



huu ay aht

ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

Huu-ay-aht First Nations pleased with direction of Throne Speech

February 13, 2019 – On Tuesday, Lt.-Gov Janet Austin read the Speech from the Throne which outlined the British Columbia government’s goals for the next year. Huu-ay-aht shares many of the values and beliefs reflected in this document.

We share the Province’s vision of a healthy, prosperous, and self-sustaining community British Columbia and would like to work with you in the following areas:

- ongoing commitment to reconciliation, including legislation to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,
- continuing support for LNG, provided it meets the principles set out in your government’s LNG framework and is consistent with your Clean BC climate action plan,
- increased protection for wild salmon stocks, and
- continuing efforts to revitalize our coast forest industry.

“True reconciliation comes from a deep understanding of what is important to the people affected by the direction of our leaders,” explains Chief Councillor Robert J. Dennis Sr. “This year’s Throne Speech shows me that we share many of the same concerns and offers hope that we can continue to build a relationship based on respect and shared values.”

As a treaty nation, Huu-ay-aht has the full authority to grant rights and privileges to its citizens, is committed to the principles of UNDRIP. Our citizens fully participate in the laws and functions of the Nations governing system.

Huu-ay-aht created its own Social Service Program last year, which focuses on bringing our children home and keeping them safe, healthy, and connected to their community. In 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found the federal funding model to be discriminatory and to provide financial incentives to bring more indigenous children into care. Huu-ay-aht has created a system that will change this for all citizens and aligns with the spirit of UNDRIP.

Our co-management relationship with Steelhead LNG on the Kwispaa LNG project is leading the way on reconciliation in Canada. Our co-management arrangement with Steelhead received 70% support in a citizen referendum, and it also has unanimous support from our hereditary and elected leadership. It has allowed Huu-ay-aht to exercise unprecedented control over economic development on our lands and will allow us to direct that economic development to the benefit of all our citizens.

From the start, we have planned Kwispaa LNG to be different from other LNG projects. In addition to our co-management relationship, Kwispaa LNG has been designed to achieve the lowest possible greenhouse gas emissions in keeping with our three sacred principles of Hišuk ma čawak (Everything is One), ʔuuʔaʔuk (Taking Care Of...), and ʔiisaak (Greater Respect).

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We are seeking to electrify the entire project, which would reduce its GHG emissions far below provincial benchmarks, not to mention those of similar projects in British Columbia and around the world. We also are working to achieve world-leading environmental outcomes in a manner consistent with Huu-ay-aht's treaty rights, which means Huu-ay-aht and Steelhead LNG have to be creative when addressing issues like salmon and the southern resident killer whales. For example, we are combining our proactive watershed renewal with responsible project design choices, such as air-cooled liquefaction units, to minimize impacts on the marine environment.

The Sarita River is the Heart of the People. We have always lived, fished, and relied upon it. But by 1997, 62% of the Sarita watershed had been logged, including 97% of the flood plain. That logging had affected the side channels and destroyed our salmon habitat.

Now, under our co-management agreement with Steelhead LNG, we have established the Sarita Watershed Renewal project and our own people are working to restore these streams and the salmon habitat.

Huu-ay-aht citizens have made it very clear that sustainable forest management is a priority. That's why we've been working over the last year with your Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Development to develop policies to revitalize coastal forestry and ensure sustainable forest management in the best interests of local communities, including Huu-ay-aht First Nations. For example, we are taking the lead in our ḥahuuḥi (traditional territory) by increasing stumpage fees from \$1 per cubic metre to \$5 from Treaty Settlement Land timber harvesting. This increase will support wild salmon stocks renewal in the Sarita and other Huu-ay-aht salmon streams and provide good jobs for our people.

"True reconciliation means respecting the decisions First Nations make for themselves and their lands," says Tayii Ḥawiiḥ ḶiiḶšin (Head Hereditary Chief Derek Peters). "Our ḥahuuḥi has been our home since time immemorial. We are ready to begin a new era of reconciliation, and we are pleased that the Province of British Columbia has indicated it is ready to travel that road together."

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About Huu-ay-aht First Nations

Huu-ay-aht First Nations is an indigenous community located on the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia. It is a part of the Nuuchahnulth Nation, formerly called the Nootka. Huu-ay-aht is a party to the Maa-nulth Final Agreement, a modern treaty that grants its five member-nations constitutionally protected self-government as well as ownership, control, and law-making authority over their lands and resources. For more information, visit huuayaht.org.

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