some key points we spoke about today with Ms. Clark include: BC's signing of agreements (within our territory), the impact of over 20 years of NStQ treaty negotiations with BC and Canada, surmounting borrowed funding and especially the need for a commitment on the part of the BC government to focus on the NStQ now, while we are held-up between the Agreement-in-Principle and Final Agreement stages of the treaty process."

Ann Louie, Chief of Williams Lake Indian Band – "The leader of liberal party Christy Clark met with NStQ at WLIB today. I, Chief Ann Louie, expressed to the leader we expect her to respect us as leaders and our Traditional Territory. Furthermore, we have requested she meet with NStQ right after the election to expedite our treaty negotiations which will lead to reconciliation for all."

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