Tahltan Central Government Archives Receives Qualified Repository Status

DEASE LAKE, BRITISH COLUMBIA, June 15, 2023, The Tahltan Central Government (TCG) Archives under the oversight of the Culture & Heritage Department has recently been granted status as a qualified repository by the BC Archaeology Branch. The status was provided following a request and submission from the TCG. This status will allow for the TCG Archives to serve as the primary facility to house artifacts and historical material portraying Tahltan cultural heritage recovered from Tahltan Territory.

Prior to obtaining this status, artifacts discovered and subsequently removed from their original location within Tahltan Territory would be sent to repositories outside of the Nation with little or no recourse or record provided back to TCG. This has resulted in substantial difficulties understanding the location of many Tahltan belongings and further complicating repatriation processes, which can be lengthy, complex, and require significant time and resources. Further, there is no legislation supporting repatriation of belongings and requests are assessed on a case-by-case basis and are not always successful. Moving forward, identifying TCG as a qualified repository will allow Tahltan cultural artifacts to remain in territory and other items reflecting Tahltan cultural heritage, including historical images, audio, and documentation, which may be returned from other museum archives to be held in trust by the TCG on behalf of all Tahltans.

“Tahltan cultural heritage belongs to all Tahltan people. Our culture connects us with our ancestors and with each other. It is who we are as Tahltans. Now we can care for the preservation of our cultural history in our Archives. Our belongings and history should stay at home in our territory. We are excited to provide Tahltans more direct access to our culture and heritage.” Said Sandra Marion, TCG’s Culture & Heritage Director. “I would like to recognize TCG’s Archivist, Ursula Abramczyk, and Archaeologist, Duncan McLaren, in helping us obtain this status. They both played key roles in supporting the application and their credentials were vital to our success.”

“I am proud of the hard work that our Culture & Heritage Department and team have put in to achieve repository status.” Said Chad Norman Day, TCG President. “This is an achievement we should all celebrate as Tahltans as it will make our cultural heritage more accessible and can serve as an example to other First Nations in British Columbia in earlier stages of this journey which take inspiration from this successful step forward.”

Indigenous Peoples maintaining and protecting their own cultural heritage is aligned with Article 11 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and BC’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA).

ABOUT THE TAHLTAN NATION

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

For further information, please contact:

Ombrielle Neria
Communications & External Relations Director
Tahltan Central Government
604-316-0478
communicationsdirector@tahltan.org