

BC Federation of Drift Fishers

4054 212 Street,
Langley, BC V3A 9K6



January 31st, 2024

Att: Hon. David Eby, K.C.

Dear Premier,

We have grave concerns regarding the planned legislation to grant veto powers to B.C. First Nations on crown lands, which currently impacts resource industries, but could result in future access issues for all B.C. residents. These crown lands are a true social and cultural treasure belonging to all residents not any specific sector and must be preserved as such. We know there is widespread opposition to any change of management to crown lands as this must be a carefully managed resource for all residents and preserved for all future generations.

With draft legislation planned for early February and legislature introduction in April, it appears that decisions have been made and the cursory request for comments is purely checking the public box without required consideration of significant public concerns. This can only be described as total lack of responsibility to govern for all residents.

Reconciliation is the dominant issue of this decade and beyond. Our organization and others have made genuine efforts to promote collaboration at the grass roots level with our indigenous neighbours which can be best described as citizen-based reconciliation. Pushing through proposed legislation without due diligence would demonstrate that your government has little respect for true citizen involved reconciliation solutions.

If you support the concept of consultation with all citizens on reconciliation, then you must put the proposed crown land legislation on hold pending further review and consider establishing a public forum, representative of citizens that can offer respectful transparent opinion on all aspects of reconciliation, not just this issue. A common theme among all citizens is lack of true understanding of what reconciliation means and a common belief that decisions should not be rushed. Reconciliation is a series of steps which require clear direction and respectful collaboration. Without this consideration, we may see serious consequences for all our respective future generations.

We trust you appreciate the critical role that your government plays in this important process and your responsibility to govern for all and that you will take the required steps to demonstrate.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns which we know are shared by many other groups and individuals.

Rod Clapton

President, BC Federation of Drift Fishers