



BRITISH COLUMBIA
ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

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**Chiefs United in Support of Rights and Title as Major Project Office, Party Leaders
Present at 23rd Annual General Meeting of the BC Assembly of First Nations**

(X^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), S^kwxw.7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətal (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.) — Chiefs gathered in Vancouver for the 23rd Annual General Meeting of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN). Chiefs stood firmly united in defense of their title and rights in the wake of the *Building Canada Strong Act*, inadequate safe drinking water legislation, and ongoing attempts to maintain government control over the health and welfare of our children.

"I am disappointed in the federal government's lack of regard of First Nations' inherent and constitutionally protected rights as they seek to fast-track major projects and fail to uphold First Nations' basic human rights. But I am equally inspired by our chiefs for continuing to demonstrate strength, solidarity and leadership in the face of increased societal division, anti-Indigenous racism, and misinformation," said Regional Chief Terry Teegee.

Chiefs-in-assembly heard directly from Dawn Farrell, CEO, Major Projects Office and Rob Van Wallegghem, VP, Major Projects Office, on the federal government's fast-tracking agenda. Kúkpí7 Rosanne Casimir led the demand for a national consultation standard on major projects grounded in standards set in the UN Declaration and First Nations' constitutionally protected rights.

Chiefs also received an update on the *First Nations Clean Water Act* (Bill C-37), a new iteration of Bill C-61. Despite being mandated by a court order to develop a law that ensures access to clean drinking water for First Nations, Bill C-37 undermines First Nations' title and rights to water. Chiefs called on the federal government to revise the proposed legislation to recognize clean drinking water as a human right (a recognition that was in the previous bill) and ensure that Bill C-37 is aligned with the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

In the wake of Canada's consistent stonewalling of First Nations in their attempts to end discrimination First Nations child and family services, Chiefs supported the [Loving Justice](#) plan prepared by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society. This plan, developed by and for First Nations across the country, stands in stark contrast to the



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federal government's plan which was not developed with First Nations and has been rejected by 99% of our communities.

Leading up to the BC provincial election, being held on October 24, 2026, BCAFN invited the three major provincial party leaders to present to Chiefs. Both David Eby, BCNDP, and Emily Lowan, BC Greens, made the case for electing their parties in the upcoming provincial election. The BCAFN received no response from Lorne Doerksen or the BC Conservatives. Federal NDP leader Avi Lewis also spoke to the Chiefs regarding his party's opposition to Bill C-39, the *Building Canada Strong Act* and C-37.

The AGM included elections for a number of positions at the BCAFN. Terry Teegee was acclaimed for a precedent-setting fourth term as Regional Chief. Chief Maureen Luggi (Wet'suwet'en First Nation) stepped down from her role as board member, and Chiefs gave their sincere appreciation for her service. Incumbent board members Kúkpí7 Rosanne Casimir (Tk'emlúps Te Secwépemc), and Brian Assu (We Wai Kai Nation) are joined by Chief Rebecca David (Pauquachin First Nation), who is returning to the board after leaving in 2020. Christian Harpe (Tl'azt'en Nation) was acclaimed as Male Youth Representative taking over from interim representative Peyal Laceese (Tsilhqot'in). Kianna Watts (Snaw-naw-as) won her election contest against incumbent Tyra Point (Sts'ailes) to become the Female Youth Representative. The Chiefs in assembly thanked Ms. Point for her work over the past three years, and welcomed Ms. Watts into the role.

For more information or to schedule an interview with Regional Chief Terry Teegee, please contact:

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