



# Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

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## **Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Questions BC on Bill 15 and asks “What happened to free, prior and. Informed consent?”**

**May 8, 2025– Hupacasath and Tseshaht Territories, Port Alberni, BC**

This week the province of BC rushed to table Bill 15 titled Infrastructure Projects Act. They may as well have called it the “Fast Tracking Projects Act” or the “Expeditious Infrastructure Project Act” as they use that word repeatedly in the legislation.

In BC’s rush to table this legislation they did not take time to consult and collaborate leading to the Free, Prior and informed consent of First Nations to ensure Bill 15 was consistent with the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and their own law the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

NTC asks “Does BC think they can run roughshod over First Nations rights, title and territories for the sake of “expediency”?”

NTC also asks “Does BC think they can set aside DRIPA and UNDRIP to fast track infrastructure projects in response to Trump’s tariffs?”

NTC further asks “Does BC think they can rush legislation through that has potential to have major impact on First Nation lands, waters and resources without consultation and collaboration leading to free prior and informed consent? NTC has so many questions on this piece of legislation and no answers.

President Judith Sayers said “BC knows how to put in place legislation that is indigenous co-developed as they are doing so with the Heritage Conservation Act? Why not this Act? Things done in a rush will backfire on Provincial Government-First Nation relationships, reconciliation and all the work done to date on UNDRIP. They cannot pick and choose when to engage meaningfully with First Nations and when they won’t as they have now adopted a high standard for adopting Legislation.”

Vice President Les Doiron added “Bill 15 grants the BC Cabinet sweeping powers to bypass First Nations jurisdiction, environmental assessment, municipal authorities and existing laws and regulations in order to fast track public and private sector projects in their discretion that can jump the regulatory queue. This is not acceptable.”

Judith Sayers further commented that Bill 15 mostly empowers the government to intervene as it sees fit on behalf of “provincially significant projects,” public as well as private. They can take conditions that are stopping a project and re-write the conditions to solve the problem the way they want to without consulting and collaborating leading the consent of First Nations? To placate First Nations they put in a section which isn’t clear as to what it actually means. Is it that an order or regulation cannot be about

engagement or is it the definition of Indigenous Peoples in their Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act. (DRIPA)

The Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council stands with the First Nations Leadership Council and other First Nations in demanding BC put Bill 15 be put through rigorous review by First Nations and amended to protect and respect the rights and title, to consult and collaborate leading to free prior and informed consent. NTC also demands that this be done in the spirit and intent of UNDRIP, DRIPA and Reconciliation.

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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, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint, Hesquiaht, Hupacasath, Huu-ayaht, 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).

- s. 20 A regulation under section 18 or an order under section 19 may not be made in relation to provisions of an enactment respecting engagement with Indigenous peoples, as defined in the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.