



August 29, 2023

**RE: Invitation to upcoming sessions on the *Heritage Conservation Act Transformation Project* (Fall 2023)**

The Joint Working Group on First Nations Heritage Conservation (JWG) is pleased to provide an update on the Heritage Conservation Act Transformation Project (HCATP) and invite First Nations to participate in virtual engagement sessions on proposed near-term policy changes.

In the summer of 2022, First Nations were invited to engage on the *Heritage Conservation Act* (HCA) and its administration to identify priority areas for transformation. We are pleased to share that outcomes from engagement to date are now available in the [First Nations What We Heard Report](#), which is appended to this letter and also available on the [UBCIC website](#).

Informed by that feedback, a near-term suite of legislative, regulatory, policy and programmatic changes for Cabinet consideration in Spring 2024 has been co-developed through the JWG, with input from the Alliance of B.C. Modern Treaty Nations (ABCMTN). This work represents critical initial steps that lay a foundation for broader, long-term transformation of the HCA and its administration as envisioned in Action 4.35 of the Declaration Act Action Plan 2022-2027, which states that the Province will “work with First Nations to reform the *Heritage Conservation Act* to align with the UN Declaration, including shared decision-making and the protection of First Nations cultural, spiritual, and heritage sites and objects.”

**Virtual Engagement Sessions**

These two upcoming virtual sessions will provide an opportunity for meaningful discussion on the proposed near-term suite of legislative, regulatory, policy and programmatic changes being proposed for Cabinet consideration in Spring 2024.

Details are as follows:

Date & Time	Time	TEAMS Registration Link
September 27, 2023	2:00pm-5:00pm PDT	<a href="#">September 27th Session Registration Link</a>
October 3, 2023	9:00am-12:00pm PDT	<a href="#">October 3rd Session Registration Link</a>

To register for the session that best works for your schedule, click the link above and you will receive a Microsoft Teams registration invitation and meeting link.

The Declaration Act Engagement Fund (DAEF) is available for First Nations to access for capacity support to participate in Declaration Act Action Plan engagement, inclusive of the HCATP. For more information on how to apply please visit the [DAEF website](#).

Materials to support the sessions are under development and will be provided in the coming weeks. In the meantime, supplementary documentation on the HCATP background and engagement to date is available on the [UBCIC website](#) or upon request to [EngageHCA@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EngageHCA@gov.bc.ca).

### Closing Comments

We appreciate you taking the time to engage on this important initiative and look forward to meeting with you. If you have any questions, concerns, or additional input regarding the HCATP, please send an email to [EngageHCA@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EngageHCA@gov.bc.ca).

Sincerely,



---

Judith Sayers, JWG Co-Chair  
President  
Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council



---

Michelle Porter (a/ADM) on behalf of:  
Matt Austin, JWG Co-Chair  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Integrated Resource Operations Division  
Ministry of Forests