



# Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

AHOUSAHT  
DITIDAHT  
ʔIIHATIS / ČIINAŦINT  
HESQUIAHT  
HUPACASATH

HUU-AY-AHT  
KA:YU:K'T'H'/CHE:K:TLES7ET'H'  
MOWACHAHT/MUCHALAHT  
NUCHATLAHT  
TLA-O-QUI-AHT

TOQUAHT  
TSESHAHT  
UCHUCKLESAHT  
YUULUʔIŁA7ATH

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## NUU-CHAH-NULTH TRIBAL COUNCIL STATEMENT ON OLD-GROWTH FORESTS

**MEDIA RELEASE: November 5, 2018/Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council/Port Alberni, B.C.:** The Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council is calling on the province of British Columbia to work with them in slowing down, or even stopping the rapid disappearance of old-growth forests within Nuu-chah-nulth territories. The forests are vanishing with the permission of the province, and have been further endangered by the rampant BC forest fires. Joint management through Indigenous laws, BC laws and other workable mechanisms is critical in curtailing further damage.

“Old-growth forests are invaluable ecosystems that can never be reproduced,” said Andy Callicum, Vice President, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council (NTC) Executive. “The forests play an important role in protecting wildlife throughout the winter, and for providing Nuu-chah-nulth peoples the medicines and roots contained within them,” he added.

Nuu-chah-nulth Nations rely on old-growth forests to continue our way of life which includes accessing red and yellow monumental cedar (over 250 years old) for many purposes such as planks for long houses, canoes, totem poles, welcoming figures, clothing and regalia. The forests are of great cultural significance to us and are also used as spiritual places.

Other First Nations are coming into Nuu-chah-nulth Nation territories to take monumental cedar, as there are none remaining in their territories. We do not want to have to go to other First Nations’ territories for our cedar when we can have plenty here. The forests must be managed properly to allow Nuu-chah-nulth access to sufficient quantities of old-growth cedar for all of our needs.

Many Nuu-chah-nulth Nations are involved in forestry in their own territories. They work to use best practices in managing their territories, to allow for the protection and access of old-growth cedar. A number of those Nations have Land Use Plans, cedar access strategies or other policies that allow them to manage the red and yellow cedar within their territories. These plans and policies use our Indigenous laws, knowledge and practices. The BC government must respect and recognize our land and forestry plans in order to retain sufficient old-growth for our cultural and spiritual purposes.

In lands not managed by First Nations, British Columbia has been giving areas of old-growth to forestry companies for harvesting, often without First Nation consent, let alone consultation. They are downloading their responsibility to the forestry companies to manage the old-growth. This is not acceptable, and not a decision that Nuu-chah-nulth have given their consent for.

Judith Sayers, President, NTC Executive, says, “The BC government has committed to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). At least five articles within UNDRIP reference our right to make decisions in matters that affect our rights; the right to our medicines, the right to strengthen our spiritual relationship with our territories, the right to the protection of the environment and to give consent on any development that affects our lands and resources.”

The protection of old growth must happen now. Clear cutting and large-scale logging of old-growth forests are things of the past that must stop. The Nuu-chah-nulth call upon the BC government to live up to their word and devise major new policies to protect enough old-growth to meet our needs, and manage our forests with our consent.

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**About Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council**

The **Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council (NTC)** provides programs and services to over 10,000 registered members. The role of the NTC is to represent 14 First Nations in three regions stretching 300 kilometers of the Pacific Coast of Vancouver Island from Brooks Peninsula in the north to Point-no-Point in the south. The NTC represents Ahousaht, Ditidaht, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint, Hesquiaht, Hupacasath, Huu-ay-aht, Kyuquot/Checklesah, Mowachaht /Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, Tseshaht, Uchucklesaht and Ucluelet First Nations and provides a variety of programs and services to them.

For more information, please visit [www.nuuchahnulth.org](http://www.nuuchahnulth.org).