



Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

AHOUSAHT
DTIDAHT
ʔIIHATIS / ČIINAXINT
HESQUIAHT
HUPACASATH

HUU-AY-AHT
KA:YU:K'TH/CHE:K:TLES7ET'H
MOWACHAHT/MUCHALAHT
NUCHATLAHT
TLA-O-QUI-AHT

TOQUAHT
TSESHAHT
UCHUCKLESAHT
YUJL.UJL.ATH

P.O. BOX 1383
PORT ALBERNI, BC
V9Y 7M2

Tel: 250.724.5757
Fax: 250.724.2172

Genocide of First Nations children confirmed for 67

February 21, 2023— Nuu-chah-nulth Territories, Port Alberni, BC

Today Tseshaht First Nations announced that there are 17 potential unmarked graves at the site of the Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS), with at least 67 who were identified by further research into deaths at the residential school. This number was arrived at by research and ground penetrating radar in Phase 1 of their work, and the radar only covered 12 per cent of the area to be looked into.

Our people have always known the truth about the atrocities that happened to our children that attended the Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS) but today first results into these atrocities can be undeniably seen in the findings from the ground penetrating radar that is being shared widely.

We as Nuu-chah-nulth hold out our arms and embrace those children who didn't go home. We embrace their families, communities and Nations. We want these children to now be at peace knowing that we have found them and they can go home knowing they did nothing wrong.

President Judith Sayers states "We condemn those horrific practices of genocide of the church and Canadian government that meant those children did not get to go home. That families did not know what happened to their beloved children. Where young innocent children were subject to vile, evil people who had no respect for First Nations lives. We condemn the churches and Canadian government for allowing their people who played a role in the deaths of these children to continue those practices for years. We ask Canadians to stand with us and condemn the practice of genocide, racism, discrimination and hatred and ensure these incredible wrongs can be addressed to the satisfaction of our people."

Today we deeply grieve the loss of those precious young lives. We grieve the loss of the potential of what those young lives would have brought to our families, communities and the Nations. We ask Canadians to join us in our efforts to hold the church and Canadian state accountable for what they did to our children and bring about real reconciliation with survivors, generations of our people and our Nations on our terms. We need to determine what will help with healing, make amends, bring justice for this genocide and for many other horrific happenings at these schools. It is a long road to actual reconciliation and understanding the appalling impact of the truths revealed today, is a start.

President Sayers concludes “Today, the reverberations of the number of these potential burial sites hits our Nuuchahnulth and other First Nations very hard. We seek ways to deal with this information. Join us today by shedding a tear, looking inside yourselves and take action for a better world for First Nations peoples.”

-30-

Contact:

Cloy-e-iis, Judith Sayers, President, Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council

P: 250.724.5757 ext. 231 or 250-415-0387

E: judith.sayers@nuuchahnulth.org

About Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council

The Nuuchahnulth 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, Ehatesaht/Chinehkont, Hesquiaht, Hupacasath, Huu-ay- aht, Kyuquot/Checklesah, Mowachaht /Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, Tseshah, Uchucklesaht and Ucluelet First Nations and provides a variety of programs and services to them.

For more information, please visit www.nuuchahnulth.org.