



**For immediate release
May 25, 2018**

District of Lillooet, P'egp'ig'lha Council (T'ít'q'et) and Squamish-Lillooet Regional District sign Protocol Agreement for Communication and Cooperation

Lillooet BC / Northern St'át'imc Territory – Officials from the District of Lillooet, P'egp'ig'lha Council (T'ít'q'et) and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) signed a *Protocol Agreement for Communication and Cooperation* on Thursday, May 24, 2018. The Protocol Agreement provides a framework to establish stronger relationships between the parties through improved communication and enhanced collaboration.

The Protocol Agreement was drafted collaboratively over the past year by an Intergovernmental Relations Working Group composed of elected officials and staff from the District of Lillooet, Lillooet Tribal Council, P'egp'ig'lha Council (T'ít'q'et), Sekw'el'wás, SLRD, and Tsal'álh. The region of focus for the Protocol Agreement is the northern St'át'imc Territory / northern SLRD; all six northern St'át'imc communities have been invited to sign on to the Protocol Agreement and may choose to do so at any time. The Protocol Agreement is intended to be a "living document" that can be amended upon mutual consent.

The Protocol Agreement does not create a legal obligation between the Parties. Rather, it establishes guiding principles for respectful communication and sets out several specific actions that the Parties will do their best to achieve with a focus on increasing awareness and understanding, improving communication and engagement, and enhancing collaboration. The Protocol Agreement also includes several definitions to help establish a shared understanding, and it sets out a process for resolving potential disputes.

Now that the Protocol Agreement has been signed, the focus will shift to implementation. Several objectives have been established for 2018, including: continuing outreach to the northern St'át'imc communities not currently engaged in the process, and developing and implementing a plan to inform organizational staff, community stakeholders and the public about the meaning and purpose of the Protocol Agreement and to engage them in the process.

Funding to support the efforts of the Intergovernmental Relations Working Group through 2018 has been provided by the BC Rural Dividend Program (Project Development Stream), Northern Development Initiative Trust (Economic Development Capacity Building Program), and the SLRD.

Quotations:

"Improving relationships with our neighbouring St'át'imc communities is an important goal for Council. This Protocol Agreement is an important step in forging stronger relationships with our neighbors in both the northern St'át'imc and the northern Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

regions. The District of Lillooet looks forward to working with the P'egp'íg'lha Council and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District to bring this agreement to life."

– **Marg Lampman**, Mayor, District of Lillooet

"P'egp'íg'lha Council, the Traditional Council of T'ít'q'et, is mandated to exercise and protect Title and Rights on behalf of the past, present and future P'egp'íg'lha. As ucwalmicw (people of this land) we have the right to occupy the land, make a living on and from the land, to have decision-making authority, and to practice **ta nqwal'uttenlhkálha múta7 nt'akmenlhkálha** (our language and our way of life). A P'egp'íg'lha Council responsibility is to build positive working relationships with our neighbours and various levels of governments. Our Council is encouraged by the signing of the Communication and Co-operation Protocol with the District of Lillooet and the SLRD. We look forward to continuing to work together to further develop and to maintain our relationships."

– **Shelley Leech**, Tribal Chief, P'egp'íg'lha Council, T'ít'q'et

"Signing this Protocol Agreement is an important step on the path to stronger relationships and it's a great example of collaboration in action. The SLRD looks forward to working with the P'egp'íg'lha Council and District of Lillooet to breathe life into the agreement, by continuing to listen to and learn from one another, and by taking concrete actions to improve the way we communicate, share information and work together for the benefit of all our communities."

– **Jack Crompton**, Board Chair, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

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