



THREE NATIONS STATEMENT - JUNE 9, 2021

RESPONSE TO FORESTRY DEFERRALS

On June 7, 2021, and with the full support of the Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council, the Pacheedaht First Nation, the Ditidaht First Nation, and the Huu-ay-aht First Nations declared that in accordance with our traditional laws and our constitutionally protected Aboriginal Title, Aboriginal Rights, and Treaty Rights, our governance and stewardship responsibilities in our ḥahahuuḥi (traditional territories) must be acknowledged and respected.

We are humbled by the broad base of support we have received for the Hišuk ma čawak Declaration from across British Columbia and Canada. We sincerely thank all those people and organizations who are supporting our rights and our responsibilities to decide what is best for our lands, our waters, our resources, and the well-being of present and future generations.

Today, we welcome the decision by the Government of British Columbia to approve the request made by our three Nations to defer old-growth harvesting in the Central Walbran and Fairy Creek watersheds for a period of two years.

We will work with the Government of British Columbia and the licensees to monitor all forestry activity outside of the deferral areas to ensure that continuing forest activity does not impact the old-growth timber within the Central Walbran and Fairy Creek protected areas.

We are committed to undertaking a formal Integrated Resource Management planning process to determine how best to manage our resources in our ḥahahuuḥi. This important work will draw on the teachings of our ancestors, the wisdom of our Elders, the input of our citizens, the input of our valued partners, the best available forestry, fishery, and integrated resource management advice, and it will be guided by our sacred principles of ʔiisaak (utmost respect), ʔuuʔaḥuk (taking care of), and Hišuk ma čawak (everything is one). We anticipate this work to take about two years.

We expect to work with the B.C. government on how to manage any negative impacts that arise because of these deferrals.

While this essential work is being carried out, we expect everyone to allow forestry operations approved by our Nations and the Government of British Columbia in other parts of our territories to continue without interruption. Please respect that our citizens have a constitutionally protected right to benefit economically from our lands, waters, and resources.

We respectfully remind third parties – whether they be individuals, organizations, or other governments – that they have no right to speak on behalf of the lands, waters, and resources in our ḥahahuuḥi or on behalf of our three Nations. We respect the right of individuals to protest safely, lawfully, and peacefully, providing it does not interfere with authorized forestry activities. For third parties to be welcome in our ḥahahuuḥi they must respect our governance and stewardship, our right to economically benefit from our resources, and our sacred principles.

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