

# **Kaska Leaders Issue Declaration on Development of a Kaska Resource Law**

## **KASKA NATION MEDIA RELEASE**

**VANCOUVER, BC – January 27, 2015 – For Immediate Release**

The Kaska Nation leaders today issued a Declaration signaling their intent to develop a Resource Law that will apply throughout their traditional territory in British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territory.

Chief Brian Ladue of the Ross River Dena Council explained the purpose of the Kaska Resource Law. “We are not anti-development,” stated Ladue, “but we have a sacred trust to ensure that our lands and our culture is protected for future generations. To do that, we must set the rules under which our consent for developments in our lands will be granted.”

The Leaders indicated that the Kaska Resource Law will be developed within six months with passage planned at a special Kaska General Assembly to be held in summer 2015. The regulations pursuant to the Law, will be developed over the next two years.

“While we are working on the development of the Law and Regulations, we will continue to expect all resource developers to enter agreements with Kaska to provide employment, training and business opportunities and to ensure Kaska will can benefit from these projects while protecting our lands and culture.” stated Chief Daniel Morris of Liard First Nation.

Companies will still be expected to meet all federal, territorial and provincial guidelines during the development and post passage of the Kaska Resource Law. KDC Chair George Miller explained. “Our law will not replace any laws passed by other governments. It will be explicit in this regard. Rather we will be setting out conditions that may enhance requirements in certain areas and create new obligations in others.”

Chief Ruby Johnny of Dease River First Nation noted the positive impact that the Resource Law will have for developers. “In our negotiations with companies,” said Johnny, “they consistently tell us that they want to reduce risks and create certainty for their projects and their investors. We understand that and the Kaska Resource Law will do that by providing clear direction for granting of Kaska consent and support for projects.”

Kaska leaders indicated that they look forward to a positive government to government relationship with Canada, British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territory that will provide for resource developments that can bring benefits to all citizens while protecting the lands for future generations.

## **KASKA NATION DECLARATION**

Whereas the Kaska Nation has unextinguished and unceded rights, title and interests in its Traditional Lands;

And Whereas the Kaska Nation has a sacred trust to protect its Traditional Lands for the use and benefit of future generations;

And Whereas the Kaska Nation has an Inherent Right to govern its Traditional Lands and Kaska communities;

Now therefore the Kaska Nation hereby declares its intention to develop and implement a Kaska Nation Resource Law to oversee access to, and developments in, its Traditional Lands.

**For more information** please contact Denelle Spencer at 867-335-5641, Council of Kaska Chiefs Governance Coordinator.