



# Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

AHOUSAHT  
DITIDAHT  
ʔIIHATIS / ČIINAXINT  
HESQUIAHT  
HUPACASATH

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

TOQUAHT  
TSESHAHT  
UCHUCKLESAHT  
YUUŁ.UʔŁ.ʔATH

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

Tel: 250.724.5757  
Fax: 250.724.2

Nuu-chah-nulth Mourn with Williams Lake First Nations on 93 Potential Graves Discovered

January 25, 2022

Nuu-chah-nulth Territories: Nuuchahnulth peoples and many other First Nations people across this country have been bracing themselves for the news that would come out today by the Williams Lake First Nation regarding more potential graves found around the former grounds of the St. Joseph Mission Residential School that was in operation within their territory for 90 years.

We all knew there would be more numbers of children who had been buried in unmarked graves than what has already been uncovered and shared through the unearthing of truths we have witnessed thus far. Since the T'kemlups Indian Residential School discovery of 215 unmarked graves, the numbers of children who didn't make it home has increased at other residential school sites across the country. A reality and truth that has been oppressed and hidden for far too long and a reality and truth that many survivors and families have had to live with throughout their lives without appropriate care and supports.

Our hearts are broken thinking of such a dark end to the lives of 93 beautiful children who could have had good, meaningful lives and contributed to our communities.

The results announced today are preliminary and may not reflect the entire immensity of bodies yet to be found.

"The practice of burying children and not notifying families and not sending them home is reprehensible and only condemnation can be found toward the Catholic Oblates. Only guilt at wrongdoing can be taken from this practice. Nuuchahnulth send our love, strength and prayers to the peoples of the Williams Lake First Nation, all those families whose precious ones did not go home and grieve with you for such atrocities" says President Judith Sayers

Mariah Charleson, Vice President adds "I cried listening to today's announcement. I cried for the children who didn't have the opportunity to live a life they so desperately deserved. I cried for the children who suffered and those who continue to suffer the effects of these federally funded and church administered institutions created solely to "rid the Indian of the child" and to commit genocide. Today we heard the abuses that took place at "St. Joseph Mission Residential school", the rapes, the beatings, the burning of babies, the countless inhumane acts of genocide inflicted on our people. I, yet again, feel sick to my stomach but this unearthing of truth is vital to move forward."

We urge those who are traumatized and negatively impacted by this news to seek help at one of the many services available.

We all must work together to ensure this never happens again to our children. We must also work together to reveal the truths of how our people were harmed and support each other along the way through this critical and extremely difficult journey.

As more truths about residential schools are revealed, the immensity of achieving reconciliation creates a great gap between governments, churches and First Nations. We call on all parties to find resolutions for these insidious practices and set aside the dark history but to always remember so they do not ever happen again. We call on governments to provide all the supports needed to First Nations as they go through these processes.

-30-

Cloy-e-iss., Judith Sayers, President, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council  
P: 250.724.5757 ext. 231 or 25-720-5621  
E: judith.sayers@nuuchahnulth.org

Łučinłcuta, Mariah Charleson, Vice President, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council  
P: 250-731-7218  
E: Mariah.charleson@nuuchahnulth.org

#### 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).