

VUNTUT GWITCHIN GOVERNMENT

Government of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation



CHIEF AND COUNCIL

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June 1, 2021

Chief & Council , Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation
200-330 Chief Alex Thomas Way, Kamloops BC, V2H 1H1

Our Nation and our people stand in solidarity with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation as you grieve the horrendous discovery of your loved ones. We grieve alongside with you, as mothers, fathers, aunties, uncles, grandmothers and grandfathers. We hold space for you and for your community as the waves of grief continue to wash over you as you process this devastating loss and as more information is brought to light.

“The Vuntut Gwitchin stand with Tk'emlups te Secwepemc on your journey to heal our regions and country. Canada has much to learn in order to walk with us to find that good place. We walk with your nation and hold up the hearts of your people. We grieve with you, and we shall heal with you. The Vuntut Gwitchin support our brothers and sisters in the south; please call upon us for anything you may need. This is our way as indigenous peoples, as brothers and sisters.” – Chief Dana Tizya-Tramm

VGG calls on all Nations, all levels of government, all people, to shift our language when discussing the atrocities of residential schools, and most certainly, the finding of the mass grave at the Kamloops Indian Residential School in BC. This is not a “stain on Canada’s history”. The atrocities incurred by Indigenous nations at the hands of the church and the government are not “historical” instances to simply be grieved by a moment of silence and then forgotten. Residential school trauma is a reality our people feel in the present; loved ones we will never get to hold again is something we are feeling right now. Acts of reconciliation are hollow, while Canada remains firmly entrenched within colonialism.

We call on the government to break the repeat cycle of: atrocities uncovered, national apologies, no action. We know that many communities have outstanding questions about lost loved ones. We know Kamloops Indian Residential School in BC is **not** the only location where unthinkable harm took place. We call for swift action and for all families to know peace and justice as soon as possible.

We send up prayers to Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nation; know that your community is heavy in our hearts and we tread lightly during this painful time. For the ones who never came home; for the ones who came home and were never the same; for those who have never found their way home and for those still carrying the intergenerational trauma of residential schools – we hold space for you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dana', with a long, sweeping underline.

Chief Dana Tiya-Tramm
Vuntut Gwitchin Government