



WORKING WITH FIRST NATIONS TO CREATE CERTAINTY

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSES:
FEBRUARY 6-8, 2017**



In June 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada granted a declaration of Aboriginal title for a portion of Tsilhqot'in traditional territory, about 1,700 km² in the Cariboo-Chilcotin. This is the first time the courts have granted a declaration of Aboriginal title in Canada.

The declaration of title raised new and complex questions that will take some time to answer. Since the declaration, the B.C. government has been working with the Tsilhqot'in on greater reconciliation that promotes a shared vision of the Tsilhqot'in Nation as true partners in the economic, political and social future of the Cariboo-Chilcotin and the province.

The B.C. government wants to build agreements with First Nations that are informed and supported by communities, local governments, industry and neighbouring First Nations. Agreements come to life on the ground and benefits are felt directly in individual communities. Local governments, neighbouring First Nations and regional stakeholders must be informed and involved if negotiation and implementation of agreements are to be successful.

Aboriginal title is a legal term that recognizes Aboriginal interest in the land. It is a collective interest in the land – the right to use and occupy title lands – that flows from being the original residents before European settlers arrived.

The Nenqay Deni Accord, signed in February 2016, is a five-year road map for longer-term negotiations between the B.C. government and the Tsilhqot'in Nation. It applies to the title lands described in the June 2014 Supreme Court case and the broader traditional territory of the Tsilhqot'in Nation.

The negotiation processes in the Accord are intended to lead to comprehensive and lasting reconciliation with the Tsilhqot'in, to help support their social and economic goals and create certainty for Cariboo-Chilcotin residents, stakeholders, and neighbouring First Nations about land-use in the Tsilhqot'in title area and broader traditional territory.

By working together to create certainty, the B.C. government aims to maintain existing jobs and improve economic, social and cultural opportunities for First Nations and all Cariboo-Chilcotin residents.

THE ACCORD IS BUILT AROUND EIGHT KEY AREAS:

- Governance
- Lands and resources
- Economic development
- Tsilhqot'in culture and language
- Children and families
- Healthy communities
- Justice
- Education and training

The B.C. government is committed to provide ongoing opportunities for all residents, stakeholders, and neighbouring First Nations to ask questions about the Accord and offer feedback on its implementation. First Nations consultations will also take place.

The roughly 1,700 km² of title lands described in the 2014 Supreme Court decision is a portion of the total traditional territory claimed by the Tsilhqot'in Nation.

One priority is to effectively transition the management, benefit and control of the declared title area to the Tsilhqot'in. The B. C. government will also work with the Tsilhqot'in Nation during the term of the Accord to negotiate Crown land for each of the five other Tsilhqot'in communities and work toward a shared management framework for the entire Tsilhqot'in territory.

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE ON THE ACCORD TO DATE?

The B.C. government and Tsilhqot'in spent the first year since the signing of the Accord preparing for the work ahead. This has included:





- Special MLA Advisory Committee
- Community meetings
- Meetings with municipalities and the Cariboo Regional District
- Meetings with neighbouring First Nations
- Stakeholder meetings including tenure holders, private landowners, guide outfitters, ranchers and timber licensees

The B.C. government and Tsilhqot'in have achieved a number of bridging agreements that secure Tsilhqot'in consent for continued access to and through title land for anglers, guide outfitters, trappers, recreationalists and the general public who want to use parks and recreation sites.

WILL THE ACCORD INCLUDE PRIVATE PROPERTY?

Private property rights are not being negotiated. The only lands up for negotiation are B.C. Crown lands.

HOW DOES THE ACCORD AFFECT INDUSTRY, PARTICULARLY FORESTRY AND MINING?

The B.C. government and the Tsilhqot'in share a common goal of increasing economic development opportunities that improve the local economy and create jobs, while minimizing environmental impacts.

The B.C. government and the Tsilhqot'in are working together to improve collaboration on future development within the Tsilhqot'in territory and to identify land for economic development opportunities, such as forestry, alternative energy, responsible mining development, ranching, and agriculture.

CAN I STILL ENTER THE TITLE LAND TO HUNT, FISH OR CAMP?

Similar to private land, the Tsilhqot'in Nation have the right to decide how their title lands are used. If you do not have a valid authorization for an activity in the title lands you are advised to contact the Tsilhqot'in National Government directly by phone at **250 392-3918** to request permission before setting out.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

The B.C. government and the Tsilhqot'in will use the second year of the Accord to start identifying opportunities to make progress on the eight key areas laid out in the framework agreement.

LEARN MORE:

Engaging with industry, interest groups, tenure holders, neighbouring First Nations, communities and community members is a priority. The B.C. government is committed to providing updates on progress and ongoing opportunities for people to ask questions and provide feedback.



We encourage you to visit the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation website www.gov.bc.ca/nenqaydeni to find out more.

You can also contact the Tsilhqot'in National Government by going to: www.tsilhqotin.ca/

Interested members of the public are welcome to connect with ministry staff at caribooengage@gov.bc.ca to ask questions about progress.

