

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gitxsan hereditary chiefs announce prohibition of LNG development and begin construction of permanent base camp to manage territory.

Hazelton, BC

Aug. 28, 2014

On Aug. 26, 2014, Luutkudziiwus, Xsim Wits'iin and Noola, Gitxsan hereditary chiefs, on behalf of their house members declared their Madii Lii territory permanently closed to all natural gas pipeline development, and began construction of a long-term base camp to focus on various territory management initiatives. Luutkudziiwus maintains Aboriginal title and rights over Madii Lii territory. The Madii Lii camp is located at 15 km on the Suskwa Forest Service Road.

The cease and desist notification is addressed to the BC government and TransCanada Corporation in regard to the Madii Lii territory, located in the Suskwa valley, and pertains specifically to TransCanada's plans for the Prince Rupert Gas Transmission (PRGT) pipeline project.

The proposed PRGT will cross Madii Lii territory for about 32 km from Suskwa Pass to the Shegunia River. Approximately one-half – 16 km – lies on top of the Babine Trail, the ancestral grease trail connecting Gitanmaax with Fort Babine.

If constructed, the PRGT would result in direct and indirect impacts to Luutkudziiwus rights and title. These include potential adverse effects to fish and their habitats, wildlife and their habitats, terrestrial and aquatic resources, including cumulative effects, as well as to social, cultural, and economic values. As well, the pipe will be supplying the proposed LNG plant in Skeena estuary, where substantial impacts are predicted to negatively affect juvenile salmon.

Hereditary chief Luutkudziiwus (Charlie Wright), noted, "Our Madii Lii territory is not for sale or use by the province of BC or TransCanada, a mere third party developer that has no understanding of what they are proposing to do, has no idea of our culture, no idea of our heritage."

Xsim Wits'iin (Les Moore) stated that, "the province has been stealing from our house territory for 150 years, and this needs to end. The proposed PRGT pipeline project is in deep conflict with core Luutkudziiwus interests and values."

Richard Wright, member of and spokesperson for the house of Luutkudziiwus, has undertaken a Territorial Management Plan, an initiative to build solutions regarding their territory, its resources, and interests. Wright stated: "Managing our territories will enable us to focus on sustainable economic development and cultural revitalization programs, all the while stopping destructive development from proceeding unabated."

For more information: Due to the remote camp location, please email the below address with your phone number to set up an interview time, and Luutkudziiwus spokesperson Richard Wright will call you at a scheduled time.

Richard Wright

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Video: www.vimeo.com/104562722