



Qwelmínte – Secwepemc G2G (QS-G2G)

April 27, 2021

TO: The First Nation Leadership Council:

BC Assembly of First Nations

Regional Chief Terry Teegee

First Nations Summit

Cheryl Casimer

Lydia Hwitsum

Robert Phillips

Union of BC Indian Chiefs

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip

Chief Don Tom

Kukpi7 Judy Wilson

Re: Request for assistance in identifying best practices and lessons learned in dispute resolution

Weytk'p,

We come to you as a collective of 7 Secwepemc communities, working together at a government-to-government table with the province of British Columbia. We are currently calling upon our kwséltkten (relatives) to assist us in shaping a dispute resolution process.

We respect the importance for a diversity of views and perspectives. As we have progressed in our work since coming together in 2018 and signing a letter of commitment in 2019, we have been publicly challenged within our own Nation regarding our goals and focus. We are seeking to establish a way forward to sharing divergent perspectives and seeking common ground.

Our end goal is peacemaking within the Secwepemc Nation – to find a peaceful way for conflicting views to be shared, a safe place for dialogue and to find resolution with all parties. We see the Secwepemc Peacemaking Process as not focussed on a single issue, past, present or future but to bring to light challenges around conflict and peacemaking within the Secwepemc Nation.

We see this work as building upon historic work¹ of our Secwepemc ancestors as well as contemporary initiatives such as the 2012 Secwepemc Unity Declaration. We intend to recognize and conduct our work in a manner consistent with the Secwepemc Unity Declaration and its principles including the following targeted objectives (1) Assertion and acknowledgement of collective title while respecting Secwepemc custom; (2) Promote nationhood through political unity.

In particular the final two bullets from the Declaration section align well with our vision and mandate as a collective:

¹ Such as the Sir Wilfred Laurier Memorial and the Memorial to H. Frank Oliver.

Q'iyen'tém ell lexéy'entem cú7tsem k súwentem, k stselxemstém ell xyemstém k sw7esc re k'wseltktnéws te Secwepemc nSecwepemcúl'ecw ell lexéy'ectem re qelmúcw n7élye ntmicw, e tk'wem7iplen'tmes ell hégen e tqwelmintem nTk'wenem7íple7tns re seseme7úy; ell

Q'iyen'tém ell lexéy'entem well newí7-kt re Secwepemc re stsekxmem-kt e syecwemíntem re tmicw-kt, e sq'ixtwílcs n7élye nstscntwécw-kt nk'weltnéws ell²

We reaffirm our mutual respect for each others' mandates to continue to advance the interests of the Secwepemc within Secwepemcúl'ecw and to the world either by way of litigation or negotiation with the settler's government; and

We reaffirm our belief that the title, rights and interests of the Secwepemc are strengthened by our meaningful, cooperative relationships.

Our Request

We come to you, not seeking to lay down any one particular burden or issue, but rather request your assistance in identifying best practices and lessons learned in dispute resolution, pulling from past and current processes. Given the nature of work that your leadership and staff undertake, we believe that you have invaluable insight in best practices and lessons learned. In particular, as we are drawing from our Secwepemc laws, culture and language as a foundation, we hope that you may know and share about other First Nations who have done similar work that we can learn from. We are asking for your cooperation as leadership as well as your staff. We are also committed to sharing about our Secwepemc Peacemaking Process as it progresses.

Background- About Us

Qwelminté Secwépemc is a collective of Secwepemc leadership from Adams Lake Indian Band, Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band, Shuswap Indian Band, Simpcw, Skeetchestn, Splatsin, and Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, along with their Aboriginal Rights and Title and Natural Resource technicians. Qwelminté Secwépemc have been working with the B.C. Government (through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development) to move forward via the Qwelminté- Secwépemc Government to Government table. We conduct our work consistent with the Secwepemc Divisions or Campfire and this concept of yecwemíñem (caretakers) relating to our territorial areas of responsibility within Secwepemcúlcw. We affirm that we are a part of, but not the entirety of, the Secwépemc Nation. We uphold our role within our historic Divisions or Campfires of the Secwépemc Nation which include: Stk'emlúps te Secwépemc: comprised of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and Skeetchestn; Simpcwemc: comprised of Simpcw First Nation; Lakes Division: comprised from the Pespésellkwe – Adams Lake Indian Band, Splatsin, Little Shuswap Lake Band. Understanding that we are not stuck in history and evolving, we stand with the Shuswap Indian Band for their desire to now refer to themselves as the Columbia Basin Division or Campfire, underlining their clear role as caretakers of such a significant watershed. We've attached a short explainer about who we are to this document. We would be delighted to share more about who we are and what we are undertaking as part of a presentation or call. In addition, we have done our best to capture more about who we are on our website: www.qwelminte.ca (attached Qwelminté Secwepemc Introduction).

² Secwepemctsin cited directly from the Unity Declaration – translated by Language Keeper Mona Jules.

About the Secwepemc Peacemaking Process

This process will seek to honour leadership in all its forms within our Secwepemc Nation- be it individuals who are elected by their community, individuals recognised through hereditary lineage, individuals acknowledged for their commitment to service to the Secwepemc Nation, to any individuals who are yet to be known in the broader Secwepemc Nation. In addition, we want to ensure participation from our next generation of leaders, our youth, as they already have gathered lived experience, insight as well as a vision for their future. We also believe in the importance of them being witness to the unfolding of the Secwepemc Peacemaking Process so that they may be prepared to carry the mantle of the work when called upon.

This is about acknowledging the collective wisdom of each member of the Secwepemc Nation- with no voice overshadowing another. This Secwepemc Peacemaking Process is focussed on resolving conflict within Secwepemcúlcw with Secwepemc Kwséltkten shaping the process. The Secwepemc Peacemaking Process's focus will be on creating a safe place for all to dialogue to find peaceful resolution.

When we think about how to move forward on dispute resolution and peacemaking, we have identified key aspects for consideration as a premise to engaging in a Secwepemc Peacemaking Process (see attached Secwepemc Peacemaking Process- Based on the Following Premise document).

We would be delighted to meet with you virtually and share more about the intent of this initiative as well as answer any questions or concerns you may have. We feel so strongly about finding a peacemaking process for our Nation, that we have secured resources to move this forward. Also, given the depth of work that this requires, we have hired an experienced facilitator and Secwepemc kwséltkten, Racelle Kooy. She will be our primary point of contact for coordinating outreach as well as input to shaping this process. She will be following up with you directly and is also ready to respond to your queries at racelle@qwelminte.ca (See attached introduction to Racelle Kooy)

Kukwstsétsemc,



*DARREL DRANEY
Responsible Official, Qwelminte-Secwepemc
Councillor, Skeetchestn & Stk'emlúpsemc te Secwepemc Nation*

cc: BC AFN: Maureen Buchan
First Nations Summit: Colin Braker
UBCIC: Andrea Glickman

Attachments:
Qwelminte Secwepemc Introduction
Secwepemc Peacemaking Process- Based on the Following Premise
Introduction to Secwepemc Peacemaking Process Facilitator Racelle Kooy
Unity Declaration

Secwepemc Peacemaking Process – Based on the Following Premise

- **Recognition of our collective wisdom as Secwepemc** – from the ancestral wisdom passed to us from our Secwepemc Ancestors through our stseptékwll and Secwepemc laws, to past work of our Ancestors and current kwséltkten.
- **As Secwepemc people, we have never relented in fighting for our rights, for our people and for our lands.** The Secwepemc Nation — be it the historic 30+ campfires pre-contact to the 17 communities recognized today — we have sought resolution to uphold our time immemorial relationship with each other as kwséltkten, with Secwepemcúlecw and with the guests who reside in our territory.

In the August 2015 publication, *Fight for Our Rights, Aboriginal Title and Rights Appeals for Justice*, Second Edition, the table of contents reflects that dedicated focus to stand for our people and stewardship of our lands for current and future generations: from the Stoney Hunting Agreement with Shuswap and Kootenay (September 27, 1895) to the Secwepemc Unity Declaration (June 22, 2012).

- **There has been a persistent effort to silence our Secwepemc voices. We are still navigating the repercussions of systemic racism, intergenerational trauma, lateral violence, interracial prejudices, etc..** To ensure healthy dialogue amongst ourselves, there needs to be an acknowledgement of what we have overcome, what we are still healing from and what is needed to create safe spaces for dialogue.
- **We are relearning how to navigate conflict.** As we emerge from the colonial shadow and reclaim our power in decision-making, we are relearning skills both ancestral and current for interacting in groups. To do so, we need safe spaces for interactions with each other. This means a space where we can engage with each other without fear or intimidation, and without loud voices dominating discussions.

There is space and opportunity to hear from whomever from our Secwepemc Nation wishes to share. Between the measures in place to respect our collective wellbeing during this time of COVID-19, to the realities of dynamics of meeting in large groups, we are given an opportunity to meet differently. We have an opportunity to engage with each other in safety – from the comfort of our own homes, from smaller groups of our choosing, from speaking, to writing, to whatever form we wish to communicate in.

- **This process will be guided by Secwepemc laws and teachings, Secwepemc Elders and Knowledge Keepers as well as following the principles of trauma-informed engagements.** Our Ancestors and present day medicine people have provided insight on approaches to ensure wellbeing while in dialogue. Outside of our Secwepemc Nation, it is often referred to as trauma-informed engagement.

Trauma-informed principles are:

√ Safety	√ Collaboration
√ Trustworthiness and transparency	√ Empowerment, voice, and choice
√ Peer support	√ Cultural, historical, and gender issues

- **This process will be iterative, transparent and accountable.** This means that it will building upon itself and as dialogue progresses, it will be shared broadly within the Secwepemc Nation.

Qwelminte Secwepemc Introduction

Qwelmínte Secwépemc a collective of leadership from 7 communities (Adams Lake Indian Band, Little Shuswap Lake Indian Band, Shuswap Indian Band, Simpcw, Skeetchestn, Splatsin, and Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc), along with their Aboriginal Rights and Title and Natural Resource technicians. Qwelmínte Secwépemc have been working with the B.C. Government (through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development) to move forward via the Qwelmínte- Secwépemc Government to Government table.

What is Qwelmínte Secwépemc's mandate

As a collective, Qwelmínte Secwépemc has said no overloading limited capacity and disjointed consultations, all purportedly working to protect, manage and take care of our territories. As a hub of leadership and technical expertise, we are strengthened by the collective wisdom of our representatives. We share knowledge and offer insight to each other as well as the Province of B.C. on what has worked and what has not. We are focused on ensuring informed decision- making for the Secwépemc signatories.

Qwelmínte Secwépemc Government to Government table is founded on a walking on two legs approach- upholding both western laws and science as well as Secwépemc laws as laid out in our oral histories and songs. For the 7 Secwepemc signatories, as caretakers of Secwepemcúlecw, we look after everything below, everything on, and everything above our Mother earth. This includes the water world, the sky world and fires and our cultural heritage.

Together with Qwelmínte Secwépemc Signatories, the Province of B.C. can make sustained, substantive progress towards:

- Developing a shared path to long term reconciliation;
- Developing structures and processes that can facilitate consensus seeking outcomes;
- Supporting Secwépemc with building law and land management capacity; and
- Eliminating the socio-economic gaps faced by Secwépemc by securing a central role for Secwépemc as partners in the regional economy and developing a new fiscal relationship.

What is NOT Qwelmínte Secwépemc's Mandate

Qwelmínte Secwépemc has no dealings whatsoever with the Transmountain Pipeline and its expansion project. Frankly put, it is out of scope. As the seven signatories to the Letter of Commitment, we are very clear what we signed and committed to regarding the B.C. Government to Government (Qwelmínte) the Letter of Commitment. We are also very clear what we did NOT sign. No part of the Letter of Commitment or any dealings with the B.C. Government as the collective, Qwelmínte Secwépemc, has or will ever have dealings regarding the Transmountain Pipeline and its expansion project.

We are also very clear that no part of the Letter of Commitment is regarding ceding or surrendering any title and rights. It is about investigating opportunities for our collective good, as the very foundation of the Letter of Commitment comes from the 2013 Secwépemc Reconciliation Framework Agreement, with reconciliation and mutual benefit at the heart of the Reconciliation Framework Agreement.

What is Qwelmínte Secwépemc and the B.C. Government's Shared Goal

Qwelmínte Secwépemc and the B.C. Government, as represented by the Ministries of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR), Forests Lands Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD), Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources (MEMPR), and Environment and Climate Change Strategy (MoE), have a shared goal to develop a pathway to long term reconciliation that will enable our two governments to work collaboratively to preserve Secwepemcúlecw in a state consistent with traditional importance to Secwépemc people; and to maintain those practices for future generations.

To create a positive, beneficial and harmonious relationship to protect and care for the tmicw (land, resources, and everything on the earth), Qwelmínte Secwépemc and B.C. have committed to work together toward a comprehensive Recognition and Reconciliation Agreement.

What is Qwelmínte Secwépemc's Scope of Jurisdiction: Yecwminúl'ecwem – take care of the territory/land [Tmicw]

In accordance with Secwépemc law and within the system of Secwépemc collective ownership and access to the lands and resources that comprise Secwepemcúlecw, there existed and continues to exist the caretaker or stewardship role (yecwemíñem). This responsibility is upheld by an interconnected network of families kwséltkten over particular areas within Secwepemcúlecw in relationship to their seasonal rounds. This collective title and inherent connection with Secwepemcúlecw reflect a relationship not only to each other as Secwépemc but all our relatives including Tmicw throughout Secwepemcúlecw.

Qwelmínte Secwépemc conducts its work consistent with the Divisions or Campfire and this concept of yecwemíñem relating to our territorial areas of responsibility within Secwepemcúlecw. We affirm that we are a part of, but not the entirety of, the Secwépemc Nation. Under the Letter of Commitment, we uphold our role within our historic Divisions or Campfires of the Secwépemc Nation which include: Stk'emplúsemc te Secwépemc: comprised of Tk'emplúps te Secwépemc and Skeetchestn; Simpcwemc: comprised of Simpcw First Nation; Lakes Division: comprised from the Pespésellkwe – Adams Lake Indian Band, Splatsin, Little Shuswap Lake Band. Understanding that we are not stuck in history and evolving, we stand with the Shuswap Indian Band for their desire to now refer to themselves as the Columbia Basin Division or Campfire, underlining their clear role as caretakers of such a significant watershed.

Introduction to Secwepemc Peacemaking Process Facilitator Racelle Kooy



First I would like to acknowledge my immediate and extended family from Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation (SXFN) as they grounded me deeply to Secwépemc teachings and lands. I am grand-daughter of Eric Hillman (SXFN) and Lillian Peters (Samahquam First Nation).

My first foray into serving the Secwepemc Nation beyond familial and community involvement goes back my Master's degree. I worked with Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation on tourism development as well as presenting at the New Prosperity Mine expert panel in the early 2000's.

I appreciate the trust and confidence shown to me from the Secwépemc Nation upon my return from working at the First Nations University in Saskatchewan in late 2015-early 2016. To date I have worked on:

- √ April 2016- June 2018: Communications lead for SSN KGHM Project Review. I was onboarded just prior to the SSN Panel Hearing and wrapped up with the June 2018 Panel Closing at Pípsell.
- √ April 2017- Chair for Northern Secwepemc te Qelmúcw Citizens Forum.
- √ March 30-31, 2017- Emcee and report writer for Secwépemc Governance Meeting - Tk'émúlps te Secwépemc.
- √ December 2017- Emcee for Secwépemc Winter Seasonal Gathering - Tk'émúlps te Secwépemc. Note: I was also involved in the planning and organising of the event at SNTC.
- √ March 13-14, 2018 Secwepemctsín Think Tank with UVic Indigenous Law Research Unit - Tk'émúlps te Secwépemc.
- √ April 20-22, 2018, Emcee and lead facilitator for Secwépemc Water Conference - Shuswap Indian Band. Note: I was also involved in the planning and organising of the event at SNTC.
- √ August 24th - 27th, 2018, Secwépemc Summer Gathering- Esket'emc. Emcee for Secwépemc Summer Seasonal Gathering. Note: I was also involved in the planning and organising of the event at SNTC and coordinated media relations for the event.
- √ November 2018- Present, Communications and Special Advisor to Qwelmínte Secwépemc.
- √ April 2019- Chair for Northern Secwepemc te Qelmúcw Citizens Forum.

Having worked in project coordination, facilitation and moderation since 1998, from community level engagement to co-chairing the Assembly of First Nations, I am often put in the hot seat to cooling situations to ensure a continuation of respectful dialogue. My skills are called upon particularly in times of extraordinary need and topics- such as the Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls, or an accelerated timeline such as the federal government's Indigenous language legislation engagement process. I have done my utmost each time to ensure that all parties are supported and

heard in the room and the nature of the language employed is respectful. At times, this would be happening with live cameras on me and the other parties- recording every moment of the exchanges.

In serving the Secwepemc Nation in a variety of capacities, frustrations mount quickly and I have waded in to diffuse, all the while being careful to ensure that each party feels seen and heard. Such situations would crop up at seasonal gatherings, workshops, assemblies and forums.

The nature of my work to date is such that I will often spend time digging into the why and how “we” (those I am engaging with) have gotten to where we are- from one-on-one meetings to reviewing work to date. I also look to examples of similar work – lessons learned and best practices to find innovative approaches to engagement and dialogue. In taking time to prepare, this foundational knowledge helps connect to the past and current realities. At the same time, that research serves as a guide but never the road map, as each situation is unique and requires an open mind to the current opportunities and challenges.

It was through working on the KGHM-Ajax Project Assessment that I got to truly come to terms with the richness of our Secwepemc Laws, language and oral tellings- how they are interconnected and tied to Secwepemcúlecw. This was further brought to light at the Secwepemc Seasonal gatherings as well as at the Secwepemctsín think tank.

I am honoured and delighted to have served time and again as the conduit to sharing that richness of Secwepemc laws to a greater audience through my communications work- be it producing the final public documents for the Pípsell decision to preparing briefs for Secwepemc leadership for presenting to federal and provincial officials.