



OCT 24 2018

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip
President
Chief Robert Chamberlin
Vice-President
Kukpi7 Judy Wilson
Secretary-Treasurer
Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs
401 – 312 Main Street
VANCOUVER BC V6A 2T2

Dear Grand Chief Phillip, Chief Chamberlin, and Kukpi7 Wilson:

I am writing in response to your joint letter of November 1, 2017, in which you highlighted frustrations with respect to researchers being denied access to records for specific claims due to a mistaken belief that band council resolutions cease to be valid after a certain period of time. Please accept my apology for the delay in responding and for the confusion surrounding this matter.

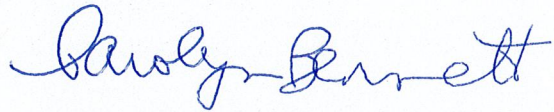
I understand that on November 3, 2017, officials within the British Columbia regional office offered an apology to researchers from the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs for their mistake. The Department's position with respect to the validity of band council resolutions is that they remain valid until they are repealed or replaced by the specific First Nation by way of another resolution.

As you are aware, the Department has been working to resolve issues surrounding access to departmental records through a joint working group on which First Nation claims researchers and the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs participates. At the most recent meeting, administrative policies were jointly revised to address concerns regarding access to departmental records. In addition, the Department's policies, procedures, and guidelines that determine the requirements and expectations around First Nation researchers' requests for access to departmental records were clarified and communicated to administrative officers responsible for administering these requests.

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I trust this response addresses your concerns, and I thank you for raising the matter with me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carolyn Bennett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C'.

Hon. Carolyn Bennett, M.D., P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, P.C., M.P.