



WET'SUWET'EN
FIRST NATION

STATEMENT REGARDING GIDIMT'EN CHECKPOINT BLOCKADE

November 14, 2021, Wet'suwet'en First Nation, Burns Lake, BC: The elected Chief and Council of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation are calling for an immediate end to the escalating conflict at the Coastal GasLink natural gas pipeline crossing of the Morice River.

We want to make it absolutely clear that the actions of a few members of the Gidimt'en Clan who claimed to evict Coastal GasLink and the RCMP from the headwaters of the Morice River (Wedzin Kwa in our language) do not represent the collective views of the Clan or of most Wet'suwet'en people. Even though we are also members of the Gidimt'en Clan, the protesters at the "Coyote Camp" and other protest sites have never consulted us about their actions and cannot claim to represent us or any other members of the First Nation.

Nor can they claim to be practicing traditional protocols. Our communities are in deep mourning following the pandemic loss of several highly respected elders in recent weeks and it is deeply disrespectful to be carrying on public protests at this time. These are sensitive cultural matters, and we raise them only to respectfully encourage all the protesters to show the customary levels of respect.

We must also point out that there are Wet'suwet'en people working on the natural gas pipeline who are now trapped behind the blockade. We fear for their safety and well-being now that their lines of supply and communication are being disrupted.

Finally, BC is undergoing a serious flooding emergency, which is affecting our members in other communities as well as our local supplies and services. This is not the time to be wasting energy and attention on unnecessary conflict in our territories.

The elected representatives of the Wet'suwet'en people have given their support to this project and expect to realize benefits for our people. We went through long and complex processes of consultation with our members, government, and the industry before agreeing to participate. Despite numerous opportunities to work together, the small group of hereditary chiefs who oppose the project, as well as their Office of the Wet'suwet'en, refused to engage and neither they, nor their non-Indigenous supporters, have offered any meaningful alternatives.

It is certain that this latest blockade will be removed one way or another. We respectfully encourage these outlying members of the Gidimt'en clan and their supporters to step down peacefully and immediately.

MAUREEN LUGGI
Chief

KAREN OGEN
Councillor

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