

December 9, 2020

Dr. Bonnie Henry
Provincial Health Officer
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Victoria BC V8W 9P4
Email: bonnie.henry@gov.bc.ca

CC: Adrian Dix (Minister of Health), Dr. Jong Kim (Interim Chief MHO NHA), Dr. Raina Fumerton (NW MHO and Acting NE MHO)

Re: Organizations and concerned individuals stand with Wet'suwet'en women in urging you to shut down industrial camps amid COVID-19 outbreaks

We are writing you to echo the concerns put forth by Wet'suwet'en Ts'ako ze' and Skiy ze' who are urging British Columbia to shut down LNG Canada and Coastal GasLink work camps amid COVID-19 outbreaks.

The cases reported in the work camps in the communities of Burns Lake (C'ilhts'ëkhyu Clan territory), Huckleberry Camp near Houston (on Gidimt'en Clan territory) and camp 9A (on Unist'ot'en territory) pose considerable risks to the health and culture of these communities.

As stated in the letter Wet'suwet'en women sent to you on November 30, these work camps do not have the capacity to isolate all COVID-19 positive workers and often send them home to cohabitate with elders and other community members. As the result of ongoing colonialism and racism in the health care system, Indigenous peoples are at increased risk with COVID-19 due to underlying health concerns. The loss of elders and knowledge-keepers poses enormous intergenerational cultural impacts for these communities.

Bringing transient workers to these remote communities during a pandemic only perpetuates the harm of colonization and puts economic gain ahead of their health and cultural wellbeing. To not heed these women's concerns is to put corporate profit ahead of Indigenous lives, which is not only morally wrong it is also incompatible with the B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act.

Please find the original letter from Wet'suwet'en women [here](#).

Respectfully, we request that you prioritize the health of Wet'suwet'en peoples and respect their ask to shut down work camps due to increasing COVID-19 concerns.

Sincerely,

Hannah Askew, Sierra Club BC executive director, on behalf of the following list of organizations and individuals:

Sierra Club BC

Dr. Tim K. Takaro, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University

Charlene Aleck, Tsleil-Waututh Nation Sacred Trust Initiative

Council of Canadians

My Sea to Sky

Wilderness Committee

Stand.earth

350.org

Watershed Sentinel Educational Society

RAVEN Trust

PIPE UP Network

Glasswaters Foundation

Center for Sustainable Economy

Gulf Islands Front Lines

Our Time Vancouver