



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2020

**New Prosperity Mine is Finally Dead: Tsilhqot'in Nation Celebrates the Supreme Court of Canada's Decision to Deny Taseko Mines Limited's Appeal.**

**Williams Lake, BC** (May 14, 2020): The Tsilhqot'in Nation is celebrating the Supreme Court of Canada's denial of Taseko Mines Limited's (TML) application to appeal the rejection of the New Prosperity Mine proposal by the Government of Canada in 2014. New Prosperity Mine threatened a sacred area of profound cultural importance to the Tsilhqot'in peoples,) with a destructive open pit gold and copper mine that did not have the consent of the Tsilhqot'in Nation.

In October 2013, an independent federal panel of experts concluded, in its environmental assessment report, that New Prosperity would have significant and immitigable impacts on water quality, fisheries and Tsilhqot'in cultural heritage, rights and traditional practices. This New Prosperity Panel affirmed the importance of Teztan Biny (Fish Lake) and Nabaš as "unique and of special significance" for the Tsilhqot'in peoples. The Federal Panel noted that TML was unable to even meet "proof of concept" for its unprecedented, unproven, entire-lake recirculation proposal and that Teztan Biny would be contaminated over time, despite mitigation efforts.

In February 2014, the Government of Canada accepted the conclusions of the Federal Panel Report and rejected the New Prosperity Mine. In response, TML filed legal challenges to both the Federal Panel Report and the decision of the Government of Canada rejecting the New Prosperity Mine. The Federal Court rejected both of TML's legal challenges in December 2017 and the Federal Court of Appeal dismissed TML's appeals in December 2019. Both levels of court affirmed the position of the Tsilhqot'in Nation that the Government of Canada made the eminently reasonable and fair decision to reject this destructive project.

Today, the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed Taseko's application to hear a further appeal. This means Taseko has no further legal avenues to appeal the rejection of the New Prosperity Mine. The New Prosperity Mine is now dead – it cannot be legally built.

**Chief Joe Alphonse, Tribal Chairman, Tsilhqot'in National Government:**

"This decision has been a long time coming. We are celebrating the Supreme Court of Canada's decision today, and taking the time to reflect on the immense sacrifices made by our communities and members to finally have their voices heard and respected. Now we call on TML to accept that this is the end of the road for them. It's time to move on and

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protect this sacred area for the survival of our way of life. We look forward to turning our focus and energy to supporting responsible economic projects in appropriate areas of our Territory, as we move towards building a regional economy that respects our culture, our spirituality and our Aboriginal Rights and Title. BC should finally recognize the importance of this area to the Tsilhqot'in and support the Dasiqox Nexwagwez'an. The Nation should never have to face the burden of an industrial threat to this sacred area ever again."

**Chief Russell Myers Ross, Vice-Chair, Tsilhqot'in National Government:**

"We are relieved and welcome this news. The last 30 years has been challenging and onerous on our communities and people. Today's decision is another step in our journey to reimagine a more respectful relationship with the Crown, grounded in recognition of our Aboriginal Rights and Title. We continue to invest our energy into such a future, and in the case of Težtan Biny and Nabaš, we are pursuing an alternative vision called the Dasiqox Nexwagwez'an ("It is there for us"). We are hopeful that now we can finally move forward with those plans and bring that vision to completion."

**Chief Jimmy Lulua, Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government:**

"Today we celebrate the courts recognition of Aboriginal rights and title. Further, we celebrate the resiliency and the perseverance of our people. Yes, the courts delivered justice, but that required our communities to remain vigilant and strong throughout this entire process, at an immense cost of our time and resources. Without the leadership shown by our communities and Nation, we would have lost the integrity of a sacred place in our territory, and our lands, water and wildlife would be at further risk. The government and the courts needed to be educated on Aboriginal rights and title to arrive at this decision. We will continue to protect our culture and our sacred places from threats like TML and we will never stop standing up for ourselves, our rights and for our future generations."

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**Resources:**

Težtan Biny: [www.Težtanbiny.ca](http://www.Težtanbiny.ca)

Video: [www.tsilhqotin.ca/News-Media](http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/News-Media)

Dasiqox Tribal Park: <https://dasiqox.org/>

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