

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

News Release

September 25, 2024

Coast Salish Oppose Actions by B.C. Métis Federation: FNLC Stands in Solidarity

(xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), sḵwḵwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) The First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) stands in solidarity with the Coast Salish peoples and fully supports their Statement of Solidarity in Opposition to the B.C. Métis Federation (BCMF).

The Statement, endorsed by 45 Coast Salish Nations, bands, and communities, is an unprecedented show of unity in defence of Coast Salish laws, ancestors, names, and histories.

We join the Coast Salish in denouncing the claim recently filed on behalf of BCMF by their legal counsel Olthuis van Ert, and the ahistorical and deeply offensive assertions made in it. The claim represents a threat to any First Nation in what is now known as British Columbia whose territory BCMF erroneously asserts is home to the “Pacific Northwest Métis” and their so-called “communities”.

Chief Don Tom, UBCIC Vice-President, stated, “B.C.-based Métis organizations, including B.C. Métis Federation, have shown time and again that they’re more than willing to ignore facts and place self-interest over respecting and upholding the inherent, constitutional, and human rights, and inherent laws, legal systems, systems of governance, and jurisdictions of their First Nations hosts. The unprecedented Coast Salish unity expressed through the Statement of Solidarity is further proof that First Nations in B.C. have had enough of this disrespect, and that we stand united in opposing it.”

Regional Chief Terry Teegee, remarked, “First Nations in B.C. are faced with myriad challenges that desperately require our time and attention. We know the truth, and the fact that we must expend limited resources to push back against B.C.-based Métis organizations’ false assertions and history is beyond insulting. We fully support and stand with the Coast Salish in their unprecedented show of unity in opposition to the actions of the B.C. Métis Federation.”

“When the Northern Gateway Pipeline was still in the news, the B.C. Métis Federation opposed that pipeline citing the need to ensure respect for First Nations territories and ensure communications in relation to decisions that effect our lands,” stated Hugh Braker of the First Nations Summit Political Executive. He added, “Now here we are 12 years later, and B.C. Métis Federation’s AGM is sponsored almost exclusively by extractive industry, they’ve signed on to Trans Mountain, and they’ve launched litigation in which they claim to represent a Métis people Indigenous to B.C. We stand united in opposition to B.C. Métis Federation’s claim, and fully support the Coast Salish and their Statement of Solidarity.”

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).



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