

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

January 8, 2021

RE: FIRST NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN – PRELIMINARY STAGES

Dear Chiefs in BC,

In 2019, First Nations leadership passed resolutions calling for the development of a BC First Nations Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (the “**BC Climate Strategy and Action Plan**” or, the “**Plan**”) (UBCIC Resolution no. 2019-02: “Climate Emergency and BC First Nations Climate Emergency Plan” and BCAFN Resolution no. 04/2019: “Climate Emergency and Support for the Development of a BC First Nations Climate Change Strategy”). We are in the preliminary stage of development of the Plan.

Climate change threatens the security and way of life of Indigenous Peoples across Canada. In British Columbia, the current climate crisis is contributing to forest fires, flooding, drought, increased temperatures, and rising sea levels. These outcomes of climate change are directly impacting our communities, our traditional food sources, and biodiversity.

The objective of the BC Climate Strategy and Action Plan is to identify actions to strengthen Indigenous climate leadership, to reduce vulnerability to impacts, and to build capacity, understanding and resilience in First Nation communities. The Plan will incorporate Indigenous Knowledge to help guide climate emergency responses while also communicating to governments and partners of priority areas.

The Plan will also remind our partners and governments that climate action is possible only when co-created with First Nations in ways that protect and strengthen our Title, Rights and jurisdiction and when our Indigenous Knowledge and unique connections to our territories are respectfully incorporated in all aspects of climate planning and action.

As we prepare a first draft, the FNLC will be conducting regional community engagement sessions. These sessions will gather important information about First Nations priorities on emissions reduction and climate adaptation initiatives. By way of information sharing, these sessions will also support First Nations in developing their own strategies and plans to implement responses to current and projected climate issues. These sessions will be held on the following dates:

Session 1: February 5, 2021 (Region: Coast)

Session 2: February 12, 2021 (Region: Interior)

Session 3: February 16, 2021 (Region: North)

Please find enclosed a Save the Date notice containing more detail on the BC Climate Strategy and Action Plan Community Engagement Sessions. The FNLC will continue to actively engage First Nations throughout the entire scope of strategy development. The FNLC will also liaise with relevant partners on climate change initiatives.



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The FNLC is also convening a BC First Nations Climate Action Technical Advisory Group (the “**Technical Advisory Group**”) to provide general technical advice in the delivery of this project. Please find enclosed a Call for Expression of Interest for Technical Advisory Group membership with an attached Terms of Reference. We encourage diverse representation, including youth, Elders and knowledge keepers, and experts from other organizations with relevant knowledge on climate change and/or First Nations.

The first draft of the Plan will be prepared with the information gathered from the activities described above, the 2019 Climate Emergency Survey data, as well as policy review and research conducted by the FNLC policy team. The first draft will be shared with First Nations in BC and the Technical Advisory Group. Feedback will be incorporated to produce a second draft.

The second draft will again be sent to First Nations in BC and the Technical Advisory Group for their review and input. A final draft version of the Plan will be presented to Chiefs in their respective FNLC Assemblies for approval via resolutions in February and March of 2021. Once finalized, the BC Climate Strategy and Action Plan will become a public document and will inform ongoing legislative changes and related policies and regulations.

Please find enclosed an overview of the BC Climate Strategy and Action Plan project phases. If you have any questions, please contact:

- Cheyenne Arnold-Cunningham, Union of BC Indian Chiefs at cheyenne@ubcic.bc.ca
- Patricia Rojas, BC Assembly of First Nations at patricia.rojas@bcfn.ca
- Colin Braker, First Nations Summit at cbraker@fns.bc.ca

Sincerely,

FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

On behalf of the FIRST NATIONS SUMMIT



Cheryl Casimer



Robert Phillips



Lydia Hwitsum

On behalf of the UNION OF BC INDIAN CHIEFS



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip



Chief Don Tom



Kukpi7 Judy Wilson

On behalf of the BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS:



Regional Chief Terry Teegee