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JUNE 28, 2024

**Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo (KKS) Thanks Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for Decision Regarding Traditional Land Called k'w'eq'ənəq**

*ALC recognizes long history of the KKS in engaging with the Federal Government regarding their goal to have the land returned to them.*

**Surrey, B.C. | Unceded traditional territories of the Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo First Nations |**

The Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo Nations would like to publicly thank the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for its recent decision (shared on June 21, 2024) that it will not pursue the inclusion of the traditional land that the Nations call k'w'eq'ənəq in the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The land is Federal Government Crown land.

In particular, the Nations appreciate that the ALC decision clearly recognized the importance of considering KKS rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Provincial Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) in their decision making.

The ALC initiated a proposal in November 2022 to consider the inclusion of k'w'eq'ənəq into the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve. However, on June 21, 2024, the ALC ultimately concluded that it had not been aware that the First Nations had a deep historical connection to the land. In addition, they learned that the KKS had been engaging directly with the Federal Government over their rights to k'w'eq'ənəq. For these reasons, they decided it would not be appropriate for them to consider a Provincial ALC designation, as it would not honourably carry out the intent of the Agricultural Land Commission Act (ALCA).

The ALC finding resolution stated that: "The Commission considers it is important to note the particular context of urban First Nations whose claimed traditional territory has been heavily

developed and is substantially under private ownership. These First Nations face special challenges in negotiating with the federal or provincial Crown due to the limited federal or provincial Crown land available within their claimed traditional territories.”

In a historic announcement on June 26, 2024, the three Nations jointly asked that the parcel of land within their traditional territory called k'w'eq'ənəq be returned to the Nations to support their cultural and economic future. The site consists of 300 acres of land which local government has earmarked for industrial use, and have been declared surplus by the Federal Government.

“k'w'eq'ənəq represents the most significant piece of Crown land where our Nations could implement our rights and enable the prosperity and well-being of our people,” said Chief Harley Chappell of the Semiahmoo First Nation. “We’re encouraged by the fact that the ALC shares our viewpoint that this is not an agricultural issue — this is a government-to-government discussion between our Nations and Canada over Federal Crown land that has been identified as surplus.”

Both the Governments of Canada and British Columbia have enacted legislation to fully adopt and implement UNDRIP as the framework for reconciliation, which is one of the 94 calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The Nations view the Federal Government’s opportunity to transfer k'w'eq'ənəq’s to KKS as an invaluable chance for the Government to demonstrate reconciliation. k'w'eq'ənəq represents a moment of truth when Canada must demonstrate its commitment to implementing UNDRIP and the principles respecting Canada’s relationship with Indigenous peoples.

For more information, visit: [www.KKSFirstNations.ca](http://www.KKSFirstNations.ca)

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