

Tahltan Central Government Makes Significant Investment in Predator Management

DEASE LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, June 28, 2022 – Under the Predator Management Framework, which includes the Tahltan Predator Management Plan and the Tahltan Predator Management Policy, the Tahltan Central Government (TCG) is supporting the Tahltan people in fulfilling their inherent stewardship responsibilities for wildlife in Tahltan Territory, in alignment with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, and *BC's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, by taking predator management into their own hands.

The TCG's Wildlife Department will be hiring four full-time predator management staff to support the program, which includes animal monitoring and population control, data collection, wildlife research, and working with Elders and Knowledge Holders. This is a historic investment which will prioritize predator management in Tahltan Territory by its own members. The TCG Wildlife Department will also increase its efforts to work closely with other wildlife stakeholders who understand and support predator management initiatives.

The Predator Management Framework responds to dwindling ungulate species populations and increased conflict between community members and predatory species. Culturally important to the Tahltan people and primary food sources, ungulate species are being protected by restoration programs and initiatives across the country developed between Indigenous, provincial, and federal governments with a primary focus on caribou.

Previous research has revealed the impact predatory species have on ungulates. Wolf densities cannot exceed 6.5 wolves per 1,000 km² for stable caribou populations, while for recovering populations, that number is reduced to 3 wolves per 1,000 km². Alarming, it is estimated that there are 15 to 24 wolves per 1,000 km² in Tahltan Territory.

The Tahltan Predator Management Framework incentivizes Tahltan members to exercise their hunting rights to harvest predatory species, such as wolves and grizzly bears that pose a high risk to ungulates. Reviving and strengthening cultural hunting practices, protecting a culturally significant species, increasing local safety, and providing monetary incentives for harvesting will benefit current and future generations of Tahltan people as the Nation works to recover dwindling ungulate populations.

"Our Predator Management Framework is yet another example of the Tahltan Nation asserting our rights and title and leading the way in stewardship of our territory, as we have done since time immemorial," said Chad Norman Day, President of the Tahltan Central Government. "We are using Tahltan knowledge and western science to help develop a world class wildlife management regime in our homeland. Relying on our own data will allow us to respond immediately to an urgent situation, while exercising our rights and jurisdiction over Tahltan Territory. We continue to push the Province to make improvements to wildlife management and will be increasingly pushing back on economic development in our homeland until this important work is done."

A provincial ban on Grizzly bear hunting in 2017 that once removed an average of 100 Grizzly bears annually, has eliminated a means of predator control without consideration for the resulting consequences for locals and ungulates. Moose, for example, require 35 calves for every 100 cows in stable populations. Our moose populations now have less than 30 calves per 100 cows. Studies have shown that bears are responsible for roughly half of moose calf mortality. This is an example of why Tahltans must take responsibility for their own

predator management as provincial and federal regulations have failed to consider regional differences and address the concerns of the Tahltan people.

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 govern Tahltan interests with respect to the Indian Act in the communities of Iskut, Dease Lake and Telegraph Creek. The TCG is the representative government of the Tahltan Nation with respect to the inherent and collective Aboriginal title and rights shared by all Tahltan people.

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. For more information, visit: www.tahltan.org.

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