

TAHLTAN NATION ANNOUNCE TRAVEL ADVISORY FOR TAHLTAN TERRITORY

Today (July 30, 2020), the Tahltan Nation announced that everyone, including hunters and wildlife enthusiasts, should avoid non essential travel to Tahltan Territory until the Province safely enters Stage 4 of the COVID-19 response. The consequence of spreading COVID-19 is too great given the limited access to acute medical care for residents along the remote Highway 37 corridor.

All non-essential travel to Dease Lake, Iskut and Telegraph Creek should be avoided, and all recreational activity is strongly discouraged north of Bob Quinn, including hunting regions 6-19 to 6-26. Hunting and recreational activity access points, including the Stikine Bridge, will be blocked with gates, and monitored, including video surveillance.

The Tahltan Central Government's Wildlife Department and our Guardians will be patrolling Tahltan Territory and asking all visitors to follow appropriate procedures or leave if they choose to ignore this travel advisory.

The RCMP is cooperating and the Tahltan Nation is working with the Province to get additional RCMP and Conservation officer support.

Dr. Bonnie Henry's has consistently stated that First Nation communities have a larger degree of risk and loss that could happen if the virus was introduced and she has consistently stated that she would leave it up to First Nation communities to decide if it is safe to travel to those communities. Among Dr. Bonnie Henry's Travel Manners announced on July 7, she states: Before travelling, check on whether there are travel advisories in place for transportation routes and recreational sites, and be sure the community you want to visit is open to visitors.

COVID-19 poses significant safety concerns in many Indigenous and rural communities. Remote Indigenous communities across northern BC, such as Dease Lake, Iskut and Telegraph Creek in Tahltan Territory, are particularly vulnerable to widespread COVID-19 outbreak due to their highly social culture, limited access to timely testing, limited medical services, and access to and timely transport of patients needing critical care.

Historically pandemics have had a devastating toll on Indigenous peoples in BC and COVID-19 has heightened sensitivities in Tahltan Territory and many Indigenous communities across BC.

For updates regarding travel to Tahltan communities please visit www.tahltan.org.

About the Tahltan Nation

The Tahltan Central Government (TCG) is the administrative governing body of the Tahltan Nation. The Iskut Band and the Tahltan Band continue to govern Tahltan interests with respect to the Indian Act. The TCG is the representative government of the Tahltan Nation with respect to inherent Aboriginal title and rights.

The Tahltan Nation's Territory spans 95,933 square km of Northwest British Columbia or the equivalent of 11 per cent of the province. Tahltan Territory includes 70 per cent of BC's Golden Triangle – a world-class mining jurisdiction with a thriving mineral exploration sector. Tahltan Territory is home to two of BC's 15 operating mines or their shared footprint, and to approximately 41 per cent of BC's exploration activities by expenditure. For more information, visit: www.tahltan.org.

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