

Tahltan - Kaska - Tlingit

Update for Kaska, Tahltan and Tlingit members on progress with BC and hunting/wildlife management in region.

This week leadership from the Kaska, Tahltan and Tlingit Nations met with Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) and his team to discuss pressing issues about hunting and wildlife management across the collective territories of the 3-Nations.

The meeting was in direct response to a letter sent to the minister regarding wildlife management on July 30 and focused on ways to build new partnerships to monitor and manage activity in our territories. This co-management approach has the potential to increase the effort being made on the ground while also making sure that our Nations are more involved in the process.

At the meeting, leaders asked the Minister for seven things:

1. Commitment to develop a work plan between our three Nations and Provincial government and commitments to increase game checks and monitoring for this season.
2. To work with other Provincial departments to find ways of increasing monitoring resources across our combined territory - which make up 25% of British Columbia.
3. To work with our Nations to submit suggested regulatory changes later this month.
4. To support the continued partnership between our Nations and FLNRO staff around capacity-building, game management and game monitoring.
5. To provide resources to plan and implement changes to wildlife management in the region, as determined by the FLNRO and 3-Nations technical group.
6. To provide resources to support a Tahltan guardianship and monitoring program for the current season. There are already similar programs in place for the Kaska and Tlingit Nations.
7. To provide future resources for community-based monitoring and guardianship programs.

Leadership was very pleased with the meeting, and several requests have already been confirmed. The Minister agreed all remaining requests will be addressed by early November.

Minister Steve Thomson said: "I understand the importance of wildlife to First Nation communities, and I also appreciate the collective approach the Tahltan, Kaska and Taku River Tlingit Nations are taking to this important work. I look forward to working together in a spirit of collaboration in the coming weeks and months."

The 3-Nations and FLNRO have worked intensely over the last month. This will continue in order to strengthen their partnership and build new approaches for this season and those to follow. As of today there is implementation of and commitment to:

- 10 Land Guardians/Monitors across the 3-Nations (includes a brand new Tahltan Land Guardian program to be implemented immediately);
- Increase game checks across the region for this season;
- A 3-Nations and FLNRO work plan to address long standing issues and further their "collaboration in practice";
- Work with the Ministry of Environment for additional Conservation Officer resources;
- Coordinate the installation of 37 new conservation signs across region; and
- Continue our unified Kaska, Tahltan and Tlingit wildlife team who will work collaboratively with our FLNRO partners to find ongoing solutions.