

**DEFENDING LAND AND
WAY OF LIFE — THE
SACRED HEADWATERS**

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN NORTHERN
BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT
IS A HUMAN RIGHT

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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'NO INDIGENOUS CULTURE COULD ENDURE OR SURVIVE THE IMPACTS IF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS WERE TO HAPPEN SIMULTANEOUSLY. OUR LAND, OUR TAHLTAN PEOPLE AND THE WILDLIFE WOULD BE DEVASTATED.'

Rhoda Quock, spokesperson for the Klabona Keepers, a society of Tahltan elders

The Indigenous Tahltan people of northern British Columbia know the area as the "Sacred Headwaters". Three major salmon-bearing rivers and hundreds of smaller rivers and streams all begin there. The waters are vital to the traditional economy and way of life of the Tahltan and other Indigenous Peoples living downstream.

In December 2008, the Province of British Columbia announced a two-year suspension of Royal Dutch Shell's plans to extract methane from coal beds under the headwaters. The announcement followed widespread protest among the Tahltan and neighbouring communities.

However, this is just one of dozens of large-scale projects planned for the headwaters and surrounding territory. The Tahltan say that not enough is known about the combined effects of this new rush to exploit natural resources. Downstream Indigenous communities haven't even been consulted.

TAKE ACTION NOW

Send this postcard to the Premier of British Columbia, Gordon Campbell.

Visit our website for more information at www.amnesty.ca/headwaters

Image: Headwaters of the Stikine River, northern British Columbia, Canada. © Amnesty International

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Dear Premier Campbell,

The headwaters of the Skeena, Nass and Stikine rivers are vital to the culture and economy of the Tahltan People and to other Indigenous Peoples downstream. The combined impacts of the many extractive projects planned for the region must be carefully assessed to ensure that they do not harm these communities and their way of life.

I urge your government to review the licences already granted for exploration and development in the area of the Sacred Headwaters to ensure that none proceeds without a full impact assessment and broad consultation with the Tahltan and downstream communities.

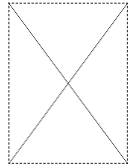
I also urge the Province of British Columbia not to issue further licences in these headwaters until the Tahltan and downstream communities have had the opportunity to develop their own land and resource management plans to protect their rights and ensure a healthy environment.

Yours faithfully,

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Country: _____



The Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier of British Columbia
Room 156, Parliament Buildings
Victoria
Canada
BC V8V 1X4

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Image: The area known by the Tahltan as the Sacred Headwaters in northern British Columbia, Canada. © Amnesty International
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