



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 16, 2023

T̂silhqot'in Call for Local Rancher's Licenses and Permits to be Revoked

Williams Lake, B.C.: The T̂silhqot'in National Government (TNG) is calling for all licenses and permits issued to Altherr & Schellenberg Cattle Co. Ltd. to be revoked in the wake of kilometers in length of destruction of local fish habitat along with other offenses by owner, Felix Schellenberg. On February 28, 2023, Mr. Schellenberg pleaded guilty to counts under the Fisheries Act, the FRPA, and the Water Sustainability Act due to, in part, destruction of fish habitat and infilling kilometers of fish channels in and near the Kleena Kleene river and Little Chilcotin River.

In one offense, Mr. Schellenberg infilled an extensive section of a sensitive side channel used by Chinook smolts. He also infilled a traditional fishing site. With operations located in the T̂sideldel caretaker area, Mr. Schellenberg is known as the owner of Pasture to Plate and Rafter 25 Ranch. Their business prides itself on organic biodiversity and biodynamic farming.

Mr. Schellenberg has been fined a total of \$460,000 and requires \$500,000 in trust to secure the costs of the remediation. There is also a \$750,000 bond that will be held in trust to ensure that activities under the remediation order are undertaken.

The TNG is pursuing a territory wide crisis line that would allow the public to notify the T̂silhqot'in Rangers of environmental offenses. This would ensure an efficient and direct system of notification for offenses on the land.

The T̂silhqot'in National Government is the governing body for the T̂silhqot'in people. The T̂silhqot'in Nation is comprised of six communities located throughout the T̂silhqot'in (Chilcotin) territory and is the only Nation in Canada with a court declaration of Aboriginal title (*Tsilhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*).

Quotes:

Nits'il?in (Chief) Joe Alphonse, O.B.C, LL.D. (hon.). Tribal Chair, T̂silhqot'in National Government

"In my opinion, the actions of Pasture to Plate and Rafter 25 Ranch show blatant disregard for the environment and the life it supports. All of Mr. Schellenberg's federal and provincial licenses and permits need to be reviewed and revoked. A person that could rip out kilometers of Chinook habitat in order to expand their hay field does not deserve to live and own property in such pristine area. This is a

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very sensitive area for Chinook populations – which are close to being listed as a Species at Risk. We have been working hard to enhance the chinook populations in the territory. Kilometers of destruction can't be replicated in remediation. It could be thousands of years of evolution that he has wiped out.”

“This is not the first time this individual has been charged for damage to the environment. It appears he has no regard for the environment even though his business prized itself on caring for the natural ecosystem. We cannot have business as usual anymore. This must go further than a fine. We also must be directly involved in the reclamation of the damage done by Mr. Schellenberg.”

Nits'il?in (Chief) Otis Guichon, Vice-Chair, Tsilhqot'in National Government

“Both of these sites of environmental damage were directly in our back yard and in places that our people have harvested fish for centuries. Mr. Schellenberg restricted our people from fishing in their traditional fishing site and proceeded to fill it in so that he had more pasture area. It is clear to me that he has absolutely no respect for the environment or families he has impacted. Mr. Schellenberg also owns property on Puntzi Lake that is right next door to a fishing reserve that our people used for centuries. His actions directly impact the land and water. He should not be allowed to own property or land in our territory. He is not welcome here.”

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