



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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T̂silhqot'in Nation Condemns Destructive B.C. Moose Harvest Allocation

Williams Lake, B.C.: The T̂silhqot'in Nation is condemning the B.C. government's destructive moose harvest allocation for the Chilcotin Region in recent days and expressing its opposition, in the strongest terms, to B.C.'s drastic escalation of Limited Entry Hunts (LEH) for moose in T̂silhqot'in territory.

T̂silhqot'in people depend on moose for sustenance and cultural survival. For many years, T̂silhqot'in hunters and members have reported struggling moose populations, and not enough moose to feed our families and communities. Many members have chosen not to hunt moose for the past several years, out of concern for the survival of moose populations.

The Province's own surveys show the moose population in the Chilcotin at its lowest point on record. Instead of raising the alarm, the Province has now drastically increased the LEH for moose – effectively doubling the number of moose LEH permits issued in the Chilcotin region compared to last year.

The T̂silhqot'in Nation opposes LEH moose hunting in the territory, given the lowest population estimates on record and the devastating impacts on habitat in recent years from unprecedented wildfires, beetle epidemics, wide-scale industrial logging and increased predation and competition with other species.

BC's decision to increase the LEH in T̂silhqot'in territory disrespects and disregards the traditional knowledge of T̂silhqot'in hunters and members, and violates the Aboriginal rights and title of the T̂silhqot'in peoples, and our international human rights under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The T̂silhqot'in Nation has a duty and responsibility under T̂silhqot'in law to prevent the destruction of the moose population in our territory. T̂silhqot'in leaders are meeting together and with membership to decide next steps in response to B.C.'s decision and the direct threat that it poses to the wellbeing of T̂silhqot'in families and communities, and the survival of the T̂silhqot'in way of life.

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Quotes:

Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, T̓silhqot̓'in National Government

"We have to take action on this issue. Mismanagement of our wildlife affects us directly. The 2017 wildfires left much of our wildlife stressed from the destruction of their habitat. Our people rely heavily on the moose populations. The province needs to do more – a business as usual approach will not be tolerated. We do not recognize the authority of any government to make the same decisions – without our consent, over our objections – and mismanage our lands and wildlife. We have fought to maintain jurisdiction over our territory, and there is a blatant disregard for that when it comes to the management of wildlife. B.C. needs to start acting to protect and preserve these populations. Our people are not going to sit and watch moose disappear in the territory like we have witnessed with the caribou. Hunters that planned to come to the Chilcotin need to be making other plans – don't come to the Chilcotin."

Nits'il?in Otis Guichon, Sr., T̓sideldel First Nation, TNG Tribal Vice-Chair

"Our people are living with crisis upon crisis. Our salmon runs have collapsed to record lows and for the first time our people have had to choose not to fish for food in recent years. Our members are not getting the moose they need to feed their families. Our caribou populations are threatened and at risk of extinction in our lifetime. These are decisions that affect whether we can put food on our tables for our elders and our communities. This B.C. government continues to talk about UNDRIP and reconciliation, but they continue to ignore and disrespect us, and make the same decisions – without our consent, over our objections, and mismanage our lands and wildlife to the state that they are in now. Our people will not stand for it. The BC Government should be ashamed of this decision".

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