



**JOINT STATEMENT ON PROPOSED OLD GROWTH DEFERRALS  
Huu-ay-aht First Nations  
November 2, 2021**

**OUR LANDS, OUR FUTURE, OUR DECISION**

Earlier today, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations announced the proposed old growth deferrals based on the advice and recommendations of the independent Old Growth Technical Advisory Panel established by the B.C. Government in June 2021. Huu-ay-aht First Nations has been briefed on the plan, including proposed old growth deferrals on the ḥahuuḷi of the Huu-ay-aht Hawiḥ (Huu-ay-aht Traditional Territory).

We were advised that the BC government will not implement any further deferrals within our ḥahuuḷi without our prior agreement arrived at through government-to-government engagement.

Our two-year integrated resource management planning (IRMP) process is now underway within our ḥahuuḷi. While we will be reviewing and considering the analysis and recommendations of the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP), it will be our IRMP processes that guide any future forest, resource, and land-use decisions by our Nation, including any further deferrals.

As a Modern Treaty Nation, Huu-ay-aht will decide what is best for our people. Our citizens have a constitutionally protected right to manage and benefit from our lands, waters, and resources throughout our ḥahuuḷi.

As the original stewards of our lands, we take our responsibility to decide what is best for the land and for present and future generations very seriously. Accordingly, we will take time to carefully review the proposed deferrals, but more importantly conduct our own Huu-ay-aht analysis. We will then advise the B.C. government of our decisions.

Our analysis will be conducted as part of our Hišuk ma čawak Integrated Resource Planning (HIRMP) process, which is already underway. We will draw on the teachings of our Ancestors, the wisdom of our Elders, the input of our Citizens, the contributions of our valued partners, and the best forestry, fishery, and integrated resource management advice as we see it. We describe this as Indigenous-based forest and resource management (IBM). Our HIRMP team includes Bruce Blackwell and Chris Niziolomski. We will be reaching out to other experts for additional scientific advice as necessary and appropriate. The HIRMP and our response to the proposed deferrals will be a made-in Huu-ay-aht, by Huu-ay-aht, and for Huu-ay-aht decision.

To assist in our decision making, Tayii Ḥawitł ʕiišin (Head Hereditary Chief Derek Peters) and Elected Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis, Sr. will host the Anacla Old Growth Summit on November 23 on old growth management and process for Huu-ay-aht's Hišuk ma čawak Integrated Resource Management Plan.

The purpose of the summit is to hear from forestry professionals regarding discrepancies in the scientific data related to old growth (the "science gap"), to tour the Huu-ay-aht ḥahuuḷi



(traditional territory of the hereditary chief), and to discuss Huu-ay-aht's approach to old growth management and the Integrated Resource Management Plan process.

Environmental leader Tzeporah Berman, resource journalist Stewart Muir, forest professionals Al Gorley, Garry Merkel, Rachel Holt, and Cam Brown, and Indigenous leaders, have been invited to the Summit along with forest professionals working with Huu-ay-aht, including Bruce Blackwell, Chris Niziolowski, and Stan Coleman and Shannon Janzen, chair of Cawak ʔqin Forestry.

Rest assured that we will manage the lands and resources the way our ancestors did – guided by our Sacred Principles of ʔiisaak (utmost respect), ʔuuʔaʔuk (taking care of), and hišuk ma cawak (everything is one). We will act in accordance with our laws and our values, and we expect everyone to respect our laws and decisions on our ḥahuuli.

We will take the time we need to get it right. That said, we expect to be in a position to decide by January 15, 2022, if there will be any further old growth deferrals over the next two years in our ḥahuuli.

Tayii Ḥawit ʔiishin  
Head Hereditary Chief Derek Peters  
Huu-ay-aht First Nations

Robert J. Dennis Sr.  
Elected Chief Councillor  
Huu-ay-aht First Nations