

Tahltan Wildlife Department Removes Grizzly Bear following Dangerous Encounter at Elder's Home

DEASE LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, November 4, 2022 - On Monday, October 31st, 2022, the Tahltan Central Government's (TCG) Wildlife Department staff shot and killed a Grizzly bear just outside the community of Iskut following a frightening incident at an elderly woman's home.

At approximately 10:30 PM on Sunday evening, an elderly community resident requested aid after the large and aggressive bear had damaged her vehicle, torn through the front door and entered her residence. Conservation Officers were contacted but were not in the territory to help at the time of the event. However, TCG Wildlife Guardians and Predator Management Technicians quickly responded to the threat.

An initial search by the Guardians and Technicians revealed damage to the property, including a raided freezer, but failed to establish the bear's whereabouts. The area was secured, and a leg hold restraint bear snare was set, leading to its eventual capture on Monday evening, at which time it was put down. This came as a relief to many Iskut community members who had been concerned for their safety after having been advised to stay indoors until the bear was captured. Halloween was cancelled for most children in the community due to safety concerns.

"This occurrence in Iskut with the Grizzly bear is a stark reminder of why there is such a need for Tahltan-led stewardship and wildlife management with more delegated authority for the Tahltan Nation. We are fortunate that no community members were harmed, and I am grateful to our Wildlife Guardians and Predator Management Technicians for acting so quickly to protect our community. We had several cabins and other infrastructure destroyed by Grizzly bears again this year," said Chad Norman Day, President of the Tahltan Central Government. "Our remote location means that BC's Conservation Officers are often unavailable to assist, particularly when there is an immediate need. Our Wildlife Department has been working to take predator management into our own hands, in response to dwindling ungulate populations caused by an increased number of predators and because there has been increased conflict between predators and community members. We have recently invested over a million dollars hiring our own Predator Management Technicians to keep Tahltans safe. Our Predator Management Policy supports Tahltan people in fulfilling their stewardship responsibilities for wildlife in Tahltan Territory. It incentivizes Tahltans to harvest predatory species in a respectful way and aligns with BC's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act."

In addition to the Predator Management Policy, the TCG has worked to establish a long-discussed Tahltan Central Government – British Columbia Accord on Wildlife Management in an effort to develop world-class wildlife stewardship in Tahltan Territory led by the Tahltan Nation. This accord acknowledges and respects Tahltan knowledge, values, and worldview in relation to wildlife, and recognizes the need to include these in wildlife management in Tahltan Territory.

ABOUT THE TAHLTAN NATION

The Tahltan Central Government (TCG) is the administrative governing body of the Tahltan Nation. 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. For more information, visit: www.tahltan.org.

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