

April 3, 2020

## TAHLTAN NATION COVID-19 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

This afternoon, the Tahltan Nation COVID-19 Emergency Management Team (TNCEMT) met again to discuss the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the threat to our Territory.

COVID-19 is not just a danger to our **ELDERS**. More and more, **ADULTS** and **CHILDREN** are starting to die because of this virus. **NONE OF US ARE IMMUNE.**

It cannot be stressed enough: **WE CANNOT AFFORD TO ALLOW FOR COVID-19 TO GET INTO OUR COMMUNITIES.**

By the time a person tests positive for COVID-19 in a Tahltan community, 50% of the community will likely have already been exposed. That means we will **LIKELY LOSE MOST OF OUR ELDERS** in that community. This virus will devastate our communities if we allow it to reach our Territory.

Right now, our communities are at a **CRITICAL STAGE**. Right now, we are **MOST VULNERABLE** because confirmed COVID-19 cases are both to the North (Whitehorse) and South (Terrace and Smithers) of us.

Prevention is the only thing that stops this virus from reaching our communities and the only thing that will save Tahltan lives.

**STOP MOVING AROUND. STOP GOING TO OTHER COMMUNITIES. LIMIT THE NUMBER OF TIMES YOU GO TO HIGH TRAFFIC AREAS SUCH AS THE STORE AND POST OFFICE. STAY HOME.**

Please ensure you do the following:

**SOCIAL DISTANCING:** Ensure you stay a minimum of 6 feet away from other people.

**WASH YOUR HANDS:** Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds or more. Soap is the best-known remedy for killing this virus so wash frequently.

**DON'T TOUCH FACE:** Don't transfer the virus into your body by touching your face.

**SELF ISOLATION:** It is strongly recommended that those at risk, including Elders, self-isolate; in other words, stay away from people outside your household.

## **Firewood**

Beginning Monday April 6<sup>th</sup>, Tahltan Forestry Ltd. will begin delivering 30 loads of firewood (10 truck loads each to Dease Lake, Iskut and Telegraph Creek).

## **Tahltan Nation COVID Website**

TNCEMT understand that our members want to be informed, especially during times of crisis. That is why we have set up a Tahltan Nation COVID-19 Emergency Management webpage - <https://tahltn.org/covid-19/> - where all of our members can inform themselves about COVID-19 and our response.

## **Red Chris (Newcrest)**

Newcrest will be providing 3 large barrels of hand sanitizer to the Tahltan Nation (1 barrel each to Dease Lake, Iskut and Telegraph Creek).

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new measures put in place at Red Chris please contact either:

### **Lorraine Callbreath**

**Email:** [lcallbreath@redchrismine.ca](mailto:lcallbreath@redchrismine.ca)

**Phone:** 250-771-4200

### **Shannon Wilson**

**Email:** [swilson@redchrismine.ca](mailto:swilson@redchrismine.ca)

**Phone:** 604-800-9200 ext 162

## **3Nations Update**

The 3 Nations Society, a partnership between the Tahltan, Kaska, and Tlingit Nations, today released its COVID-19 Pandemic Plan. At its heart, 3 Nations' response to COVID-19 is collaborative, public health-led, and founded on well-established and evidence-based approaches in dealing with outbreaks of infectious disease.

"The 3 Nations' leadership and administrative team has a responsibility to ensure that our unique challenges are adequately addressed," said Chad Norman Day, President of the Tahltan Central Government. "This Plan charts a course of action for how we will work in unity as 3 Nations to address our unique situation in northern British Columbia."

The Plan charts a clear course of action, driven by four primary goals:

1. Prevent the arrival of the virus and, if required, limit community spread;
2. Protect and minimize health impacts to our community members at greater risk from COVID-19;
3. Strengthen the public health measures needed to respond to and manage COVID-19; and,
4. Reduce the COVID-19 social and economic impacts experienced by our communities.

"We must draw upon the strengths that have made the 3 Nations and their communities effective in the past, to mitigate the risks that threaten us with this pandemic," said John D. Ward, Spokesperson of Taku River Tlingit First Nation. "I also want to acknowledge the ongoing relationships with the province of British Columbia and with Canada, whose partnerships are essential to help us all get through this difficult transition."

"Our leadership are connected, evidenced by our 3N COVID-19 Pandemic Plan, putting in place emergency management committees across the collective territory, coordinating networks at all levels, and linking our primary health care systems, all in an effort to support each member, each family and each Nation," said Danny Case, Chair of the Kaska Dena Council.

"Our main priority is to come together to protect our members and elders in our community," said Fred Lutz Sr., Deputy Chief of the Daylu Dena Council. "And we all play a vital role by keeping updated and informed to ensure the safety of our communities."

"Thankfully, we have small communities, and we can identify our most vulnerable groups and individuals," said Myles Manygreghorses, Chief of Dease River First Nation. "With the right plan, we can be proactive and reactive, to provide the protection and support needed until the pandemic is over."

"We are acutely aware that communities closing themselves off from the general public, and practicing physical distancing within our communities, will have significant mental health implications for many people – including our elders, children and youth," said Chief Marie Quock of the Iskut Band. "We will support communities to implement strategies both from within, and from outside our Nations, to address these serious challenges."

"Of immediate concern to us is ensuring that our supply chains function normally," said Chief Rick McLean of the Tahltan Band. "We are already experiencing difficulties obtaining some of the goods that our communities need to survive. We will be working to ensure that existing supply chains are strengthened, and that new supply chains are established as needed."

The 3 Nations COVID-19 Pandemic Plan is available on the 3 Nations website at <https://3nations.org/covid-19-pandemic-plan/>.

## **Dease Lake Update**

Peoples Haven staff have been working diligently to contact every household to have our questionnaire filled out. We appreciate their efforts. The Peoples Haven staff will be assisting in many ways during this crisis and the EMC would like to acknowledge them as they are doing an amazing job in moving our efforts forward.

The EMC has created signs which are designed to help you let potential visitors know whether or not you will allow them to enter your home and if your home has an occupant which is in a high-risk category. Please pick one up at Super A or the Post Office; in both locations they are on the bulletin board.

The EMC is looking at ways to support our community members to "STAY HOME". Please note that when we say, "STAY HOME" we are not just asking you to limit yourself to your own home we also mean "Do not leave the community of Dease Lake for non-essential travel".

If you have not yet joined the Dease Lake Emergency Management Committee Face book Page, please do so.

Beginning Monday April 6<sup>th</sup> the Dease Lake EMC is requesting that if you are leaving Dease Lake, if you have been out of town and are returning to Dease Lake, or if you have someone who is new to your home to please contact the Peoples Haven at 250-771-5577 to let the EMC know. It is essential at this time that as a community we do not travel unless absolutely necessary. Also, if you are returning to Dease Lake or are new to Dease Lake, please follow the self-isolation guidelines which have been provided via Facebook and mailouts.

EMC Coordinator is Tina Etzerza - 250-771-3405 or 250-631-2442 - [EMCDL@tahltan.org](mailto:EMCDL@tahltan.org)

## **Iskut Update**

The Iskut store is open Monday to Friday from 11am to 12pm for Elders and from 12pm to 6pm for the remainder of the public. The store has been working hard to stock fresh produce and keeping up with all the grocery demands.

Our community is doing a great job at following our rules regarding social distancing and the 4-person limit in the store.

The Headstart handed out craft kits to our young children in the community which was great. Online bingo has been added to the Iskut Band Council Facebook Page.

The Iskut gate monitors are still working 24/7 and doing an excellent job to keep our community safe. Please be advised that you cannot park at the gate and walk in. Everyone wanting to enter community must first meet with our gate monitors. Please be advised, if you are not from the community you will not be allowed in.

## **Telegraph Creek Update**

Staff of the Tahltan Band will begin working from home.

We continue to prudently update our community members with critical information, including educating our community members about the importance of social distancing and how deadly this virus is.

## **Employment, Contracting and Tahltan Businesses Update**

TNCEMT understands that many of you will be negatively affected - employment wise - by what is happening. If you or a family members employment has been negatively impacted due to the virus, please reach out to the TCG's Employment Director Kody Penner [employmentdirector@tahtlan.org](mailto:employmentdirector@tahtlan.org). The Tahltan Nation is here to help assist you and your family through these trying times.

Please continue to check the Tahltan Nation COVID-19 Emergency Management webpage regularly - <https://tahtlan.org/covid-19/> - to inform yourself of the services and benefits that are available to you.

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