



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement from Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Chief and Council

June 24, 2021, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc – As Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Chief and Council, we would like to openly acknowledge the horrific truth that Cowessess First Nation, survivors and intergenerational survivors of the former Marieval Indian Residential School are grappling with.

We mourn the confirmation of the hundreds of unmarked graves in Cowessess First Nation. We wish to acknowledge the leadership and truth that Chief Cadmus Delorme and Cowessess Knowledge Keeper Florence Sparvier, as well as FSIN Regional Chief Bobby Cameron, showed the world this morning at their press conference.

We regret that we know well what Cowessess First Nation is going through, given the preliminary findings we shared with the world on May 27, 2021. It has been a heavy burden but one we carry with love, honour and respect for the Kamloops Indian Residential School children – who we refer to as Le Estcwéy (The Missing) that are in our caretakership. As with Cowessess First Nation, for Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, this is only phase one, more investigation is needed.

We, too, have called upon the Pope for an apology and agree with the statement made by Cowessess First Nation Chief Cadmus Delorme. An apology is but one of the many stages of the healing journey.

We stand with Cowessess First Nation in mourning as well as in deep gratitude for the survivors and intergenerational survivors who held fast to the truth of the unmarked graves.

Cowessess, the people in Cowessess's care in the unmarked graves, the families and communities affected, will be part of our prayers and ceremonies.

We will be making some significant announcements regarding Kamloops Indian Residential School Le Estcwéy (The Missing) in the near future. We will be sure to give due notice to the public and media.

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