



FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT

January 20, 2012

Hon. Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia
PO Box 9041 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

Honourable Rich Coleman
Minister of Energy and Mines
PO Box 9060 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E3

Hon. Mary Polak
Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

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Dear Premier and Ministers,

Re: Support for the Tsilhqot'in Nation Concerning the New Prosperity Environmental Assessment Process

The First Nations Summit remains steadfast in our support for the Tsilhqot'in Nation in their defence of their Constitutionally-protected rights concerning the New Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine project. We enclose a resolution of support approved by the leaders and Chiefs in Assembly at the most recent First Nations Summit meeting in December 2011.

We were disappointed to learn of the decision by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) that the already rejected Taseko Mines Ltd.'s Prosperity Mine proposal will move forward to yet another review process. In our view, the correct assessments and decisions regarding this failed project have already been made. The Prosperity Mine proposal whether option 1 or option 2, is an environmental disaster waiting to happen and infringes on the title and rights of the Tsilhqot'in Nation.

Last year the environmental review panel clearly indicated there would be 'significant adverse environmental effects' as a direct result of the proposed Prosperity Mine. There is no evidence to suggest that this "revised" proposal changes that assessment. The panel noted that even the alternative Project proposals considered by the company, which might preserve the integrity of Teztan Biny (Fish Lake), would also have significant adverse impacts, and that "the proximity of the open pit and associated mining facilities would be close enough to Teztan Biny (Fish Lake) to eliminate the intrinsic value of the area to First Nations even if another alternative were chosen."

We completely agree with the Tsilhqot'in Nation that the findings of the last panel make it clear that this is not only a matter of their constitutional rights, but also their international human rights under the U.N.

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Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the right to free, prior and informed consent over land use decisions concerning their Territory.

First Nations across Canada take note of decisions relating to environmental assessment reviews to determine whether there is value and integrity in environmental assessments of major projects or if First Nations should be resorting to litigation and other means to assert Aboriginal title and rights and protect lands, resources and culture.

This mine is a threat to the survival of the Tsilhqot'in culture and people. Neither they nor we will stand by while this happens. We will support the Tsilhqot'in Nation while they protect their lands and their culture. The First Nations Summit Chiefs in Assembly call upon the federal and provincial governments to:

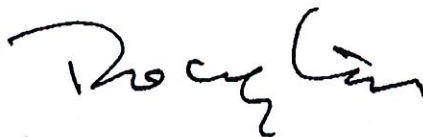
- a. heed the cautions of the federal panel conducting the environmental assessment of the Project;
- b. demonstrate commitment to environmental protection and the cultural survival of First Nations in BC; and
- c. deem the New Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine proposal (the Proposal) not worthy of approval.

In conclusion, in our view, it is imperative your government respect the **recognized and affirmed** constitutional rights of First Nations and that appropriate legal instruments and mechanisms be developed, in conjunction with First Nations, when considering development initiatives in First Nations traditional territories.

Respectfully,
FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT TASK GROUP



Grand Chief Edward John



Chief Douglas White III Kwulasultun



Dan Smith

Enclosure (1) First Nations Summit Resolution #1211.05 (Support for the Tsilhqot'in Nation and Call for Rejection of the "New Prosperity" Mine Proposal)

cc. **Tsilhqot'in National Government**
National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo, Assembly of First Nations
BC Assembly of First Nations
Union of BC Indian Chiefs
Jay Nelson, Woodward & Co.