
COLUMBIA River Treaty



January 26, 2021

Honourable Marc Garneau
Minister of Foreign Affairs Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Sent by email to: marc.garneau@parl.gc.ca

Honourable Katrine Conroy
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations
And Rural Development
#2 – 1006 3rd Street
Castlegar, B.C. V1N 3X6

Sent by email to: Katrine.Conroy.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Ms. Sandra Luke
Chairperson, Ktunaxa Lands and Resources Council
Ktunaxa Nation Council
220 St. N. Cranbrook, B.C. V1C 0C2

Sent by email to: sluke@ktunaxa.org

Chief Keith Crow
Okanagan Nation Alliance
#101, 3535 Old Okanagan Hwy.
Westbank, B.C. V4T 3L7

Sent by email to: chief@lsib.net

Mr. Nathan Matthew
Shuswap Nation Tribal Council
680 Athabasca St. W.
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1C4

Sent by email to: nmatthew@look.ca

Dear Ministers Garneau and Conroy, Ms. Luke, Chief Crow and Mr. Matthew:

Re: Updated Recommendations Related to the Columbia River Treaty

The Columbia River Treaty Local Governments Committee (the Committee) has updated our recommendations regarding the modernization of the Columbia River Treaty (CRT) and the resolution of related domestic issues. These updates are based on what the Committee has heard from Basin residents and local governments since our original recommendations were prepared in 2013.

The updated recommendations are attached for your consideration. The revisions include: a) more detailed descriptions of the impacts from the Treaty on basin communities; b) several of the original recommendations have been refined; and c) recommendations have been added related to the Treaty regarding less fluctuation in reservoir levels and a broader governance structure that includes Indigenous Nations at a government to government level with the federal and provincial governments, as well as Indigenous and western science expertise in ecosystem management, local governments and basin residents. A summary of the revisions is also attached.

Adding ecosystem function as a third and equal priority in the Treaty, alongside flood risk management and hydro power generation, is a continuing interest and priority for many Basin residents. We are relieved to know this is one of the main points of discussion during the negotiations. The Committee acknowledges and supports the federal decision that the three regional Indigenous Nations have official observer status in the negotiations and supports their leadership in integrating ecosystem function into the Treaty.

We are very grateful for our open, productive and ongoing working relationships with the CRT Negotiating Team, including the regional Indigenous Nations representatives involved in the CRT negotiations and the B.C. CRT Team. We are also grateful for the ongoing communications by both Teams with basin residents. This is especially important to begin to overcome the strong feelings of alienation from the 1960s when the CRT was signed without any consultation with Indigenous Nations or basin residents and local governments. As a result of the ongoing dialogue, the Negotiating Team knows that the Committee and basin residents are looking for significant changes in the Treaty to improve our quality of life compared to current operations.

We would appreciate being informed if there are any concerns about incorporating our recommendations into the ongoing negotiations to modernize the CRT.

The Committee is very aware of the public commitments by the B.C. CRT Team to bring any elements of a negotiated agreement that impact the region back to residents and local governments for review before negotiations are finalized. We look forward to this step in the process.

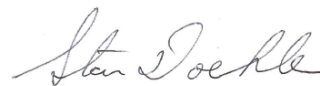
In the interim, we will continue to work with the B.C. CRT Team, Indigenous Nations and others on solutions to the domestic issues that are included in our recommendations.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding our updated recommendations. We are available to discuss our recommendations with you and others if that would be helpful.

On behalf of the CRT Local Governments' Committee,



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Appointed by the Regional District of Kootenay
Boundary
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Appointed by the Regional District of East Kootenays
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c.c. Sylvain Fabi, Columbia River Treaty Canadian Lead Negotiator

Stephen Gluck, Deputy Director, Global Affairs Canada

Edena Brown, Ministerial Assistant

Kathy Eichenberger, Executive Director, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team

Bill Green, Ktunaxa Nation Council CRT Negotiations Observer

Jay Johnson, Okanagan Nation Alliance CRT Negotiations Observer

CRT Local Government Committee members:

Linda Worley, Chair, Regional Director, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary

Stan Doehle, Vice Chair, Regional Director, Regional District of the East Kootenays

Aimee Watson, Regional Director, by Regional District of Central Kootenay

Ramona Faust, Regional Director, Regional District of Central Kootenay

Diane Langman, Mayor, Village of Warfield and appointed by Regional District of Kootenay Boundary

Jane Walter, Regional Director, Regional District of the East Kootenays

Ron Oszust, Mayor, Town of Golden and appointed by Columbia-Shuswap Regional District

David Brooks-Hill, Regional Director, Columbia Shuswap Regional District

Donnie MacLean, Councillor, Village of Valemount

Clara Reinhardt, Mayor, Village of Radium Hot Springs and appointed by Association of Kootenay Boundary Local Governments